

Evaluation of WFD's work on Post-Legislative Scrutiny, 2017-2022

May 2023

Alex Scales and Aisling O'Connell



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Key personnel

The evaluation was undertaken by a team led by Alex Scales (WFD Evidence & Learning Manager) and Aisling O'Connell (WFD Accountability Policy Adviser), with inputs from Franklin De Vrieze (WFD Head of Practice, Accountability), Graeme Ramshaw (WFD Director of Quality & Innovation) and Dr Maria Mousmouti (Institute of Advanced Legal Studies, University of London).

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Foreword: Lord Norton of Louth

Law shapes the lives of citizens. It is important that in a democratic polity, law is not only approved by citizens through their elected representatives but also that the law is well-intentioned, well-drafted and well-implemented. The first relates to the principle – what the law is designed to achieve. The second is the detail, in effect translating the principle into practice. The third is ensuring that, once enacted, it is carried out in the way intended. The last of these has generally been neglected by legislators. The goal has been to get a measure passed into law. Enactment has been the end of the process. Legislative success has been seen as enactment, not implementation.

In recent years, there has been a growing recognition of the importance of ensuring that law has fulfilled the purpose for which it was enacted. The spur for reviewing a measure once on the statute book to ensure that it is fulfilling its purpose – post-legislative scrutiny – largely originated in the UK Parliament, but the use of post-legislative scrutiny has been taken up by legislatures around the globe. It has received international recognition. Responsibility for achieving such recognition, and in helping develop the tools for its delivery, rests in large part with the pioneering work of Westminster Foundation for Democracy (WFD). It has proved not only the principal advocate of post-legislative scrutiny, but it has been the body that has helped legislatures develop bespoke procedures for undertaking it.

This evaluation bears testimony to the excellent work WFD has done. Without the work of the WFD, there is every possibility that post-legislative scrutiny would be little known and little used. Over the past five years, WFD has made major progress in its post-legislative programme to the benefit of many nations, not least developing nations keen to develop best practice in the legislative process. Like a legislature, its resources are not infinite. There are, as the evaluation makes clear, various challenges, some substantial, to rolling out and expanding post-legislative scrutiny. Several recommendations are advanced for meeting them. In tackling them, WFD will be building on a much-deserved reputation for being the leader in the field.



Philip Norton

Lord Norton of Louth

Foreword: Anthony Smith CMG

As a democracy support organisation, nothing is more important to WFD than oversight and accountability. It has therefore been an inspiration to be part of the work among a group of parliamentary experts to establish a significant new oversight instrument. That work has been both collaborative and creative, with parliaments both new and old experimenting and sharing lessons as they considered how to develop and use post-legislative scrutiny in their national contexts. The positive comments from partners in this evaluation are heartening, but the determination of those partners – parliamentarians and staff – to ensure accountability of the executive is our biggest reward.

The recommendations of this evaluation point to the value of scaling-up work on post-legislative scrutiny and targeting it on policy issues that will continue to be important for parliaments, and societies, around the world – climate, gender, and human rights. That growth will require deepening as well as widening of the post-legislative scrutiny global community. WFD will continue to play its part, building on the contributions of some key staff members both at headquarters and in our country offices. However, it is the actions of parliamentarians around the world to use post-legislative scrutiny that will ensure the accountability that is the heart of democracy.



Anthony Smith CMG

CEO, Westminster Foundation for Democracy

Table of contents

Acknowledgements	2
Disclaimer	2
Key personnel.....	2
Citation	2
Foreword: Lord Norton of Louth.....	3
Foreword: Anthony Smith CMG.....	4
Table of contents	5
List of tables, figures and boxes	7
List of acronyms	8
Executive summary	9
1. Introduction.....	13
1.1 Background and context.....	13
1.2 Purpose and scope	16
1.2.1 Purpose	16
1.2.2 Objectives.....	17
1.2.3 Scope	17
1.3 Audience	17
2. Approach and methodology.....	18
2.1 Overview of the approach	18
2.2 Evaluation questions	20
2.3 Methodology	21
2.3.1 Data sources	21
2.3.2 Data collection, analysis and reporting	21
2.4 Limitations, risks and mitigations	25
3. Evaluation findings	26
3.1 EQ1: How and why has WFD's PLS work contributed to enhancing parliaments' legislative and oversight capacities?.....	26
3.2 EQ2: What are the factors (internal and external to WFD) that have enabled or hindered the success of PLS?	37
3.2.1 Enabling factors.....	37

3.2.2 Hindering factors	40
3.4 EQ3: How successfully has WFD adapted its PLS support to specific development/institutional contexts to align with national priorities and why?	47
3.5 EQ4: Has WFD's work on PLS contributed to a better understanding of inclusive legislative practices? If so, how and to what extent?	52
3.6 EQ5: To what extent has WFD's PLS work been aligned with the work of other democracy support actors (e.g. the media, civil society, NGOs, other programmes) in the contexts it has operated?	57
4. Case study summaries	62
4.1 Global.....	62
4.2 Western Balkans.....	64
4.3 Ukraine.....	66
4.4 Nepal.....	68
5. Conclusions and recommendations	70
5.1 Conclusions	70
5.2 Recommendations	72
Annexes.....	75
Annex I: Bibliography.....	76
Annex II: Evaluation timeline	79
Annex III: Interview guide	80
Annex IV: Timeline of PLS initiatives by WFD, 2017-2022	84

List of tables, figures and boxes

Tables

Table 1: Rationale for evaluation approaches

Table 2: Five evaluation questions

Table 3: PLS pilot inquiries across Nepal, Ukraine and the Western Balkans Programme, 2017-2022

Table 4: Gender-blind vs gender-sensitive scrutiny questions for PLS inquiries

Figures

Figure 1: Timeline summary of PLS initiatives by WFD, 2017-2022

Figure 2: Overview of scrutiny in the legislative cycle

Figure 3: Overview of the approach

Figure 4: Overview of KIIs completed

Figure 5: Theory of Change for WFD's work in PLS (Global Case Study)

Figure 6: Activity monitoring data – WFD's Online Advanced Course in PLS (2021 & 2022)

Boxes

Box 1: Definition of post-legislative scrutiny

Box 2: Gender-sensitive budgeting, Ukraine

Box 3: Global portfolio summary

Box 4: Myanmar PLS Conference, June 2019

Box 5: Programme Summary: Creating a Parliamentary Network on Human Rights (HUGEN) Programme

Box 6: Programme Summaries: Ukraine

Box 7: Programme Summary: Nepal Inclusive and Accountable Politics Programme

Box 8: PLS inquiries conducted in Nepal

List of acronyms

CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CPA	Commonwealth Parliamentary Association
EIH	Evidence and Impact Hub
EQ	Evaluation Question
FCDO	The Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (United Kingdom)
GIA	Grant-in-aid
HQ	Headquarters
HUGEN	Human Rights and Gender Equality Network of Committees in the Western Balkans
IALS	Institute of Advanced Legal Studies
IAP	Inclusive and Accountable Politics (Programme)
IPU	Inter-Parliamentary Union
KII	Key informant interview
LMC	Legislation Management Committee (Nepal Federal Parliament)
MP	Member of Parliament
NOK	Norwegian Krone
PLS	Post-Legislative Scrutiny
SDG	The Sustainable Development Goals
UK	The United Kingdom
VRU	Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine
WFD	Westminster Foundation for Democracy

Executive summary

Introduction

Since 2017, WFD's work on post-legislative scrutiny (PLS) has grown to form a core part of the organisation's democracy delivery approach, integrating into WFD's country programmes and headquarters operations. WFD believes it is appropriate to now reflect on and assess the impact of six years of work. The primary purpose of this evaluation is to better understand how WFD is contributing to its intended outcomes in PLS programming, including identifying what has worked well and what has not worked well, since 2017. This evaluation documents the outcomes that have been delivered to date, where different approaches have yielded different results, what WFD should do differently, and what learning could be integrated into its approach moving forwards.

The evaluation took place between November 2022 and April 2023, integrating three complementary approaches: process evaluation (light touch), contribution analysis and outcome harvesting. The evaluation collected data from three data categories: 1) key informant interviews (KIIs) – the evaluation team conducted 25 KIIs with relevant stakeholders (including parliamentarians and their support staff, parliamentary secretaries, academics and democracy assistance organisations); 2) Programme data, including a review of existing WFD programme documentation (e.g., programme monitoring data, PLS knowledge products, evaluations, case studies and survey data); and 3) External data, constituting publicly available data on parliamentary oversight and scrutiny, such as that available on national data portals and official statistics. The evaluation was operationalised using a four-stage modular approach, including 1) a desk review, 2) case studies, 3) analysis and synthesis, and 4) reporting and communications.

Overview of findings

Overall, the evaluation finds that WFD's work in PLS is relevant, impactful and tailored to meet the emerging needs of parliaments as they begin to introduce PLS. WFD has built a valued reputation and evidence base in PLS and is successfully using this to advocate internationally for the introduction of PLS pilot inquiries across a range of developing parliaments. WFD has also used this influence to advise on the strategic direction taken by parliaments as they embark on their journeys to undertake their initial PLS pilot inquiries.

Whilst the individual PLS pilot inquiries have enjoyed varied success in achieving either legislative or policy responses from governments, it's clear that WFD has played an important role in establishing PLS as a viable oversight tool in the contexts examined. This evaluation finds strong evidence that WFD has contributed to enhancing the technical capacity of parliamentarians and parliamentary staff. In light of this, parliaments have warmly embraced PLS but only among a select number of PLS champions within their respective institutional contexts. This has contributed to the introduction of PLS pilot inquiries and the insertion of PLS review clauses in legislation across a range of parliaments. In particular, PLS pilot inquiries have been introduced by parliaments looking for ways to exercise oversight during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Before 2017 no parliaments in the Western Balkans, Ukraine or Nepal had yet undertaken any significant work in PLS or completed a full PLS inquiry. Today, these parliaments have undertaken at least 21 PLS pilot inquiries. In Nepal, 14 Acts have been passed with PLS review clauses (together with an additional 4 bills not yet passed). Whilst these results cannot be attributed to WFD, this evaluation finds strong evidence to suggest that WFD has played an instrumental role in introducing and supporting PLS pilot inquiries, thereby supporting the development of institutional knowledge and processes that are expected to maintain beyond WFD's programme interventions.

This country-based work has been accompanied by work at the global level to expand the research base and strengthen global networks on PLS, creating a significant impact within the parliamentary strengthening community more broadly.

Below, find a summary of the 15 findings of the evaluation:

- 1. WFD is seen as a thought leader in PLS and has raised the profile of PLS as a parliamentary practice internationally.** WFD is widely perceived as an authoritative voice on democracy strengthening that demonstrates thought leadership globally in PLS. WFD has made important contributions to introducing PLS to developing parliaments and increasing demand for piloting PLS inquiries in the contexts it has operated.
- 2. WFD's work on PLS is contributing to enhancing the technical knowledge and practice of parliaments to undertake PLS.** WFD's investments in developing parliaments' technical capacity to undertake PLS inquiries have resulted in clear improvements in knowledge among parliamentary stakeholders who have attended WFD's training. WFD's activities have played an important role in redefining parliamentary stakeholders' views on how parliament can exercise oversight and how it could be applied in their roles.
- 3. PLS pilot inquiries are viewed positively as an effective first step to embed institutional memory, legally consolidate PLS and foster political dialogue.** WFD has played a valued role in guiding developing parliaments to introduce PLS pilot inquiries – a significant result. These have contributed to embedding institutional memory for future PLS pilot inquiries and promoting discussion on PLS among parliamentary stakeholders.
- 4. WFD's research has helped to establish typologies of PLS and contributed to defining global standards in parliamentary oversight.** WFD has made significant contributions to the conceptual elaboration of PLS, which has supported the development of PLS as a field of study and practice.
- 5. Peer-to-peer learning and study trips are valued at the country, regional and international levels and conducive to building institutional support for PLS.** Study visits both to and from the UK and elsewhere are considered to offer a unique opportunity for comparative study and learning that have proved helpful to introduce PLS pilot inquiries and reinforce PLS champions' support for and commitment to PLS.
- 6. PLS is perceived to be a new, relevant, pragmatic, and highly desirable tool to empower parliaments to introduce mechanisms and use evidence to drive better scrutiny of legislation.** PLS is viewed favourably in part because of the new role it affords parliaments, from which it is possible to produce tangible results that enable parliamentary stakeholders to influence the legislative agenda on their own terms.

7. **Without greater output level monitoring, WFD may miss opportunities to understand how it can best support stakeholders to achieve change and sustain impact.** As WFD is not always monitoring the aggregate impact of its PLS activities, it may be missing opportunities to understand key enabling and limiting factors, sustain impact, and guide participants to achieve further change in their institutions.
8. **WFD is not deriving maximum value from its investments in internal and external e-courses.** WFD has developed several e-courses on PLS, including one in three Western Balkan languages. However, each of these remains underpromoted and underutilised.
9. **Parliaments are subject to continuous change and evolving power dynamics that can reduce parliaments' oversight capacity and obstruct oversight practices.** Political dynamics in parliaments, especially inter-party competition and factionalism were frequently cited as hindering PLS pilot inquiries. Whilst WFD was recognised as adapting well to these challenges, the evaluation also uncovered a sense that WFD could play a more intentional role in breaking down political silos and fostering greater *cross-party* unanimity.
10. **WFD adapted its programming to support parliaments with limited established practice of exercising oversight in emergency contexts to introduce and guide scrutiny of emergency and pandemic legislation.** In response to the change in context resulting from COVID-19, WFD's programmes adapted to continue supporting parliaments to improve oversight. WFD achieved perhaps its greatest success of the 2017-22 period by supporting parliamentary committees to exercise scrutiny of emergency legislation.
11. **WFD's programme staff have built fruitful relationships with PLS champions, which have uniquely positioned WFD to respond to national priorities despite limited programme budgets not aligning with champions' ambitions for PLS.** WFD's approach has yielded a close and conversational relationship with influential parliamentary stakeholders, where WFD's technical guidance and support are regularly sought to help respond to windows of opportunity.
12. **WFD's thematic research, particularly on gender-sensitive PLS, is beginning to drive a greater focus on inclusivity in legislative scrutiny.** Whilst research on gender-sensitive parliaments has existed for decades, WFD has re-energised the application of this discussion and applied this to PLS specifically, helping to illustrate the role that PLS can play in advancing gender-, human rights- and environment-responsive legislation.
13. **WFD has facilitated the introduction of PLS pilot inquiries on gender and human rights legislation, but there may be more work to do to ensure parliaments' scrutiny work is fully gender-, human rights- and environment-responsive.** WFD has played a pivotal role in supporting parliaments to scrutinise gender and human rights legislation, especially in the Western Balkans. However, there is more work to do to fully integrate WFD's thematic research on PLS (e.g., gender) with WFD's programme work.
14. **WFD's work on PLS has provided a framework to help CSOs and NGOs report on issues, share evidence, and advocate for policies and change.** By supporting parliaments to introduce consultative PLS pilot inquiries, WFD has provided a (mostly) previously absent framework that has enabled civil society organisations (CSOs) and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) to participate in the legislative cycle.

15. WFD's combined GIA and programme funding has enabled it to advocate consistently for PLS, even as programme funding has ebbed and flowed, which has contributed to establishing PLS ecosystems comprising different organisations, parliaments and professionals. Through leveraging its role as an influential global convener and using its GIA funding strategically to complement third-party programme-funded activities, WFD has led the organisation of national, regional and international PLS conferences and contributed to building interdisciplinary networks of PLS experts, academics, legal professionals, CSOs, MPs and parliamentary staff.

Conclusions

WFD inhabits an important niche in democracy strengthening programming globally where it can mobilise resources and people in ways other organisations cannot. WFD has contributed to shaping the development agendas of several developing parliaments, whilst making excellent use of its grant-in-aid (GIA) funding and convening capabilities to establish a global network of PLS practitioners and experts. During the COVID-19 pandemic, WFD's ability to leverage institutional relationships and adopt an advisory role to many parliamentary stakeholders enabled greater scrutiny of emergency legislation, resulting in enhanced pandemic responses. This is in no small part due to the expertise of WFD's country teams and the strong professional ties they have cultivated. It is also in virtue of the in-house expertise WFD can draw on, in particular, the Head of Practice for Accountability, as well as its ability to draw on an extensive network of partners (e.g., [the Institute for Advanced Legal Study](#), IALS hereafter). The promising results discussed to date indicate that WFD and its partner parliaments have demonstrated the value of PLS as a concept and oversight tool. WFD's next steps should focus on reinforcing and scaling results during its current 2022-25 strategy.

Summary of recommendations

- **Recommendation 1:** WFD should develop a clear two-track strategy to guide scale-up work on PLS globally focused on 1) institutional development and 2) thematic PLS.
- **Recommendation 2:** WFD should collaborate closely with PLS champions to advocate for gender-, climate- and human rights-responsive PLS inquiries.
- **Recommendation 3:** WFD should refine its process for programmes' close-down phase.
- **Recommendation 4:** WFD should improve output level monitoring systems.
- **Recommendation 5:** WFD should review training materials with sustainability in mind (including external non-WFD focused training and WFD staff training).
- **Recommendation 6:** WFD should adopt a more systematic view to building the technical capacity of parliaments to undertake PLS.
- **Recommendation 7:** WFD should ensure the planned Global Community of Practice on PLS responds to the needs of the diverse stakeholders in its network.
- **Recommendation 8:** WFD should review and curate a PLS learning library.
- **Recommendation 9:** WFD should consider how to build and maintain wider PLS ecosystems in their programme contexts and foster broad-based political support for PLS inquiries, as this is likely to support PLS inquiries to generate legislative and policy changes.

1. Introduction

1.1 Background and context

WFD is the UK public body dedicated to strengthening democracy and open societies around the world. Since the fall of the Berlin Wall, WFD has been working around the world to help make political systems fairer, more inclusive and more accountable by working with parliaments, political parties, electoral bodies and civil society.

As WFD embarks on its new 2022-25 Strategy, we recognise that ‘reversing the 15-year downward trend in global democracy requires new approaches and more ambitious efforts,’¹ including the use of effective tools and techniques to empower parliaments and civil society alike. It also requires us to take stock of efforts made to date and reflect on how we can achieve greater impact in our work. This evaluation forms part of WFD’s continual drive and commitment to rigorous evidence-based programmes.

Since 2017, WFD’s work on PLS has grown to form a core part of the organisation’s service offering, integrating into WFD’s country programmes and headquarters operations (see Figure 1). Whereas pre-legislative scrutiny represents an *ex-ante* tool that enables parliaments to examine draft legislation before legislation is finalised, as defined in Box 1, PLS represents an *ex-post* measure to assess the quality of the implementation of the law *after* it has been passed. Together, pre-legislative scrutiny and PLS form key components of scrutiny across the whole legislative cycle, helping to introduce and guide the implementation of legislation (see Figure 2).

Box 1: Definition of post-legislative scrutiny

Post-legislative scrutiny (PLS) refers to the examination and evaluation of legislation after the legislation has been enacted. This can include assessing the effectiveness of the law, identifying any unintended consequences, and making recommendations for changes or improvements. It can be conducted by government agencies, independent commissions, or other organisations. The primary purpose of PLS is to ensure that laws are working and being implemented as intended and to make any necessary adjustments to improve their effectiveness.

‘People’s lives are shaped by what is permitted or prohibited by law. Law can constrain or empower. While parliaments debate legislation, it should not be seen as the end of the process. A law may not have the effect intended. It may have unintended effects or simply have no effect.’²

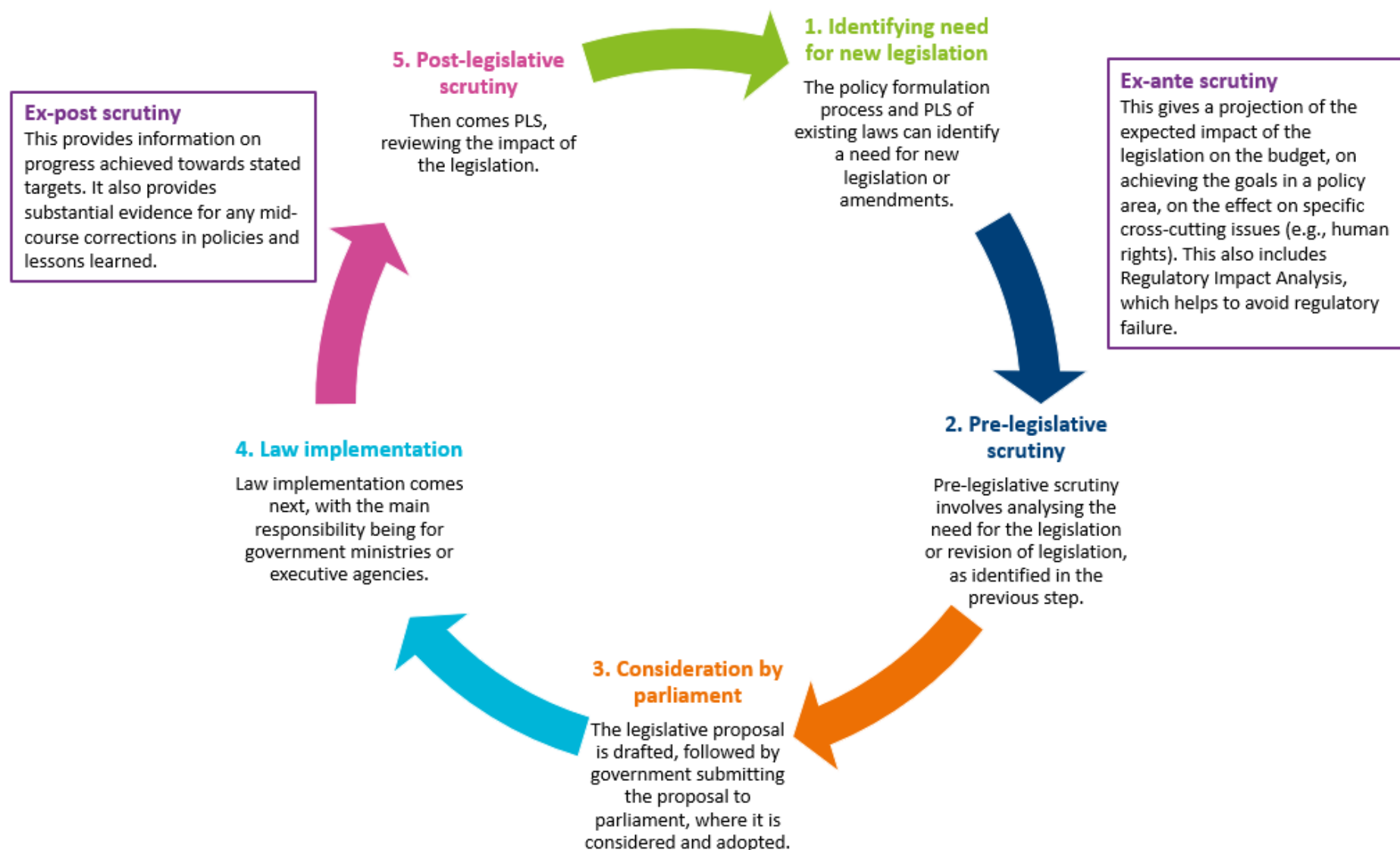
¹ WFD’s Strategy 2022-25. Accessible [here](#).

² Norton, P. and De Vrieze, F. (2021). Why Post-Legislative Scrutiny may be considered a Public Good. 16 March. Available [here](#).

Figure 1: A summary timeline of key PLS initiatives by WFD, 2017-2022

Knowledge generation and network building					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> WFD holds its first expert seminar on “Parliaments and PLS”, in London. WFD holds a second expert seminar on “In Search of a Gender-Specific Approach to Post-Legislative Scrutiny by Parliament”, at the Scottish Parliament. Publication of WFD’s first Guide for Parliaments on PLS. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Academic Seminar on PLS, at IALS in London. Special issue on PLS of the European Journal of Law Reform. Publication of PLS Principles. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> WFD co-organises the 2-day Academic Conference for PLS in Myanmar, featuring 55 speakers. First Certified Course on PLS, as in-person 5-days course in London, with IALS. Two special issues on PLS of The Journal of Southeast Asian Human Rights. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Publication of: Policy Paper: Gender-Sensitive Post-Legislative Scrutiny and three case studies. Special issue on PLS: Journal of Legislative Studies, Vol 26 (3), 2020. Digital conference on impact of COVID-19 on democracy and legislative processes, co-organized with IALS. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Publication of: Post-legislative scrutiny of climate and environment legislation: Guide for parliamentary practice. Second Certified Course on PLS, as online course during July, with IALS. Launch of Parliamentary and legislative indicators for PLS. Start of the PLS Series (PLS in the UK Parliament and a comparative study of election campaign finance legislation). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Publication of PLS Series 3: Sunset Clauses and Post-Legislative Scrutiny. Publication of: Post-Legislative Scrutiny: From a Model for Parliamentarians to a CSO Strategic and Operational Tool. Third Certified Course on PLS, as online course during July, with IALS. Creation of a 4-language E-course on PLS for the Western Balkans (HUGEN).
2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Country programmes					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> WFD begins PLS training with the parliaments of Indonesia, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, and Armenia. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PLS training extends to the parliaments of Laos, Lebanon, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Morocco, Ukraine, Malaysia, Algeria, Jordan. Preparations for the international academic seminar on PLS in Asia, in cooperation with WFD Myanmar and WFD Indonesia. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PLS training extends to the parliaments of Ecuador, Mexico, Uzbekistan. Start of the regional PLS programme for the Western Balkans (HUGEN project). PLS pilot inquiries begin in Nepal, Myanmar and Georgia. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PLS training extends to the parliaments of Albania and Serbia. WFD begins supporting CSOs to undertake PLS in Lebanon. PLS pilot inquiries begin in Ukraine on COVID-19 legislation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PLS training extends to the parliaments of DRC, Maldives, and Nigeria. PLS pilot inquiries begin in Western Balkans parliaments (HUGEN project). WFD begins to advise CSOs on PLS for the Global Equality Project. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PLS training extends to the parliaments of Kosovo and Mozambique. Support to three Committee pilot projects on PLS in Ukraine.

Figure 2: Overview of scrutiny in the legislative cycle



WFD has now undertaken PLS-related programming in a wide variety of countries and contexts with a range of different donors. Initially, WFD focused only on institutional strengthening, meaning that WFD focused on strengthening the institution of parliament to be able to conduct PLS. In 2019, WFD began to integrate a second, thematic approach, by supporting impact assessments of legislation through a specific thematic lens (e.g., gender, environment/ climate, election campaign finance, and civil society).

Broadly speaking, WFD has worked on four types of parliamentary strengthening initiatives with regard to PLS, including:

- Awareness raising with parliamentary leaderships, Members of Parliament (MPs) and parliamentary staff on the relevance and opportunities of PLS
- Piloting of PLS pilot inquiries through support to specific committees
- Institutionalising PLS by promoting the inclusion of review and/or sunset clauses in new legislation, as well as modifying parliamentary procedures and structures
- Capacity and knowledge building, including many research publications, guides, e-courses and in-person events and courses.

WFD believes it is appropriate to now reflect on and assess the impact of six years of work. This standalone evaluation report, therefore, presents the findings, conclusions and recommendations of the internal evaluation team to contribute to the knowledge base on WFD's PLS programmes and guide future activities, programmes and research. The evaluation was undertaken by a team led by Alex Scales (Evidence & Learning Manager) and Aisling OConnell (Accountability Policy Adviser), with inputs from Franklin De Vrieze (Head of Practice, Accountability), Graeme Ramshaw (Director of Quality & Innovation) and Maria Mousmouti (Institute of Advanced Legal Studies of the University of London).

1.2 Purpose and scope

1.2.1 Purpose

This evaluation is formative by nature: its primary purpose is to better understand WFD's ability to achieve its intended outcomes in PLS programming, including what has worked well and what has not worked well, since 2017. This evaluation identifies what outcomes have been delivered to date, where different approaches have yielded different results, what WFD should do differently, and what learning could be integrated into its approach moving forwards (see section 5.2).

The evaluation will be used to identify areas to adapt and strengthen, as well as areas to stay on course, expand, and/or replicate in subsequent PLS programming. Moreover, the evaluation provides evidence of the potential challenges of designing and delivering PLS, and how these apply to different programme delivery contexts.

The evaluation is also intended to contribute to the broader knowledge base on PLS programming and democracy support for uptake among WFD's partners and the PLS and governance community more broadly.

1.2.2 Objectives

Against this purpose, the specific objectives of this evaluation are to:

- Understand the relevance and effectiveness of WFD's work in PLS by documenting how it is contributing to results.
- Identify lessons learned and make recommendations for WFD's future work on PLS.

1.2.3 Scope

Based on the objectives described above, the evaluation covers WFD's work on PLS between 2017-22, in the period of WFD's 2017-22 Strategic Framework.³ The evaluation is focused on five evaluation questions (EQs) (see section 1.4) and is rooted in a case study approach that spans both headquarters and a range of contexts where WFD has had active programmes that include a PLS component(s).

1.3 Audience

The **primary** audience for the evaluation is the WFD Chief Executive Officer, Director for Quality and Innovation, Director of Programmes, WFD Heads of Practice, Senior Programme Managers, Regional Directors, and Country Offices. These are understood to be decision-makers who may use the evaluation report to inform adjustments to current or future programmes.

The **secondary** audiences for this evaluation are other internal WFD teams (e.g., Communications and Business Development) not directly involved in programme decision-making, WFD programme partners, donors and the governance and PLS community more broadly.

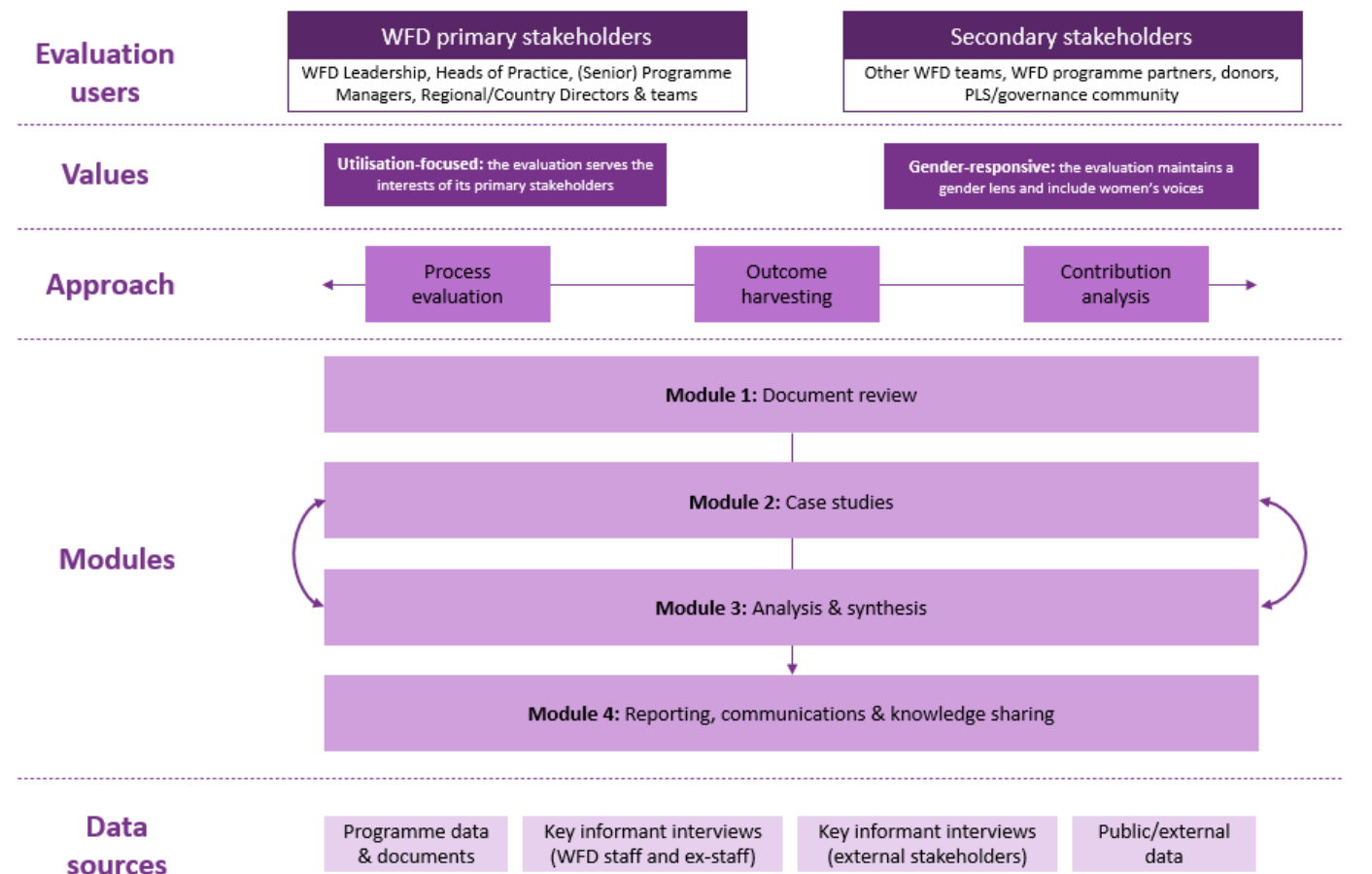
³ WFD's 2017-22 Strategic Framework. Available [here](#).

2. Approach and methodology

2.1 Overview of the approach

The evaluation took place between November 2022 and April 2023 (see a full timeline in Annex II), using a theory-based evaluation approach informed by Michael Quinn Patton’s principles for **utilisation-focused evaluations**,⁴ which stipulates that an evaluation should be judged on its usefulness to its intended users. The evaluation is also **gender-responsive**, maintaining a gender lens to allow for a better understanding of the impact WFD has had on different genders, whilst ensuring that women's voices are prominent throughout the evaluation.

Figure 3: Overview of the approach



⁴ Patton, M. Q. (2013). Utilization-Focused Evaluation Checklist. January 2013. Available [here](#).

The evaluation integrates three complementary approaches: process evaluation (light touch), contribution analysis and outcome harvesting, as shown in Figure 3. The rationale for each evaluation approach is summarised in Table 1 below and the modules through which the evaluation was operationalised are explained in detail in section 2.3.2.

Table 1: Rationale for evaluation approaches

Approach	Rationale
Process evaluation	Process evaluation aims to test the effectiveness of an intervention's implementation and is well suited to examining WFD's work in implementing countries. The process evaluation will aim to answer: how were WFD's PLS programmes implemented and adapted, focusing on 1) activities and resources and 2) outputs?
Outcome harvesting	Outcome harvesting aims to 'harvest' evidence of outcomes (i.e., changes in actions, activities, relationships, policies, or practices) that have been achieved, rather than starting with a set of pre-determined outcomes. As WFD has already developed evidenced outcome data on WFD's Evidence and Impact Hub (EIH), ⁵ the evaluation collected data against already reported outcomes whilst also seeking to collect evidence of possible unintended, negative or unreported outcomes too.
Contribution analysis	Contribution analysis is well suited to understanding how and why WFD contributed (or not) to outcomes and who benefited. Contribution analysis is a theory-based approach to evaluation, meaning the framing, data collection and analysis have been built upon relevant theories of change. This provides a framework for a structured approach, enabling the team to assess the process(es) and underlying assumptions in the programme's theories of change. By applying contribution analysis the evaluation seeks to assess WFD's contribution to observed outcomes relative to other factors.

⁵ WFD's EIH is WFD's secure, cloud-based platform for (near) real-time monitoring of programme activities, enabling WFD to routinely collect, aggregate and analyse participant data (gender, disability, profession, etc.) and feedback. This data is regularly reviewed by programme teams to support frequent reflection and programme decisions based on activity/ies performance. This feedback loop allows WFD to operate iteratively, an important asset in well-informed and contextually-relevant democratic strengthening programmes. All data stored in WFD's EIH is encrypted in transit and at rest using both SHA-256 and AES-256 encryption with firewalls in place that restrict records to authorised traffic only.

2.2 Evaluation questions

The evaluation is centred around the five EQs which were refined and agreed upon with WFD's primary stakeholders. The questions are derived from the evaluation criteria⁶ of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development Assistance Committee (OECD DAC). Table 2 displays these five EQs alongside judgment criteria that guided data collection and analysis.

Table 2: Five evaluation questions

#	Evaluation questions
EQ1.	<p>Impact: How and why has WFD's PLS work contributed to enhancing parliaments' legislative and oversight capacities?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Criteria:</u> evidence of commitments to change laws/policies/processes; evidence of behaviour change; evidence of increased technical capacity for PLS; evidence of PLS pilot inquiries; evidence of the profile of PLS growing; evidence of improved access to knowledge and evidence on PLS.
EQ2.	<p>Effectiveness: What are the factors (internal and external to WFD) that have enabled or hindered the success of PLS?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Criteria:</u> evidence of 1) organisational- and programme-related or 2) external (i.e., not related to WFD) factors that either contributed to or hindered results.
EQ3.	<p>Relevance: How successfully has WFD adapted its PLS support to specific development/institutional contexts to align with national priorities and why?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Criteria:</u> extent to which WFD's activities are relevant to programme stakeholders and align with their priorities, as well as global challenges.
EQ4.	<p>Sustainability: Has WFD's work on PLS contributed to a better understanding of inclusive legislative practices? If so, how and to what extent?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Criteria:</u> evidence that gender- and human rights-responsive PLS is taking place and will continue; evidence of any changes related to inclusion broadly.
EQ5.	<p>Coherence: To what extent has WFD's PLS work been aligned with the work of other democracy support actors (e.g. the media, civil society, NGOs, other programmes) in the contexts it has operated?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Criteria:</u> extent to which WFD's activities are aligned with other key actors.

⁶ See here: <https://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/daccriteriaforevaluatingdevelopmentassistance.htm>

2.3 Methodology

2.3.1 Data sources

The data sources for the evaluation include both primary and secondary data:

- **Key informant interviews (primary data):** the evaluation team conducted key informant interviews with 25 key informants who were identified during the desk review and in consultation with WFD programme and headquarters (HQ) staff. Key informants included members of WFD's programme teams, programme partners, beneficiaries (i.e., parliamentarians and their support staff), experts, and other country-level stakeholders from government and civil society.
- **Programme data (secondary data):** this included a review of existing WFD programme documentation, including a) programme documents and monitoring records in WFD's EIH, b) country-level documentation, c) relevant evaluations, reviews and case studies conducted on WFD's PLS work to date, and d) survey data from evaluations and activity monitoring forms (i.e., with participants of WFD's PLS activities).
- **External data (secondary data):** the team also reviewed publicly available data on parliamentary oversight and scrutiny, such as that available on national data portals, parliament websites and official statistics.

2.3.2 Data collection, analysis and reporting

The evaluation was operationalised using a four-stage modular approach. This included:

Stage 1: Desk review

This involved systematically reviewing documents related to WFD's work on PLS to provide the evaluation team with a thorough understanding of the varied contexts in which WFD operates and insights into programme processes, activities and reported outcomes. A full list of documents consulted throughout the evaluation can be seen in Annex I.

Stage 2: Case studies

Case study selection was informed by conversations with WFD primary stakeholders and the desk review. Case studies were defined and selected according to the following sampling criteria: 1)

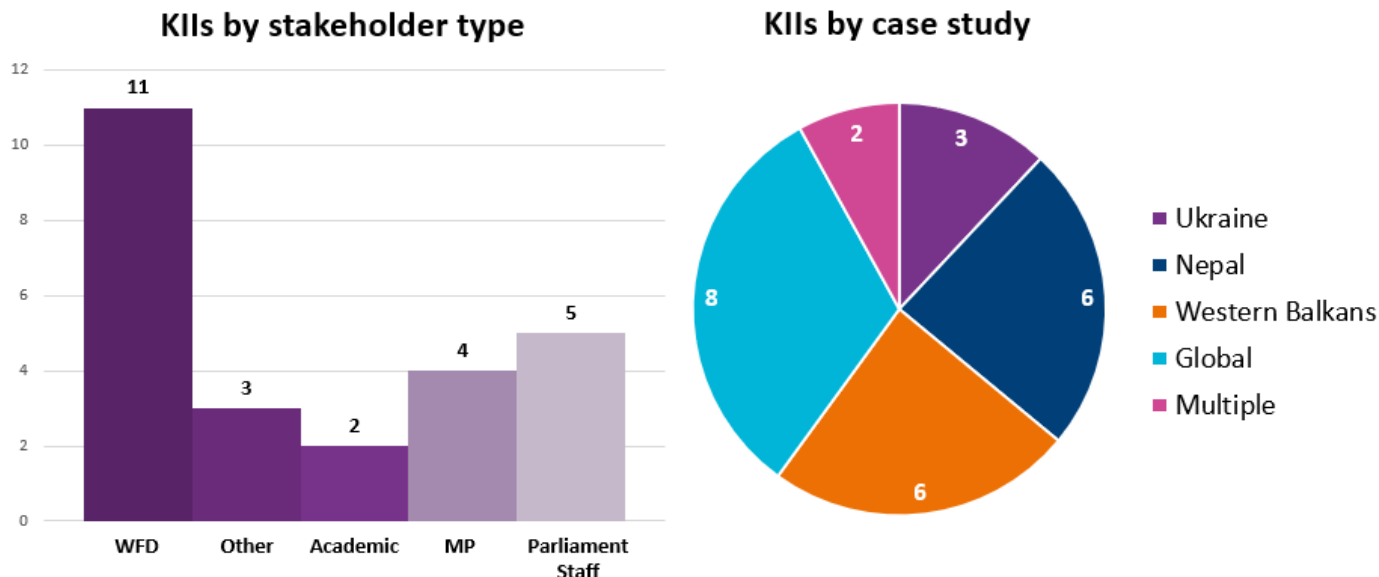
Significant – case studies should provide sufficient information about WFD's work on PLS to support a meaningful evaluation; 2) **Accessible** – selections were deprioritised when WFD operations had ceased and access to key informants was judged too difficult (e.g., Myanmar) or where language barriers might obstruct the evaluation; 3) **Diversity** – case studies were selected to try to maintain a degree of regional balance with the resources available; 4) **Innovative** – case studies were selected to purposefully explore unique drivers (e.g., the Western Balkans with a first-of-its-kind regional programme). As a result of applying the sampling criteria, a total of four case studies were defined and selected:

1. **Global**, focusing on international research and knowledge-building events led by WFD's London HQ through its GIA funding⁷ from the UK's Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO).
2. **Western Balkans**, focusing on WFD's Human Rights and Gender Equality Network of Committees in the Western Balkans (HUGEN)⁸ and the work of the regional HUGEN programme.
3. **Ukraine**, focusing on the work of WFD's country programme.
4. **Nepal**, focusing on the work of WFD's country programme.

The case studies built on the desk review by examining how observed processes and outcomes materialised and assessed their impact relative to their theory of change. As the 'global' case study did not have a relevant theory of change due to the nature of its cross-country and -programme focus, this was recreated during the inception phase with inputs from selected primary stakeholders which acted as an overarching theory of change for the evaluation (see Figure 5 below). Workshops were then held with the WFD team to begin to harvest outcomes, defined broadly as a change in policy, behaviour or practice that aligns with the relevant theory of change.

Having completed an initial analysis of outcomes, the evaluation collected additional evidence to establish the strength of evidence and WFD's relative contribution by using KIIs and incorporating evidence from additional programme documents.

Figure 4: Overview of KIIs completed⁹



⁷ WFD's relationship with the UK Government is regulated by a Framework Agreement (2020) between WFD and the FCDO. For more on WFD's governance and relationship with FCDO, see [here](#). For more on GIA funding, see [here](#).

⁸ <https://www.hugenwb.net/participants/>

⁹ Note: the 11 stakeholders listed under 'WFD' in Figure 3 include both current (7) and former (4) staff.

Overall, the evaluation team conducted 25 KIs with a wide range of stakeholders across each case study context. A breakdown of KIs by stakeholder type and case study context can be seen in Figure 4 above. In line with ethical evaluation practice, all stakeholders were interviewed based on informed consent.¹⁰ Given the sensitive context of the evaluation, all interviews were undertaken on the principle of anonymisation.¹¹ This has been respected when publishing quotes and details in this evaluation report, with a small number of exceptions where consent to be named has been explicitly provided to enrich the narrative of the report.

Stage 3: Analysis and synthesis

Evidence from interviews and document reviews was then triangulated throughout the analysis and synthesis phase of the evaluation. Analysis and synthesis took place concurrently with data collection to permit an iterative and adaptive approach to data collection and analysis, which was needed to gather, verify and triangulate evidence along WFD's relevant theories of change. Using this iterative approach with regular evaluation team check-ins enabled the team to analyse and code data in real time and adjust the KI guide throughout the course of the evaluation to permit the team to follow up on key lines of enquiry.

Overall, the team used two approaches:

- **Qualitative analysis:** coding and organising qualitative data by evaluation question and then reviewing this to understand, explain and articulate findings and assess the weight of evidence.
- **Qualitative synthesis:** drawing together findings from across multiple case studies, reports and other relevant data sources (see 2.3.1) using both a deductive and inductive approach.

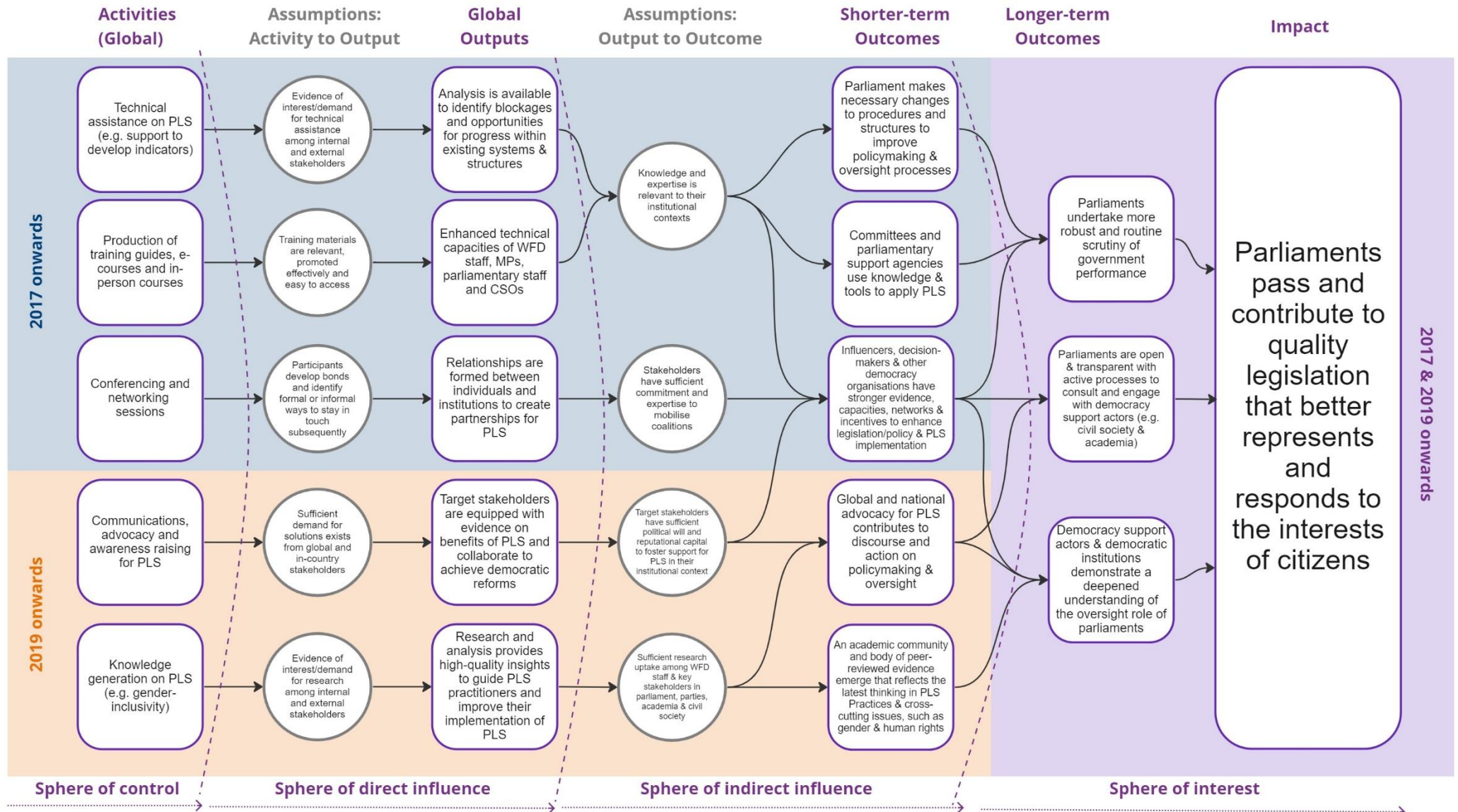
Stage 4: Reporting, communications and knowledge sharing

This evaluation report constitutes the main deliverable of the evaluation, which incorporates discussions from completed evidence workshops. In line with the principles of utilisation-focused evaluation, an interactive workshop with selected primary stakeholders took place on 27th January 2023 to refine the evaluation findings. A conclusion and recommendations workshop also took place on 22nd February, alongside check-ins with case study programme teams. Further knowledge-sharing events during the first half of 2023 are planned to help circulate and socialise findings and recommendations amongst primary and secondary audience members.

¹⁰ Participants were free to end the interview at any point, not answer a question, and retract any comments afterwards.

¹¹ See Annex II for the introduction and background provided to all stakeholders in KIs.

Figure 5: Theory of Change for WFD's work in PLS (Global Case Study)



2.4 Limitations, risks and mitigations

The main limitations of the evaluation are as follows:

- **A primary focus in Asia and Europe:** when applying the sampling framework (section 2.3.2), the evaluation team took the difficult decision to limit the number of case studies due to the limited resources for the evaluation. The consequence was that WFD countries in Africa, the Middle East and North Africa, the Pacific and Latin America were not included, thereby limiting the generalisability of the evaluation findings. Nevertheless, this was mitigated through a purposeful outcome-harvesting approach that sought to collect evidence of impact from outside of these case study countries only.
- **Lack of primary survey data:** during the inception phase, it was agreed that to avoid placing pressure on WFD staff and due to the busy nature of many time-poor stakeholders, the evaluation would not collect primary data with a survey. Whilst the evaluation forfeited a potentially useful source of data which limits the generalisability of evaluation findings, conclusions and recommendations beyond the case studies included, the evaluation team did include secondary survey data where possible to support the evaluation.
- **Reliance on programme monitoring and performance data:** while the process evaluation drew on monitoring data, it was not within the evaluation team's remit to conduct data verification or quality checks on this data.
- **Digital data collection:** all KIIs were conducted remotely or in some cases where language barriers arose, via a question-and-answer form. This can limit data collection as it is harder to establish a rapport and connectivity issues can limit interviews.
- **The evaluation is internal, not conducted by a third party:** the evaluation has been carried out by two WFD staff members, with support from subject matter experts within WFD. Therefore, the evaluation may be perceived to be less independent than an external evaluation. To mitigate this and reinforce the credibility of the evaluation, the evaluation created a firewall between the evaluation team and WFD staff, whilst also providing guarantees of anonymity in the evaluation report unless explicit consent was provided. In line with the principles of utilisation-focused evaluation, the evaluation team has also co-created the findings, conclusions and recommendations of this report and has planned activities to help socialise the findings and recommendations among key stakeholders. Moreover, whilst the evaluation relied to a large degree on interviews with WFD staff or former staff (44%), the evaluation also purposefully engaged with other stakeholders outside of WFD and sought to triangulate claims of impact with additional external data sources.

3. Evaluation findings

3.1 EQ1: How and why has WFD's PLS work contributed to enhancing parliaments' legislative and oversight capacities?

Finding 1: WFD is seen as a thought leader in PLS and has raised the profile of PLS as a parliamentary practice internationally.

This evaluation finds that WFD is widely perceived as an authoritative voice on democracy strengthening that demonstrates thought leadership globally in PLS – both theory and practice. In this sense, WFD occupies a unique status among democracy-strengthening organisations and is roundly viewed by the parliamentarians, parliamentary staff, academics and other democracy support organisations (alongside WFD staff and former staff) interviewed to have played a pivotal leading role in advocating for the instigation of PLS practices globally. WFD's systematic approach has constituted multiple activities, including publishing research and comparative analysis of *ex-post* scrutiny in parliaments (including PLS specifically), advocating for PLS both nationally and internationally, and supporting PLS pilot inquiries before using the learning generated as a basis for comparative analysis. The evaluation notes these activities have been mutually reinforcing and highly complementary approaches that have guided parliaments to introduce PLS pilot inquiries (see finding 3) whilst also beginning to build an international PLS ecosystem with WFD at its heart as a critical thought leader (see finding 15).

Important contributions have been made by WFD to introduce PLS to developing parliaments and generate or amplify existing demand for establishing PLS processes in the contexts it has operated. Whilst this evaluation uncovered some limited evidence that WFD has contributed to heightening PLS on UK parliaments' agendas, WFD's greatest impact by far has been in the international arena. Across the Global, Western Balkans, Ukraine and Nepal case studies, this evaluation finds strong evidence from KIIs that WFD activities have played an instrumental role in raising the profile of PLS in developing parliaments. Among stakeholders interviewed, WFD is widely considered to be responsible for taking PLS from an oversight tool generally associated with the UK parliaments and transforming this into an academic field and pragmatic oversight tool of substantial interest to parliamentary stakeholders (i.e., parliamentarians and parliamentary staff) across a range of developing parliaments. There is also some limited evidence to suggest that WFD's research and resources have stimulated donors' and other democracy assistance organisations' interest in PLS, outside of WFD's sphere of direct influence. The following quotes illustrate this impact:

“WFD has had an enormous impact on the profile of PLS around the world. I see it regularly as when we meet with partner parliaments and [democracy support organisation] develops work plans, they often mention PLS as an area they would like to work in. More often than not, parliaments express an interest in strengthening their work in PLS. This comes largely if not almost entirely from WFD's work on PLS and encouraging parliaments to take on PLS. It has moved PLS from something that

10 years ago very few parliaments were hardly aware of to something that is now regularly considered an important thing. This is probably the largest impact of any development initiative on parliaments I've seen in my career.”

Other, Global, KII8

“WFD improved knowledge in a new field [PLS] and laid the foundations for future application. The contribution can be seen at this time in the improvement of the knowledge of MPs and the Service of the National Assembly.”

Parliamentary Staff, Serbia, KII31

“I haven't come across any other organisations who have shown the level of interest in PLS that WFD has... WFD has really found a niche that has clearly been overlooked... What WFD has done, which is quite remarkable, is they have taken PLS into the international arena, particularly developing nations and helped to demonstrate the impact it can have on their systems of government.”

Academic, Global, KII9

“We have got good evidence of... how bigger organisations like NDI and UNDP have begun looking at PLS. They weren't looking at PLS before WFD put this on the map.”

WFD, KII2

In particular, WFD has played a critical role to introduce PLS to most interviewed parliamentary stakeholders (parliamentarians and parliamentary staff). A majority of key parliamentary stakeholders credited WFD as having introduced themselves and/or their parliaments to PLS. In this sense, the evaluation finds that WFD is successfully tapping into and generating demand for PLS across the case study contexts examined, with WFD's communications, advocacy and awareness-raising activities for PLS leading to sustained interest in exercising PLS. It should also be noted that the WFD's programme staff were routinely praised by parliamentary stakeholders across all case studies.

Moreover, WFD has contributed to shaping the development pathways of national parliaments (Western Balkans, Georgia, Ukraine, Nepal, Indonesia) and also municipal parliaments (Kyrgyzstan). Across all case study contexts, WFD's PLS activities are considered to have influenced parliaments' development agendas, contributing to the embedding of new PLS ideas and practices in parliamentary contexts. The following quotes illustrate this impact:

“WFD PLS activities were the beginning of the PLS activities in parliaments in the Balkans as the parliaments were not conducting real PLS before.”

Parliamentary Staff, North Macedonia, KII28

“Before WFD started doing this work a lot of people who work on parliamentary strengthening, a lot of agencies and practitioners would focus on pre-legislative scrutiny, such as ensuring financial and human rights considerations were factored in. But nobody was focused on what happened after the bill was passed... You are really talking about how parliaments resource and prioritise their work, and now PLS is built

into legislation and there is going to be a review of legislation. This is very significant, and this is a very tangible result.”

Ex-WFD, KII4

Finding 2: WFD’s work on PLS is contributing to enhancing the technical knowledge and practice of parliaments to undertake PLS

This evaluation finds that WFD’s investments in developing parliaments’ technical capacity to undertake PLS inquiries have resulted in clear improvements in knowledge among parliamentary stakeholders who have attended WFD’s training. A key aim of WFD’s efforts to build parliaments’ capacity in PLS has centred on improving influential individuals’ knowledge and parliamentary practices. There is strong evidence to suggest WFD’s programmes have been effective at broadening parliaments’ engagement with *ex-post* legislative scrutiny, laying the ground for parliaments to introduce PLS pilot inquiries (see finding 3). However, the evaluation notes that WFD’s level of impact varies between contexts, particularly in the Western Balkans, with parliaments across the case studies examined likely to require additional strengthening and support (e.g., additional training and resources) to sustain interest in and momentum with PLS.

WFD’s training and guidance material, developed in partnership with IALS of the University of London, was reported to be effective at building the technical capacity of participants, including through both online and in-person courses. Whilst there is no broadly accepted definition of ‘capacity’, it is perhaps best understood on an aggregate level as the ability of an actor ‘to do something in a certain way at a certain time at a certain scale’.¹² As Figure 5 shows, a key part of WFD’s work on PLS has been producing training guides and courses, designed to enhance the technical capacities of WFD staff, MPs, parliamentary staff and CSOs, enabling them to begin to apply PLS in their institutional contexts. Activity monitoring (i.e., participant feedback) forms following WFD’s advanced and introductory courses on PLS indicate that courses are rated highly by participants, including scores for expanding participants’ understanding and developing their knowledge and skills (see Figure 6). This evaluation also notes that the average scores increased consistently across 12 of the 13 rated domains measured by WFD between 2021-22.

Evidence from activity monitoring forms and KIIs suggests that WFD’s training is viewed positively by participants, as the following quote illustrates:

“All WFD events were extremely interesting, well organised and useful from the point of view of exchanging experiences and improving knowledge. The materials we received at the event, as well as the speakers who participated, were very relevant to the topics discussed. In particular, I would like to highlight activities related to getting acquainted with the practice of PLS, including the Course on PLS, held in Belgrade from 18 to 20 November 2019 and the Enhanced Course on Post-Legislative

¹² Baser, H. and Morgan, P. (2008) Capacity, Change and Performance: Study Report. Maastricht: ECDPM

Supervision held online during July 2021 in cooperation between the WFD and the Institute for Advanced Legal Studies from London.”

Parliamentary Staff, Montenegro, KII25

“After the PLS training, we hired some experts related to land distribution and land management... and made a quick assessment of whether the government had established institutions to implement that provision and whether Dalits¹³ had actually received land. So that was the kind of scrutiny, related to land management. This was very, very useful because after the investigation of the team, we realised that three years had passed but we had not even started to implement the law. PLS allowed us to see we were completely missing the implementation - not only that, the very preparation to be able to implement the law.”

MP, Nepal, KII19

“WFD helped me in my work. I learned a lot at the training organized by WFD. The HUGEN network enabled me to exchange information and experience with members of parliament from the region.”

MP, Montenegro, KII30

This is primarily because WFD’s activities have played an important role in redefining parliamentary stakeholders’ views on how parliament can exercise oversight and how it could be applied in their roles. Whilst many parliamentarians and parliamentary staff interviewed reported a degree of familiarity with parliaments’ responsibilities for financial accountability, several of the parliamentary stakeholders interviewed acknowledged that before WFD’s training they didn’t have the same sense of responsibility when considering legislative accountability. That is, accountability to ensure legislation is implemented as intended and reviewed to optimise its implementation had been to some extent overlooked.

“Our earlier concept was that law-making was the main job of the parliament and the implementation part is the government, and the interpretation of laws is part of the judiciary – a very traditional understanding. Now, when we talk about PLS, we feel the concept has been changed and now parliament also has a role to play in implementing laws through PLS.”

Parliamentary Staff, Nepal, KII19

It was striking that most parliamentary stakeholders interviewed referenced that as a result of WFD’s activities, they had gained a better sense of how parliament could exercise oversight in general. WFD’s activities also influenced how they understood and conceived of their own oversight responsibilities, in effect widening the scrutiny options in the legislative cycle

¹³ The Dalit minority in Nepal (and other South Asian countries) are also commonly known as the ‘untouchables’ based on their descent and face discrimination, marginalisation, stigma and violence. See more [here](#).

available to them. Whilst WFD cannot claim attribution for these changes in perspective, there is strong evidence that in both the Western Balkans and in Nepal¹⁴ WFD's training events, alongside ongoing technical advice, are effective in encouraging and preparing parliamentary stakeholders to commence PLS pilot inquiries. In one case in Nepal, an MP even credited WFD's training as a major influencing factor on their decision to apply to join the Legislation Management Committee (LMC) so that they would enjoy more opportunities to participate in PLS, as the following quote illustrates:

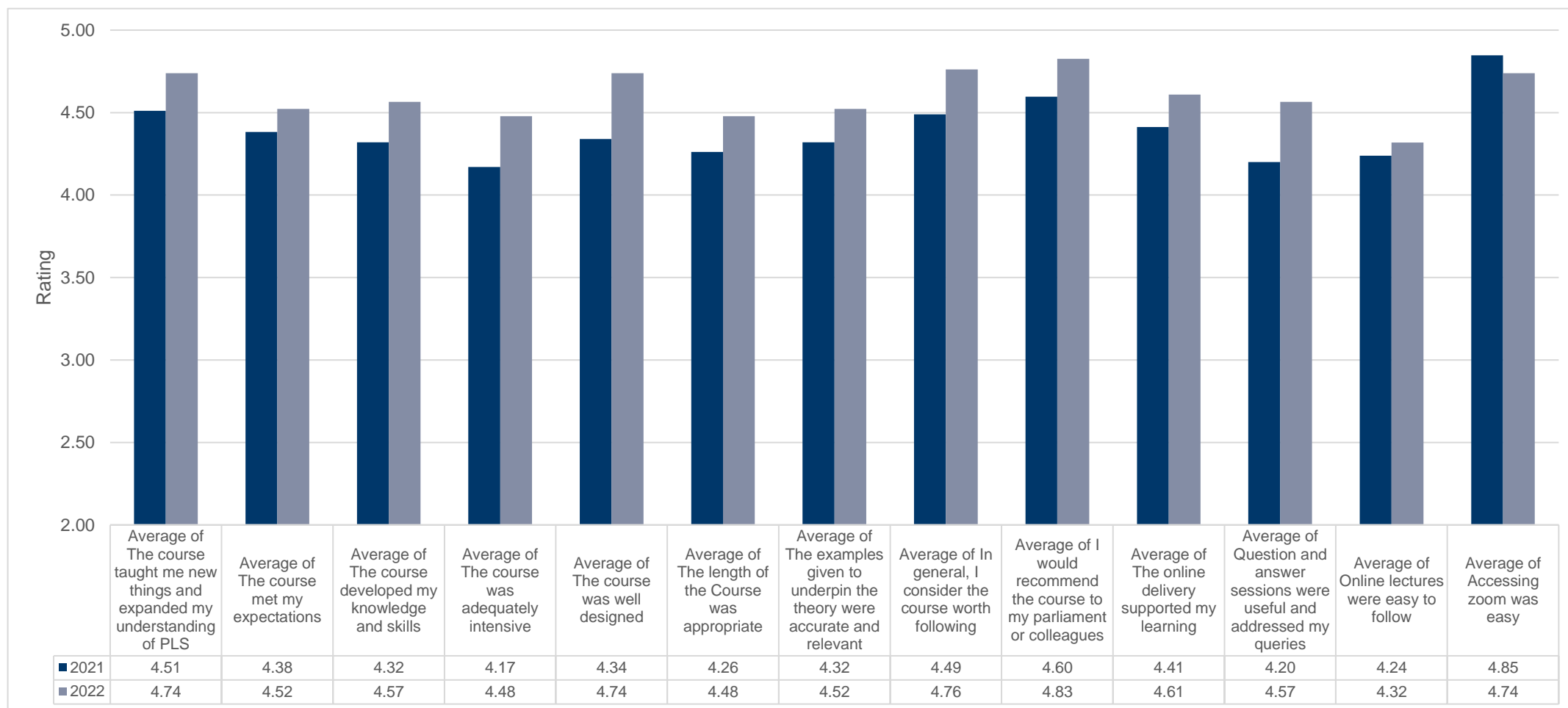
"I attended a WFD course on PLS to support learning on PLS. It was very eye-opening for me...I didn't know we could see how laws were being implemented. You could also assess whether the law is making impact or not, that I didn't know of before... It changed my perspective... this was really interesting and eye-opening in that sense. The training was also the first time I'd heard about PLS.... After attending the training, I thought I should be in the Legislation Management Committee so I could help evaluate laws, so I made an attempt to join and now I am a member of the Committee. So the training was definitely one thing I attended and found useful."

MP, Nepal, KII18

Despite this, a lack of output monitoring limits WFD's understanding of exactly how the self-reported improvements in understanding, knowledge and skills are beneficial to participants or how they have been put into practice (see finding 7).

¹⁴ Given the strong evidence of impact, similar results would be expected in Ukraine, but due to the conflict parliamentarians were not available for interview.

Figure 6: Activity monitoring data – WFD’s Online Advanced Course in PLS (2021 & 2022)¹⁵



¹⁵Overall, 70 participants provided feedback along a rating scale: 1 = Don't know; 2 = strongly disagree; 3 = disagree; 4 = agree; 5 = strongly agree

Finding 3: PLS pilot inquiries are viewed positively as an effective first step to embed institutional memory, legally consolidate PLS and foster political dialogue

This evaluation finds that WFD has played a valued supporting role in guiding developing parliaments to introduce PLS pilot inquiries – a significant result. Whilst there is work to do before PLS is embedded sustainably across all parliaments examined in the case studies, it is notable that the national parliaments of the Western Balkans (including Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia, Kosovo and Albania), Ukraine and Nepal parliaments have all introduced PLS pilot inquiries following their engagement with WFD's programmes. WFD's pilot-first approach encourages parliaments to proceed with pilots to work through establishing a process to facilitate inquiries as they proceed, rather than, for example, establishing (new) committees beforehand. This evaluation uncovered strong evidence that the improved knowledge and capacity of parliamentarians and parliamentary staff (from PLS pilot inquiries) was manifesting in institutional and behaviour changes, helping to embed institutional memory and foster political dialogue.

Following WFD- and IALS-led training events, parliaments have established PLS committees and/or procedures to facilitate and guide the introduction of PLS pilot inquiries. For example, WFD's HUGEN Programme involved both the Committee on Human Rights and Freedoms and the Gender Equality Committee of the Parliament of Montenegro. After attending a regional parliamentary conference on PLS in October 2019 and WFD's Course on PLS in November 2019, parliamentary staff helped to guide the Parliament of Montenegro's [Committee on Gender Equality](#)'s 2020 PLS pilot inquiry of the Law on Gender Equality. This introduced an open consultative process with contributions from 26 different stakeholders representing public institutions, the media, CSOs and human rights activists. The committee dealt with specific questions related to the implementation of gender-sensitive language, the education of civil servants as well as gender-disaggregated statistics.

Subsequently, the [Committee on Human Rights and Freedom](#) of the Parliament of Montenegro used the same approach and methodology to scrutinise whether the implementation of the Law on the Prohibition of Discrimination Against Persons with Disabilities was adequately preventing discrimination in the field of education and vocational training. WFD supported the PLS pilot inquiry to convene a consultative hearing of representatives from the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare, Ministry of Health and Ministry of Human and Minority Rights in February 2020, with the subsequent PLS report and recommendations later shared with these same Ministers to discuss how to act on the findings. Whilst further sessions were planned, these were postponed for political reasons. The following quotes nevertheless help to illustrate WFD's contribution to the introduction of PLS pilot inquiries in the Parliament of Montenegro:

“WFD's contribution to the implementation of PLS, as a practice that was implemented for the first time in the countries of the Western Balkans, was immeasurable. The report on PLS on the Law on the Prohibition of Discrimination against Persons with Disabilities had a participatory and open consultation process... all institutions, organisations, individuals, experts, as well as activists of NGOs dealing with the protection of the rights of persons with disabilities, contributed to the creation of a quality report and PLS process. MPs and members of the Committee

have also contributed to achieving concrete results, and I hope that the continuation of this process and the planned control hearing... will show that the relevant ministries have also undertaken activities to achieve concrete results.”

Parliamentary Staff, Montenegro, KII25

“Several employees of the Parliament of Montenegro attended PLS training. Also, the completed PLS analyses helped to increase the supervisory capacity of the Parliament... The work of the WFD on PLS had the greatest impact on the work of MPs who are members of the Committee for Gender Equality and the Committee for Human Rights.”

MP, Montenegro, KII30

Table 3 below shows the total number of PLS inquiries introduced by parliaments in case study contexts between 2017-2022.

Table 3: PLS pilot inquiries across Nepal, Ukraine and the Western Balkans Programme, 2017-2022

Institution	Legislation scrutinised
Federal Parliament, Nepal	Infectious Diseases Act
Federal Parliament, Nepal	Social Practices (Reform) Act
Federal Parliament, Nepal	Public Procurement Act
Federal Parliament, Nepal	Lands Act
Ukraine Parliament	COVID-19 Legislation
Ukraine Parliament	Tax Law
Ukraine Parliament	Local Government Reorganisation
Ukraine Parliament	Energy Efficiency Law
Ukraine Parliament	Law on the regulation of remote work, home work and work with the application of flexible working hours
Ukraine Parliament	Law About the cooperation of territorial communities
Parliament of Federation of BiH	Law on Protection Against Domestic Violence
National Assembly of the Republic of Srpska	Law on Protection from Domestic Violence in Republika Srpska

Parliament of Albania	Law on Gender Equality
Assembly of the Republic of North Macedonia	Law on General Administrative Procedure
Parliament of Montenegro	Law on Prevention of Discrimination against People with Disabilities
Parliament of Montenegro	Law on Amendments to the Law on Gender Equality
National Assembly of the Republic of Serbia	Law on Prevention of Discrimination against People with Disabilities
Assembly of the Republic of Kosovo	Law on the Protection from Discrimination

Following the introduction of PLS pilot inquiries in specific parliamentary contexts, parliamentarians and parliamentary staff tend to exhibit greater capacity and motivation to undertake more pilot inquiries and introduce review provisions into new legislation (see finding 11). This is very important as it reflects efforts to legally consolidate PLS within parliaments, but also because it represents a feedback loop in the theory of change that endorses WFD's pilot-first approach. This effect is particularly prevalent in Nepal, but also to some extent evident in Ukraine and the Western Balkans. Evidence suggests that PLS pilot inquiries have the potential to generate a research base and assessment that provides a means for politicians and parliamentary staff to generate political dialogue and a spotlight for its proponents, whilst enabling them to demonstrate legislative expertise to peers, as the following quotes illustrate:

“PLS provided the research base and measurement that meant we can talk with the government, parliament and parliamentary committee, using the data. WFD helped to introduce the concept and provided support and advice – for example, now we have done the pilot, the next concept is to apply this to other laws passed by parliament, so they are reviewed in 3-5 years. We have showed the laws need to be reviewed, and now we are incorporating a 3-5 year [PLS] review clause into new laws too. We have added this provision in many laws...Now we have to institutionalise this concept.”

Parliamentary Staff, Nepal, KII19

“On the government side, it [PLS] has been very important as we have had good responses from the government. We have mentioned some 4-5 laws on PLS. First of all, we make a PLS for the Social Practices (Reform) Act in Nepal and then we made a PLS for the Infectious Diseases Act 2020 (1964), then we make a PLS for the Public Procurement Act, and then the Lands Act of Nepal. Through these, we generated reports, and the government had a good response, with the government agreeing to enforce the law... WFD's role in all of these PLS works has been very

helpful, very nice and enthusiastic... The role of WFD was very key when we shared and learned from the WFD side. We learned from the WFD expert on PLS about our PLS programme and they provided us very key tools... WFD shared with us about PLS and how to make PLS and what the objectives of the PLS are. All of this we learnt from WFD...[Then] the parliamentary committee tried to make a programme on PLS in Nepal and explore this with other National Assembly members and the House of Representatives... The first time I introduced it [PLS] in the Legislation Management Committee I was very confused, so when I mentioned this to Dinesh [WFD's Country Representative] and we consulted we shared knowledge on PLS and I was so happy, so, so happy, as I became a success at this time."

Parsu Ram Meghi Gurung (former Chair, LMC, Nepal) ¹⁶

This is also supported by evidence from the Western Balkans, where in an evaluation survey in 2021, in response to the statement "my committee is more interested in conducting oversight since the PLS pilot", 83% either agreed or strongly agreed.¹⁷

Finding 4: WFD's research has helped to establish typologies of PLS and contributed to defining global standards in parliamentary oversight.

This evaluation finds that WFD has made significant contributions to the conceptual elaboration of PLS, which has largely enabled the overall growth and development of PLS as a field of study and practice. Since 2017, WFD's work in PLS has been rooted in the tradition and the practice of the Westminster Parliament and UK Law Commission: the UK's Westminster Parliament has shown increasing interest in PLS since 1992, notably increasing in 2004 and beginning to permeate into other parliaments from approximately 2006. Nevertheless, statutory review provisions and ad hoc procedures for reviewing legislation remain highly varied from parliament to parliament, and country to country.¹⁸ A key goal of WFD's work on PLS has been to grow the academic literature on PLS to help to define standards, shape and optimise procedures, and expand the evidence base globally on PLS.

There is strong evidence to suggest that WFD has succeeded in achieving its intermediate outcomes articulated in its theory of change (figure 5), particularly building an academic community and body of peer-reviewed evidence that reflects the latest thinking in PLS practices and cross-cutting issues. WFD has proved a prolific disseminator of PLS research and evidence, publishing over 27 PLS-focused publications since 2017 (see Annex I) and contributing over six articles to academic journals. These have helped to introduce, identify and classify varying

¹⁶ Note: consent was provided to include deanonymized quotations throughout this report.

¹⁷ WFD, HUGEN Case Study, December 2021

¹⁸ De Vrieze, F., and Hasson, V., (2017). Post-Legislative Scrutiny: Comparative Study of Practices of Post-Legislative Scrutiny in Selected Parliaments and the Rationale for its Place in Democracy Assistance. Westminster Foundation for Democracy.

typologies of PLS. As WFD's institutional approach to PLS began in 2017, the majority of WFD's publications during the evaluated period align with this and curate evidence of Westminster-style parliaments' approach to PLS alongside that of other parliamentary systems, such as the parliaments of the Western Balkans. Nevertheless, WFD's thematic approach to PLS has also made important contributions to building PLS into an academic field with relevance to parliaments and practitioners, particularly around gender- and human rights-sensitive PLS (see findings 13 and 14). Together, both approaches have played a significant role in fostering greater inter-disciplinary collaboration that is actively growing the evidence base:

“An important contribution has been getting like-minded practitioners into the room, comparing and contrasting the benefits of PLS and its wider impacts and the different ways in which parliaments do PLS. There is no one-size-fits-all approach to PLS and what works in one place might not work in other Parliaments. WFD has been vital in helping to identify best practices and sharing this with other nations to export this, as many parliaments don't necessarily have an understanding of what's best and what's good and what's not – they are very much still finding their feet around it.

Academic, Global, KII9

“Before WFD people thought PLS was there but it was pretty insignificant. Making it a whole issue and theme, it has not only impacted the bibliography and literature, but also the practical insights and how it is practised and now the discussion – it has sparked conversation on piecing this together and drawing together different insights.

I don't think PLS as a topic was a key part of academic research before WFD, for both practitioners but also academics.”

Academic, Global, KII15

There is also evidence to suggest WFD's research has influenced parliamentary stakeholders – a long-term goal articulated in the theory of change. For example, in Nepal, one parliamentary stakeholder even reported using WFD's research and analysis in their work on PLS prior to any formal interaction with WFD, which came later. Similarly, among parliamentary stakeholders interviewed, some reported they were using WFD's research and guidance on PLS in the development and implementation of PLS pilot inquiries across case study contexts. As a result of this and WFD's programme work, WFD's publications are now informing PLS pilot inquiries.¹⁹ Other stakeholders (including WFD staff and former staff) verified the tangible impact WFD has had through its research and analysis:

¹⁹ For example, see the Completed Report on post-legislative supervision of elected members of the Law on Amendments to the Law on Gender Equality, Parliament of Montenegro - Gender Equality Committee. Available online [here](#). This was completed by a WFD-hired expert as part of the HUGEN project and cites two WFD publications: 1) [Post-Legislative Scrutiny: Guide for Parliaments](#) (De Vrieze, F., 2017); and 2) [Comparative Study on Post-Legislative Scrutiny](#) (De Vrieze, F., and Hasson, V., 2018).

“I don’t think you can undersell how important and innovative the work is that WFD has put forwards. Sometimes it can seem very procedural and technical...but if you talk to the parliamentary community – staff, practitioners and researchers – it is a really big deal and intimately linked to WFD.”

Ex-WFD, KII4

Overall, through its prolific research output and advocacy approach, WFD has made significant contributions to defining global standards of parliamentary oversight. For example, WFD has contributed to the development of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU)-drafted “indicators for democratic parliaments”,²⁰ which credit WFD’s resources on PLS as the main source material that has informed “dimension 1.6.7 on PLS”, as well as constituting a source for further reading. Moreover, WFD’s influence is also visible in the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association’s (CPA) latest recommended benchmarks for democratic legislatures, which credits WFD as a co-convener of the 2018 Study Group alongside the CPA. The new benchmark agreed upon by the 2018 Study Group specifies ‘to ensure that the legislative process places sufficient attention on the consequences and impact of legislation (post-legislative scrutiny)’ – a notable addition to the previous 2006 edition with no corresponding reference.²¹

There is also some evidence that WFD has raised the profile of gender-, climate- and human rights-sensitive/responsive legislation and the need to assess its impact (see section 3.5).

3.2 EQ2: What are the factors (internal and external to WFD) that have enabled or hindered the success of PLS?

3.2.1 Enabling factors

Finding 5: Peer-to-peer learning and study trips are valued at the country, regional and international levels and conducive to building institutional support for PLS

There is strong evidence that peer-to-peer learning and study trips are effective and valued at the country, regional and international level. Study trips to and from the UK’s Westminster Parliament form a reportedly welcome opportunity for learning and networking. Perceived as unique opportunities, visits from UK delegations were also reported to help facilitate productive discussions and raise the profile of PLS proponents among peers, suggesting motivation to travel is not a major influencing factor behind this finding. Rather, study visits both to and from the UK and elsewhere are considered to offer a unique opportunity for comparative study and learning that

²⁰ Inter-Parliamentary Union (2022). Indicators for democratic parliaments, based on SDG targets 16.6 and 16.7. Available online [here](#).

²¹ Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (2018). Recommended Benchmarks for Democratic Legislatures. Available online [here](#).

have proved helpful to introduce PLS pilot inquiries and complementary to other programme activities. The following quotes illustrate this across both Nepal and Western Balkans case studies:

“We met a delegation from the UK in 2018... when I made it to the UK and could see how other leaders had used PLS it was very insightful and that opened the avenues of my new life. I really felt this... These events [2019 Myanmar Conference and 2020 UK Study Visit] were very great for me to learn about PLS. Before this, I was very confused. When I had the opportunity to visit the UK parliament and Myanmar conference, this gave me some clarity and this sharpened my views on how PLS could be used in the legislative process and to ensure its implementation.”

Parsu Ram Meghi Gurung (former Chair, LMC, Nepal)

“The most useful event I would single out is the HUGEN network conference in Kopaonik together with the scientific work of the advanced course for PLS.”

Parliamentary Staff, Serbia, KII31

“PLS is very new for us. From 2018, we have learned this concept and introduced PLS and led some PLS activities... We visited the UK parliament to learn about how the UK parliament works and how committee hearings are done. We have had the opportunity to study the UK parliament through WFD and content-wise WFD’s work in PLS has been very significant for us to introduce PLS in Nepal.”

Parliamentary Staff, Nepal, KII19

Building on this, this evaluation finds that study visits are conducive to reinforcing institutional support among PLS champions (see finding 11), with study visits reported to positively influence their commitment to PLS – evidenced across all three case study contexts. The evaluation also noted some evidence from previous WFD case studies and a KII to suggest that the HUGEN programme’s regional dynamic stimulated healthy competition in the Western Balkans, creating an additional dynamic that provided an opportunity for greater exchange of knowledge whilst also motivating and incentivising parliamentary staff to undertake PLS pilot inquiries. Although, the evaluation also noted it was perceived this sense was undermined because of the COVID-19 pandemic and the shift to online networking.

Finding 6: PLS is perceived to be a new, relevant, pragmatic, and highly desirable tool to empower parliaments to introduce mechanisms and use evidence to drive better scrutiny of legislation.

PLS is seen by parliamentarians and parliamentary staff as an attractive tool to improve parliaments’ oversight capacities, which is echoed in the similarly positive perceptions of PLS of WFD’s current and former staff. WFD is one of the few organisations focusing on PLS and WFD’s advocacy for PLS (see finding 1) has been vital for raising the profile of PLS internationally, yet the evaluation finds this has been catalysed by a perception of PLS among parliamentary stakeholders as a new, relevant, pragmatic and highly desirable tool that could be adopted by a wide range of parliaments. This includes established and newer democratic contexts and Westminster and non-

Westminster style parliaments – it was notable that across the contexts examined, there was a strong appetite to learn from the UK’s parliamentary system, as the following quote illustrates:

“WFD’s excellent support and international experience and knowledge sharing with the government has had an impact. In the mind of Nepalese people, the mother of the parliament is the UK parliament. And so this has been very useful to share UK experience of PLS with the Nepal parliament at different levels, from parliamentarians to civil service staff. This has been a good thing and useful to show them where other PLS is happening around the world and where it has had a good result.”

Parsu Ram Meghi Gurung (former Chair, LMC, Nepal)

There is strong evidence to suggest that PLS is viewed so favourably because of the new role it affords parliaments and champions, from which it is possible to observe a result. The process of PLS produces tangible results in the form of reports and offers another method for parliamentary committees to hold governments to account. In this sense, PLS pilot inquiries can be empowering for parliaments as they enable parliamentary stakeholders to influence the legislative agenda on their own terms, rather than waiting for governments to propose new legislation. Across the regional and country cases examined, PLS has been introduced as a new practice to “legislative parliaments” (i.e., parliaments that mainly focus on debating and adopting legislation and where oversight is often limited to budget oversight). For example, in the Western Balkans, the PLS ‘broadens the oversight role of parliament, creates a new agenda for parliament, and sometimes also results in a new workload for staff and MPs.’²² This evaluation finds this role has been roundly welcomed across the case study contexts examined, with parliamentary stakeholders continuing to attend WFD’s courses and seek guidance and advice following introductory sessions.

“Until now, we had made laws but didn’t look back, and PLS allowed us to actually look at the laws that have been in place and this is one of the important departures of thought in my role. So in that sense, it’s been an opportunity to look at and expand my own role. Since then I have always looked at the provisions in the laws and reflected myself on whether this provision is going to make some impact on people’s lives. So that’s the expansion of my horizon I would say.”

MP, Nepal, KII18

“The achievements of WFD in PLS are very important and of interest to the Parliaments of the Western Balkan states, in the sense of shaping work on PLS but also in the permissive sense of extending the oversight of a Law, through examples implemented in practice on the part of parliaments of each state.”

Parliamentary Staff, Kosovo, KII27

²² WFD (2021). Post-Legislative Scrutiny in the Parliaments of the Western Balkans. Available [here](#).

“The Parliament Secretariat is now very serious about PLS. There were some interactions between WFD’s PLS programme and the General Secretary of the Federal Parliament. But now all at the Secretariat level also understand PLS, what it is and why it is important to conduct it, and how to conduct it. So the impact on the Secretariat is now they understand it and how to apply it.”

MP, Nepal, KII17

It is also notable that in the period covered by the evaluation, all parliamentary stakeholders interviewed reported having a continuous interest in PLS and a commitment to improving oversight capacity in general. This was particularly prominent in parliamentary staff, where WFD has provided training to “parliamentary staff [as they are] are the stable engines in parliaments who will be there whoever is in power”²³ and this has been received with a general openness to learn about new ways of working. Interviews with WFD’s current and former staff suggested that an advantage of WFD’s close collaboration with parliamentary staff was that this was useful to further embed institutional memory since MPs are at a greater risk of leaving parliament should their terms end or they fail to win re-election (see finding 9). In this sense, WFD has capitalised on parliamentary stakeholders’ general openness to learn by sharing a highly relevant scrutiny tool at a time when parliaments were also looking to grow their accountability toolbox.

3.2.2 Hindering factors

Finding 7: Without greater output level monitoring, WFD may miss opportunities to understand how it can best support stakeholders to achieve change and sustain impact.

Despite the positive impact of WFD’s advocacy for PLS (finding 1), training on PLS (finding 2), support for PLS pilot inquiries (finding 3) and contribution to the academic literature on PLS (finding 4), the evaluation finds that a core limitation of WFD’s approach is its failure to sufficiently monitor at the output level and tailor programming in response. Whilst WFD’s role in providing technical resources, experts, and training to support parliaments to undertake PLS pilot inquiries has been generally well-received and has contributed to transferring knowledge and skills to parliamentary stakeholders, this evaluation finds that WFD is not always monitoring the aggregate impact of its PLS activities at the output level of its theory of change (see figure 5). Therefore, WFD may be missing opportunities to reinforce and sustain impact and to understand how it can best support stakeholders to achieve change at the outcome level of its theory of change (see figure 5). Relatedly, across the cases examined, the impact of WFD’s work on PLS can be understood best as a form of introductory support. The following quote illustrates this:

“Honestly speaking, WFD just supplied the appetite to make this [PLS] possible. You know, showing that this is the way to effective implementation of the law, but [WFD’s

²³ Academic, Global, KII15

contribution] is very limited... WFD's support was an introductory type of support that showed how to make effective implementation of the laws and this is the way to do it. This was correctly understood and now several laws need PLS, but WFD can't do that. Thus the budget, the programme, and the office are limited, I mean just an introductory type of budget, office and support. Most WFD support has been introductory. In Nepal, this could be a huge project but WFD is not sufficient in that sense."

MP, Nepal, KI17

The evaluation notes that WFD's work on PLS has grown significantly since it first started in 2017, yet a lack of purposeful output level monitoring with the potential to maintain relationships and begin conversations around how to put knowledge into practice to contribute to results has limited WFD's ability to scale its impact. As demonstrated under finding 2, there is evidence from activity monitoring forms, WFD's EIH and KIIs to suggest that WFD is achieving its desired outputs in its theory of change (see figure 5) and contributing to raising the technical capacity of parliamentary stakeholders. Yet interviews with several stakeholders and reflections on WFD's monitoring data suggest WFD does not always monitor how knowledge and expertise are aggregating nor how participants are applying this knowledge and learning subsequently. For example, KIIs with parliamentary stakeholders revealed underlying questions about how to best select legislation for PLS inquiries and how to balance depth and scope with limited parliamentary resources (i.e., undertaking 'light' PLS inquiries on many pieces of legislation vs selecting a small number for 'deep' inquiries). Whilst WFD's EIH did record some of this information,²⁴ the evaluation encountered gaps, suggesting WFD may be missing opportunities to understand key enabling and limiting factors, sustain impact, and guide participants to achieve further change in their institutions. The following quote conveys this:

"There's a lot of information that we don't have in terms of going back to those stakeholders and saying, right, what have you done? ...a lot of our work has been limited to the activity level and there has not been a lot of follow-up, so there is a question mark there in terms of we don't know what has happened after we have done the training, so we don't know what might have been the motivations, the blockers and what the resources were for PLS... We really need to peel back some layers and go back to the core for what PLS is offering – what are the core challenges and what resourcing is needed as a pre-requisite? How do we make sure the committees and parliaments as a whole are invested in PLS as a model? How can we support them to resource PLS properly in their institutional contexts? ...What role

²⁴ For example, in March 2020 in Nepal, the (now former) Chair shared with WFD that the LMC's lack of a calendar system was inhibiting his ability to manage PLS activities. WFD responded by providing a series of presentations on PLS, whilst also sharing the UK House of Commons inquiry calendar to help the LMC overcome this challenge.

WFD can play, not only in terms of the knowledge transfer but in terms of actioning these things, I think is a gap that we need to fill.”

WFD, KII13

“We should perhaps work with partners more closely on the sustainability side... Perhaps a [PLS] community of practice would be helpful to sustain the idea of PLS, for example in helping attendees at WFD’s courses to learn from each other. There is follow-up work that could be done after conferences to create workshops and spaces to encourage learning, which doesn’t currently happen.”

WFD, KII12

Whilst WFD has played an important role in introducing PLS to many parliaments as a valued oversight tool and practice by providing a sense of impetus and clarity to move from theory to practice, parliamentary stakeholders have typically experienced difficulties in using PLS pilot inquiries to prompt legislative changes (see finding 9). Indeed, notwithstanding the introduction of PLS review clauses in legislation in Nepal (see finding 3), WFD’s impact on achieving legislative changes as a result of PLS pilot inquiries has been more limited. Even when PLS pilot inquiries have been completed there remain question marks about 1) whether legislative change will follow, 2) whether parliamentary committees, parliamentary secretariats and MPs are sufficiently equipped to continue their work in PLS independent of WFD, and 3) what this means for democracy in their institutions more broadly.

In the Western Balkans and Ukraine, a compounding challenge noted in KIIs stemmed from WFD’s use of external expertise to lead the production of PLS reports. Whilst access to expertise was seen positively as a way for parliamentary committees to resource PLS pilot inquiries and seek guidance, KIIs also revealed that to some extent parliamentary committees risk depending on donor-supplied experts and pass work onto them. It was also the view of a couple of stakeholders that externally produced PLS reports may carry less political legitimacy and lower levels of political investment from key parliamentary stakeholders, potentially reducing the likelihood that PLS pilot inquiries will lead to concrete legislative change.

Finding 8: WFD is not deriving maximum value from its investments in internal and external e-courses

One area identified by the evaluation team as an area where WFD was failing to maximise opportunities was in e-courses. For example, WFD has invested in an e-learning site, WFD Learn, and has developed several e-courses on PLS. However, an examination of completion logs for its introductory course on PLS reveals that – to date – only six people have completed the course (four WFD staff²⁵ and two WFD consultants). The WFD Learn course ‘apply practical steps

²⁵ Including one of the authors of this report in preparation for the evaluation

in all phases of PLS' has only been completed by two WFD staff members.²⁶ Similarly, the WFD Learn course 'Global Equality Project – a process for change' that introduces the methodology that enables CSOs to engage in PLS (i.e., monitoring the process introduced by state actors or undertaking the process on their own, including informing the process with their own perspectives on the impact of legislation) has been completed by two WFD staff members.²⁷

Despite this, the evaluation also notes WFD has organised bespoke training for WFD staff and continues to reserve spaces on its international PLS courses, which is a promising development. For example, WFD delivered a bespoke four-module PLS course in November 2020 for all WFD staff involved with programme design, implementation and evaluation. It has also reserved 10 spaces for WFD staff for its previous 2021 and 2022 courses and the upcoming 2023 course with IALS. Whilst WFD has conducted a range of seminars during the evaluation period on oversight and accountability practices, the evaluation still finds that WFD may be missing opportunities to measure, track and improve staff's collective expertise in PLS by failing to routinely leverage its e-courses for programme inductions. Indeed, there has been very little promotion and communication for these PLS e-courses within WFD, with no strategy for their curation and promotion.

Similarly, WFD's HUGEN Programme in the Western Balkans invested to create an e-course for PLS in three Western Balkan languages, providing a good opportunity to develop a public good as WFD's programme was ending with the potential to sustain impact. However, KIs revealed that whilst the course was available on the HUGEN website and WFD Learn, it was only promoted at one programme event (see finding 15) which undermined its potential and meant it was under-utilised.

Finding 9: Parliaments are subject to continuous change and evolving power dynamics that can reduce parliaments' oversight capacity and obstruct oversight practices.

The evaluation notes that parliaments, like other political institutions, are subject to frequent change and disruption due to political factors (e.g., elections, strategy, polarization, public pressure and procedural rules) and other factors (e.g., personal motivation, rivalry, retirements and job changes). These factors can alter the dynamics in parliaments and influence the agendas and motivations of parliamentary stakeholders, particularly MPs.

Whilst the evaluation finds that WFD is continually adapting its programming in response to the changing political economy of its programmes, there is no doubt that these factors represent challenges to WFD's programme environment. For example, in Ukraine, it was reported that the practice of oversight fluctuated corresponding with changes to the make-up of committees, which resulted in a large degree of variance across committees despite WFD's efforts to support the committees to continually review and update their efficacy. Similarly, 2020 saw elections in

²⁶ Including one of the authors of this report in preparation for the evaluation

²⁷ Both Global Equality Project team members.

Montenegro, North Macedonia and Serbia – together, these elections brought new committee leadership in all parliaments where elections were organised. This evolution poses a challenge to WFD’s programme teams, who need to adapt to the new personalities, politics, priorities and dynamics of the committees, but the challenges also manifest within parliaments for parliamentary stakeholders. The following quotes from Nepal help to illustrate how these challenges can manifest within parliaments:

“In the Upper House where I come from, every two years one-third of new MPs come in and one-third of old MPs retire. So, it is important that we do more training for newcomers and repeat the training. What happened was that three of us took part in WFD’s PLS training – now I am the only one left in the Upper House. So how can we best translate our learning to reach and connect with other colleagues on PLS? ...Especially as MPs retire after some time and WFD has been very good at introducing the topic, but not really at scaling up. When people retire, they leave altogether.”

MP, Nepal, KII18

“We have almost 400-500 staff in our parliament but to my knowledge, only around 10-15 people are trained on WFD’s concept of PLS. We require to give them more training and more interaction with WFD – every 4-5 years parliament has elections and the parliament may change, so the parliamentary chairpersons may not repeat, which means we need to offer continuous support and training... this is required for new parliamentarians also.”

MP, Nepal, KII19

WFD’s work with parliamentary staff (see finding 6) and PLS champions (see finding 11) who seek to engage other parliamentarians has to some extent mitigated the risk of PLS capacity reducing when MPs’ terms end. The combination of working with ambitious parliamentary staff who have a good knowledge of ways of doing things alongside ambitious and determined MPs has enabled WFD to progressively guide the introductions of PLS pilot inquiries and begin to change how parliaments function on a practical and procedural level. However, these challenges continue to represent obstacles that WFD needs to account for in its programme work.

Moreover, political dynamics in parliaments, especially inter-party competition and factionalism were frequently cited among all stakeholder types interviewed as being a hindrance to achieving results through PLS. For example, committee members may not be politically inclined to collaborate with others for a wide range of reasons, which can impede the PLS process. Similarly, the recommendations that emerge from PLS pilot inquiries are perceived by parliamentary stakeholders and governments as inherently political. There is some evidence to suggest that if inquiries are led by incumbent parties, they tend to be reluctant to criticise the government, especially publicly. On the contrary, if inquiries are led by opposition parties, the recommendations from inquiries have a greater risk of being ignored. For example, in Nepal, party politics was reported to prevent two committees from working together on PLS and secondary legislation

despite clear overlaps and synergies in their line of oversight work, with political motivations also influencing how learning and recommendations from PLS reports are disseminated.

“Parliament is not one person... there are lots of different stakeholders and power dynamics... this was the case in [country], where our work was being led by a Senator who had established a PLS-type committee, but the political dynamic changed and then his power waned.”

Ex-WFD, KII10

“Sometimes I feel like in parliament we make a lot of recommendations to the government as we are not an implementer of laws, so we can only ask the government to do things. In Nepal, democracy is inclusive but not very mature or principled, so the government does not always respond to what Parliament asks it to do... So how can MPs hold the government accountable is still a big question.

Sometimes whatever we think or envision, whatever we recommend to the government when laws are not implemented, you can feel kind of helpless.”

MP, Nepal, KII18

Whilst WFD has contributed to fostering political dialogue through its work on PLS (see finding 3), the evaluation also notes that among several WFD staff and former staff interviewed there was a sense that WFD could play a more intentional role in breaking down political silos and fostering greater *cross-party* dialogue and political consensus to better contribute to real-world impact. Across a large number of KIIs, including WFD programme staff, parliamentary stakeholders and academics, the evaluation notes a broad appreciation of how PLS could support this. Without denying the political nature of legislation, there was a strong sense that PLS adds a highly pragmatic dimension to oversight with the potential for altering parliamentary culture. For instance, whilst it can be expected that parliamentary opposition will criticise the government in any parliament, a PLS inquiry looks at legislation as a tool for achieving different policy objectives with the potential to act as a critical friend to the government and support it to achieve its objectives. The following quotes convey this point:

“What I would like to see a little bit more when we talk about PLS... is to show the value of cross-party activities. In the House of Commons, there is an element of bringing together and establishing cross-party activities that build alliances across party lines. Not enough has been done to focus attention on how PLS can bring people together for cross-party work as part of a broader cross-party effort. Often it can be opposition parties who have a primary interest in PLS, but it is important to look for ways at the design phase to build into programmes a genuine cross-party focus...I think WFD could introduce this concept better to and promote this practice and contribute to influencing cultures in countries we work with.”

WFD, KII12

“We have led training with parliamentary stakeholders, but have they then been able to take the findings from the stakeholders and speak to governments and get laws

changed? What has stopped that from happening is a non-confrontational technical approach... If Parliament is broken into factions of parties that really don't talk to each other and all of them can do PLS and PLS reports with particular findings can be used to change laws or policy if you have a really strong majority in Parliament and government. But if it's not an inclusive process then it's liable to become a political football more than anything else. So you really need that broader engagement and ownership across the party lines. You need to take a structured approach to multi-party collaboration as otherwise, this doesn't happen.”

WFD, KII13

The evaluation also registered some views of WFD staff and former staff that WFD risks relying too much on PLS in its parliamentary development support. This risk was noted to have the potential to cause parliaments to over-rely on PLS as a form of oversight to the detriment of other forms, although no examples were shared.

3.4 EQ3: How successfully has WFD adapted its PLS support to specific development/institutional contexts to align with national priorities and why?

Finding 10: WFD adapted its programming to support parliaments with limited established practice of exercising oversight in emergency contexts to introduce and guide scrutiny of emergency and pandemic legislation.

Throughout the focus period of the evaluation (2017-22), democracies experienced unprecedented social, economic and political challenges resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic. This put severe pressure on systems of public governance around the world, with governments allocating resources swiftly with reduced opportunities for scrutiny. Researchers have since labelled the trend of authoritarian responses to the pandemic a “governance shock doctrine” with key features including the ‘suppression of dissent, centralisation of executive power, curtailment of press freedoms, and tightened regulation of civic space, including online space’.²⁸ In many countries, this shift towards executive authority enabled governments to introduce emergency legislation without oversight, consultation and public and parliamentary debates. Concerningly, measures adopted in emergency contexts have also tended to persist and threaten civil rights long after the threat to public health has subsided. The evaluation, therefore, acknowledged this drastic shift in operating context throughout the programme period in each case study context, seeking evidence on how WFD may have supported parliamentary stakeholders.

Analysis of WFD’s planned and implemented activities between 2017-22 shows WFD’s programmes introduced a series of adaptations to account for the change in context and continue supporting parliaments and stakeholders to improve oversight. For example, by meticulously monitoring the political economy in Nepal,²⁹ WFD supported MPs to monitor parliamentary activities around the world, presenting evidence to the LMC, uniquely mandated to scrutinise legislation in Nepal, on how other parliaments were approaching oversight of pandemic legislation. Similarly, in the Western Balkans, from early 2021 WFD’s programme team organised three online multilateral meetings and one PLS webinar, including parliamentary staff from participating parliaments, with each session dedicated to the question of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on women, persons with disabilities and Roma community respectively.

²⁸ McGee, R. (2022), The Governance Shock Doctrine: Civic Space in the Pandemic. Dev Policy Rev. Available online [here](#).

²⁹ For example, throughout 2021 WFD’s programme team recorded 74 context updates in WFD’s EIH. Of these, 36 were directly related to the COVID-19 pandemic, 36 were related to the general political economy (including the Supreme Court Crisis and dissolutions of parliament), and two were related to political turnover or statements.

“During the time of COVID-19, WFD monitored the parliamentary activities taking place which was very useful for us.”

MP, Nepal, KI18

Importantly, WFD has achieved perhaps its greatest success of the 2017-22 period by supporting parliamentary committees to exercise scrutiny of emergency legislation. By guiding parliaments to value PLS as an additional method to exercise scrutiny over government policy and legislation, WFD’s support has played an important role in fostering demand for greater scrutiny of COVID-related legislation. As explained under finding 3 and sections 4.3 (Ukraine) and 4.4 (Nepal), both the VRU and Federal Parliament of Nepal undertook PLS pilot inquiries of pandemic legislation, with both contexts using subsequent PLS recommendations to influence policy formulation to address the pandemic.

For example, since 2019 in Nepal WFD supported Nepal’s LMC to design and manage a PLS pilot inquiry of the Social Practices (Reform) Act when the onset of the coronavirus pandemic changed its priorities. The committee responded to COVID-19 by opening a second PLS inquiry into the controversial 1964 Infectious Disease Act, which the government invoked to impose a nationwide lockdown and fight the virus in the spring of 2020. WFD supported the Committee to introduce a PLS pilot inquiry on the outdated law, collect evidence and conduct a series of hearings with key government figures, including the Health Minister, who was invited at different times to discuss the outdated law and learn about its limits. This enabled the Committee to share preliminary recommendations with key government figures, with some of these responded to in the government’s annual budget in mid-2020. The LMC completed the inquiry in April 2021, publishing a PLS report that concluded the Act was outdated and unsuitable for today’s democratic society since the act side-lined parliament’s role in responding to crises. The report contained a series of recommendations to the government – although the government didn’t draft a new law as recommended by the report, the government did issue a Covid-specific ordinance in May 2021 that responded to many of the recommendations made. For example, one of the recommendations was to handle the COVID crisis through a unified health system, with the government then converting a major hospital into what it called the Unified COVID-19 Hospital. The following quote illustrates the significance of the PLS pilot inquiry:

“One act that WFD supported was the Infectious Diseases Act... We had to conduct PLS on the law because when COVID-19 came out parliament activated to meet the emergency and a very unforeseen type of crisis... In Nepal what the government has done is use a law that is around 60 years old and is a very limited act – it is not [designed] for pandemic control, but it was [intended] to control cholera. Most of the clauses gave power to the government and not the parliament, and a weak law has been activated and because of this an effective response was not delivered by the government... After the PLS review, PLS recommendations were issued to the government which issued an ordinance to address a lot of issues, health and health-worker issues... The immediate effect was visible in the practice after the PLS but our PLS recommendation was to introduce a comprehensive law, but although the

ordinance has been issued and the government has been more responsive, the comprehensive law wasn't made."

MP, Nepal, KII17

"We tried three different pieces of work immediately after the WFD PLS course, during the COVID period. The first task we tried was to review a 56-year-old law on pandemic readiness to see if it was still relevant or not. We made a quick assessment of the law which was already in practice and asked the government to amend and make a new law on the pandemic response because the context had changed so much and we were addressing the pandemic without an updated law, which was making a lot of issues. We didn't follow all of the steps of PLS as it was during the pandemic, but we tried to evaluate the law and adapt our work during the pandemic.

The outcome was we asked the government to listen to our assessment and convinced them these were the gaps – we told them they need to make a new law or update this one. We even suggested the areas that it needed to cover and the new context. The government couldn't make a new law at that time but issued a new ordinance that addressed most issues we'd highlighted."

MP, Nepal, KII18

Similarly, in 2020 the VRU in Ukraine passed over 27 pieces of emergency legislation in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. From December 2020 in Ukraine, WFD provided technical support and mentoring to the Committee on Economic Development to introduce its first PLS pilot inquiry on the effectiveness of COVID-19 legislation. WFD provided guidance to clarify the scope of the pilot inquiry and the responsibilities of committee members, before guiding the committee to publish the call for evidence and facilitating access to experts to collate information and analysis on the legislation's performance. Notably, WFD's support played an important role in guiding the Committee to trial digital tools (replacing traditional in-person methods) to collect evidence from the public and engage CSOs, culminating in a report that provided a series of practical recommendations to refine the emergency legislation. The following quote helps to illustrate this impact:

"The UK was very happy to fund an innovative and very timely pilot project on the use of post-legislative scrutiny in order to assess the effectiveness and impact of COVID-19 emergency legislation passed by the Ukrainian parliament when the pandemic started. Halyna [WFD's Country Representative] led the team of project implementers and high-level experts in a highly efficient and effective way and as a result, the project became a success story as it provided valuable recommendations on improving the key legislation related to COVID-19 for small and medium business in Ukraine and improved the skills of MPs in applying PLS for assessment of other important legislation."

Other, Ukraine, KII34

Finding 11: WFD's programme staff have built fruitful relationships with PLS champions, which have uniquely positioned WFD to respond to national priorities despite limited programme budgets not aligning with champions' ambitions for PLS.

By fostering close relations with PLS champions, WFD programme staff have maintained a strong degree of relevancy during tumultuous parliamentary spells. Across the Western Balkans, Ukraine and Nepal case studies, WFD has built strong relationships with influential parliamentary stakeholders who have had the authority and political skill to drive greater levels of institutional change. This is particularly prevalent in Nepal, but also the Western Balkans and Ukraine, where despite intense challenges – notably Russia's unprovoked invasion of Ukraine and Nepal's two-time dissolution of parliament – faced by WFD's stakeholders, WFD has shown a high degree of flexibility to continually support their evolving priorities.

WFD's approach has yielded a close and conversational relationship with influential parliamentary stakeholders, where WFD's technical guidance and support are sought regularly by senior parliamentary stakeholders. This has enabled WFD to offer valued support to their parliamentary operations when identifying and responding to windows of opportunity. Throughout this period, all parliamentary stakeholders interviewed expressed a strong interest in building greater cultures of oversight. In fact, the ambition of PLS champions WFD works closely with is so great that the evaluation found their PLS goals and expectations for WFD's support tend to exceed the available support and resources WFD can provide, with WFD occasionally turning down requests for support. Indeed, nearly all parliamentary stakeholders interviewed explicitly expressed an appetite for further support from WFD. Yet despite the limited resources at WFD's disposal, the evaluation finds that WFD's investments in building PLS champions have been a key enabler of success. This is because these strong relationships position WFD to support parliamentary stakeholders to deliver against their priorities in a highly efficient way. Truly, where there is enthusiasm in parliament to engage with PLS processes and where demand exists among *senior* parliamentarians to initiate PLS processes, WFD can channel resources to these key change-makers.

In Nepal, WFD's approach to supporting institutional PLS Champions is helping to generate evidence to guide reforms across a wide range of national priorities, as the following quote illustrates:

“We have also done PLS work and introduced PLS on 6 or 7 laws where we have reviewed them from the perspective of PLS. Some few laws that we made using PLS were the Infectious Diseases Act, Social Practices (Reform) Act, Public Procurement Act, a land-related act, an untouchables-related act, and sexual harassment laws – all reviewed from the perspective of PLS. We have reviewed about 6 laws since 2018 and over these four or five years this has meant we have been able to introduce the concept of PLS. We are trained and have done some work on PLS. The initiative was taken up by the LMC of the Upper House and it has been introduced now to the Lower House too. Gradually the PLS concept is spreading in Nepal. We expect WFD will need to continue its support to this process as there is still a long way to go.”

Parliamentary Staff, Nepal, KI19

This champion-building approach complements well WFD's work on institutional advocacy for PLS (see finding 1) and works to embed institutional memory together with PLS pilot inquiries (finding 3). For example, in Nepal, WFD's approach led to a highly fruitful relationship with the Chair of the LMC. Following an initial conversation, WFD identified the Chair of the LMC as an influential figure with a very strong interest in PLS. By building close ties with him, investing in training and study visits, and creating an open line of communication, WFD has been able to continually advise on ways the LMC could use PLS review clauses as a mechanism for legislating for future PLS pilot inquiries. This has led to the LMC introducing PLS review clauses into 14 pieces of legislation since 2019 – a significant result. Another 4 bills also have a review provision, although they have not yet been passed. The below quote illustrates this impact:

“It [WFD support] had a great impact when I was Chair of the LMC, we succeeded to include the provision of PLS in the laws we were going to pass. Now we have 15 [sic] laws that have been passed by parliament and permitted by the president where the provision of periodic review, PLS, should be done by the government and reports need to be shared with the parliament committee. This provision has been included in 15 [sic] laws now. 6 bills were introduced in National Assembly and 9 bills were included in the Lower House. We have succeeded to include PLS in the enforcement of the law, ensuring ministries will oversee a review of the implementation of the law.”

Parsu Ram Meghi Gurung (former Chair, LMC, Nepal)

3.5 EQ4: Has WFD's work on PLS contributed to a better understanding of inclusive legislative practices? If so, how and to what extent?

Finding 12: WFD's thematic research, particularly on gender-sensitive PLS, is beginning to drive a greater focus on inclusivity in legislative scrutiny.

WFD's thematic work on PLS is generating academic and practitioner-focused literature and guidance which is stimulating further inclusive research and publications. Driven by WFD's thematic research agenda on PLS, WFD has made numerous original and relevant contributions to defining standards and typologies for PLS globally (see finding 4). Whilst research on gender-sensitive parliaments has existed for decades,³⁰ WFD has re-energised the application of this discussion and applied this to PLS specifically. In particular, WFD's contributions to the academic literature have helped to illustrate the role that PLS can play in advancing gender-, human rights- and environment-responsive legislation.

For example, the below extract from WFD and IALS' 2020 paper on gender-sensitive PLS and Table 4 below demonstrates how a gender-sensitive PLS pilot inquiry can be framed and carried out, with both representing original contributions to the PLS literature:

'A gender-sensitive post-legislative scrutiny adds a gender perspective to the scrutiny by assessing whether legislation has produced (positive or negative, unintended or unexpected) impacts on gender results and outcomes... Post-legislative scrutiny has the advantage of hindsight – and offers the possibility to look at cross-cutting acts and identify positive and negative change at a larger scale. In other words, post-legislative scrutiny can show what worked, what did not work and why, and what needs to be changed. Gender-sensitive post-legislative scrutiny adds one complementary layer of analysis: how the law worked for women and men, whether there were achievements and unwanted impacts from a gender equality perspective and how to 'correct' them.'³¹

³⁰ For example, see: [Gender-Sensitive Parliaments | Inter-Parliamentary Union \(ipu.org\)](https://www.ipu.org/gender-sensitive-parliaments)

³¹ Mousmouti, M., (2020). Case Study 1: Gender-sensitive Post-Legislative Scrutiny of general legislation. WFD.

Table 4: Gender-blind vs gender-sensitive scrutiny questions for PLS inquiries³²

Gender-blind scrutiny questions	Gender-sensitive scrutiny questions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • is the Act achieving its aims, and if not why not? • are costings achieved, and if not why not? • has the Act achieved overall value for money? • how well the Act has been implemented and working in practice, including any unintended consequences? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • is the Act achieving its aims, and if not why not? • did the Act affect men and women differently? • What impacts can be identified in terms of rights, resources, representation, opportunities, outcomes and participation? Did the Act contribute to gender equality in the specific sector/area? • are costings achieved, and if not why not; • how are costings distributed between men and women? Is one gender disproportionately affected? • has the Act achieved overall value for money? • how well the Act has been implemented and working in practice, including any unintended consequences? • Did implementation have any wanted or unwanted impacts on men and women? How can they be corrected or improved?

There is emerging evidence to suggest WFD's research on gender-sensitive PLS is beginning to influence that of other academics and other democracy assistance organisations (e.g., INTER-PARES), with WFD's reports cited in emerging literature on gender-sensitive parliaments and the legislative cycle.³³ The following quote helps to illustrate this impact:

³² Mousmouti, M., (2020). Case Study 1: Gender-sensitive Post-Legislative Scrutiny of general legislation. WFD.

³³ For example, the following publications cite WFD's research on gender-sensitive PLS: 1) Johnson, H., (2022). Gender-Sensitive Scrutiny: A Guide to More Effective Law-Making and Oversight. INTER-PARES. Available [here](#).; 2) Johnson, H., (2022). Legislating for change: gender-sensitive ex-ante legislative scrutiny in practice. The Theory and Practice of Legislation, 10:3, 249-269, Available online [here](#); and 3) Palmieri, S., (2022). Gender-sensitive parliaments and the legislative cycle: conceptualising new cultures and practices. The Theory and Practice of Legislation, 10:3, 234-248. Available online [here](#).

“The gendered aspect of PLS was an interesting way to reflect and take this forward. It required a variety of inputs and experts and brought them together to think about this. I do think WFD has contributed to more inclusive legislative practices, especially over the last two or three years. There has been a very strong focus on inclusivity and not just on procedural approaches... A broader question on whether we consider and respond to the gender aspects and consequences of broader policymaking filtered in through WFD’s report on gender-sensitive PLS but also a report on gender-sensitive budgets. I remember it being quite topical, particularly in the UK as austerity had hit women harder than men. It seized the atmosphere at the time and WFD captured the right time to lead on these inclusive issues. Before this, it was very process focused but this opened the legislative process up for thinking about how the process could be good for some and bad for others. There was a sense of what else could PLS target beyond oversight and scrutiny. WFD really opened up the understanding of policymaking and the kind of questions that we raise around the use of procedures, from being in a sense a tunnel to a kaleidoscope: it’s not just a yes or no answer in terms of its effect, it can be effective for some but not for others. It helped to identify a diversity that needs to be acknowledged.”

Academic, Global, KII9

Finding 13: WFD has facilitated the introduction of PLS pilot inquiries on gender and human rights legislation, but there may be more work to do to ensure parliaments’ scrutiny work is fully gender-, human rights- and environment-responsive.

WFD has played a pivotal role in supporting parliaments to scrutinise gender and human rights legislation, however, there is more work to do to integrate WFD’s thematic approach for PLS with WFD’s programme work. The evaluation notes that this isn’t necessarily unexpected: WFD’s research on PLS is innovative and highly advanced, whereas a key feature of its programme work on PLS during this evaluated period has been more introductory (i.e., establishing proof of concept and building institutional support to introduce PLS pilot inquiries). Yet it is important to recognise WFD could more purposefully incorporate a thematic approach to PLS in its programme work as and when parliaments begin to demonstrate proficiency in identifying, designing and managing PLS pilot inquiries.

Notably, WFD has contributed to increasing the priority of scrutiny of gender and human rights legislation in the Western Balkans. HUGEN consisted of eight participating parliaments and 15 human rights and gender equality parliamentary committees. A key feature of WFD’s work through HUGEN has been to share knowledge and enable parliaments to introduce learning from others in their parliamentary contexts. For example, between March to September 2021, WFD organised three online multilateral meetings and one PLS webinar dedicated to the question of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on women, persons with disabilities and the Roma community. There is strong evidence to suggest these sessions were highly valued by HUGEN participants, with evidence from KIIs and the EIH suggesting these served as an important opportunity to exchange regional knowledge and experience on scrutinising gender and human rights legislation, but also to learn about the UK’s experience. This is further supported by an evaluation of the

HUGEN project, which found that individual committees often report on their participation in the activities of the HUGEN network on their official parliamentary websites, and bring issues discussed within the HUGEN network into their committee proceedings.³⁴ This suggests gender and human rights issues have been raised because of HUGEN.

Moreover, WFD's contributions are beginning to lead to the introduction of gender-sensitive PLS pilot inquiries, although there is less evidence of this outside of the HUGEN project's focus on gender and human rights legislation. One positive example documented was the Committee for Gender Equality's (Parliament of Montenegro) PLS pilot inquiry on the implementation and impact of the Law on Amendments to Gender Equality between 2015 to 2019/20. Following a 3-day training on PLS in November 2019, organised for MPs and parliamentary staff across parliaments participating in the HUGEN network, WFD supported the participants to select legislation that could become the subject of a PLS pilot inquiry through a consultative process. The Committee selected the legislation and with support from a WFD-hired expert, oversaw a consultative PLS inquiry with 30 in-depth interviews and a focus group discussion, spanning representatives of parliament, government, ministries and other public agencies, as well as representatives of CSOs and the media. The final report³⁵ included a detailed analysis of the impact of the legislation on women's representation, the introduction of gender policies and codes of ethics across government and municipalities, the use of gender-sensitive language, and gender discrimination, providing recommendations to take forwards.

Box 2: Gender-sensitive budgeting, Ukraine

When it was time to review the 2020 state budget, WFD helped the Committee on Public Health, Medical Assistance and Medical Insurance and the Committee on Youth and Sports to scrutinise the government submissions. The committees questioned the relevant ministers on the lack of gender-disaggregated numbers and proposals in the budget, and at the time the Health minister made a commitment to always include gender-disaggregated data in future submissions to parliament.

Whilst not the focus of this evaluation, this suggests that there are strong complementary parallels between WFD's work on gender-sensitive scrutiny.

Outside of the Western Balkans, evidence for gender-sensitive PLS was present although more scarce. In Ukraine, IALS and WFD collaborated to introduce training to MPs and staff on how to conduct a gender sensitivity analysis when conducting PLS, and the evaluation notes WFD supported a PLS pilot inquiry that helped to differentiate the pandemic's economic impact on men

³⁴ In an evaluation survey, in response to the statement "Issues discussed within the HUGEN network are taken up in my committee afterwards", 42% responded always, 33% responded often, 17% responded sometimes, 8% responded rarely. This was supported by KIIs with parliamentary staff and MPs.

³⁵ Available online [here](#).

and women. Whilst this is encouraging, this might also represent a limit in the extent to which WFD is contributing to inclusive legislative practices, although further investigation is required.³⁶ This might also represent an opportunity for how WFD continues its work in its 2022-25 strategy, since there may be potential for more to guide and introduce further gender-sensitive PLS pilot inquiries.

It should be noted that the evaluation also registered a potential risk to WFD's thematic approach to PLS. Namely, the results of PLS inquiries might be different depending on the law that is selected to be reviewed and from which angle. For example, a participant in one KII noted that in Indonesia the government introduced a very broad law on job creation and the government and parliament intentionally eliminated several provisions on the environment that were perceived to be hindering implementation. An environment-sensitive PLS inquiry might therefore identify risks despite this standing in contrast to the aims of the legislation.

³⁶ Note: some of the PLS reports that WFD has supported are not available on parliamentary websites. Some were not made public or available to this evaluation. This evaluation also relied heavily on English language PLS reports.

3.6 EQ5: To what extent has WFD's PLS work been aligned with the work of other democracy support actors (e.g. the media, civil society, NGOs, other programmes) in the contexts it has operated?

Finding 14: WFD's work on PLS has provided a framework to help CSOs and NGOs report on issues, share evidence, and advocate for policies and change.

By supporting parliaments to introduce consultative PLS pilot inquiries, WFD has provided a (mostly) previously absent framework that has enabled citizens to participate in the legislative cycle. Evidence from the document review and KIIs with parliamentary stakeholders suggests that WFD is having a positive impact on the role that CSOs and NGOs can play in PLS and parliamentary oversight in general. For example, across the PLS pilot inquiries cited in this evaluation report, CSOs and NGOs have typically been included in the consultation process. Whilst the evaluation did not speak directly with representatives of CSOs or NGOs as part of this evaluation, the evaluation notes that across case study contexts WFD has consistently advocated for the inclusion of CSOs in PLS pilot inquiries. WFD has also produced guidance to assist CSOs and NGOs to understand and participate in PLS, which may have supported their involvement in the consultation process. The below quotes highlight these points:

“PLS helps put institutional memory with parliamentary staff to ensure that relationships with civil society are maintained. They keep lists of CSOs and can keep those relationships. This is why WFD puts effort into working with secretariat staff as well as MPs. Secretariat staff led this pilot project.”

WFD, KII33

“All institutions, organizations, individuals, experts, as well as activists of NGOs dealing with the protection of the rights of persons with disabilities contributed to the creation of a quality Report and the entire process. MPs and members of the Committee on Human Rights and Freedoms have also contributed to achieving concrete results.

Parliamentary staff, Montenegro, KII25

“In Ukraine, one of the first PLS exercises we did, before the war, was we launched a call for evidence in 2020 – something that they don't normally do or even if they do, they sort of just invite the usual suspects. So the fact they got back responses from civil society organisations you know, and we were thinking about how we can ensure for them a framework where responses could be anonymised and nobody would be threatened or suffering any consequences related to participation. I think this was

new to them, this framework for evidence collection in a PLS process, and it was very important as it showed again that it can be done and it can make a huge difference for people who are there.”

Academic, Global, KII15

Although the evaluation also registered views from WFD programme staff that more could be done to support CSO involvement in PLS pilot inquiries:

“We need to talk about PLS not as a sort of standalone technical thing, but very much as a cohesive package that brings in WFD’s work around civil society engagement and work that we can be doing to strengthen civil society, to connect civil society with Parliament and for Parliament to be more engaged with civil society.”

WFD, KII13

As no CSO representatives were interviewed for this evaluation, it is not clear to what extent CSOs have perceived WFD’s support as valuable in supporting them to play a watchdog and lobby role, for example acting as a critical friend to government and parliaments. Therefore, the evaluation finds only that by supporting the introduction of PLS pilot inquiries, WFD has provided a (mostly) previously absent method for CSOs and NGOs to share evidence to consultations and support the formulation of inquiry recommendations. For example, as demonstrated under finding 10, in Ukraine WFD guided the Committee on Economic Development to trial digital data collection tools so civil society could provide anonymised evidence to the PLS pilot inquiry on Ukraine’s COVID-19 response.

This finding is also consistent with KII data from two MPs who were asked whether WFD’s work had increased their awareness of the need to engage with civil society, and who responded negatively or neutrally. Whilst there is insufficient evidence to be sure, it may be that WFD’s impact on parliamentary stakeholders’ awareness of working with civil society is similarly limited to introducing a previously absent avenue through which they could operationalise their previously existing commitment to work with civil society.

Finding 15: WFD’s combined GIA and programme funding has enabled it to advocate consistently for PLS, even as programme funding has ebbed and flowed, which has contributed to establishing PLS ecosystems comprising different organisations, parliaments and professionals.

Through leveraging its role as an influential global convener and using its GIA funding strategically to complement third-party programme-funded activities, WFD has led the organisation of national, regional and international PLS conferences and contributed to building interdisciplinary networks of PLS experts, academics, legal professionals, CSOs, MPs and parliamentary staff. A PLS ecosystem has begun to emerge – both globally and in specific country and regional contexts – that WFD has played a major role in facilitating, funding, connecting, and inspiring. Not only has WFD’s focused advocacy on PLS contributed to raising the profile of scrutiny and oversight in parliaments (see finding 1), but this in combination with WFD’s prolific research output (see findings 4 and 13) and efforts to convene relevant national, and

regional and international forums has played a major contributing role to building an informal community of practice in PLS. The evaluation notes that these efforts have been complemented by WFD's role in supporting the [AGORA Parliamentary Development Community of Practice](#), sharing resources to advocate to other democracy assistance organisations and coordinating with them about PLS. The following quotes convey this significant convening and influencing role:

“One of the biggest issues WFD has supported on is putting PLS onto the agenda. WFD opened up a whole new range of institutions, organisations and people who were also interested in PLS and could help shape research and agendas. It was great from an agenda-setting perspective, but also from a networking perspective... There is no other organisation that is bringing people together in the way that WFD has done... WFD's publications have proved very good at actually bringing different parliaments, and different academics from across different fields, together into one room, for single events, to build a network. Whether it's people who are interested in politics or law.”

Academic, Global, KII9

“The themes that are running across projects are connecting projects, connecting the people, connecting the parliaments, which is really important because it's more thematic... The training has definitely strengthened the capacity of people working for WFD around the world – this is important as they are working with parliaments and promoting the ideas. The second thing is it has created a network of people who are interested in different capacities and development experts and international experts.”

Academic, Global, KII15

“The thing that really struck me 3-4 years ago was fairly large scholarly practitioner events that were organised by WFD that brought together leading thinkers on PLS, such as Lord Norton and Franklin³⁷ and other scholars and a lot of practitioners. There were a lot of seminars in 2019 that put PLS on a different plane and raised the profile. I've been involved in parliamentary development for many years and it wasn't until WFD grabbed PLS and carved it into a parliamentary function that it took off... WFD played a key role in bringing those new ideas, new ways of that emphasis on PLS and the philosophical importance of following up on what happened to the legislation that was passed.”

Other, Global, KII8

³⁷ Franklin De Vrieze, WFD's Head of Practice (Accountability)

WFD's proactive approach to seeking collaboration with other democracy assistance advocates, especially academics and experts, has been particularly useful for enabling WFD to maintain momentum in building the profile and concept of PLS. WFD's ability to leverage GIA funding to support key strategic PLS objectives has been critical to sustain momentum in PLS, even when programme funding has ebbed and flowed. There is good evidence to suggest that WFD has actively exploited its reputational capital to further build the case for PLS and play a convening function globally, which has begun to result in the formation of an interdisciplinary community. Across all KIIs with stakeholders who had attended either national, regional or international conferences on PLS, WFD's conferences are seen as roundly valuable in virtue of the opportunity they provide for knowledge sharing, collaboration and networking purposes. Whilst it was also noted in several interviews that online courses did not have the same effect due to the lack of networking opportunities provided, by drawing effectively on these different elements WFD has begun to establish a PLS ecosystem that has played an important role in helping to sustain institutional progress and interest in PLS beyond the end of WFD's support.

At the regional level, the HUGEN network was perceived to be a constructive way of working on PLS across KIIs with parliamentary stakeholders in the Western Balkans. It was noted that the regional dimension may have been important and provided motivation for some parliaments that may have been less interested in participating alone. Overall, a total of over 40 committee staff participated in the network, which has supported the continuity of the network through periods of political upheaval. Those staff believed the network is establishing itself as a tool for regional cooperation,³⁸ with KII participants also reinforcing this point. However, whilst the evaluation also notes the benefits of WFD's GIA-funded PLS work (see section 4.1) and its ability to maintain focus on PLS as WFD's programme activities ebb and flow depending on available programme resources, this hasn't always manifested at the programme level. WFD's academic and practitioner network has helped to drive momentum in PLS globally (see findings 1 and 4) but the evaluation uncovered evidence it has not always filled the whole left by ending programmes. The following quote illustrates this risk:

“Since the HUGEN project ended, there has no longer been any follow-up contact between the parliaments. The project held us together with regular meetings and training and conferences. Whilst I still have the contacts there is no process of how to engage with them now or what to do. A web that is broken.”

Parliamentary Staff, North Macedonia, KII28

³⁸ In an evaluative survey, 92% strongly agreed with the statement: “HUGEN network is helping to facilitate regional cooperation”.

Therefore, there may be additional opportunities to identify, curate and promote PLS resources (see finding 8) and facilitate networking and ways of working with programme stakeholders, which may help to sustain WFD's footprint after the end of its programme.

There is also good evidence to suggest that WFD has supported the mobilisation of PLS ecosystems to form within and outside of parliaments at the country level. As discussed under finding 11, WFD's work with influential PLS champions has led to the establishment of informal networks to share knowledge and experiences on PLS. Parliamentarians with influence (including speakers and committee chairs) have acted as champions for PLS and worked to encourage other parliamentarians to begin working on PLS. In Nepal, this established an influential network of parliamentary stakeholders, particularly within the LMC, who have actively collaborated to insert PLS review clauses into 14 Acts (together with an additional 4 bills not yet passed) whilst also managing several PLS pilot inquiries (see table 3).

"I would say Members of Parliament are more interested in PLS, but also development professionals. So not just in parliament but also outside. Because I'm also a member of an evaluation network in Nepal. So I shared my learning from PLS in that forum and people were saying 'wow', so that perspective didn't come earlier. I think credit for that goes to WFD."

MP, Nepal, KII18

Yet as already noted, parliamentary dynamics are noted to continually change (see finding 9), whilst the evaluation notes the former Chair of the LMC has now stepped down, it was notable that since he had retired from parliament he had set up a new CSO – The National Legislative Academy – with a core mission to improve PLS across all levels of parliament in Nepal (including the provincial level).

"When I was working as Chair of LMC I felt the whole process of legislation was very weak and we needed support on the public side. Also, the PLS programme was a child in Nepal and needed support for its continuity to make it a sustainable programme in Nepal. So we ex-MPs discussed how to divert our retired life to help the government, public and civil society groups by sharing our experience. So, we set up the National Legislative Academy to support the legislative process to help pass quality legislation and enforce the law to contribute to the country. WFD's work has been an inspiring tool to set up the National Legislative Academy... We have set up an expert team of MPs from different parties who are participating in a [new PLS] academy. Now we are sharing the experience of legislation and how to make quality legislation and how to extend the programme of PLS through this academy. We are looking at how to expand PLS at federal, provincial and local levels in Nepal."

Parsu Ram Meghi Gurung (former Chair, LMC, Nepal)

Whilst this outcome relies heavily on the contributions of the determined and motivated MP, the support of WFD's programme team in Nepal has helped to guide his journey in PLS and inspire the formation of the National Legislative Academy – a significant achievement.

4. Case study summaries

4.1 Global

Box 3: Global portfolio summary

- **Dates:** February 2017 to present
- **Donor:** FCDO (mainly GIA-funded)
- **WFD corporate outcomes:** Inclusive political systems; accountable political systems

Overview

Since 2017, WFD's global GIA-funded work on PLS has played a leading role in shaping the direction and strategy of its overall portfolio. For this evaluation, the global case study focused primarily on WFD's research in PLS and its role in establishing a PLS community globally, in recognition that technical assistance and communications and advocacy also form a key part of WFD's in-country programme work.

Summary of results

Overall, WFD's global portfolio has been instrumental in establishing a diverse and growing PLS ecosystem and community that is advocating for PLS around the world. As noted under finding 15, by effectively using its position as a prominent global facilitator and strategically utilising its GIA funding to supplement program-financed initiatives, WFD has hosted prominent PLS conferences at the national, regional, and global levels. Together with WFD's prolific research output (see findings 4 and 13), has helped to establish interdisciplinary networks of PLS

experts, legal professionals, academics, CSOs, MPs and parliamentary staff.

Notably, WFD's contributions to the research and evidence base on PLS have been significant, with stakeholders regarding WFD as a thought leader (finding 1) that has made vital contributions in raising the profile of PLS globally. Not only has WFD succeeded in demonstrating proof of concept to parliamentary stakeholders in its partner parliaments, but there is good evidence to suggest that this is even beginning to influence the demands that parliaments make of other democracy assistance organisations. WFD's contributions to the literature on PLS have helped to inform publications of other democracy assistance organisations and academics, creating a ripple effect with an impact beyond that of WFD's programme work.

“The field as a whole of parliamentary development has been impacted by WFD's work on PLS. So PLS is something that we take into account... For example, we do a needs assessment of every parliament we work with and quite often there is an interest in PLS... It's common now, very common, for parliaments to be interested by PLS.”

Other, Global, KII8

From a conceptual perspective, WFD has made significant and original contributions to PLS by influencing definitions and conceptually advancing what PLS can offer to parliaments.

Parliaments are beginning to apply thematic principles to PLS pilot inquiries – especially gender and human rights-sensitive PLS pilot inquiries. This is partly driven by WFD's research and guidance on

PLS, which has defined and clarified key concepts whilst creating relevant linkages with WFD's programme work.

This has been tied together by WFD taking full advantage of its reputation and convening power to host landmark international conferences (see box 4) to consolidate momentum. By creating the space for PLS advocates to share experiences and discuss challenges and opportunities, WFD has played a major role in establishing a global network of interdisciplinary professionals who share a strong interest in PLS and who advocate for its introduction in their parliamentary contexts.

Box 4: Myanmar PLS Conference, June 2019

On 17-18th June 2019, in cooperation with the Universities of Jember (Indonesia) and Yangon (Myanmar), WFD organised the 2-day Academic Conference for PLS. Held in-person at the Lotte Hotel, Myanmar, the conference featured 55 speakers (including committee chairs, MPs, academics, parliamentary staff, and practitioners) from Australia, Georgia, Greece, India, Indonesia, Italy, Kosovo, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, South Korea, Sri Lanka, Taiwan, the UK and Vietnam. The 14 sessions ranged from how PLS could be used as an instrument to help deliver the SDGs to knowledge sharing from case studies of applying PLS to pieces of legislation and discussions around PLS methodologies. Approximately 700 participants attended, including 600 legislators from Myanmar and other Asian countries.

Overall, WFD's GIA-funded work at the global level has played a major influencing role in building political will and support for PLS among key parliamentary stakeholders, highly complementing parallel efforts at the programme level. As a result, WFD has been able to contribute to the development of new PLS concepts, mechanisms, and practices around the world.

Challenges

- **Regional balance:** the majority of WFD's engagement with academics has been European. WFD has to some extent addressed this by hosting international conferences and working with journals and academic institutions overseas. For example, WFD has collaborated with the University of Jember to develop two special-issue editions of the Journal of Southeast Asian Human Rights focused on PLS: 1) [Vol 3 No 2 December 2019](#) and 2) [Vol 4 No 1 June 2020](#). However, considering the scale of WFD's output, this still represents only a small proportion.
- **Other forms of legislative scrutiny:** in light of WFD's advocacy for PLS, some developing parliaments risked viewing PLS as the only or the most important oversight tool.
- **COVID-19:** conference and study visit attendees reported these to be extremely useful from both a knowledge and networking perspective. However, the evaluation noted the networking element was somewhat lost with the shift to online work that took place during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Opportunities

- **PLS Community of Practice:** WFD's plans for a Community of Practice on PLS would be a good avenue to respond to the above challenge on regional diversity. WFD should explore how this can draw in diverse national and epistemological viewpoints.
- **International bodies, conventions and treaties:** to date, WFD's work on PLS has focused on mainly national parliaments and legislation. Given the promising results, there may be value in looking at how PLS could be applied to international bodies, conventions and treaties.

4.2 Western Balkans

Box 5: Programme Summary: Creating a Parliamentary Network on Human Rights (HUGEN) Programme

- **Dates:** January 2019 to March 2022
- **Donor:** Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- **Programme value:** £400,000 (NOK 5,076,954)
- **WFD corporate outcomes:** Inclusive political systems; accountable political systems; protection of freedoms and rights

Overview

PLS in the Western Balkans was piloted across the region as part of the HUGEN Programme. The primary goal of the programme was to enhance oversight of the implementation of human rights- and gender-focused laws and policies. As PLS formed a core component of the programme, HUGEN is considered a first-of-its-kind approach to working at the regional level to establish a PLS network and guide parliaments to select specific human rights and/or gender legislation to apply PLS. The programme was implemented through the WFD Belgrade office with collaboration from other country offices across the region. PLS has been introduced as a new practice in the Western Balkans.

Summary of results

The programme succeeded in its goal of creating a valued **regional parliamentary network on human rights and gender equality**. With eight participating parliaments (across Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Montenegro, North Macedonia, and Serbia) and 15 human rights and gender equality parliamentary committees, HUGEN³⁹ provided a platform for dialogue between participating parliaments and a mechanism for regional parliamentary cooperation.

After establishing the network, this programme also aimed to improve the committees' application of oversight on human rights and gender-related laws. In November 2019, the Board recognised that parliament needed to play a bigger role in evaluating the impact of existing legislation and decided that participating committees would select and conduct PLS pilots. As a result, seven parliaments have successfully completed PLS pilot inquiries:⁴⁰

- **Law on Gender Equality in Society** (Subcommittee on Human Rights and Subcommittee on Gender Equality and Prevention of Violence Against Women, Parliament of Albania)
- **Law on Protection from Domestic Violence** (Committee for Gender Equality and Committee for the Protection of Human

³⁹ <https://www.hugenwb.net/participants/>

⁴⁰ The reports in English are included in a bibliography in Annex I of this report. Reports in other languages can be accessed [here](#).

Rights and Freedoms, Parliament of the Federation of Bosnia & Herzegovina)

- **Law on Preventing Domestic Violence** (Committee for Equal Opportunities, National Assembly of the Republic of Srpska)
- **Law on Protection Against Discrimination** (Committee on Human Rights, Gender Equality, Missing Persons and Petitions, Assembly of the Republic of Kosovo)
- **Law on Amendments to the Law on Gender Equality** (Committee on Gender Equality, Parliament of Montenegro)
- **Law on the Prohibition of Discrimination Against Persons with Disabilities** (Committee on Human Rights and Freedoms, Parliament of Montenegro)
- **Law on General Administrative Procedure** (Standing Inquiry Committee, Assembly of the Republic of North Macedonia)
- **Law on Prevention of Discrimination of Persons with Disabilities** (Committee of Human and Minority Rights and Gender Equality, National Assembly of the Republic of Serbia)

Notably, PLS is perceived as highly relevant and useful for HUGEN participants (see finding 6), with the network component representing a significant value-add (see finding 5) despite the pandemic's limitations on in-person meetings.

However, participants also reported the network has faded since WFD's programme ended with insufficient funding, processes and capacity in place to continue independently of WFD.

Throughout the programme, WFD played a major role in the overall establishment and functioning of the parliamentary network. WFD and its partners led training and played the vital role of convenor,

bringing all parties together. WFD also produced several research studies to inform the network's thinking and agenda, whilst also shaping the practice of PLS in participants' parliamentary contexts.

Challenges

- **Financial and human capacity:** as the committees had multiple mandates and duties yet limited human and financial resources, often committees did not prioritise PLS. Committees also tend not to have separate budgets from parliament, with any distinct budgets being small. As a result of this tension, during crunch periods committees tended to prioritise the review of draft legislation rather than oversight.
- **Limited technical capacity risked relying on experts:** PLS is a new practice for the parliaments of the Western Balkans, meaning parliaments have only just begun to build technical capacity. The evaluation noted this risked creating a reliance on external experts, although with limited funding parliaments also experienced challenges procuring them.

Opportunities

- **European Union accession:** since countries seeking accession to the European Union need to align legislation with the Acquis Communautaire, there is an opportunity for such countries to use PLS to ensure that their legislation is compatible with EU law to support closer integration.
- **Re-purpose HUGEN e-courses:** when built, these were considered an opportunity to leave something behind when the project was ending, however they have been underutilised and underpromoted. They are available in 3 Western Balkan languages and could be promoted and used further by WFD Country Offices or participants to continue to promote PLS.

4.3 Ukraine

Box 6: Programme Summaries: Ukraine

Inclusive and Accountable Politics (IAP) in Ukraine Programme:

- **Dates:** January 2019 to March 2022
- **Donor:** FCDO (GIA)
- **Programme value:** £162,849
- **WFD corporate outcomes:** Inclusive political systems; accountable political systems

Ensuring Effectiveness of COVID-19 Legislation Programme:

- **Dates:** October 2020 to March 2021
- **Donor:** FCDO
- **Programme value:** £15,000
- **WFD corporate outcomes:** Inclusive political systems; accountable political systems

Rada Next Generation (RANG) Programme:

- **Dates:** January 2022 to Present
- **Donor:** USAID
- **Programme value:** £1,000,000 (\$1,285,992)
- **WFD corporate outcomes:** Inclusive political systems; accountable political systems

VRU institutional and functional assessment

- **Dates:** December 2019 to September 2020
- **Donor:** UNDP
- **Programme value:** £135,377
- **WFD corporate outcomes:** Inclusive political systems; accountable political systems

Overview

WFD has worked with the Ukrainian Parliament (Verkhovna Rada or VRU) since 2016, particularly to support the VRU's shift towards stronger oversight of the executive. The programmes in box 3 were considered for this evaluation. Across these, a key focus has been legislative oversight, especially PLS.

Traditionally, the VRU has tended to focus on the legislative rather than the oversight aspect of its role, thereby producing a high number of bills and laws.

During the period studied by the evaluation, Ukraine found itself engulfed in two global crises. First, in 2020 the COVID-19 pandemic created significant challenges for government and parliament, with existing legislation deemed insufficient to respond to the pandemic. Secondly, on February 24th 2022, Russia's illegal and unprovoked invasion of Ukraine significantly altered the political landscape and priorities of the VRU, causing disruption to WFD's Kyiv-based team.

Results

In Ukraine, oversight is developing into a core practice, and aspiration, of key parliamentary stakeholders at the VRU. Since 2019, the programme made steady progress towards establishing PLS as a new procedure at the VRU: by March 2020, three committees were ready to introduce pilot PLS inquiries. This in itself is a significant result, especially as any change in practice within Ukrainian institutions requires extensive preparation.

In January and February 2020, WFD conducted an assessment of the functioning of the VRU secretariat. Because the staff members were now more knowledgeable of oversight practices, they made it clear in the interviews with WFD's programme team that they saw a

need for further development within the VRU. The final presentation WFD made to the Secretary-General, the deputies and the working group tasked with reform of the VRU secretariat therefore included a suggested restructuring of the VRU Secretariat that would give more prominence and resource to oversight.

WFD has since also carried out several activities to enhance oversight in the VRU, including supporting various PLS pilot inquiries in Ukraine (see table 3). Training was provided to Committees on an individual basis by WFD staff. WFD, in conjunction with the IALS, ran an advanced PLS course in July 2021 which has been attended by Committee staff. WFD also contributed by engaging local experts to assist in writing terms of reference for the PLS pilot inquiries and for public consultation.

Moreover, WFD has also played a key supporting role in introducing greater public consultation practices within the VRU. When the COVID-19 pandemic hit, the VRU brought in more than 27 pieces of emergency legislation to deal with the pandemic. With WFD support, the Committee on Economic Development introduced novel digital public consultation forms that enabled the Committee to seek broader and deeper consultation with the public when restrictions prevented in-person evidence.

Since October 2022, WFD through its RANG Program has supported three PLS pilot inquiries to integrate data and evidence from civil society into the PLS pilot inquiry discussions. This includes 1) The Committee on Energy and Housing and Communal Services, 2) The Committee on Social Policy and Protection of Veterans' Rights, and 3) The Committee on the Organization of State Power, Local Self-Government, Regional Development and Urban Planning.

Notably, the Committee on Social Policy and Protection of Veterans' Rights introduced a PLS pilot inquiry regarding the legal regulation of remote work, home work and work with the application of flexible working hours, for which the Committee received 1,274 submissions from employers and 19,120 submissions from employees. Danylo Bodnar, Deputy Secretariat Chair stated: "I understand and already see how we will continue to use these PLS tools."

Challenges

- **VRU PLS resources:** Progress risks remaining slow if the VRU secretariat does not identify a dedicated unit or person in a leadership role focused on PLS. While staff have become more knowledgeable about the oversight work the parliament should be doing according to its own laws, and skilled thanks to WFD activities, this is still a bottleneck.

Opportunities

- **Ongoing pilots in multiple committees:** WFD's ongoing programmes in Ukraine are currently working towards piloting PLS inquiries in several committees. This is an opportunity to institutionalise PLS into multiple committees in Ukraine, with the aim being to pilot every committee. WFD should continue to prioritise these pilots and ensure sufficient follow-up with PLS champions to anticipate challenges to securing legislative changes, which risks remaining difficult without action.
- **Building a PLS ecosystem:** The ongoing RANG programme in Ukraine is scheduled to continue until the end of September 2026. This length of time provides an opportunity to not only pilot PLS in each committee but also conduct multiple inquiries, build PLS champions and develop PLS ecosystems that extend beyond parliamentary culture.

4.4 Nepal

Box 7: Programme Summary: Nepal Inclusive and Accountable Politics (IAP) Programme

- **Dates:** January 2019 to March 2022
- **Donor:** FCDO
- **Programme value:** £115,000
- **WFD corporate outcomes:** Inclusive political systems; accountable political systems

Overview

Since multi-party democracy in Nepal was re-established in 2006, accountability of the government has relatively been limited. Whilst the Federal Parliament, specifically the Upper House and LMC, has *ex-post* scrutiny procedures in place, parliament has often not exercised its full range of scrutiny powers. Additionally, independent bodies, the media and civil society have more untapped potential to promote oversight and scrutinise the government's actions.

WFD's Inclusive and Accountable Politics (IAP) Programme in Nepal aimed to enhance the accountability of government by strengthening parliamentary oversight. WFD identified select committee chairs of the Federal Parliament as potential change agents, supporting them with committee mentoring and both technical- and policy-oriented seminars. A key goal of WFD's programme was to embed good practices in PLS in committees, particularly the LMC, as this is uniquely mandated to carry out scrutiny of legislation.

Summary of results

The Nepal IAP programme has made significant contributions to introducing PLS to Nepal and laying the ground for successive PLS pilot inquiries, helping to foster an emerging culture of

oversight and scrutiny. At the beginning of the programme period, there was very little *ex-post* scrutiny of legislation in Nepal, with PLS constituting a missing piece of the legislative puzzle. Despite the challenging operating context (see below) and short programming window, WFD has built strong relationships with PLS champions and harnessed their commitment to greater oversight. WFD has provided relevant and effective guidance to support them in generating local changes with the potential to scale impact moving forward.

There is strong evidence from the EIH and KIs to suggest that WFD's work is effective in supporting Nepal's parliamentary committees to begin to institutionalise principles of PLS into committees' oversight practices, particularly the LMC. WFD's monitoring data documents several significant milestones, with the programme either partially achieving (10) or fully achieving (4) 17 progress markers linked to the programme's accountability indicator on the extent to which parliamentary committees (particularly the LMC) establish credible oversight principles and practices to strengthen a culture of oversight and scrutiny. For example, the LMC has now introduced 15 laws with review provisions and produced a book that details the process of conducting a PLS inquiry, which incorporated and shared learning from the Committee's first PLS inquiry in 2019-20 and was enabled by support from the Parliament Secretariat that contributed nearly a million rupees (approximately £10,000) to the LMC to support its work on PLS.

Whilst these changes are not attributable to WFD and owe largely to the commitment of a select number of parliamentary stakeholders, WFD's contributions were commended during KIs where these stakeholders reported WFD's training and guidance had helped them to begin to raise the profile of PLS in Nepal's Federal Parliament, complementing the resources provided by other donors such as UNDP. WFD supported PLS pilot inquiries for two of the 14 laws

introduced with PLS review clauses, with parliamentary stakeholders reporting that WFD's guidance offered important clarity on how to introduce PLS pilot inquiries and optimise the process.

Box 8: PLS inquiries conducted in Nepal

The LMC has conducted 4 PLS inquiries: Social Practices (Reform) Act and Infectious Diseases Act, Public Procurement Act, and Lands Act. The Human Rights Committee has also now conducted three separate PLS inquiries.

Notably, WFD has also proved adept in aligning with fast-changing local priorities. As WFD was supporting the LMC to deliver a PLS pilot inquiry of the Social Practices (Reform) Act, the onset of the pandemic changed the Committee's priorities. The committee responded to the pandemic by opening a second PLS inquiry on the controversial Infectious Disease Act that the government invoked in the spring of 2020. WFD supported the LMC's PLS process, which concluded the Act was unsuitable for its purpose and proposed a series of recommendations with some taken up by the government.

Challenges

Two context-specific challenges were identified:

- **Limited resources for PLS:** evidence suggests that the government does not consider PLS a priority, limiting available funding and human resources of the Federal Parliament. This is compounded by the fact WFD is seen as the primary international sponsor of PLS in Nepal, despite a modest budget vis-à-vis other agencies, and the fact as MPs continually leave parliament their PLS expertise is prone to leave parliament too.
- **Parliamentary disruption:** pandemic lockdowns limited parliamentary activity, with an internal government crisis

culminating in parliament being dissolved twice in six months by Prime Minister Oli until the Supreme Court acted to reinstate parliament.

Opportunities

The following opportunities have been identified:

- **Utilising study visits and conferences:** KIs and monitoring data suggest study visits are especially effective in providing an opportunity for comparative learning. However, not all parliamentary stakeholders interviewed were aware of WFD's conferences and courses on PLS. Therefore, WFD should find ways to promote these conferences and courses to encourage further comparative learning.
- **Growing a PLS ecosystem:** a broader PLS ecosystem is beginning to emerge in Nepal. CSOs (e.g., The Legislative Academy) are beginning to advocate for PLS in parallel to WFD, whilst WFD has also begun to engage law students on PLS practices. Similarly, whilst the Human Rights Committee has now conducted three PLS pilot inquiries, PLS expertise has been concentrated in the LMC and parliamentary secretariat. WFD should purposefully explore opportunities for cross-committee PLS learning groups and consider how best to facilitate the invitation of other Committees, law colleges and the Law Commission at PLS hearings and WFD training events.
- **Enhancing capacity monitoring:** Despite WFD's investments in PLS, and those of other donors like UNDP, PLS remains underfunded in Nepal. Despite improvements in the overall levels of technical capacity for PLS in the Federal Parliament, there is a risk this capacity will leave Parliament when MPs' terms end or staff leave. To guard against this, WFD should consider mapping the capacity for PLS in parliament and use training to reinforce and expand this.

5. Conclusions and recommendations

“Laws aren’t just there to decorate the statute book and make it bigger and bigger. That’s the powerful lesson for parliaments, politicians and MPs. PLS can really make a difference to people based on evidence of results.”

Dr Maria Mousmouti, Associate Research Fellow, IALS

5.1 Conclusions

WFD inhabits an important niche in democracy strengthening programming globally where it can mobilise resources and people in ways other organisations cannot. WFD has contributed to shaping the development agendas of numerous developing parliaments, whilst making excellent use of its GIA-funding and convening capabilities to establish a global network of PLS practitioners and experts. During the COVID-19 pandemic, WFD’s ability to leverage institutional relationships and adopt an advisory role to many parliamentary stakeholders enabled greater scrutiny of emergency legislation, resulting in enhanced pandemic responses. This is in no small part due to the expertise of WFD’s country teams and the strong professional ties they have cultivated. It is also in virtue of the in-house expertise WFD can draw on, in particular, the Head of Practice for Accountability, as well as its ability to draw on an extensive network of partners (e.g., IALS). The promising results discussed to date indicate the WFD and its partner parliaments have demonstrated the value of PLS as a concept and oversight tool. WFD’s next steps should focus on reinforcing and scaling results during its current 2022-25 strategy.

Three themes of conclusions emerge from the evaluative evidence presented and include:

Theme 1: the value of WFD’s PLS programmes and research

- **Conclusion 1: WFD has empowered parliaments to exercise oversight using PLS pilot inquiries.** Until recently, WFD’s main focus has been on its institutional approach, which has enjoyed significant success in demonstrating the full range of the roles and powers available to parliamentarians and parliamentary staff, with evidence that this beginning to transform oversight culture. Whilst WFD has enjoyed more limited success in influencing parliamentary procedures and legislation that might further embed PLS in parliaments across the cases examined, where this has occurred it has helped to reinforce and institutionalise a culture of oversight.
- **Conclusion 2: WFD’s thematic approach to PLS is beginning to show promising results, although more work could be done to support thematic PLS pilot inquiries and support CSOs.** Notably, parliaments are demonstrating interest in this thematic approach, particularly for gender- and human rights-responsive PLS pilot inquiries. WFD has played a role in raising the priority of gender and human rights-responsive legislation and is beginning to see gender-sensitive PLS pilot inquiries emerge in programme contexts. However, it may be that WFD could better align its thematic approach with the interests of civil society and integrate civil society support more explicitly into its PLS programming generally, even when this is not an explicit goal of the programme (e.g., HUGEN).

- **Conclusion 3: WFD is making important contributions to the intermediate results set out in its theory of change but results risk being limited by a lack of output monitoring and support** (including follow-up support from WFD programme teams and in-country political support). For example, WFD doesn't always adopt a systemic view of building parliamentary capacity for PLS: whilst WFD has enjoyed success in supporting PLS champions it has made less headway in establishing the minimum sufficient levels of technical capacity required for PLS to continue in parliaments without WFD's support. Whilst this is to some extent mitigated by parliaments encoding PLS into parliamentary practices when including review clauses in legislation, there remains a risk that when PLS champions leave parliaments, their institutions may lose a significant degree of capacity for PLS. Better monitoring of institutional levels of technical capacity for PLS would enable WFD to build capacity more systematically and support efforts to anticipate and respond to challenges.
- **Conclusion 4: By continually adapting its work to support the priorities of its partners in parliament, WFD is responding to national priorities.** WFD's work on PLS is relevant to national-level priorities and those of its programme partners, which have included COVID-19 responses and a wide range of important national issues. The evaluation notes that this should remain a guiding principle in any future PLS work to achieve scale-up moving forward.
- **Conclusion 5: When programmes end, WFD does not always have sufficient sustainability plans in place.** When programmes end, a lack of sustainability plans means WFD's partners can be left without systems or plans in place to continue working on PLS when WFD's support ends, despite strong progress in developing PLS ecosystems globally. WFD may be missing opportunities to use optimise the use of its developed resources, particularly e-courses, and to facilitate introductions between its network and partners in parliament who might be able to maintain a degree of support.

Theme 2: WFD's convening power

- **Conclusion 6: WFD has significant convening power and influence with PLS practitioners globally, which has helped to galvanize a PLS community and provide a mechanism to share comparative examples of PLS.** This is perceived as helpful to WFD's stakeholders and field-forming. It has enabled WFD to play a valuable role in parliamentary communities of practice, like AGORA, which has helped to grow international PLS networks and has contributed to establishing PLS as a valued oversight tool in several parliaments. This has also been reinforced by WFD's influence over global parliamentary standards (see finding 4), such as IPU-drafted indicators for democratic parliaments. This is also successfully reinforced through study visits, conferences and training offered to parliamentary stakeholders and practitioners alike.
- **Conclusion 7: WFD's commendable approach to research partnership has facilitated a prolific research output that has significantly grown the evidence base and theory on PLS.** WFD has fostered a small but growing PLS ecosystem underpinned by strong institutional and academic relationships across fields, which is helping to amplify its impact and grow PLS as an interdisciplinary field. However, WFD's academic relationships have so far been predominantly Europe-centric and WFD might be missing opportunities to build and sustain academic interest in PLS in programme countries.

Theme 3: PLS dynamics in parliaments

- **Conclusion 8: PLS champions can be highly effective if they have the right level of authority.** This is especially true in parliamentary systems with weaker institutions that are at greater risk of experiencing political turbulence. WFD's champion-building approach has achieved significant success and future support should be tailored around barriers for champions. For example, difficulties in selecting legislation for PLS pilot inquiries were cited as a recurrent obstacle despite WFD's efforts to support this in training events.
- **Conclusion 9: PLS provides a process that facilitates political dialogue between cross-party and -parliamentary stakeholders.** However, PLS pilot inquiries have frequently encountered political obstacles that can limit the ultimate effectiveness of revising and improving legislation.
- **Conclusion 10: PLS pilot inquiries represent a continuous learning process that can enhance parliamentary stakeholders' motivation and knowledge for PLS.** PLS pilot inquiries play a vital role in moving from theory to practice, helping to make oversight more inclusive and providing hands-on experience of how to exercise oversight of legislation. However, they also offer an opportunity for parliamentary stakeholders to initiate political dialogue and generate political capital.

5.2 Recommendations

Overall, WFD should continue its work on PLS and maintain its position as a core service offering linked to clear objectives to generate change. In addition, the following recommendations are based on the evaluation findings and conclusions:

General

- **Recommendation 1 – WFD Head of Practice (Accountability): develop a clear two-track strategy to guide scale-up work on PLS globally focused on 1) institutional development and 2) thematic PLS.** The evaluation team notes WFD's current 2022-25 strategy specifies that 'we will focus on pre- and post-legislative scrutiny'⁴¹ which is a welcome development, but the strategy does not specify what the goals or priorities of this work will be. To ensure a coherent and goals-centred approach, WFD should consider developing an overarching strategy that elaborates its emerging two-track approach moving forward: 1) institutional and 2) thematic. This should also reflect on how WFD can best utilise resources already developed (particularly e-courses), reinforce gains made to date, embed PLS into the processes and practices of parliaments (also focusing on pre-legislative scrutiny), and maintain WFD's position at the vanguard of PLS programming. This should also pay attention to how PLS could better sustain impact once programmes end, enhance engagement with strategic state and non-state actors, and support greater cross-party and -

⁴¹ WFD Strategy, 2022-25. Available [here](#).

factional dialogue and cooperation. This could also explore how to engage other political actors who may also have an interest in PLS, such as political parties. Together, this would also better enable future assessments of WFD's performance in PLS moving forwards.

- **Recommendation 2 – WFD programme teams: collaborate closely with PLS champions to advocate for gender-, climate- and human rights-responsive PLS inquiries.** WFD has supported parliaments to introduce PLS pilot inquiries whilst also developing the concept of gender-, climate- and human rights-responsive PLS in parallel. Whilst there is evidence that theory is beginning to enter practice in the cases examined, WFD programme teams should work closely with PLS champions to further advocate for the introduction of gender-, climate- and human rights-responsive PLS inquiries. Importantly, it will be critical for new programmes to reflect on how a thematic approach to PLS could be integrated at the design stage. WFD's thematic work would be well suited to engage civil society more closely and could also explore closer alignment with international development targets, such as the Sustainable Development Goals 2030. This thematic approach to PLS may also be enhanced by the continued development of research, guides and participation in communities of practice.
- **Recommendation 3 – WFD MEL and programmes teams: refine the process for programmes' close-down phase.** Improvements here could enable programmes to work more closely with partner parliaments to develop continuity plans, even as programmes end. This might better support partner parliaments to continue to work on PLS in resource limited settings, which would improve the sustainability of WFD's programme impact. This should also be combined with efforts to curate training materials that could be of value to both internal WFD and external stakeholders (see recommendation 5).

Training and capacity

- **Recommendation 4 – WFD MEL and programme teams: improve output level monitoring systems.** This evaluation has revealed WFD's activities are highly valued by participants, but monitoring data in WFD's EIH has not documented the full extent to which new knowledge, skills and connections have been applied in practice subsequently. Given the conclusion that WFD is making important progress along its theory of change, better monitoring at the output level may better enable WFD to identify common drivers and barriers moving forwards and provide additional evidence on what works, for whom and in what circumstances. Whilst in some cases this was being captured by the diligent reporting of WFD teams, taking a more systemic approach could help to support programme decisions. Additionally, building on recommendation 2, by investing more in follow-up and sustainability of projects (see findings 8 and 9), more consideration could be given to how to embed inclusive legislative practices long-term and output monitoring could support this.
- **Recommendation 5 – WFD Head of Practice (Accountability) and Evidence & Learning Manager: review training materials with sustainability in mind.**
 - **5a – external training:** As a product of the PLS training courses, parliamentary stakeholders should be encouraged to develop their introductory course for parliamentary colleagues in their contexts, focusing on what is important to them. Given the strong appetite for PLS in partner parliaments and WFD's limited resources, this may lead to a more sustainable level of capacity in partner parliaments, which to date have relied partly on expertise provided by WFD.

- **5b – internal training:** Inductions for WFD programme staff should better take advantage of e-courses and guidance developed to date, which might represent a low-cost way of improving staff familiarity and confidence in PLS.
- **Recommendation 6 – WFD programme and business development teams: adopt a more systematic view to building the technical capacity of parliaments to undertake PLS.** This should be underpinned by a theoretical framework for PLS capacity that can help to identify where parliaments are stronger and weaker. This would help to identify where WFD's investments are likely to achieve results in the form of policy or legislative changes in response to PLS pilot inquiries. This would also permit WFD to monitor the level of PLS expertise in the parliaments and committees it works with to inform the nature, scope and scale of its PLS support.

Networking and knowledge sharing

- **Recommendation 7 – WFD Head of Practice (Accountability): ensure the planned Global Community of Practice on PLS responds to the needs of the diverse stakeholders in its network.** WFD's plans for a Global Community of Practice are welcomed, which will take advantage of its status as a thought leader and global convener in PLS to continue to galvanise the field and sector moving forwards. This should aim to build on principles laid out in the 2022-25 strategy and make connections between PLS practitioners, facilitate opportunities for peer-to-peer learning and share evidence of comparative PLS cases. This represents an opportunity to build on and supplement WFD's programme work and particular attention should be paid to connecting parliamentary stakeholders with experts who could support parliaments outside of WFD's programmes. The evaluation also notes stakeholders' (i.e., MPs, parliamentary staff, implementers and academics) needs vary and so ensuring the community can respond to each of these will be vital for its success.
- **Recommendation 8 – WFD Head of Practice (Accountability): review and curate a PLS learning library.** WFD has developed a significant library of PLS resources (including publications and e-courses) and as this continues to grow, consideration should be given to how resources could best be shared and made accessible to the wider PLS community, such as via the Community of Practice. This may also be an opportunity to curate good practices from other organisations and further strengthen the PLS ecosystem globally.
- **Recommendation 9 – WFD programme teams: WFD country and programme teams should consider how to build and maintain wider PLS ecosystems in their programme contexts and foster broad-based political support for PLS inquiries.** Particular attention should be paid to establishing cross-party and -factional dialogue and cooperation for PLS, as well as engaging strategic state and non-state actors. Evidence suggests that broad-based political support is likely to be necessary for PLS inquiries to achieve significant legislative and policy changes. This evaluation notes an appetite and potential opportunity to expand training and build relations with a range of actors as of yet somewhat underexplored relative to parliamentary stakeholders. For instance, this includes in-country academic institutions, think tanks, law colleges and commissions, the media and CSOs.

Annexes

Find the following annexes below:

- I. Bibliography
- II. Evaluation timeline
- III. Interview guide

Annex I: Bibliography

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Annex II: Evaluation timeline

Phase	Task	Due date
Design & desk review (Module 1)	Identify priority case studies	14 th October
	Initial stakeholder interviews	14 th October
	Refine the evaluation questions and focus	14 th October
	Country desk review to identify key outcomes, understand programme operating contexts, and finalise list of stakeholders for interview	14-28 th October
	Identify and reconstruct theory/ies of change	28 th October
	Deliverable: final design document	28th October
Case Studies, Analysis & Synthesis (Modules 2 & 3)	Country desk review continued	n/a
	Key informant interviews started (4) – R1	4 th November
	Analysis workshop – (1/3)	25 th November
	Key informant interviews continued (10) – R2	11 th November
	Analysis workshop – (2/3)	16 th December
	Key informant interviews (9) – R3	19 th December
	Analysis workshop – (3/3)	21 st January
	Final analysis workshop – analysis of key trends and synthesis of evidence (including identification of findings and provisional recommendations)	30 th January
Reporting, communications and knowledge sharing (Module 4)	Internal write up and beginning of report drafting	(continued)
	Deliverable: Preliminary findings presentation with primary users	2nd February
	Reporting workshop – discussion on stakeholder feedback and report revision	7 th February
	Deliverable: Recommendations workshop	22nd February
	Report revision and finalisation	(continued)
	Deliverable: draft report shared	20th March
	Quality assurance	20 th March to 7 th April
	Deliverable: final report published	Early May

Annex III: Interview guide

Interviewee(s)	Informant type, organisation, position	Time in role
Interviewer(s)	Date and time of interview	Consent provided?
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interview: YES / NO / N/A • Recording: YES / NO / N/A
Preparatory notes		
Headline notes and preliminary analysis		
Participant notes	<i>E.g. participant was engaged/distracted/guarded/ frustrated, etc.</i>	
EQ notes	<i>E.g. particular relevance to one or more study questions</i>	
General notes and/or other emerging findings	<i>E.g. Discussion raised interesting points about X, Y, Z</i>	
Good quotes	<i>E.g. QUOTE: “WFD engaged well in X but not so well in Y because Z”</i>	

Project introduction

1. **Before interview:** Adapt and share interview guide ahead of interview, then tailor questions and supplement with notes from programme documents.
2. **During interview:**
 - a. **Introduce the project:** the evaluation will primarily be learning-focused with two main objectives: 1) to understand the relevance and effectiveness of WFD’s work in PLS by documenting how WFD is contributing to results; and 2) to identify lessons learned and make recommendations for WFD’s future work on PLS. In this conversation, we are looking to build and understand a story of change, WFD’s role in this and why this the change is important. We want to understand what happened, who was involved, when and where the changes took place, how WFD contributed to making the change happen and why this

is important. We will also ask about what other factors were at play so that we have a full understanding of the context in which the changes took place. We're also especially interested to hear about what challenges occurred and any adaptations to the programme from the original design in response.

- b. Explain interview purpose:** This interview will be around 60 minutes and will help provide us with an appreciation of the data that we may not get by looking at the programme documents alone.
- c. Request informed consent:** The source of any information will remain anonymised if presented in the evaluation report. Before including any non-anonymised data in the report, specific consent will be sought from individuals concerned. If at any point you wish to end the interview, not answer a question, or retract any comments you make at a later date (up until publication), you are free to do so. Are you happy to participate on this basis?
- d. Offer an opportunity to ask questions**

Q1. Introductions and consent:

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Q2. Outcome harvesting: What do you think are the most important or significant results that have emerged from WFD's recent work on PLS? Can you provide any examples?

Tip: Capture any expected and unexpected outcomes and test the link between the output level in discussion.

Prompt: Do you have any good examples at either the London or programme/country level?

•

Q3. Theory-based discussion: 1) To what extent is WFD's work on PLS contributing to enhancing parliaments legislative and oversight capacities? 2) How about inclusive legislative practices?

Tip: Look for evidence of causal pathways. Are assumptions in TOC reasonable? Can participants provide examples to support their claims? For country case studies, look for evidence of adaptation to country contexts and avoid general statements.

Prompts:

Legislative and oversight capacities – how about parliaments’ oversight role, legislative accountability and/or establishing the legislative cycle?

Inclusive legislative practices – how about engagement with CSOs?

Evidence of participants from events contributing to national and or global dialogue on PLS?

Evidence of individuals exercising stronger capacities of PLS and stronger networks to deliver it?

•

Q4. Process evaluation: 1) WFD undertakes a range of PLS work. What WFD PLS-related activities are you familiar with and do you think they have been effective in responding to national priorities and/or global challenges? Why or why not?

Tip: *Focus on activity level – are outputs being achieved as expected? Test assumptions and ask for examples where possible.*

Prompt: *What WFD activities do you think have yielded the most significant results and why? How have WFD’s activities impacted your work? Were there occasions where you needed to foster/boost political buy-in – what did you do?*

•

Q5. Process evaluation:

WFD STAFF ONLY: To what extent did your work on PLS adapt in response to challenges or opportunities that may have arisen? What were they and what was the outcome?

NON WFD ONLY: To what extent has your engagement with WFD or WFD’s PLS work in general enabled you to respond to challenges or opportunities that have arisen in your work?

Tip: *For WFD staff/former staff, what are the challenges that have been encountered? What level of adaptation occurred, what was the result? For non-WFD staff, look for evidence of whether WFD’s support has been relevant to different contexts and if it has improved their capacity somehow, or the knowledge base on PLS generally.*

Prompt: *How did you adapt to meet these challenges? What was WFD’s role?*

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Q6. Contribution story: 1) Are there any other important external factors that are necessary for success in PLS? Do you have any examples in relation to WFDs' programmes? 2) Have there been any limiting factors? Do you have any examples?

Tip: we are looking for other influencing factors at the outcome level. This could be formations of new parliamentary units, the contributions of other democracy support actors, media reports that gave added impetus to reform efforts, etc.

Prompts: Do you think the change would have happened without WFD's support? Who did the results depend upon most? How has WFD attempted to harness and account for these factors in its work?

•

Q7. Alignment: To what extent has WFD's PLS work been aligned with the work of other democracy support actors?

Tip: Look for how this fits in the big picture but also whether there are complementarities and synergies that may be being missed, as well as instances of democracy support actors undertaking contradictory activities.

Prompts: Who have we collaborated with? Would you recommend us to collaborate with others who we may not be?

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Q8. Recommendations: Do you have any recommendations for how WFD could improve the impact, relevance or sustainability of the results through its work on PLS? What should we do differently?

Tips: Try to link this to specific challenges discussed.

Prompts: Do you think WFD could have done or be doing anything differently? Is there anything I haven't asked about that you think I should know? Would you recommend we speak with anybody else?

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Annex IV: Timeline of PLS initiatives by WFD, 2017-2022

The below timeline provides an overview of PLS activities undertaken by WFD between 2017-2022 in more detail than Figure 1, structured according to three categories of initiatives:

1. Research and development of PLS tools and knowledge products
2. Country programmes
3. Representation and advocacy on PLS

2017

Research and development of PLS tools and knowledge products

- First expert seminar on “*Parliaments and PLS*”, in London.
- Second expert seminar on “In Search of a Gender-Specific Approach to Post-Legislative Scrutiny by Parliament”, at the Scottish Parliament.
- Publication of *Guide for Parliaments on PLS*.
- Publication of *Comparative Study on PLS*.

Country programmes

- PLS capacity building and training with the parliaments of Indonesia, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, Armenia.

Representation and advocacy on PLS

- Presentation at the Parliamentary Forum on Sustainable Development (Bali).
- Presentation at PSA Parliaments Group conference, Scottish Parliament.
- Blog posts on PLS.

2018

Research and development of PLS tools and knowledge products

- Academic Seminar on PLS, at IALS in London.
- Special issue on PLS of the European Journal of Law Reform.
- Publication of PLS Principles.
- Preparation of categorization of parliamentary practices on PLS, as basis for academic article ‘PLS in Europe’.

Country programmes

- PLS capacity building and training with the parliaments of Laos, Lebanon, Armenia, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Indonesia, Morocco, Myanmar, Nepal, Ukraine, Malaysia, Algeria, Jordan.

- Preparations for the international academic seminar on PLS in Asia, in cooperation with WFD Myanmar and WFD Indonesia.

Representation and advocacy on PLS

- Blog posts on PLS.
- Cooperation with IALS.

2019

Research and development of PLS tools and knowledge products

- First Certified Course on PLS, as in-person 5-days course in London, with IALS.
- Publication of: Comparative Study on PLS in the Americas.
- Two special issues on PLS of The Journal of Southeast Asian Human Rights, University of Jember (Indonesia).
- Expert seminar on legislative impact assessments and Post-Legislative Scrutiny, with University of Hull (Lord Norton).
- Academic article on: How Parliaments Monitor Sustainable Development Goals - A Ground for Application of Post Legislative Scrutiny.
- International academic conference based on a call for papers: *Post-Legislative Scrutiny in Asia*, organized in Yangon, Myanmar.
- PLS panel at the Wroxton Workshop for parliamentarians and scholars.

Country programmes

- PLS capacity building and training with the parliaments of Ecuador, Georgia, Indonesia, Mexico, Morocco, Myanmar, Pakistan, Ukraine, Uzbekistan.
- Start of the regional PLS programme for the Western Balkans (HUGEN project).
- Support to pilot projects on PLS in Myanmar, Nepal, Georgia.

Representation and advocacy on PLS

- Cooperation on PLS with IALS, ParlAmericas, Africa colloquium of legal counsel to parliaments.
- Presentation at the bi-Annual Conference of the Standing Group on Parliaments of the European Consortium for Political Research (ECPR).
- Blog posts on PLS.
- PLS publications in English, Spanish, Arabic, Myanmar, Nepali and Russian languages.

2020

Research and development of PLS tools and knowledge products

- Publication of: Policy Paper: Gender-Sensitive Post-Legislative Scrutiny and three case-studies.
- Publication of Academic article: PLS in Europe.

- Special issue on PLS: Journal of Legislative Studies, Vol 26 (3), 2020.
- Consultations on future project on Parliamentary and legislative indicators for post-legislative scrutiny.
- PLS Manual adaptation for Myanmar.
- Online certified course on PLS and lawmaking for Myanmar.
- Digital conference on impact of COVID-19 on democracy and legislative processes, co-organized with IALS.

Country programmes

- PLS capacity building and training with the parliaments of Albania, Armenia, Morocco, Serbia, Ukraine.
- Support to CSO approach in PLS, incl. in Lebanon.
- PLS pilot inquiry begins in Ukraine on COVID-19 emergency legislation.

Representation and advocacy on PLS

- Blog posts on PLS.
- Cooperation on PLS with IALS.

2021

Research and development of PLS tools and knowledge products

- Publication of: Post-legislative scrutiny of climate and environment legislation: Guide for parliamentary practice.
- Start of the *PLS Series*, and publication of Number 1: PLS in the UK Parliament.
- Publication of *PLS Series 2: Post-Legislative Scrutiny of election campaign finance legislation* - Comparative study on legislation and practices in Indonesia, Moldova, and Nigeria.
- Publication of Routledge book: Parliaments and Post-Legislative Scrutiny.
- Second Certified Course on PLS, as online course during July, with IALS.
- Launch of Parliamentary and legislative indicators for Post-Legislative Scrutiny.

Country programmes

- PLS capacity building and training with the parliaments of DRC, Georgia, Maldives, Mexico, Nigeria, Ukraine, Nepal.
- Advice to PLS pilot projects in Western Balkans parliaments (HUGEN project).
- Advice to Global Equality Project (GEP) on PLS for CSOs approaches.

Representation and advocacy on PLS

- Blog posts on PLS.
- Cooperation on PLS with IALS.

Research and development of PLS tools and knowledge products

- Publication of *PLS Series 3: Sunset Clauses and Post-Legislative Scrutiny*.
- Publication of: *Post-Legislative Scrutiny: From a Model for Parliamentarians to a CSO Strategic and Operational Tool*.
- Third Certified Course on PLS, as online course during July, with IALS.
- Online course on PLS and lawmaking for parliament and civil society in The Maldives.
- Advise on creation of 4-languages E-course on PLS for the Western Balkans (HUGEN).

Country programmes

- PLS capacity building and training with the parliaments of DRC, Georgia, Jordan, Kosovo, Laos, Mozambique, Nigeria.
- PLS indicators assessment preparations for Indonesia, Kenya, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Scotland, Wales, Italy, South Africa.
- Support to three Committee pilot projects on PLS in Ukraine.
- Advice to WFD country teams on institutionalization of PLS.

Representation and advocacy on PLS

- Blog posts on PLS.
- Cooperation on PLS with IALS, IFLA, IPU, ODIHR and Venice Commission.

Westminster Foundation for Democracy (WFD) is the UK public body dedicated to supporting democracy around the world. Operating internationally, WFD works with parliaments, political parties, and civil society groups as well as on elections to help make countries' political systems fairer, more inclusive and accountable.

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