

# Commonwealth Secretariat Strategic Plan

2017/18 – 2020/21



The Commonwealth

---

# Commonwealth Secretariat Strategic Plan

2017/18 – 2020/21

Approved by the Commonwealth Secretariat Board of Governors

1 June 2017



The Commonwealth

---

© Commonwealth Secretariat 2017

All rights reserved. This publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording or otherwise provided it is used only for educational purposes and is not for resale, and provided full acknowledgement is given to the Commonwealth Secretariat as the original publisher.

Views and opinions expressed in this publication are the responsibility of the author and should in no way be attributed to the institutions to which he is affiliated or to the Commonwealth Secretariat.

Wherever possible, the Commonwealth Secretariat uses paper sourced from responsible forests or from sources that minimise a destructive impact on the environment.

Printed and published by the Commonwealth Secretariat.

# Contents

<b>1. Introduction</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>2. Context: Challenges and Opportunities</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>3. Outcomes: Strategic, Intermediate and Cross-cutting</b>	<b>3</b>
3.1 Democracy	5
3.2 Public institutions	5
3.3 Youth and Social Development	7
3.4 Economic Development	8
3.5 Small and Other Vulnerable States	9
3.6 Cross-Cutting Outcomes	10
<b>4. Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>5. Programme Coordination and Coherence</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>6. Risk Management</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>7. Delivery Plan</b>	<b>13</b>

# Acronyms

<b>CHOGM</b>	Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting
<b>CMAG</b>	Commonwealth Ministerial Action Group
<b>EPG</b>	Eminent Persons Group
<b>PMIS</b>	Programme Management and Information System
<b>SDGs</b>	Sustainable Development Goals
<b>SDP</b>	Sport for Development and Peace
<b>SRF</b>	Strategic Results Framework
<b>UN</b>	United Nations
<b>UPR</b>	Universal Periodic Review
<b>YDI</b>	Youth Development Index
<b>CVE</b>	Countering Violent Extremism

# 1. Introduction

1. The Commonwealth is a voluntary association of independent and equal sovereign states. Its special strength lies in the combination of its diversity and shared inheritance. Its members are bound together by respect for all states and peoples; by shared values and principles; and by concern for the vulnerable. The Commonwealth Secretariat in London is the backbone of the Commonwealth. It convenes summits and high-level meetings; executes plans agreed by the Commonwealth Heads of Government; promotes Commonwealth values and principles; and facilitates the work of the Commonwealth organisations.
2. The Strategic Plan 2017/18 – 2020/21 covers a four-year period. It continues the priorities agreed for eight to ten years in the Strategic Plan 2013/14 – 2016/17. It allows the Secretariat to build on the results achieved and lessons learned during the last plan period. The development of the new Plan has greatly benefitted from the performance feedback provided by member states, two external audits undertaken by KPMG (one each on strategic and operational planning), a meta-analysis of the Commonwealth Secretariat's evaluation studies, and an independent evaluation of performance of the Secretariat in the first three years of the previous Strategic Plan.
3. The Strategic Plan is a short and smart document. It is an aspirational plan that outlines the Secretariat's strategy in line with the values and principles enshrined in the Commonwealth Charter. It is aligned with global goals and conventions, including the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the Paris Climate Change Agenda, which were agreed within the past four years. It also includes mandates from the last two Commonwealth Heads of Government Meetings (CHOGMs), including an emphasis on good governance, anti-corruption, empowering women and girls and protecting them against violence and harmful practices. The new Plan continues our commitment to the development and resilience of small and other vulnerable states, which comprise the majority of the Commonwealth's membership.
4. The new Plan period heralds a different way of adaptive planning, monitoring and delivery of results. A detailed Delivery Plan will be developed in line with the new Strategic Plan. Many of the operational recommendations put forth in the Strategic Plan evaluation will be addressed in the Delivery Plan. Both the new Plan and the Delivery Plan have been informed by the lessons learnt and the recommendations of two key independent evaluations – a meta evaluation of 30 evaluations the Secretariat conducted over 11 years and the evaluation of the previous Strategic Plan. A smart organisational structure will be in place and the financial situation will be more predictable by early next year. The new Strategic Plan will be operationalised accordingly from 1 July 2017.

## 2. Context: Challenges and Opportunities

5. We live in a complex and dynamic world. It is a time of profound political, economic, social, environmental and technological changes. The Commonwealth is affected by the external **challenges**, and also has the **opportunity** to influence the wider world. Its values of democracy, development and diversity bind its members together, and provide a common ground to help each other. We shall continue to use our soft power to influence the external environment, and emerge as a global force for good.
6. The strength of the Commonwealth has been demonstrated in its great potential to influence contemporary global policies and institutions - be it the SDGs, resilience or de-risking. It must continue to build on its convening power, strengthen high level political dialogue, enhance efforts for consensus building, promote Commonwealth priorities, and champion the cause of small and other vulnerable states at global forums.
7. Climate change is a global challenge. It is reversing progress on poverty alleviation, economic growth and stability across the world. There is compelling evidence that small, vulnerable and least developed countries are disproportionately suffering from its adverse impacts. The Commonwealth has long been at the forefront of global action and needs to continue its efforts on this front.
8. There is a huge trade potential within the association due to common language, legal systems and institutions. Bilateral trade costs between Commonwealth partners are 19% lower when compared to other country pairings. Intra-Commonwealth trade is growing and is expected to reach US\$1trillion by 2020.
9. The Commonwealth family is home to one third of the global youth population. More than half of its citizens are under the age of 30. This is an enormous demographic advantage as many developed country populations are declining and ageing. The Commonwealth views young people as assets and will continue to work with them.
10. Member states of the Commonwealth face financial challenges and so does the Secretariat. It is an opportunity to improve value for money, prioritise better, adopt adaptive programming, chase ideas and innovation, leverage the Commonwealth network, go for global partnerships and have a leaner structure. The new Strategic Plan is all about having more impact with a smaller team and smarter ways of working.
11. A meeting of Commonwealth Heads of Government (CHOGM) will be held in the first year of the Strategic Plan. How the mandates of CHOGM 2018 will be carried forth in the Strategic Plan will be determined following consultations with member countries through the Board of Governors after CHOGM.

### 3. Outcomes: Strategic, Intermediate and Cross-cutting

12. The Plan is built on strategic, intermediate and cross cutting outcomes. Strategic outcomes reflect the long-term change the Secretariat aims to strive for and contributes to over an eight to ten-year period. We are currently in the latter half of that period. Intermediate outcomes are medium term results for four years. Short-term outcomes will be developed to track progress on annual and biennial basis. Cross-cutting outcomes reflect Secretariat-wide commitment in these areas.
13. There were 149 programme outcomes in the previous strategic plan. In the last planning cycle, this number was reduced to 24, and placed under six strategic outcomes. The mid-term review further reduced it to 22. The current Plan has reduced strategic outcomes from six to five and the intermediate outcomes from 22 to 17. The new outcomes have also been mapped against the 5Ps of the SDGs, which are Partnerships, Peace, People, Planet and Prosperity.
14. There are three cross-cutting outcomes, namely, Partnerships and Innovation, Gender Mainstreaming, and Consensus Building. The outcomes matrix (on the next page) also includes four new intermediate outcomes on: promoting civil path to peace with a focus on preventing violent extremism; sports for peace and development; protecting women, girls and the vulnerable from violence; and increasing resilience and mitigation against climate change.
15. The outcomes matrix will be developed into a Strategic Results Framework (SRF) after the approval of the Strategic Plan. The SRF will have smart intermediate outcomes that will be developed when the new organisational structure is ready and the financial position is more clear. The results framework will have not only smart intermediate outcomes but also indicators, baselines and targets. It will be the basis for the development of the Delivery Plan.



Strategic Plan 2017/18 – 2020/21

OUTCOMES MATRIX

Goals

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

	Democracy (Peace)	Public institutions (Peace)	Youth and Social Development (People)	Economic Development (Prosperity)	Small and Other Vulnerable States (Planet)
Strategic Outcomes	1. Greater adherence to Commonwealth political values and principles	2. More effective, efficient and equitable public governance	3. People of the Commonwealth fulfil their potential with dignity and equality in a healthy environment	4. More inclusive economic growth and sustainable development	5. Strengthened resilience of small and other vulnerable states, including adaptation and mitigation against climate change
Intermediate Outcomes	1.1 CMAG is well-informed and supported to protect and promote Commonwealth values and principles 1.2 Member states engaged with and benefit from strengthened Good Offices of the Secretary-General 1.3 Member states conduct fair, credible and inclusive elections 1.4 Strengthened mechanisms of civil paths to peace in member states to counter violent extremism	2.1 Human Rights promoted and protected, and participation in the UN's UPR process improved 2.2 Rule of law strengthened and access to justice ensured for all 2.3 Improved public administration for good governance, and the prevention and elimination of corruption	3.1 Young people engaged and empowered to meaningfully participate in political and development processes 3.2 Sports contributes to sustainable development, health, and peaceful and just societies 3.3 Strengthened sustainable policies reduce disparities and improve health and education outcomes 3.4 Women, girls and other vulnerable groups empowered and protected against violence and harmful practices	4.1 Effective mechanisms for increased trade, increased access to trade, employment and business growth 4.2 Commonwealth positions, advanced in international development and financing mechanisms 4.3 National frameworks facilitate effective debt management 4.4 Sustainable development of marine, other natural resources, including 'blue economies'	5.1 International policies, mechanisms and rules are more responsive to small and other vulnerable states' development strategies and resilience needs 5.2 Increased resilience, adaptation and mitigation against climate change 5.3 Improved access to climate financing

Cross-cutting Outcomes

- Partnerships and Innovation: Strengthened partnerships and innovations to support member countries and Commonwealth organisations
- Gender Mainstreaming: Gender equality and the empowerment of women integrated in the Secretariat's policies, frameworks, programmes and projects
- Consensus Building: Member states achieve consensus and advance key priority issues

### 3.1 Democracy

#### Greater adherence to Commonwealth political values and principles

- **CMAG** is well-informed and supported to protect and promote Commonwealth values and principles
  - Member states engaged with and benefit from strengthened **Good Offices** of the Secretary-General
  - Member states conduct fair, credible and inclusive **elections**
  - Strengthened mechanisms of civil paths to peace in member states to **counter violent extremism**
16. The Secretariat supports members in adhering to the Commonwealth's fundamental political values in line with the Charter of the Commonwealth through the Secretary-General's Good Offices and the Commonwealth Ministerial Action Group (CMAG). During the previous Strategic Plan period, the Secretariat strengthened its analytical capacity and proactive engagement on Good Offices, including supporting member states following political crises. Assistance will continue to be provided, where discussed and agreed with member states, to help prevent, manage and overcome internal differences.
  17. In recent years, the Secretariat has increased its focus on pre-electoral environments and implementation of Commonwealth Observer Group recommendations. The Secretariat will continue to develop and strengthen the capacity of Commonwealth Election Management Bodies to conduct fair, credible and inclusive elections through targeted technical assistance, innovative projects such as the successful Junior Elections Professional initiative as well as the continued support of the Commonwealth Electoral Network created in 2010.
  18. The Secretariat's work on respect and understanding, including civil paths to peace, will include a focus on countering violent extremism. The primary mode of delivery will remain the dissemination of Commonwealth values, including the promotion of dialogue to prevent and resolve conflicts, with a particular focus on protecting and educating young people. Targeted support will be provided to member states by the Countering Violent Extremism (CVE) Unit. The CVE agenda will be further advanced through civil society networks and education, as mandated by Heads of Government at CHOGM 2015 in Malta.
  19. All of the work under Democracy – CMAG, Good Offices, Elections, and CVE -- together with initiatives under Public Institutions focusing on good governance exemplify the Commonwealth's commitment to peace and security.

### 3.2 Public institutions

#### More effective, efficient and equitable public governance

- **Human Rights** promoted and protected, and participation in the UN's **UPR** process improved
- **Rule of law** strengthened and **access to justice** ensured for all
- Improved **public administration** for good governance, and the **prevention and elimination of corruption**

20. Well-performing public institutions are critical for establishing and sustaining democracy, good governance and development. The Secretariat has a track record of assisting member states in strengthening the core public institutions of human rights, rule of law and public administration through context-sensitive technical support and peer-to-peer support. In this result area, the Secretariat will continue to support member states to create and strengthen effective, efficient and equitable public institutions.
21. In the area of human rights, focus will be on supporting the establishment and strengthening of National Human Rights Institutions, an Eminent Persons' Group Recommendation in line with the Paris Principles to advance development of national human rights policies, action plans and legislation. This will include networking and capacity building through the Commonwealth Forum of National Human Rights Institutions, which was established during the last Strategic Plan period. In addition, the Secretariat will build members' capacity and provide the technical assistance necessary to engage constructively with international and regional human rights mechanisms such as the UN Human Rights Council's Universal Periodic Review (UPR), and help members implement UPR outcomes.
22. The Secretariat aims to strengthen member states' democratic institutions, through assisting reform to national constitutions, judiciaries and judicial processes, law enforcement and justice sector institutions in order to promote the rule of law and access to justice for all. This will be achieved through: developing long-term capacity; assisting members to ensure national laws comply with international standards; supporting members to implement and monitor rule of law commitments under Sustainable Development Goal 16; producing and making available for use model laws, rules, procedures, guidelines and toolkits; and strengthening judicial institutions, justice systems and court administration. In addition, the Secretariat will support members to uphold the Commonwealth (Latimer House) Principles. Work that was commenced during the previous Strategic Plan period on cross-border, technological issues, including block chain technology, virtual currencies and cybercrime, will continue to be a focus.
23. In the area of public administration, the Secretariat will continue to provide technical and advisory assistance to member states to create and sustain effective, accountable and transparent institutions at the centre of government. This will be achieved through working in the key area with a special emphasis on anti-corruption. Using a holistic approach to drive excellence in these key areas, emphasis will be placed on institutional strengthening, enhancing human capital, development of new and improved systems including technologies and processes, and building professional networks.

### 3.3 Youth and Social Development

#### People of the Commonwealth fulfil their potential with dignity and equality in a healthy environment

- **Young people engaged and empowered** to meaningfully participate in political and development processes
  - **Sports** contributes to sustainable development, health, and peaceful and just societies
  - Strengthened sustainable policies reduce disparities and improve **health and education outcomes**
  - **Women, girls and other vulnerable groups** empowered and protected against violence and harmful practices
24. Building on more than 40 years' experience in youth development, the Secretariat will continue to effectively deliver advocacy and technical assistance for national and regional youth-relevant policies that support an enabling environment for political, social and economic engagement of young people; the development and sharing of frameworks, guidelines, learnings and tools; and the capacity building of national, regional and international representative youth institutions and networks.
  25. As part of this effort, the Secretariat will continue to support members to promote the professionalisation of youth work. Special focus will also be placed on supporting young people to design and drive youth-led initiatives including through strengthening the autonomous and youth-driven Commonwealth Youth Council and thematic Commonwealth Youth Networks. In addition, the Secretariat will continue to support young leaders to have a voice via Youth Forums at CHOGM, key ministerial meetings, and on *yourcommonwealth.org*.
  26. The Secretariat will continue to build on its ground-breaking work on the Commonwealth Youth Development Index (YDI) which has been welcomed by the global community as a key resource in addressing the data gap in assessing the wellbeing of young people not only in the domains of education, health, employment and opportunity, but also politically, in the quality and scale of their participation in the political and civic affairs of their countries. It enables improved youth-focused policies and programming at national levels, in addressing the critical issues of youth employment and enterprise.
  27. Adopted at CHOGM 2011 as an EPG recommendation, the Secretariat has sought to help member states strengthen the linkage between sport, development and peace. Building on the success of this relatively new stream of work, the Secretariat will advance its advocacy for issues of integrity in sport, and for the contribution that sport can make to the achievement of SDGs, in particular in health, education, gender equality and peaceful and inclusive societies. The focus will be on helping members strengthen Sport for Development and Peace (SDP) policies and strategies.

28. Recognising that health and education are key development sectors with significant national and international budgets and major global partners, the Secretariat is keen to focus its expertise and comparative advantage where it is most effective. Hence, the Secretariat's efforts will focus towards policy advocacy and technical support for the development and implementation of strengthened health and education policies that better undergird the SDGs and position our members to realise the targets of these in line with their national agendas.
29. Expertise will be provided to member states in policy analysis and strategies for bridging gaps between policy formulation and policy implementation, in order to effectively realise national health and education outcomes. In this regard, we will continue to harness exchange and learning opportunities through our partnerships, knowledge and exchange platforms (i.e. 'hubs'). These specialised online environments provide a dynamic facilitated space for: discussion, learning and sharing; forging and nurturing Pan-Commonwealth partnerships and linkages; and providing a central access point for governments, civil society and stakeholders to collaborate.
30. Whilst reaffirming the importance of women's leadership, equitable participation and empowerment as critical drivers for inclusive sustainable development, the Commonwealth shall continue to address women's social, economic and political roles in society. The Women's Forum, introduced at CHOGM 2015, provides an important platform to support this work.
31. The Secretariat will work with member countries to address violence against women and girls and work alongside judiciaries and other partners to promote and strengthen evidence-based, gender sensitive policy and legal frameworks that prevent discrimination, empower women and girls to participate, represent and lead in political, social and economic spheres.

### 3.4 Economic Development

#### More inclusive economic growth and sustainable development

- Effective policy mechanisms for **increased trade**, increased access to trade, **employment** and **business growth**
  - Commonwealth positions advanced in **international development and financing mechanisms**
  - National frameworks facilitate effective **debt management**
  - Sustainable development of **marine, other natural resources, including 'blue economies'**
32. The Secretariat's efforts will be anchored in building capacity by strengthening frameworks for inclusive economic growth and sustainable development by improving export diversification through trade with new countries and increasing the range of products and services which will, in turn, create employment and aid business growth. Intra-Commonwealth trade is estimated at US\$592 billion (2013) and is expected to grow to US\$1 trillion by 2020. In addition, post-Brexit, there is great potential for new trade deals between Commonwealth members who share historic ties in trade, law and language. The Commonwealth Trade Finance Facility, a commitment of Heads of Government at CHOGM 2015, will

enhance trade and investment finance, particularly for small and developing states with limited access to trade finance. The Hubs and Spokes II Programme will provide essential support to national trade ministries and regional economic organisations to assist with negotiating trade relations and agreements.

33. The Secretariat will advance its research and policy work in the area of global development and financing and with specific attention towards emerging issues, particularly for small and other vulnerable states. It will continue to scan major global developments and build on its policy contributions to international forums.
34. The Secretariat will assist members in attaining long-term debt sustainability by providing technical advice on institutional strengthening, debt financing, debt strategy formulation and debt restructuring. This includes capacity building in public debt management, by advising member states on the appropriate legal and institutional structures; developing government domestic bond markets; formulating and implementing debt strategies within a risk management framework; providing a suite of software solutions for recording, analysing, monitoring and reporting public debt and assisting in setting up accurate and timely databases covering various debt categories.
35. Support will be provided to member states to develop and benefit from marine and other natural resources through model laws and practices in accordance with international law. The Secretariat will help in the development of legal, commercial and environmental frameworks, as well as fiscal regimes, and will assist in the preparation of transparent and fair policies to attract investment. The Secretariat will encourage and support the creation of sustainable innovative processes and concepts to enhance job creation and competitiveness. The Secretariat recognises that in order to achieve sustained economic growth, increased maritime education, capacity and skills have to be enhanced in accordance with the industry's emerging requirements.

### 3.5 Small and Other Vulnerable States

#### Strengthened resilience of small and other vulnerable states, including adaptation and mitigation against climate change

- **International policies, mechanisms and rules are more responsive to small and other vulnerable states' development strategies and resilience needs**
  - Increased resilience, adaptation and mitigation against **climate change**
  - Improved access to **climate financing**
36. The Commonwealth is recognised for its works in identifying and proposing responses to the challenges faced by small and other vulnerable states, while at the same time advocating for their causes. It will continue its work assisting small and other vulnerable states in utilising innovative financial instruments that build fiscal resilience to economic shocks. The Small States Offices in New York and Geneva will continue to provide an opportunity for small states to engage effectively with the UN General Assembly and other international forums.

37. The interests of small states will also be promoted through the Commonwealth Small States Centre of Excellence, mandated by CHOGM and hosted in Malta. The centre will facilitate targeted and predominantly internet-based capacity building programmes; serve as a focal point for sharing of best practices; maintain links with development agencies, academia and other relevant organisations in the field; and provide an information and referral service for academic and research work on small states.
38. Climate change continues to be a pressing issue for all member states, many of which bear the brunt of its impacts. Increasing global temperatures, rising sea levels, extreme weather and loss of ecosystems look set to radically alter the planet and pose an existential threat to many countries. The Secretariat will prioritise this crucial issue through advocating for the implementation of the 2015 Paris Agreement among member countries, and through supporting its delivery. This will include exploring and driving innovative approaches and technologies that will help to reduce the threat of climate change and its impacts for climate vulnerable states, and supporting member countries in their commitments.
39. Global funds are being established to help countries deal with climate change, but too often the funds are complicated to access. The Climate Finance Access Hub, hosted in Mauritius, will provide capacity building, knowledge sharing and technical support to members that are vulnerable to climate extremes and disasters, with a view to improving their climate financing frameworks and supporting them to access and manage much needed adaptation and mitigation funds. It will help governments dealing with the ravaging effects of climate change to draw down funding from a global fund target of \$100 billion a year by 2020.

### 3.6 Cross-Cutting Outcomes

40. The cross-cutting themes reflect outcomes that should be considered in all areas of the Secretariat's work and projects. Partnerships were recommended to be highlighted as a cross-cutting outcome along with innovation in the evaluation of the previous Strategic Plan. This approach for gender mainstreaming, was recommended in the evaluation and in the End of Term Review for the Gender Plan of Action as it was seen to be a more effective way to mainstream. The evaluation also recommended the important consensus building role of the Secretariat be featured in a cross-cutting outcome, and suggested that a corporate approach on advocacy be developed to capture all of the work the Secretariat does in this area.

### 3.6.1 Partnerships and Innovation

#### Strengthened partnerships and innovations to support member countries and Commonwealth organisations

41. Working with international and Commonwealth partners will be one of the key delivery principles in the new Plan period. The Secretariat will seek to increase the share of its projects that are supported through technical and financial partnerships. Building on results achieved in improving engagement with Commonwealth accredited organisations, the Secretariat will also work to increase the number of effective partnerships. In addition, the Secretariat will devise more collaborative, smarter and innovative modes of delivery. The new and contemporary approaches will be deployed in order to maximise our expertise and to attain better value for money. This will include leveraging digital and virtual resources, and working as smart teams.

### 3.6.2 Gender Mainstreaming

#### Gender equality and the empowerment of women integrated in the Secretariat's policies, frameworks, programmes and projects

42. Gender mainstreaming involves assessing, from the start, the implications for women and men of any planned action including projects, programmes, policies and legislation. The same commitment to gender mainstreaming and gender equality that the Commonwealth advocates is found in the SDGs. The Secretariat will build the capacity of programme professionals in mainstreaming gender in their respective areas and also provide support in designing, implementing, monitoring and evaluating projects and programmes in a gender-sensitive manner.

### 3.6.3 Consensus Building

#### Member states achieve consensus and advance key priority issues

43. The Commonwealth's voice is respected in global discussions. Commonwealth positions helped inform the development of the SDGs and the Paris Agreement on Climate Change. In recent years, the Commonwealth has helped focus world attention on the issues facing small island states and advanced practical solutions to address these problems. The Consensus Building outcome recognises the critical role the Commonwealth has to work to achieve consensus and advocate the agreed positions reached by its membership to global forums. Coming together at CHOGM, Ministerial meetings, or High Level Forums, member countries have an opportunity to develop consensus for Commonwealth positions on the key global issues.



## 4. Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting

44. The new Plan period will benefit from a maturing monitoring, evaluation and reporting system that was established in the last few years. A monitoring and evaluation policy will be developed in line with the delivery plan that will complement the existing programme management guidelines. The policy will ensure systematic collection of evidence to enable the Secretariat monitor better, make adjustments, learn lessons and increase the chances of sustainable impact.
45. Recognising the SDG agenda and the need for alignment for the Strategic Plan monitoring system, at the strategic outcome level, indicators will be aligned to the SDG indicators with appropriate linkages to the Secretariat's priorities. Data from these global indicators for Commonwealth countries will be collated and reported in line with the Secretariat's contributions.
46. Contributing to the strategic outcomes, intermediate outcomes with the supporting short-term outcomes and outputs (with their corresponding indicators, baselines and targets) will be monitored, evaluated and reported through projects as the delivery mechanism. Each results area will be tracked through the established performance markers from strategic outcome, through to intermediate outcome, short-term outcome, outputs, activities and tasks. A comprehensive Programme Management Information System (PMIS) that facilitates the tracking of progress will support this process. With the system in place, emphasis in this strategic plan period will be on building robust evidence and quality assurance.
47. Reporting of the results will continue in the form of an annual report to the Board of Governors on the performance of the Secretariat in achieving the priorities of the Strategic Plan. Periodic monitoring data will be available from PMIS. The Evaluation Plan as approved by the Board will be used to commission independent evaluations and the findings and recommendations from the evaluations and impact studies will be shared with the Board of Governors.

## 5. Programme Coordination and Coherence

48. A programme coordination and coherence mechanism will be established before the start of implementation of the new Plan. A number of programme evaluations and recent operational reviews have highlighted the growing need for better coordination and coherence at the Secretariat. A coordinated approach to programming and delivery will enable the Secretariat to increase its effectiveness. Better coordination will reduce overlap and duplication, and hence improve results.

49. Programme coherence focuses on ensuring programmes reflect a clear understanding of the contextual issues including national priorities and potential partnerships. It will establish a cross-divisional approach that integrates our full range of resident expertise and experiences. Programme coordination and coherence will begin at the design stage, with project proposals reflecting a Secretariat-wide view of addressing an issue. It will bring together smart, multi-disciplinary teams with the expertise needed to innovate, create workable solutions, and adaptively manage delivery of projects. Another important consideration will be working together with other Commonwealth organisations to leverage our collective expertise and diversity for better impact.

## 6. Risk Management

50. The Secretariat has recently adopted the international standard, ISO 31000 'Risk management – Principles and guidelines'. It provides a structured approach to Risk Management. The Secretariat's risk management strategy, policy and procedures have been developed accordingly. Risk is assessed at multiple levels at the Secretariat, especially at the project, structural and strategic levels.
51. In the new Strategic Plan period, the Secretariat will continue to assess and manage risks. Project risk management has successfully been integrated into the PMIS. All strategic risks affecting the Secretariat at large have continued to be recorded, reviewed and reported in the Strategic level risk register. High-level risks and those with common themes found on project and divisional risk registers are escalated to the strategic risk register. All risks will continue to be reviewed at least on a quarterly basis.

## 7. Delivery Plan

52. After the approval of the Strategic Plan, the outcomes matrix will be sharpened in the form of the SRF. The SRF will guide the development of a Delivery Plan which will be a detailed and graduated implementation plan. The Delivery Plan will identify priorities in line with the anticipated and available financial resources as well as short term outcomes in line with the SRF.

**Commonwealth Secretariat**

Marlborough House, Pall Mall  
London SW1Y 5HX  
United Kingdom

[thecommonwealth.org](http://thecommonwealth.org)

