



# HIGHLIGHTS

## THE COMMONWEALTH PARLIAMENTARIANS' FORUM HIGHLIGHTS REPORT 2018

Authored by Adelaide Adade, Charlotte Andrews, and Sarah Asson  
Commonwealth Parliamentary Association UK  
May 2018



## What did we do?

The Commonwealth Parliamentarians' Forum 2018 was a unique, inspiring, substantive, and creative four-day event covering 24 sessions, and offering parliamentarians from across the Commonwealth the opportunity to:

- Engage in discussions and activities that focused on the **importance of the Commonwealth's future direction of travel**
- **Embrace free and lateral thinking** without bureaucratic or hierarchical constraints in the room
- Start new conversations and collaborations internally and externally – with a focus on **connectedness through networks as well as common structures**
- Engage and participate in a series of events **shaped by them, co-designed with them**, and arranged to offer diversity of content via parallel sessions, video messages live streaming, and spotlight events
- Engage with **new methodologies and concepts** such as Slido polling, 'pitches and pleas' immersive facilitation, visual builds, the Commonwealth School of Inclusive Thought, and the Commonwealth Body:

*"The 'What', 'Why', 'Who', 'When', and 'Where' approach was particularly powerful, as was the diagram linking the big challenges facing the Commonwealth to the scope for collaboration in sustainable development and the role of parliamentarians in addressing these challenges. All connecting the relevance of the Commonwealth Parliamentarians' Forum 2018..."*

(UK MP and Forum delegate)

- Tap into a deeper, **emotional connection with themselves, each other, and the Commonwealth** through an immersive facilitation introducing four archetypes:
  - Forward energy (Warrior): Resolute
  - Backward energy (Lover): Competent at listening
  - Up energy (Jester/Magician): Flexibility and play
  - Down energy (King/Queen): Stability
- Develop insightful content and **become 'builders' of a visually powerful representation of a re-imagined Commonwealth** fit for the 21st century

## Forum in Numbers

73 speakers

2,262,126 people  
reached via  
#ParliForum18

67  
parliamentarians

3 locations

569  
Slido votes

10 youth  
delegates

33 countries  
represented

24 sessions

6 visual  
builds

24 current &  
former ministers &  
shadow ministers

4 themes

Across the four main Forum themes of **Sustainability**, **Fairness**, **Security**, and **Prosperity**, and the crosscutting themes of **Youth**, **Gender**, and **Inclusion**:

## Key Messages

1. The art of collaboration – maximising the Commonwealth network

2. Recognising & addressing difference across the Commonwealth

3. 'The Lion without teeth' – creating tangible change

4. The role of transparency & government accountability

5. The unique & distinct role of parliamentarians

Following on from the Forum, we have selected five areas (or inconvenient truths) that we believe are **critical to understanding** how to take the range of outcomes from the Forum and convert them into a **different working environment for parliamentarians** and a **different culture for the Commonwealth**. In thinking about these 'inconvenient truths', we repeatedly asked the question: **How does the Commonwealth become a more connected and collaborative network, and what role can parliamentarians play in this process?**

## Five Inconvenient Truths... ...and Enablers for change?

1. **The elephant in the room: Moving beyond rhetoric to tangible delivery**
2. **Building on a collaborative Commonwealth network (that already exists!)**
3. **The Commonwealth Parliamentarians' Forum: Maximising impact**
4. **Matching ambition with delivery: 'Implementation is the last 98 percent'**
5. **Taking steps towards renewal, reform, and innovation:  
Looking within and re-imagining leadership for the future**

# Taking steps towards renewal, reform, and innovation: Looking within and re-imagining leadership for the future

## A FRAMEWORK OF PRACTICE: Monitoring CHOGM Outcomes



This framework is not rigid, but seeks to map out some of the practical actions month-by-month, and year on year. Some are more immediately achievable, whilst others require a longer-term approach. There is shared responsibility across parliamentarians, Heads of Governments, and organisations such as CPA UK and CPA International (CPA HQ).

This framework proposes the 'what', and to some extent the 'how' – but it cannot be prescriptive, and must allow flexibility to work with different country approaches. The hope is that the current leading group of parliamentarians, will finalise and agree the framework, complete with key performance indicators (KPIs) and milestones by autumn 2018, and develop a clear implementation plan.

CPA UK will work to support this group and Commonwealth parliamentarians to use levers such as the Forum, its outputs, and subsequent framework to gain more influence to challenge and hold their respective governments to account on Commonwealth priorities. However, it will be the work of a more collaborative, joined up Commonwealth of parliamentarians, Heads of Government, cross-sector organisations, and citizens to actively work on and deliver on these commitments. We look forward to being part of this Commonwealth collaboration.

# A FRAMEWORK OF PRACTICE: MONITORING CHOGM OUTCOMES

## Short-Term

## Medium-Term

## Long-Term

6 MONTHS - 1 YEAR

2 YEARS

5 YEARS +

IN THE LEAD UP TO CHOGM 2020

- Triage and unpack the CHOGM18 Communique & Leaders Statement ●●
- Start to test and apply the framework with responsive Commonwealth parliaments ●●
- Ignite a series of internal conversations across Commonwealth parliaments on CHOGM outcomes ●●
- Help to strengthen the convening power of the leading group of parliamentarians in the interim period before CHOGM 2020. This can involve providing space, networks (e.g. CSPOC January 2019) and expertise, and some resource to sustain newly brokered partnerships and collaborations from the Forum ●
- Identify and establish the network of regional focal points and across each Commonwealth parliament. This will serve to encourage better lines of communication and understand the commitments to the CHOGM outcomes from each parliament ●
- Work closely with CPA HQ, the Commonwealth Secretariat, and regional representatives as the key vehicles for coordination and 'buy-in' of this framework ●
- Continue to disseminate the Forum declarations and follow-up actions ●
- Early engagement with the UK Chair in Office ●
- Continue to defend and protect the role of parliamentarians across the Commonwealth ●●

- Sustained engagement with relevant stakeholders to influence CHOGM and related meetings and events (i.e. advocating for one day of the annual Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference to focus on M&E of CHOGM priorities & objectives) ●
- Developing strong links with CHOGM 2020 host country, advocating for a Commonwealth Parliamentarians' Forum in 2020. CPA UK and the current leading group of parliamentarians will act as 'critical friends' to CHOGM 2020 hosts, providing a 'how to' framework, advice and expertise on delivering a follow-up Forum ●●●
- Current group of leading parliamentarians to identify and select, along with Forum 2020 organising body, a new group of parliamentarians to act as accountability partners for the CHOGM 2020 outcomes ●
- A review of the Forum 2018 declarations and actions by current leading group of parliamentarians ●
- A set of benchmarks to be agreed and monitored ●
- Continue to defend and protect the role of parliamentarians across the Commonwealth ●●

- Sustained engagement and review of successive CHOGM outcomes, with a clearly defined and tested methodology to do this ●
- Sustained engagement with CHOGM related activities ●●
- Engagement with All Party Parliamentary Groups (APPGs) to support CHOGM outcome via CPA branches ●●
- Commonwealth Parliamentarians brokering country/national outcomes with other anchor institutions, and cross-sector groups to address country approaches to broader Agenda 2030 ●●
- Continue to defend and protect the role of parliamentarians across the Commonwealth ●●

### KEY

Lead party on each actionable step:

● CPA UK

● Parliamentarians

● Heads of Government

