

Commonwealth Secretariat Strategic Plan

2013/14 - 2016/17



The Commonwealth

Commonwealth Secretariat Strategic Plan

2013/14 –2016/17

Approved by the
Commonwealth Secretariat Board of Governors

23 May 2013



The Commonwealth

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

AOSIS	Alliance of Small Island States
APEC	Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation
ARTEMIS	Activity Results Tracking and Expenditure Management Information System
AU	African Union
BoG	Board of Governors
CARICOM	Caribbean Community
CBC	Commonwealth Business Council
CEN	Commonwealth Electoral Network
CHOGM	Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting
CMAG	Commonwealth Ministerial Action Group
CoL	Commonwealth of Learning
CPP	Civil Paths to Peace
EPG	Eminent Persons Group
EU	European Union
ExCo	Executive Committee
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
HRD	Human Resources Division
HLRG	High-Level Review Group
ICTs	Information and Communication Technologies
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IT	Information Technology
LDCs	Least Developed Countries

MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
ME&R	Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting
PCP	Primary Contact Point
PIFS	Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat
RBM	Results-based Management
SAARC	South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation
SIDS	Small Island Developing States
SRF	Strategic Results Framework
TA	technical assistance
UN	United Nations
UNFCCC	UN Framework Convention on Climate Change
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UPR	Universal Periodic Review
WTO	World Trade Organization
YDI	Youth Development Index

Executive Summary

The Commonwealth Secretariat is the principal intergovernmental agency of the Commonwealth. The Strategic Plan for the period 2013/14 to 2016/17 has been developed after extensive consultation with member governments. It is more narrowly focussed than previous plans, as directed by Commonwealth Heads of Government. Nevertheless, it maintains a balance of outcomes and allocation of effort between the longstanding 'democracy' and 'development' pillars of the Secretariat's work. The plan takes into account agreed recommendations of the 2011 report of the Eminent Persons Group (EPG). It also includes the orientation to a strategy to collaborate with Commonwealth organisations.

"The plan reflects the shared priorities of member governments... It also envisages a number of fundamental changes in the way that the Secretariat delivers its work..."

The plan reflects the shared priorities of member governments. These include three longer-term goals for the next eight to ten years, and six strategic outcomes to be pursued during the next four years.

The **three goals** are:

1. Strong democracy, rule of law, promotion and protection of human rights and respect for diversity;
2. Inclusive growth and sustainable development; and
3. A well-connected and networked Commonwealth.

The plan is based on a Strategic Results Framework (SRF), which provides intermediate outcomes and indicators to support these six **strategic outcomes**:

1. Democracy – greater adherence to Commonwealth political values and principles;
2. Public institutions – more effective, efficient and equitable public governance;
3. Social Development – enhanced positive impact of social development;
4. Youth – youth more integrated and valued in political and development processes;

5. Development: pan-Commonwealth – more effective frameworks for inclusive economic growth and social and sustainable development; and
6. Development: small states and vulnerable states – strengthened resilience of small states and vulnerable states.

In addition to the strategic and intermediate outcomes, the SRF also has three enabling outcomes and four internal result areas. The **enabling outcomes** are those results that underpin the intermediate outcomes. The internal outcomes, on the other hand, will ensure an efficiently run organisation that promotes the delivery of the enabling and intermediate results. Indicators are provided against which the impact of the Secretariat's work can be measured. The plan is to be delivered under a results-based management (RBM) approach.

A Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting (ME&R) Framework complements the SRF to help the Secretariat monitor and evaluate results, as well as report on progress in achieving the agreed outcomes. The plan will be the subject of a mid-term review in 2015.

The plan envisages a reduction in the number of activities currently undertaken by the Secretariat. It also envisages a number of fundamental changes in the way that the Secretariat delivers its work, including greater use of information and communication technologies (ICTs), strategic partnerships, promotion of collaboration between member states and brokerage of assistance from elsewhere when the Secretariat itself is unable to provide this.

The plan assumes a continued 'zero real growth' financial climate and is based on the 2012/13 budget. The Plan will be rolled out from 1 July 2013. The first six months of the 2013/14 financial year are being used as a time of transition to give effect to the significant reductions, narrowing of focus and other changes that are envisaged.

Message from the Chair, Board of Governors

As Chair of the Board of Governors, I am pleased that a consultative process has been chosen to develop the new Strategic Plan. From meetings with the Secretary-General to briefing sessions on the discussion paper and the draft plan, the Secretariat has made a concerted effort to listen to the many voices of its members. This plan is mindful of the challenging economic pressures of members. It is reform oriented and reflects our collective priorities.

The plan focuses on the Secretariat's perceived strengths. It introduces a strategic emphasis on small states, an area in which the Commonwealth has considerable expertise as small states account for more than half of its membership. It also looks to the future, to our youth, and aims to develop our young people's contribution to the Commonwealth.

The plan should result in an enhanced, focussed and results-oriented organisation, which should facilitate collaboration between its members and the transfer of portable concepts and best-fit solutions among them. The expected benefits or outcomes should be to assist member states to be able to develop good governance and public institutions which are in keeping with generally accepted laws, and the common principles and values of the Commonwealth.

By working with the Secretariat – the Secretary-General, senior managers and staff of the Secretariat who are drawn from across the Commonwealth – to shape the final outcome of the Strategic Plan, the Board is confident that it will help the Secretariat achieve success as it embraces an era of reform.

HE Dr Carl BW Roberts, CMG

High Commissioner

Antigua and Barbuda

“The plan focuses on the Secretariat's perceived strengths. It introduces a strategic emphasis on small states... It also looks to the future, to our youth... ”

Foreword

"...we now move forward with a reconfigured approach, adopting new ways of working so that we deliver efficiently and cost-effectively for the benefit... of all Commonwealth member states..."

This plan reflects some of the most fundamental reform of the Secretariat in a generation – both of the work we do and in the way we do it. We have embraced the change with enthusiasm and belief. I am confident that this New Strategic Plan heralds an era of significant opportunity for the Secretariat and to member states. We will build on the essence of our track record and our organisational brand strengths, success and unique advantage. We will strive to be more tightly focussed, with practical outcomes as our orientation.

I pay tribute to the detailed thought and attention that has been given by so many from throughout the Commonwealth, and which has provided the necessary groundwork in order to bring this Plan to fruition. It is the culmination of a deep and extensive process of consultation, appraisal and review.

Having taken stock, and having considered projections of the likely context within which we are likely to operate in future, we now move forward with a reconfigured approach, adopting new ways of working so that we deliver efficiently and cost-effectively for the benefit, collectively and individually, of all Commonwealth member states and its citizens.

Such modification and modernisation are crucial to the continuing processes of reform and renewal that maintain the vitality of the Commonwealth Secretariat as we strive to fulfil our mission of serving the member states and peoples of our worldwide Commonwealth family.

Kamalesh Sharma
Commonwealth Secretary-General

Commonwealth Secretariat Strategic Plan

2013/14 – 2016/17

1. Introduction

- 1 **The Commonwealth is a voluntary association of independent and equal sovereign states. Its special strength lies in the combination of its diversity and shared inheritance. Its members are bound together by respect for all states and peoples; by shared values and principles; and by concern for the vulnerable.**
- 2 The Commonwealth Secretariat in London is the backbone of the Commonwealth. It convenes summits and high-level meetings; executes plans agreed by the Commonwealth Heads of Government; promotes Commonwealth values and principles; and facilitates the work of the Commonwealth family of organisations.
- 3 At the 2011 Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM), leaders asked the Commonwealth Secretary-General to develop a Strategic Plan for the next four-year period that was more focussed and reflected the Secretariat's size and resources. This direction echoed recommendations of the Eminent Persons Group (EPG), which proposed a narrower focus of effort by the Secretariat and emphasised sharpening the impact, strengthening the networks and raising the profile of the Commonwealth.
- 4 The New Strategic Plan marks the beginning of a new chapter for the Secretariat. It focuses on those areas where the Commonwealth and the Secretariat in particular have distinct strengths. It is prioritised, flexible and result oriented. It is 'designed to deliver' what is envisaged in the recently agreed Charter of the Commonwealth.
- 5 The new Plan has been prepared in light of the guidance from the Heads of Government, EPG recommendations, as well as the Secretary-General's consultations with the Board of Governors, senior management and staff of the Secretariat,¹ and input from other Commonwealth organisations. It takes into account the recommendations of recent evaluation and impact studies,² management reviews by some member states, the results of the Priorities Questionnaire survey, feedback from the Primary Contact Point (PCP) meetings and regular guidance from the Board of Governors (BoG) and its Executive Committee (ExCo).
- 6 The EPG report of 2011 made 106 recommendations, most of which have been adopted by Heads of Government, either as drafted or with agreed modifications. Where appropriate, the adopted recommendations are reflected in this Plan. For instance, it is envisaged that the ability of the Secretariat to support the Commonwealth Ministerial Action Group (CMAG) in its enlarged and positively oriented

1 The Strategic Plan Development Consultative Process is at Annex-I.

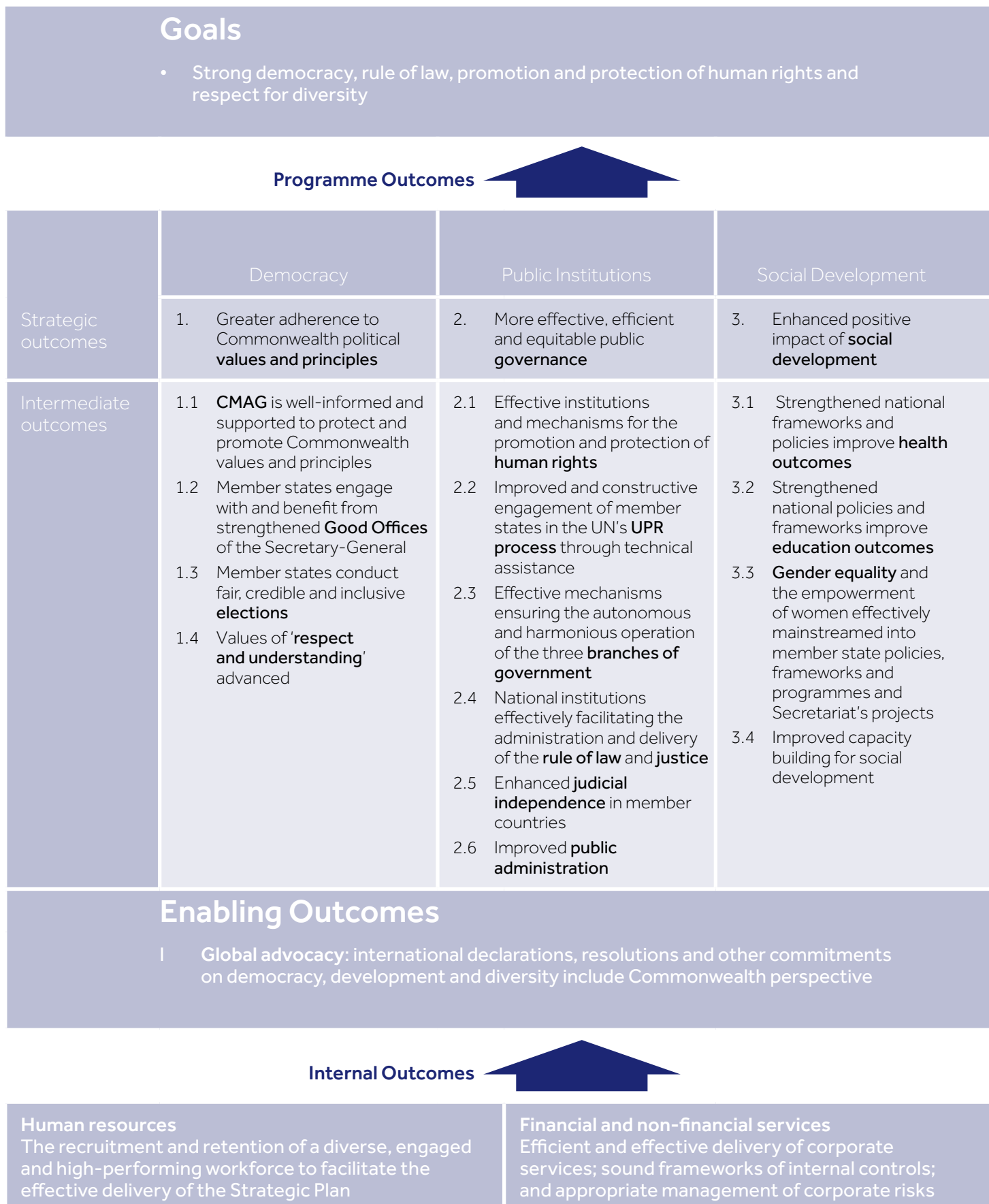
2 The List of Evaluation Studies (2008–2012) is at Annex-II.

mandate will be enhanced; that the technical assistance services provided to member governments and sharing of knowledge will be strengthened; that the Secretariat will work in closer partnership with the Commonwealth Foundation and accredited Commonwealth organisations; and also that a number of one-off mandates will be delivered.

- 7 The Strategic Plan is guided by a set of principles. It is prioritised, sharply focussed, realistic, impact-oriented and in line with the recently agreed Commonwealth Charter and adopted EPG recommendations. It reflects Commonwealth's distinct and comparative strengths, and avoids duplication of work with other organisations. It embeds learning from past planning periods. It addresses the membership's diverse needs and perspectives and manifests innovative and contemporary approaches (such as projectising) to securing outcomes.
- 8 This Plan reflects some guiding considerations: the global context in which the Commonwealth operates; the key priorities of member governments collectively; and, the resources available to deliver the plan. The Strategic Plan takes into account the rapidly changing global environment in which the Commonwealth and other multilateral organisations have to pursue their goals. It is reform oriented and aims at strengthening organisational effectiveness and value-added.
- 9 The Plan strives to reflect the shared key priorities of members. It has retained the balance that has existed in the Secretariat's work and priorities since its establishment in 1965, and which is reflected in its founding Memorandum. The number of work areas has been rationalised, yet a balance of priorities between 'democracy' and 'development' work continues.
- 10 In recognition of the Commonwealth's strength as a community of diverse states and peoples united by common goals, values and principles, the Plan envisages a new focus on 'diversity'; this would take the form of practical initiatives to give effect to the 'Civil Paths to Peace' (CPP) report adopted at the 2007 CHOGM arising from the Commonwealth Commission on Respect and Understanding.
- 11 With regard to available resources, the Plan is based on the envelope of funds available in the 2012/13 financial year, adjusted annually on a 'zero real growth' basis. It takes into account the financial difficulties of member states in the wake of the global economic crisis and values their continuing contributions. Biennial Planning and Budgeting will be taken forward after the approval of the Strategic Plan in line with the available resources.
- 12 The approved Plan is intended to come into operation from 1 July 2013 to ensure that the work programme is synchronised with the financial year. In accordance with the Secretariat's usual practice, there will be a mid-term review of the Plan, in 2015, allowing for flexibility and adjustments so that the Secretariat's work continues to meet the contemporary needs of the membership.

13 The schematic diagram (Diagram 1) provides a strategic overview of the Commonwealth Secretariat from a results perspective. It has three over-arching goals at the top indicating that all organisational efforts will be directed at achieving these results. The Secretariat's programme is planned in light of these goals. It is divided into six inter-related work areas: Democracy; Public institutions; Social Development; Youth; Development: pan-Commonwealth; and Development: small states and vulnerable states. Priority themes have been defined within these work areas in terms of strategic and intermediate outcomes, with a timeframe of ten and four years respectively. This is followed by three enabling outcomes that underpin the achievement of results and are an integral part of the programme. Finally, forming the bedrock are the four corporate outcomes (hereafter called internal outcomes) which ensure the Secretariat is able to support the delivery of the Strategic Plan.

Diagram 1: Strategic overview



- Inclusive growth and sustainable development
- A well-connected and networked Commonwealth



Programme Outcomes

Youth	Development: pan-Commonwealth	Development: small states and vulnerable states	
4. Youth more integrated and valued in political and development processes	5. More inclusive economic growth and sustainable development	6. Strengthened resilience of small states and vulnerable states	Strategic outcomes
4.1 National and pan-Commonwealth frameworks advance social, political and economic empowerment of young people 4.2 Young people empowered and supported to participate meaningfully and to take forward youth-led initiatives	5.1 Effective policy mechanisms for integration and participation in the global trading system 5.2 Commonwealth principles and values advanced in global development and financing decisions (e.g. G20 and post-2015 MDG framework) 5.3 National frameworks facilitate effective debt management 5.4 Strengthened, equitable and sustainable management of maritime and other natural resources 5.5 Knowledge management and exchange leads to sharing of good practices and strengthened Commonwealth network	6.1 International policies, mechanisms and rules are more responsive to small states' development strategies and resilience needs 6.2 Small states enabled to effectively participate in international decision-making processes 6.3 Improved climate financing frameworks	Intermediate outcomes

- II **Technical assistance, referral and partnership** mechanisms respond flexibly to member states' needs and capacity building priorities
- III **Commonwealth profile:** profile of the Commonwealth is strengthened at all levels



Internal Outcomes

Information technology Quality and reliable information technology services support the delivery of programme outcomes	Quality and results Effective planning, quality assurance and ME&R system to facilitate the delivery and reporting of the Strategic Plan
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2. Context: Challenges and Opportunities

- 14 Due to the interconnected nature of the global economy, the **economic and financial crises** over the past five years have had global ramifications and have ultimately led to a global economic downturn, affecting both developed and developing countries. The economic crisis has had serious implications for the least developed countries (LDCs) and smaller states: they experienced reductions in commodity prices, remittances, exports, tourism revenue and foreign direct investment, which has resulted in diminished revenues, an increase in the demands on socio-economic safety nets and increasing levels of unemployment.
- 15 Despite the ongoing global downturn, the **economic prospects** of the Commonwealth as a group of countries are encouraging. A recent report by the *World Economics*³ forecasts average annual growth of 7.3 per cent for Commonwealth countries as a group over the next five years. This forecast is seeing many Commonwealth economies well placed to emerge stronger, more resilient and wealthier in the years ahead. By 2015, the Commonwealth's share of global gross domestic product (GDP) is forecast to have grown by more than 15 per cent in less than 35 years.
- 16 The **Commonwealth as a grouping** includes a number of the world's fastest growing economies. Intra-Commonwealth statistics highlight the **Commonwealth's network advantage** in an evolving landscape. The Commonwealth's combined GDP nearly doubled between 1990 and 2009. More than US\$3 trillion in trade takes place each year between Commonwealth members. Export trade increased from Commonwealth members as a whole between 2007 and 2011.
- 17 The Commonwealth embraces vibrant **regional networks**: 19 Commonwealth states are members of the African Union (AU); 12 of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM); ten are members of the Pacific Islands Forum (PIF); seven of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC); five of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC); and three are members of the European Union (EU). Keeping in view the growing importance of regional networks, the Secretariat's work with these networks is expected to grow during the new plan period.

3 World Economics has recently started a research project entitled 'Commonwealth Growth Monitor' which compiles and analyses economic data about Commonwealth countries as well as compares and contrasts it with other regions

- 18 Climate change** and environmental issues remain a global challenge and a major concern for the Commonwealth. It is noteworthy that out of 100 countries classified as most vulnerable to climate change, 45 are Commonwealth states, 31 are Commonwealth small states and 27 are Commonwealth small island developing states (SIDS). The Commonwealth aims to be a global player in promoting awareness of these issues, devising strategies for climate change finance and acting as a champion advocating the case of small states and vulnerable states.
- 19** Global demand for energy and **natural resources** is increasing while finite natural resources are declining. Commonwealth states rank prominently as producers of many precious metals including gold, diamonds, platinum and copper, as well as natural gas. Many Commonwealth states also have extensive coastlines. The Secretariat will continue to provide assistance to members in strengthening equitable and sustainable management of maritime and other natural resources.
- 20 Technology** is radically changing the way in which individuals, organisations and the world work and interact. The world's internet population is predicted to reach 3.4 billion by 2016. There is a huge potential for the countries and peoples of the Commonwealth to leverage this technological resource. The Commonwealth Secretariat is poised to benefit from this opportunity. 'Commonwealth Connects'⁴ and other ICT tools will be used to facilitate intergovernmental linkages and pan-Commonwealth interaction among practitioners and people of the Commonwealth.
- 21** Demographic shifts in recent years have changed the outlook of populations and regions affected by such shifts across the globe. In Commonwealth countries, more than 50 per cent of citizens are under the age of 30. In 31 of the 54 Commonwealth states, more than one-fifth of total population is under the age of 14. The Commonwealth views **young people as assets** and works with them to enhance their political and developmental role.
- 22** The G20 has emerged as the major grouping in the global economic and developmental arena. **The Commonwealth–G20 relationship** has grown as the Commonwealth has served as a vehicle for bringing the perspectives of developing countries to the G20, and also for suggesting practical solutions to difficult development challenges. This engagement has been rooted in the 2009 CHOGM mandate, which urged the Commonwealth to work with the G20 and to strengthen the voice and representation of developing countries in international economic decision-making and norm-setting.

⁴ Commonwealth Connects is a digital platform for professional networking and collaboration. This secure platform supports networks of expertise and communities of practice across the Commonwealth to be in contact with each other, to share knowledge and to collaborate in developing best practice, managing projects and coordinating events. Using cloud-based technology, Commonwealth Connects enables people to build working partnerships using their internet-enabled communication devices such as desktop/laptop computers or mobile smart-phones.

- 23 The Commonwealth focuses its '**soft power**' in several areas, including peace building and democracy, respect and understanding, the rule of law and constitutionalism, and human rights. The Commonwealth has excelled in fostering an atmosphere of peer-to-peer influence. The Commonwealth values which have been agreed and demonstrated by the members over the duration of its existence remain a benchmark by which members continue to hold themselves and each other accountable.
- 24 The next four years will see further reform in the global development agenda. There will be opportunities to influence this reform by advocating **the Commonwealth's perspectives** – including its principles of inclusiveness and equity, its fundamental values, and its concern for the small and vulnerable, reflected in the Marlborough House Declaration of the Heads (2008). Significant opportunities include contributions to striving forward the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) by 2015; the creation of the new post-2015 global development agenda; influencing the global debate on climate change and sustainable development; providing inputs to the Small Island Developing States (SIDS) summit in 2014; and advocacy in support of global trade negotiations and rules-based order.
- 25 The **Commonwealth family of organisations** is a valuable network for the Secretariat. Forging stronger partnerships with accredited Commonwealth organisations is vital to strengthen the network and to create greater impact. Similarly, **strategic partnerships** with other organisations will be strengthened in order to ensure Commonwealth values and developmental priorities are advanced through wider collaboration and co-operation.

3. Strategic Results Framework (SRF)

- 26 The Strategic Plan focuses on results that the Secretariat aims to achieve in the next four years. These outcomes are summarised in the SRF, which is the core of the plan (Annex-III). The SRF will guide the Secretariat's planning and budgeting, monitoring, evaluation and reporting during the plan period.
- 27 The SRF focuses at two levels of outcomes – strategic and intermediate. Strategic outcomes reflect the long-term change the Secretariat aims to strive for over the next eight to ten years. The Secretariat's contributions to the strategic outcomes will be assessed at the end of that period, largely through evaluation studies guided by the indicators, verifiable externally available data and feedback from stakeholders and member states.
- 28 Intermediate outcomes are medium-term results which the Secretariat will focus upon over the next four years. The Secretariat will align its resources with these results and track progress through indicators during the plan period. These intermediate outcomes, expected to be realised between two to four years, will result from an organisational effort and by contributions from the Secretariat's staff, which will be adjusted in terms of structure and core competencies accordingly.
- 29 The intermediate outcomes and indicators will be supported by the development of short-term outcomes and indicators for a two-year period during the biennial planning and budgeting cycle. The outcomes and their indicators in the SRF will guide the development of all Secretariat projects, and allocation of financial and human resources. Outcomes will be subjected to rigorous quality assurance mechanisms to ensure compliance and relevance with the SRF. This will be supported by the ongoing efforts in the Secretariat to strengthen the capacity of staff on results-based management (RBM). Monitoring and evaluation will be conducted against the defined quantitative and qualitative indicators.
- 30 In addition to the strategic and intermediate outcomes, the SRF also has three enabling outcomes and four internal result areas. The enabling outcomes are those results that underpin the intermediate outcomes. The internal outcomes, on the other hand, will ensure an efficiently-run organisation that promotes the delivery of the enabling and intermediate results.
- 31 The Strategic Plan's priorities will inform both the Secretariat's structure and subsequent planning and budgeting. The Secretary-General will make requisite adjustments in the Secretariat structure to best deliver all Strategic Plan outcomes. It is envisaged, for example, that requisite delivery capacity will be created in those

areas where new CHOGM mandates have emerged (strengthened role of Good Offices and CMAG; building resilience in small states and vulnerable states), where EPG recommendations have been adopted including partnerships and collaboration with Commonwealth organisations; and where the Secretariat is proposing new initiatives (such as the knowledge management and exchange function, country to country collaboration, enhanced advisory capacity and strategic partnerships).

32 With no expected growth in real terms anticipated in the budget in the immediate term, the plan is based on the existing envelope of funds, adjusted annually on a zero real growth basis. Funds will be allocated for result areas outlined in the intermediate, enabling and internal outcomes.

3.1 Strategic and intermediate outcomes

3.1.1 Democracy

Strategic outcome: Greater adherence to Commonwealth political values and principles

Intermediate outcomes:

- *CMAG is well-informed and supported to protect and promote Commonwealth values and principles*
- *Member states engage with and benefit from strengthened Good Offices of the Secretary-General*
- *Member states conduct fair, credible and inclusive elections*
- *Values of 'respect and understanding' advanced*

33 The focus of this strategic outcome is supporting members in adhering to the Commonwealth's fundamental political values in line with the recently agreed Charter of the Commonwealth. The Secretariat will continue to provide support to member states in deepening these values.

34 The Secretary-General's Good Offices for Peace will continue to work with vigour as mandated by Heads of Government at the Perth CHOGM. The Secretariat is aiming to strengthen its analytical capacity and proactive engagement on Good Offices. Assistance and support will be provided, where sought, to help prevent, manage and overcome internal differences. The Secretariat will work with member states to enhance the impact of Commonwealth engagement and interventions geared to prevent conflict, as well as help members respond to and manage both conflict and risks of conflict effectively.

- 35 The Perth CHOGM approved an enhanced role of the Commonwealth Ministerial Action Group (CMAG). The Secretariat will be providing analytical and administrative support to enable CMAG to deal with the full range of serious or persistent violations of Commonwealth fundamental political values. This will include political analysis and greater background context for the information of CMAG, particularly in advancing the scope to engage proactively and positively. By increasing this support, it is envisioned that member states will respond positively to CMAG's recommendations and implement them. There will be closer co-ordination between the distinct but complementary roles of the Secretary-General's Good Offices and CMAG.
- 36 The EPG report recognised the importance of election observation (Recommendations 11–15) and the need to pay adequate attention to the pre-electoral environment and implementation of Commonwealth Observer Group recommendations. In addition, the Secretariat will continue to work to develop the capacity of Commonwealth Election Management Bodies to conduct fair, credible and inclusive elections through supporting the Commonwealth Electoral Network (CEN) created in 2010.
- 37 The Secretariat will strengthen its work in the area of diversity promotion under its Civil Paths to Peace mandate. This mandate was the outcome of the report of the Commonwealth Commission on Respect and Understanding endorsed by the Heads of Government in the Kampala CHOGM (2007). The prioritisation of this area of work was reiterated in the Perth CHOGM Communique. The Secretariat has already initiated actions through advocacy and institution building at the local level. This work will be deepened during the new plan period.

3.1.2 Public institutions

Strategic outcome: More effective, efficient and equitable public governance

Intermediate outcomes:

- *Effective institutions and mechanisms for the promotion and protection of human rights*
- *Improved and constructive engagement of member states in the UN's Universal Periodic Review process through technical assistance*
- *Effective mechanism ensuring the autonomous and harmonious operation of the three branches of government*
- *National institutions effectively facilitating the administration and delivery of rule of law and justice*
- *Enhanced judicial independence in member countries*
- *Improved public administration*

- 38 Well-performing public institutions are critical for establishing and sustaining democracy, good governance and development. The Secretariat has a track record of strengthening the core public institutions of rule of law, human rights and public administration through context-sensitive technical support and peer-to-peer support. In this result area, the Secretariat will be working to create and strengthen effective, efficient and equitable public institutions.
- 39 In the area of human rights, focus will be on supporting the establishment/ strengthening of National Human Rights Institutions (EPG Recommendation 10) or other acceptable mechanisms. The Secretariat will be helping to develop effective human rights institutions and mechanisms in line with the Paris Principles to advance development of national human rights policies, action plans and legislation.
- 40 In addition, the Secretariat will build members' capacity and provide the technical assistance to engage constructively with international and regional human rights mechanisms such as the United Nations Human Rights Council's Universal Periodic Review (UPR); and help members implement UPR outcomes.
- 41 The Secretariat aims to strengthen member states' democratic institutions, including constitutions, judiciaries and judicial processes, for effective administration and delivery of rule of law and justice. This will be done through developing long-term capacity in legislative drafting; assisting members to harmonise national laws with international frameworks; developing and sharing a variety of toolkits, including model laws and guidelines; and facilitating the efficient delivery of justice by strengthening court registries, building the capacity of court staff and effective case-flow management. In addition, the Secretariat will engage with governments, when required, to support adherence to the Commonwealth Latimer House Principles, for example in enhancing judicial independence in member countries.
- 42 In the area of public administration, the Secretariat will provide assistance to create more effective institutions at the centre of government. This will be done by improving co-operation between political and administrative leadership. Support will also be provided to members to help create well-functioning anti-corruption and public procurement agencies through effective networks to conduct peer reviews and to facilitate sharing of good practices; and strengthening public financial management institutions. Special emphasis will be paid to strengthening public administration in small states by sharing and assisting in capacity building needs.

3.1.3 Social Development

Strategic Outcome: Enhanced positive impact of social development

Intermediate Outcomes:

- *Strengthened national frameworks and policies improve health outcomes*
- *Strengthened national policies and frameworks improve education outcomes*
- *Gender equality and the empowerment of women effectively mainstreamed into member state policies, frameworks and programmes and Secretariat's projects*
- *Improved capacity building for social development*

- 43 Global education and health goals are particularly significant to Commonwealth nations which collectively carry high burdens of poverty-related health diseases and education challenges, including providing pre-school education which has been shown to be a key factor in achieving education outcomes. Recognising that health and education are key sectors with significant national and international budgets and major players, the Secretariat will focus its efforts on providing policy advice and technical support to strengthen policy and regulatory frameworks. Expertise will be provided to member states in policy analysis and strategies for bridging gaps between policy formulation and policy implementation in order to effectively realise national health and education outcomes.
- 44 This process will be anchored on in-depth research, policy analysis and documentation of Commonwealth practices, identifying trends, gaps and opportunities for policy advocacy to inform Ministerial Meetings and related global advocacy forums. Special focus in this plan will be the Post-2015 development agenda and the implication for the member states.
- 45 The different stages of development of member states will be harnessed for exchange and learning opportunities drawing the membership into a dialogue, a development that will be strengthened through knowledge and exchange platforms ('hubs'). These will be professionally managed, specialised on-line environments: a secure place for experts and practitioners to discuss, share and learn (inform); a convergence point for forging and nurturing pan-Commonwealth partnerships and linkages (connect); and, a central access point for governments, civil society and private stakeholders to conduct business (transact). The Secretariat will facilitate connections between such potentially dynamic networks. Access to the hubs can be controlled, to maintain relevance and efficacy for the users. There can, for instance, be spaces for professionals, accredited Commonwealth civil society organisations, and associations, to follow and share emerging trends and good practices, form partnerships, provide peer-support and

mentoring, and impart specialised training. This could forge stronger links, partnerships and collaboration between Commonwealth Universities and higher institutions of learning, including more collaboration with partners such as the Commonwealth of Learning and the Association of Commonwealth Universities.

- 46 The importance of gender mainstreaming has been consistently emphasised in CHOGM communiqués. Efforts have been made in the past in this regard, but there is recognition that the Secretariat should do more to renew and deepen the practice. The Secretariat is aiming at making significant progress in the new plan period to achieve gender equality in diverse areas of its work as well as help member states mainstream gender in their policies, frameworks and programmes.
- 47 The Secretariat's gender policy was launched on International Women's Day in March 2012 and provides a framework for a concerted and systematic approach to gender mainstreaming within the Secretariat. At the organisation level, policy and planning processes will reflect gender equality principles and measures. At the programme and project level, special consideration will be paid to the gender dimension, and measures to address gender gaps will be incorporated throughout the programme and project cycle. This commitment towards gender mainstreaming will be translated into allocation of financial resources, as well as capacity building initiatives. The Secretariat will also provide technical assistance to member states to help empower women and develop effective frameworks for gender equality.
- 48 During the development of the strategic plan, members highlighted the importance of social development to their countries and the need to see that reflected in the plan itself. They asked the Secretariat to focus on facilitating capacity building where the Commonwealth can add value.

3.1.4 Youth

Strategic outcome: Youth more integrated and valued in political and development processes

Intermediate outcomes:

- *National and pan-Commonwealth frameworks advance social, political and economic empowerment of young people*
- *Young people empowered and supported to participate meaningfully, and to take forward youth-led initiatives*

- 49 With 40 years' experience in youth development, the Secretariat has a unique advantage in terms of its broad networks, trusted relationships and convening power. The Secretariat will be working towards the goal that national and pan-Commonwealth frameworks advance the social, political and economic empowerment of young people.

This will be achieved by providing technical assistance for national and regional youth-relevant policies and enabling environments, if so requested by member states; advocacy for investing in youth ministries and programmes; development and sharing of frameworks, guidelines and tools; and the creation of a Youth Development Index (YDI) that augments respective member countries' national youth development indicators.

- 50 In addition, the Secretariat will support members to continue promoting the professionalisation of youth work. This will be pursued through setting competency standards for youth development work; exploration and facilitation of courses in youth development work; advocacy and support for the recognition of youth work as a profession; and the establishment of national and pan-Commonwealth youth worker associations.
- 51 A special focus will be placed on supporting young people to design and drive youth-led initiatives, especially by providing technical assistance and support for national, regional and pan-Commonwealth youth networks. This is in line with EPG Recommendation 50, which recommended the development of an autonomous and youth-driven Commonwealth Youth Council. In addition to this, the Secretariat will continue to support young leaders to convene Youth Forums at CHOGM and key ministerial meetings. The Secretariat will also build the capacity of national, regional and international institutions and mechanisms in youth development and youth-led programming, to empower young people to confidently and skilfully participate in democracy and development processes, in accordance with national laws and regulations of Member States.
- 52 The Secretariat's youth work will be underpinned by the existing Commonwealth Plan of Action on Youth Empowerment (2007–2015). The Secretariat's youth development work will place particular emphasis on the most critical challenges and opportunities relevant to young people in the Commonwealth. Most prevalent at the current time is the area of youth employment, where the Secretariat's work will focus on environments and mechanisms that enhance entrepreneurship and youth enterprise, thus enabling young people to contribute to national economies.
- 53 Additionally, the EPG Report recommended that the Secretariat play a role in helping member states strengthen the linkage between sport, development and peace, as well as in helping member states develop 'Sport for Development and Peace initiatives' (Recommendations 105, 106). This work will be taken forward also in collaboration with the Commonwealth Civil Paths to Peace initiative.
- 54 The Secretariat will continue to support members through its regional facilities in Zambia (Africa), India (Asia), Guyana (Caribbean) and Solomon Islands (Pacific).

3.1.5 Development: pan-Commonwealth

Strategic outcome: More inclusive economic growth and sustainable development

Intermediate outcomes:

- *Effective policy mechanisms for integration and participation in the global trading system*
- *Commonwealth principles and values advanced in global development and financing decisions (e.g. G20 and post-2015 MDG framework)*
- *National frameworks facilitate effective debt management*
- *Strengthened, equitable and sustainable management of maritime and other natural resources*
- *Knowledge management and exchange leads to sharing of good practices and strengthened Commonwealth networks*

55 The Secretariat's efforts will be anchored in strengthening frameworks for inclusive economic growth and sustainable development. The Secretariat has carved out a niche of expertise over the last 25 years supporting members with economic policy development, trade negotiations, debt management, natural resource management, delimitation of maritime boundaries and ocean governance.

56 The Secretariat will be engaged with emerging issues on regional trade integration and economic co-operation that affect Commonwealth developing countries. Trade policy-makers, negotiators, regulators and other stakeholders will benefit from timely, relevant and high-quality economic research, analysis and technical support upon which to frame national economic goals and strategies. The focus will be on developing institutional capacity at the national level. This work will be taken forward in collaboration with other relevant organisations, including the Commonwealth Business Council (CBC).

57 The Secretariat will advance its work in the area of global development and financing decisions through its policy work, expert placement, research and by convening efforts in specific emerging issues. It will work towards the following: scanning major global developments; policy contributions to the G20 Working Group on Development; and facilitating discussions and developing collective Commonwealth stances on the post-2015 global development agenda.

58 In line with EPG recommendations (Recommendations 33 and 34) on debt management, the Secretariat will assist members to design and implement sound and prudent policies. This role includes advising states on the appropriate legal and

institutional structures; developing and implementing strategies to guide relevant operations; the provision of a suite of software tools to record and analyse debt portfolios; assistance in setting up accurate and timely databases covering various debt categories; and provision of hands-on capacity building through training.

59 Support will be provided to member states to develop and benefit from marine resources by: securing access to marine resources through the delimitation of maritime boundaries in accordance with the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea; realising the value of the ocean economy through coastal policy-making, investment and decision-making; and integrating ocean governance into national governance frameworks.

60 Members will also be supported in the development of other natural resources through model laws and practice. The Secretariat will help in the development of legal, commercial and environmental frameworks, as well as fiscal regimes, and assistance in the preparation of transparent and fair bidding rounds to attract foreign investment.

61 The work of the Secretariat and member countries has created a body of knowledge that would be ideal for knowledge transfer among members. For example, in the last plan period the Secretariat produced research papers, CHOGM and ministerial meeting reports, consultants' technical analyses, feasibility studies and evaluations, as well as project design documents and project completion reports. The Secretariat also delivered training programmes and developed the presentations and databases to deliver these programmes. Other knowledge products included the Small States Digest and the Commonwealth Law Bulletin. In the absence of an institutional approach to knowledge management and sharing, such a reservoir of knowledge was not collated, organised or made available to stakeholders in a systematic way.

62 During the new plan period, knowledge is being recognised as a 'strategic asset' and source of value creation. Knowledge will serve both internal and external purposes. Internally, it will be a source of organisational learning that will help strengthen the Secretariat's organisational capacity and improve its effectiveness. Externally, the sharing of knowledge with member countries and stakeholders will inform, empower and help decision-making.

63 Member states and the EPG have both recommended that the Secretariat strengthen the Commonwealth network. Efforts are already underway and a cloud-based electronic platform, 'Commonwealth Connects', has been established. A strategy to collaborate with Commonwealth organisations will also be developed and implemented in due course.

3.1.6 Development: small states and vulnerable states

Strategic outcome: Strengthened resilience of small states and vulnerable states

Intermediate outcomes:

- *International policies, mechanisms and rules are more responsive to small states' development strategies and resilience needs*
- *Small states enabled to effectively participate in the international decision-making processes*
- *Improved climate financing frameworks*

- 64 The majority of the Commonwealth's membership – 32 of 54 – comprises small states, and in the last 35 years the Commonwealth has consistently been at the forefront in identifying and proposing responses to the challenges that small states face, while at the same time advocating for their causes. In fact, the Secretariat has developed expertise in small states' work across several thematic areas. In line with 11 EPG recommendations on small states (Recommendations 28, 29, 30, 31, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43), a dedicated work area on small states and vulnerable states has been introduced to strengthen advocacy for their concerns on global platforms, as well as to address their particular development needs.
- 65 The Secretariat will carry out global advocacy towards the end that international policies, mechanisms and rules are more responsive to small states' development strategies and resilience needs. This will also include implementation of decisions of high-level Commonwealth forums and events to raise awareness and build consensus. The Secretariat will seek in particular to complement the work of the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS) and to support a strong Commonwealth contribution to the AOSIS summit in 2014.
- 66 The Secretariat will help strengthen the policy development and implementation capacities of small states. Technical assistance and support will be provided in the areas of growth, resilience, trade and regional integration, and sustainable development. This work will be supported by policy research and analysis on the particular challenges facing small states.
- 67 The Secretariat will facilitate the representation and effective participation of small states in international decision-making processes through the Commonwealth offices in New York and Geneva. The New York office will continue to provide a diplomatic base for envoys from small states to represent their respective states at the UN and promote pan-Commonwealth collaboration in the UN. The Geneva Office, in addition to providing a subsidised office space for diplomatic missions and a business centre for tenants and visiting small states delegations, will also continue to offer technical assistance from resident technical experts in the areas of work that take place in Geneva, including trade and human rights.

- 68 Emphasis will be placed on supporting the work being done to improve the climate financing frameworks for vulnerable states and sharing knowledge between regions. While the focus is principally on small and vulnerable states, the solutions may be applicable to other developing members. Global advocacy will be carried out to facilitate improved flow of climate finance to small, vulnerable and island states. The EPG recommendation to convene an Expert Group on Climate Change will be implemented.

3.2 Enabling outcomes

3.2.1 Global advocacy

Outcome: International declarations, resolutions and other commitments on democracy, development and diversity include Commonwealth perspective

- 69 The Commonwealth Secretariat has a distinguished history of engaging and influencing global discussions and decision-making processes. It will continue its efforts in this area. The advocacy work will be carried out at three levels, as follows:
- a. Office of the Secretary-General, involving senior political-level engagement with organisations such as the UN, the World Bank, IMF, EU and the G20. This is in line with the EPG recommendations and Perth CHOGM mandate. This effort will be supplemented by support for the CHOGM Chair-in-Office to advocate for Commonwealth positions in global forums, such as the UN General Assembly.
 - b. Convening of ministerial meetings (such as education, environment, finance, foreign affairs, health, sports, women's affairs and youth) has generally focussed on discussing contemporary global issues and providing mandates to the Secretariat. The focus on ministerial meetings will gradually shift and these meetings will be used as an opportunity to build consensus on global issues and otherwise utilise the Commonwealth power of convocation represented by these meetings. The agreed outcomes of these meetings will provide common policy positions for advocacy at relevant international fora. Ministerial meetings will be encouraged to network online through the 'Commonwealth Connects' platform.
 - c. The Commonwealth Secretariat, with its policy analysis, has had proven impact in technical areas of global significance. These areas include trade, environment, debt management and G20 development work. The Secretariat will strengthen its efforts and will contribute to the development of the post-2015 global development framework, climate financing for small and vulnerable states, and promotion of international rules-based trade.

3.2.2 Technical assistance, referrals and partnerships

Outcome: Technical assistance, referral and partnership mechanisms respond flexibly to member states' needs and capacity building priorities

70 Provision of tailored technical assistance (TA) to members and regional bodies has been a hallmark of the Secretariat's work. It focuses on strengthening sustainable national capabilities through institutional capacity development and is provided in many forms e.g., research and feasibility studies, despatch of long- and short-term experts etc. The Commonwealth approach is flexible, as well as culturally and contextually sensitive, and emphasises country ownership. It is guided by the principle of 'best fit' rather than 'best practice'. The Secretariat will continue to provide TA to its members in response to requests, especially least developed members, small states and vulnerable states, in line with the new Strategic Plan, while showing sensitivity to the unique challenges of its members.

71 In addition to providing direct TA to members, the Secretariat will develop a 'referrals facility' for its developing members. This mechanism was initially proposed by the High Level Review Group (HLRG) of the Commonwealth in 2001. Its desirability was reiterated by the Governors to the Secretary-General during the recent Strategic Plan discussions. The referrals function will be a mechanism for receiving and responding to requests for assistance from the members. It will act as an advisory cell to identify work that the Secretariat may not be well-placed to undertake, but which could be referred to :

- a. Commonwealth family of organisations;
- b. Other Commonwealth member states; and/or
- c. Relevant international organisations and other entities.

72 Strengthening partnerships will be used as a key methodology to support members. The value of partnerships was emphasised in a number of EPG recommendations (Recommendations 17, 27, 42, 43, 58, 59 and 92). Currently, the Commonwealth Secretariat is working with a number of organisations including the World Bank, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), World Trade Organization (WTO), the African Union (AU), the European Union (EU), the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) and the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS). The Secretariat will strive to strengthen existing relationships and will also explore new effective partnerships at the multilateral, regional and national levels.

3.2.3 Commonwealth profile

Outcome: Profile of the Commonwealth is strengthened at all levels

- 73 The Secretariat will strengthen the Commonwealth's profile in diverse ways, building public awareness and understanding of the organisation's values and accomplishments through increased visibility. Profile lifting will need to be a joint effort between Secretariat and member states. For instance, the EPG encouraged references to the Commonwealth in public speeches by leaders and ministers at international forums.
- 74 Profile-raising includes sustaining the highest levels of participation by Commonwealth members in ministerial meetings, and especially in CHOGM. Additional impetus would come from member governments celebrating Commonwealth Day in a public way and advancing the Commonwealth among citizens through, national events and recognising creation and activism of Commonwealth societies. Increased engagement and dialogue across Commonwealth networks would also be desirable. The Secretariat will seek to support systematic and orchestrated activity of this kind across its membership. An aspect of successfully raising the Commonwealth's profile will include recognition by international partners of the value of its contributions, including enhanced media coverage. The Secretariat will strengthen Commonwealth wide engagement with the media.

3.3 Internal outcomes

3.3.1 Human resources

Outcome: The recruitment and retention of a diverse, engaged and high-performing workforce to facilitate the effective delivery of the Strategic Plan

- 75 The Secretariat will develop and deliver an organisational change programme, focussing on the structure and staffing requirements, in order to develop an appropriate culture to deliver the Strategic Plan. The focus will be on developing a coherent approach to people management in the form of a Human Resource Strategy that is aligned with and supports the Strategic Plan. The strategy will include mechanisms to attract and retain high-calibre employees, and effective policies on learning and development, reward management and performance management. Greater gender balance and reflection of Commonwealth national diversity in the workforce will be a priority.
- 76 There will be greater flexibility in project and staffing arrangements, so that staff can be recruited and projects undertaken in some cases for specific purposes over a given time horizon. The scope to 'projectise' the Secretariat's contribution in this way, in preference to being a continuous Secretariat function or open-ended work programme,

would be examined where appropriate (i.e. certain activities would be delivered by staff recruited for finite terms to deliver activities designed as time-bound projects, rather than being delivered by staff recruited to the establishment on renewable contracts). The criteria for such areas of work would be those where the Secretariat has no long-term, unique and comparative advantage.

- 77 The impact will be measured through key performance indicators that monitor, measure and compare strengths and development areas, both internally and externally. Tools such as the HR Management Information System and annual performance appraisals will be used to monitor and evaluate indicators against outcomes. The newly upgraded Human Resources Division (HRD) will work with managers to develop, motivate and manage employees in the organisation in a way that promotes organisational health and a positive working culture.

3.3.2 Financial and non-financial services

Outcome: Efficient and effective delivery of corporate services; sound frameworks of internal controls; and appropriate management of corporate risks

- 78 Financial and non-financial services are an essential underpinning to ensure that the Secretariat is able to deliver its programmatic mandates. These include financial systems, conference services, facilities management and printing. The Secretariat will discharge its key responsibility in this area to a variety of stakeholders, both internal and external.
- 79 Within the Strategic Plan horizon, the Secretariat will continue to improve on these services. Success will be substantiated through unqualified external audit reports on the financial statements of the Secretariat's funds, responsiveness and progress on implementing audit recommendations related to the control and risk management framework to the satisfaction of the Audit Committee, and the facilitation of good stewardship of governmental funds.

3.3.3 Information technology (IT)

Outcome: Quality and reliable information technology services support the delivery of programme outcomes

- 80 IT strategy supports the Secretariat's needs and direction and its delivery of programme mandates. The focus is on ensuring that the service is readily available and underpinned by a resilient infrastructure that supports transformational business change and organisational requirements. Staff will be empowered to make best use of their IT facilities, supported and made easier by appropriate technologies and

innovation. The IT service will support specific developments and improvements and enable more effective collaboration and communications, both internally and with stakeholders.

- 81 Necessary enhancements will be made to IT security in keeping with industry best practice. Progress will be measured in compliance with Service Level Agreement targets, level of staff satisfaction with the service, as well as meeting targets for service availability and system uptime. IT will also support the development of Phase II of the Activity Results Tracking and Expenditure Management Information System (ARTEMIS), which will link project design to the new Strategic Plan and divisional work plans, as well as to monitoring, evaluation and reporting mechanisms. This is key to delivering RBM.

3.3.4 Quality and results

Outcome: Effective planning, quality assurance and ME&R system to facilitate the delivery and reporting of the Strategic Plan

- 82 The quality assurance function will be strengthened and aligned to planning, monitoring and evaluation. This will allow the Secretariat to move beyond assessing the quality of 'project design only' to ensuring quality at all stages of project implementation. Emphasis will be placed on the design of bigger and longer-term projects that meet the quality standards set out in the project management guidelines. Attention will be placed on ensuring that all intermediate results outlined in the SRF are integrated in project plans, and projects are aligned effectively to intermediate, enabling and internal outcomes.

4. Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting Framework

- 83 While the SRF outlines the strategic priorities for the next four years, it is supported by a robust ME&R framework that will help the Secretariat to monitor and evaluate results, as well as report on the progress against the agreed outcomes.
- 84 During the plan period, monitoring, evaluation and reporting will be undertaken as envisaged in the framework in Table 1. The framework will help ensure that we are 'doing the right things' and 'doing them right'. The Secretariat will endeavour to establish baselines as soon as the Strategic Plan is approved and requisite structural adjustments are made to deliver the new plan. Independent evaluations of the Secretariat's work will be routinely undertaken to assess the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability of Secretariat's programme of assistance, and more importantly the lessons on how the Secretariat can demonstrate better results.
- 85 Reporting of the results will take the form of an annual report to the Board of Governors on the performance of the Secretariat in achieving the priorities of the Strategic Plan. In addition, detailed mid-term and end-term reviews will be presented to the Board of Governors.

5. Collaboration with Commonwealth Organisations

- 86 The Secretariat has continued in recent years to consolidate a closer working relationship with the accredited Commonwealth organisations, in order to give greater relevance and substance to accreditation itself, as well as to promote more effective partnerships in delivering the Secretariat's work programme. This approach was given a further impetus by the EPG recommendations that the Secretariat should strengthen its relationship with the Commonwealth Foundation (Recommendation 81); co-ordinate its work with associated Commonwealth institutions in order to draw on their expertise (Recommendation 87); and strengthen its linkages and functional co-operation with Commonwealth agencies in the field (Recommendation 89).
- 87 The Secretariat will establish institutionalised mechanisms of liaison and collaboration with other inter-governmental and accredited Commonwealth organisations. The Secretariat will propose, for the approval of Board of Governors, a framework of consultations with accredited Commonwealth organisations.
- 88 The Secretary-General will meet at least once every year with the heads of inter-governmental organisations and attend consultative meetings with accredited organisations. The S-G, as well as other members of the senior management, will continue to promote Commonwealth organisations in member states. The ongoing consultations with accredited organisations will be made strategic and meaningful, with an emphasis on promoting more qualitative, knowledge-sharing and results-oriented dialogue. The Accreditation Guidelines have been revised, and the Secretariat will develop a framework for the accreditation review process to ensure that these organisations uphold Commonwealth values and principles.

Table I: Monitoring, evaluation and reporting framework

Results	Monitoring and evaluation process	Methodology
Strategic outcomes (8–10 years)	Strategic Plan review	The Strategic Plan review will be based on a comprehensive strategic monitoring and evaluation plan with indicators, means of verification and, where possible, baseline information and targets. The contribution of intermediate outcomes to the plan's strategic outcomes will be assessed. Towards the end of the four years, this independent strategic review will evaluate the strategic and intermediate outcomes, including lessons learned.
Intermediate outcomes (2–4 years)	Mid-term review	A mid-term review of the Strategic Plan will assess performance against the short-term and intermediate outcomes. It will also provide an opportunity to assess the appropriateness of indicators. This review will consider how the Secretariat can be more effective and be informed by recommendations from evaluation studies on selected outcomes and programme areas.
	Annual performance review	Standardised monitoring and evaluation tools will be used to assess progress. Information collected will be analysed to reflect progress against the outcomes. Bi-annual progress reports and project completion reports will inform the annual performance review.
Internal processes to improve performance		
Short-term outcomes (0–2 years)	Field visits and project reviews	Standardised M&E tools will be developed, which can be tailored to meet specific project requirements.
Outputs Ongoing	Field visits and project reviews	This will be conducted during the delivery of outputs, through checklists where project teams are present or experts are placed. Information will improve design and delivery of projects.
Quality assurance of project design and implementation		
Establish baselines		

Frequency	Report	Utilisation of Findings
Quadrennial	Independent evaluation report	<p><i>Internal</i></p> <p>Development of corporate knowledge base and organisational learning for informed decision-making.</p> <p><i>External</i></p> <p>Accountability mechanism to BoG/ExCo on progress on achieving strategic plan results.</p>
Biennial	Independent evaluation report	<p><i>Internal</i></p> <p>Inform review of project design, adjustment in short-term outcomes and indicators, and allocation of resources.</p> <p><i>External</i></p> <p>BoG and ExCo assessment of progress/ decisions.</p>
Annual	Annual performance and assistance to member countries report	<p><i>Internal</i></p> <p>Show trends and inform decision-making on project implementation, review of design and budget reallocation.</p> <p><i>External</i></p> <p>Inform ExCo and BoG on progress and decisions.</p>
Bi-annual	Bi-annual progress reports	<p><i>Internal and external</i></p> <p>Data and information from the reports should show trends in outputs and outcomes by intermediate outcomes/country region/sector/ mode of delivery etc. Programme performance will be assessed against financial performance. Critical issues will be tagged for discussion at and ExCo meetings (under Development Dialogue).</p>

6. Moving Forward

- 89 After the approval of the Strategic Plan by the Board of Governors, the Secretariat will develop an Implementation Plan to translate the approved strategy into practical actions. This will include the organisational structure, broad internal reforms, the development of baselines, defining short-term results and indicators, and biennial planning and budgeting. All changes in staffing will be undertaken in accordance with the Secretariat's obligations and international good practice.

Annex I: Strategic Plan Development Consultative Process

- Written submissions were sought from member governments over a two-year period, including a questionnaire in which member governments were requested to prioritise those areas of the Secretariat's current work that could be increased, decreased or brought to a conclusion, as well as to propose new areas of work if desired or required;
- The Secretary-General conducted informal consultations with groups of Governors of the Board throughout late 2011 and early 2012;
- The CHOGM-directed process to further consider the EPG recommendations informed the strategic plan development through a senior officials meeting in April 2012 and a meeting of the Ministerial Task Force in June 2012;
- A 'First Discussion Paper' was circulated to the Board of Governors of the Commonwealth Secretariat in June 2012;
- The Secretary-General conducted consultations in 2012 with Commonwealth Secretariat staff;
- The Secretariat met with the Consortium on Education and other leading figures working in the education sector, and also with leading figures working in the Commonwealth in the health and education sectors during 2012;
- A 'Scoping Paper' on emerging themes for the plan was discussed in an informal briefing of the Board in September 2012;
- The 'Scoping Paper' was discussed and endorsed by Commonwealth Foreign Ministers at their annual meeting in September 2012;
- A draft Strategic Plan was presented to an informal meeting of Governors on 15 November, 2012;
- A draft Strategic Plan was presented to an Extraordinary meeting of the Board of Governors on 27 November, 2012;
- A revised draft was circulated on 25 January 2013 and discussed at an Extraordinary meeting of the Board of Governors on 08 March 2013 where it was agreed to form a Sub-Group to finalise the Plan.;
- The Sub-Group met on 19 March and 8 April and a revised draft was circulated to Board members on 15 April and discussed at an Extraordinary Board meeting on 2 May 2013; and
- An expanded Sub-Group met on 17 May and reached a consensus on the draft Strategic Plan, which would go to the 23 May 2013 Board meeting for approval.

Annex II: Evaluation Studies (2008–2012)

1.	Evaluation of the Commonwealth Fund for Technical Co-operation	April 2008
2.	Evaluation of Commonwealth Secretariat Assistance to Member States in Trade Law	March 2009
3.	Review of the Commonwealth Secretariat's Support to the Iwokrama Programme	May 2008
4.	Evaluation of the Secretariat's Training Programme	June 2010
5.	Evaluation of the Commonwealth Secretariat Debt Management Programme	June 2010
6.	Evaluation of Commonwealth Secretariat Programme of Technical Assistance on Maritime Boundary Delimitation	June 2010
7.	Evaluation of the Commonwealth Private Investment Initiative	May 2012
8.	Evaluation of the Commonwealth Secretariat Public Private Partnership Programme	June 2012
9.	Country evaluations: Belize and Sri Lanka (drafts)	October 2012

Annex III: Strategic Results Framework

Strategic outcomes	No.	Intermediate outcomes	Indicators
1. Democracy			
Greater adherence to Commonwealth political values and principles	1.1	CMAG is well-informed and supported to protect and promote Commonwealth values and principles	Member states that respond positively to and implement CMAG's recommendations
	1.2	Member states engage with and benefit from strengthened Good Offices of the Secretary-General	Member states that benefit from the Good Offices of the Secretary-General
			Member states able to prevent, manage and overcome internal differences
	1.3	Member states conduct fair, credible and inclusive elections	Member states where Commonwealth Observer Groups assess improvements in the quality and credibility of elections
			National Election Management Bodies engaged in information and knowledge exchange through the Commonwealth Electoral Network and implementing Commonwealth Observer Groups' recommendations
	1.4	Values of ' respect and understanding ' advanced	Member states initiating programmes and projects in line with the Respect and Understanding approach
			Global advocacy opportunities to advance Respect and Understanding value

Strategic outcomes	No.	Intermediate outcomes	Indicators
2. Public Institutions			
More effective, efficient and equitable public governance	2.1	Effective institutions and mechanisms for the promotion and protection of human rights	Member states with new or strengthened national human rights institutions
			Member states with policies, plans and legislation
			More national interlocutors engaged in protection and promotion of human rights
	2.2	Improved and constructive engagement of member countries in the UN's UPR process through technical assistance	Member states constructively engaged in international and regional human rights mechanisms
			Member states that have progressed in the implementation of the outcomes of international and regional human rights mechanisms, including UPR, through Secretariat technical assistance
	2.3	Effective mechanisms ensuring the autonomous and harmonious operation of the three branches of government	Member states taking affirmative action to reflect Latimer House Principles on judicial, parliamentary and executive autonomy and harmonious operation
	2.4	National institutions effectively facilitating the administration and delivery of rule of law and justice	Member states operationalizing Secretariat guidelines, tools and model laws/regulations in the administration and delivery of justice
			Member states with substantial progress in law reforms for effective delivery of justice
			Member states with a reduced backlog of cases

Strategic outcomes	No.	Intermediate outcomes	Indicators
2. Public Institutions <i>continued</i>			
	2.5	Enhanced judicial independence in member countries	Member states whose constitutional arrangements reflect the Commonwealth (Latimer House) Principles on judicial independence
	2.6	Improved public administration	Member states with more effective institutions at the centre of government
			Anti-corruption and public procurement agencies functioning effectively through networks
			Member states strengthening democratic oversight of public financial management standards
		Small states applying comparative experience to develop more effective public administration	
3. Social Development			
Enhanced positive impact of social development	3.1	Strengthened national frameworks and policies improve health outcomes	Member states with up-to-date policies and regulatory mechanisms to meet international health care delivery standards
	3.2	Strengthened national policies and frameworks improve education outcomes	Member states with up-to-date policies, regulatory mechanisms and standards for the implementation of quality teaching and learning systems
	3.3	Gender equality and the empowerment of women effectively mainstreamed into member state policies, frameworks and programmes and Secretariat's projects	Policy formulation and planning processes of member states reflect and demonstrate gender equality and empowerment

Strategic outcomes	No.	Intermediate outcomes	Indicators
			Secretariat's resources, including annual budget allocation, training and capacity building, actively support gender equality
			Secretariat's programmes, projects and services address gender gaps
	3.4	Improved capacity building for social development	Members states have the ability to formulate policy and planning processes for their social development priorities
4. Youth			
Youth are more integrated and valued in political and development processes	4.1	National and pan-Commonwealth frameworks advance social, political and economic empowerment of young people	Member states with developed, strengthened and/or implementing frameworks (<i>policies, systems, modalities, measurement etc.</i>) for youth empowerment and mainstreamed participation
			Member states engaged in promoting the professionalization of youth work
			Member states that adopt sports as an approach to development and peace
	4.2	Young people empowered and supported to participate meaningfully, and to take forward youth-led initiatives	# of established and functional national, regional and pan-Commonwealth youth networks and platforms
			# of national, regional and international institutions and mechanisms with increased capacity in youth development and youth-led programming

Strategic outcomes	No.	Intermediate outcomes	Indicators
5. Development: Pan Commonwealth			
More inclusive economic growth and sustainable development	5.1	Effective policy mechanisms for integration and participation in the global trading system	Member states that effectively formulate trade policy, and negotiate and implement international trade agreements
			Member states that implement export development and competitiveness strategies
	5.2	Commonwealth principles and values advanced in global development and financing decisions (e.g. G20 and post-2015 MDG framework)	Commonwealth position on global development and financing decisions recognised at G20 and post-2015 MDG framework, among others
	5.3	National frameworks facilitate effective debt management	Member states that reform their management of public debt
			Member states effectively utilise the Secretariat debt management systems to proactively manage their debt
	5.4	Strengthened, equitable and sustainable management of maritime and other natural resources	Member states with integrated policies for sound governance of natural capital
			Member states that reform/establish governance frameworks that support and promote responsible exploitation of natural resources
			# of satisfactory delimited maritime boundaries by Commonwealth member states, including joint development agreements
Member states implementing broad-based mechanisms for integrated management of ocean resources			
	5.5	Knowledge management and exchange leads to sharing of good practices and strengthened Commonwealth networks	# of quality publications, reports, periodicals, research and knowledge-based materials disseminated and utilized

Strategic outcomes	No.	Intermediate outcomes	Indicators
			# of knowledge exchange forums (ministerial meetings, regional consultations etc.) and active networks on Commonwealth Connects
			# of effective networks of governments, professional associations, civil society and other partners facilitate the advancement of Commonwealth values and principles
6. Development: small states and vulnerable states			
Strengthened resilience of small states and vulnerable states	6.1	International policies, mechanisms and rules are more responsive to small states' development strategies and resilience needs	Small and vulnerable member states reporting an improvement in the international framework of support for their development strategies and resilience needs
			Small and vulnerable member states that effectively formulate policy, negotiate international agreements and participate in international processes related to their sustainable development strategies and resilience needs
	6.2	Small states enabled to effectively participate in international decision-making processes	Small states making submissions and attending high-level meetings on trade and human rights in Geneva
			Small states engaging effectively with the UN General Assembly and other forums in New York
	6.3	Improved climate financing frameworks	UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and regional platforms take action and facilitate improved flow of climate finance to vulnerable states

Enabling outcomes

No	Area	Outcomes	Indicators
I.	Global advocacy	International declarations, resolutions and other commitments on democracy, development and diversity include Commonwealth perspective	Consensus at CHOGM, ministerial meetings (education, environment, finance, foreign affairs, health, public administration, sports, women's affairs and youth) and other high-level forums on key development, democracy and diversity issues
			Recognition at relevant global forums of Commonwealth declarations and policy positions on key development, democracy and diversity issues (For example: Post-2015 MDG framework, G-20 Development Working Group statements, Rio+ statements/Plan of Action, UN Commission on the Status of Women, UNESCO, WHO, UN Forum for Climate Change (UNFCCC) statements – reflect the concerns of the Commonwealth members)
II.	Technical assistance, referrals and partnerships	Technical assistance, referral and partnership mechanisms respond flexibly to member states' needs and capacity development priorities	Short- and long-term technical assistance requests of member states responded to by the Secretariat
			Requests effectively referred to and sufficiently considered by other member states and development partners
			Effective partnerships with Commonwealth-accredited organisations and other international partners
III.	Commonwealth profile	Profile of the Commonwealth is strengthened at all levels	Increased levels of participation by member states in ministerial meetings, CHOGM
			More member states celebrate Commonwealth Day and the Commonwealth annual theme
			More people are involved in Commonwealth networks
			International partners recognise the value of contributions by the Commonwealth
			# of media stories referencing the Commonwealth/the Secretariat

Internal outcomes

No	Area	Outcomes	Indicators
A.	Human resources	The recruitment and retention of a diverse, engaged and high-performing workforce to facilitate the effective delivery of the Strategic Plan	Improved staff retention
			# of managers and staff whose appraisals demonstrate achievement of work-plan results and improved performance
			Timely and effective resolution of employee relations issues in accordance with rules and procedures
B.	Financial and non-financial services	Efficient and effective delivery of corporate services; sound frameworks of internal controls; and appropriate management of corporate risks	Unqualified financial statements approved before 31 December following the end of the financial year
			Audit Committee expresses satisfaction with the response to internal and external audit recommendations, progress in embedding risk management, and the implementation of new regulations and supporting documentation
			Demonstrable progress towards target risk management levels in the Strategic Risk Register
C.	Information technology	Quality and reliable information technology services support the delivery of programme outcomes	Compliance with Service Level Agreement targets
			Level of staff satisfaction
			Service availability and system uptime meet agreed targets
D.	Quality and results	Effective planning, quality assurance and ME&R system to facilitate the delivery and reporting of the Strategic Plan	Proportion of projects that meet the Secretariat's project management standards
			Monitoring and evaluation embedded in the Secretariat's biennial planning and budgeting processes and conducted at project, divisional and organisational levels
			Phase II of ARTEMIS (Activity Results Tracking and Expenditure Management Information System) is functional and supporting planning, monitoring, analysis and reporting modules

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