The Commonwealth Partnership for Democracy (CP4D) Programme set out to promote more effective governance through improved parliamentary inclusion and accountability in Commonwealth democracies. Over the 2-year life of the programme, CP4D worked with parliaments in 15 commonwealth countries across Sub-Saharan Africa and South-East Asia to increase the representation of women, young people, people with disabilities and the LGBT+ community, and to improve how they monitor the executive. In total, through country-level engagements, as well as regional events, CP4D engaged 30 legislatures from each of the Commonwealth regions. The programme was led by Westminster Foundation for Democracy (WFD) and implemented in partnership with the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA), Commonwealth Parliamentary Association UK Branch (CPA-UK) and the Commonwealth Local Government Forum (CLGF).

**KEY RESULTS**

The CP4D programme supported changes in policy, increased capacity, and formalized mechanisms for increased coordination between civil society and duty bearers. Results were achieved at the country, regional and Commonwealth-wide programming levels.

**COUNTRY-LEVEL CHANGE**

Country-level programming focusing on inclusion of underrepresented groups was carried out in The Gambia, Ghana, India, Kenya, Malawi, Malaysia, Mozambique, Pakistan, Sierra Leone, Sri Lanka, and Uganda. Key results included policy and procedural changes, the introduction and enactment of legislation, as well as the introduction of external policy. Notable examples of changes achieved in CP4D programme countries include:

- In Mozambique, Mércia Viriato Licá, a 23-year-old female who, because of a birth defect, has no upper limbs, was elected to the Mozambican Parliament¹.
- In India, 500 women who were reached by CP4D programming committed to running in the upcoming local elections.
- In Uganda, the Uganda Parliamentary Forum on Youth Affairs (UPFYA) drafted the National Graduate Scheme Bill (2018) and presented it on the floor of Parliament with overwhelming support².
- In Kenya, two new disability bills were passed, and one previously passed bill was operationalized.

**REGIONAL-LEVEL CHANGE**

CP4D delivered five regional conferences. Conference topics included women’s political participation and leadership; youth political participation and leadership and LGBT+ inclusion. CP4D conferences also included CPA-UK led regional Commonwealth Association of Public Accounts Committees (CAPAC) workshops with legislatures from

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¹ [https://globalvoices.org/2020/02/03/newly-elected-mozambican-mp-who-lacks-upper-limbs-plans-to-focus-on-education/](https://globalvoices.org/2020/02/03/newly-elected-mozambican-mp-who-lacks-upper-limbs-plans-to-focus-on-education/)

² [https://www.independent.co.ug/support-national-graduate-scheme-bill/](https://www.independent.co.ug/support-national-graduate-scheme-bill/)
30 countries across all four of the Commonwealth regions – including the Caribbean and the Pacific regions – to promote best practices and effective scrutiny of public expenditure.

Programming at the country-level also resulted in regional momentum and programming coherence. For example, networking and sharing among youth chapters across East Africa empowered youth to elevate their voices in local political discourse.

**COMMONWEALTH-WIDE CHANGE**

**Twelve Parliaments** completed a facilitated self-assessment utilizing the updated *CPA Recommended Benchmarks for Democratic Legislatures*. The updated Benchmarks were significantly stronger on gender equality, in particular. The feedback from assessments enabled advocates to persuade parliamentary colleagues and authorities to be more open to tracking and acting on barriers to gender equality.

A number of legislatures outside the CP4D programme are currently undertaking or scheduling a self-review based on the benchmarks. There has also been interest from other leading international organisations to use the benchmarks as a foundation to develop a set of global benchmarks for all parliaments.

**SUSTAINABILITY OF RESULTS**

96% of local partner survey participants said that outcomes from their programme(s) were likely or very likely to be sustained. All local partner survey respondents (n=27) also indicated that they are still involved in efforts to further similar inclusion or accountability objectives. Some programme participants have already reported how they are using what they learned through participation in CP4D programming in light of COVID-19. For example, students who participated in youth leadership programmes in Ghana have taken skills gained to act as community leaders on the frontlines of the COVID-19 response.

Some CP4D programming will continue with other funding. **59% of CP4D partners surveyed report that they will continue at least some of their CP4D programmes with other funding sources.** However, the sustainability of the CP4D programme extends beyond the continuation of programme activities themselves. **65% of CP4D partners surveyed report that participation in CP4D has influenced their non-CP4D programming.**

**KEY LESSONS LEARNED**

**FLEXIBLE DESIGN**

Given CP4D’s short implementation period (2 years), partners focused programming in areas that were likely to achieve results in a short timeframe. This required deep knowledge of the local context and existing relationships with key local and parliamentary stakeholders. In addition, partners sought areas where they could build on existing momentum – including where legislation had already been drafted and stalled or passed but not yet operationalized – and contribute to results rather than focusing efforts on areas that would demonstrate directly attributable outcomes.

**BENEFITS OF INTERACTION BETWEEN PROGRAMMING LEVELS**

The intra-national exchange and exposure to and between politicians, champions and communities at both the national and local levels was key to programme success. In particular, the networking and communication opportunities provided – both upwards with high-level politicians and downwards with local political actors and affected communities – proved to be CP4Ds most effective strategies. Through training and facilitated dialogue, participants were able to hone their messaging and more effectively advocate for and between diverse audiences.

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3 South Africa, Malaysia, Belize, Uganda, Tanzania, Kenya, St. Lucia, The Gambia, Grenada, Ghana, Pakistan & Sierra Leone