



The Commonwealth

GEI

Commonwealth Learning Week 2021

Programme

Virtual Event: 27 - 29 April 2021

Learn and Adapt to Accelerate Action

Translating a decade of learning into transformational change

Background¹

As a global community of 54 countries, spanning four regions, the Commonwealth has a unique perspective into the commonality of challenges and complexities across our Member States. We have amassed a wealth of knowledge on what works in delivering impact in development and democracy across diverse communities, cultures and economic contexts.

As the world continues to grapple with the far-reaching impacts of COVID-19, the Secretariat is listening to its members, adapting rapidly to new pressures, while maintaining efforts towards the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. This builds on the Secretariat's ongoing reform process, which includes an organisation-wide digital transformation and an enhanced approach to monitoring and evaluation.

The Secretariat, in collaboration with Global Evaluation Initiative of the World Bank, is hosting a Commonwealth Learning Week to reflect on the lessons learned over the past ten years in terms of organisational strategy, and how it can enhance its role as an effective global partner for the 2030 Agenda, in the face of multiple global crises.

This week will:

- Highlight, share and discuss lessons and evidence towards more impactful programmes and actions;
- Reflect on progress in national monitoring, evaluation and learning systems with a view to identifying enablers for evidence-informed policies and planning;
- Facilitate peer engagements among stakeholders, staff and partners representing diverse professional, political and academic experiences and expertise to bridge the gap between lessons and learning for addressing the SDG implementation deficit; and
- Challenge the Commonwealth community to learn, innovate and accelerate actions towards the 2030 SDGs.

Our co-hosts: Global Evaluation Initiative, World Bank Group

The Global Evaluation Initiative principally focuses on closing the evaluation gap as well as, relatedly, contributing to addressing the other two gaps where possible. As a global

¹ Provisional Programme Updated as of 13.04.2021

network of institutional partners and experts working in the field of M&E, the GEI strengthens M&E systems and capacities in countries across the globe at three levels:

1. The enabling environment (e.g. by supporting the development of legislation or policies that facilitate the supply and utilization of evaluative evidence);
2. The institutional environment (e.g. by supporting institutions in developing their systems of supply and demand for evaluative evidence);
3. The individual (e.g. by delivering trainings to different types of stakeholders to strengthen their individual capacities in the supply and utilization of evaluative evidence).

PROVISIONAL



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Day 1 Theme: A Decade of Learning 2010 - 2020

Discussions drawing evidence from evaluations, will look at the Commonwealth journey over the past decade, including a deeper look at the challenges, triumphs and lessons from 2011 to 2021. These lessons will be presented, reflected upon and challenged by evaluators, member states, Commonwealth organisations and development partners.

Session 1: Opening Session, 09:30 - 11:00 UK Time

The opening session will welcome speakers, participants and guests to the Commonwealth Secretariat's 2021 Learning event. It will set the expectations for the week outlining the broad themes. The Secretary-General of the Commonwealth will deliver the opening speech. A Keynote speaker will be invited from the Global Evaluation Initiative of the World Bank Group to share their organisational learning over the previous 10 years. Other speakers will include United Nations Evaluation Group and political leaders of Member States who can reflect on their country's experiences in development.

Chair

- Dr Nabeel Goheer, Assistant Secretary-General - Commonwealth Secretariat

Panel

- Rt. Hon Patricia Scotland QC, Secretary-General - Commonwealth Secretariat
- Ms Evelyn Pedersen, Head of Evaluation and Learning in the Strategy, Portfolio, Partnerships and Digital Division - Commonwealth Secretariat
- Ms Alison Evans - Director-General of the Independent Evaluation Group - The World Bank Group
- Dr Masahiro Igarashi, Chair - United Nations Evaluations Group
- HE Dr Kevin Isaac, High Commissioner - St. Kitts and Nevis High Commission, London

To register for this Session, please follow the link below:

<https://primetime.bluejeans.com/a2m/register/hxszzhu>

Session 2: A Decade of Commonwealth Learning, 11:30 - 13:00 UK Time

This session will be informed by the Draft Paper: The Commonwealth: A Decade of Learning 2010 - 2020. The Paper documents the organisation's growth, highlighting successes and lessons in strategic, structural and systems reforms; comparative advantage in the face new global challenges.

Chair

- **HE Ellison E. Greenslade QPM** - High Commissioner, The Bahamas High Commission, London

Panel

- **Dr Nabeel Goheer** - Assistant Secretary-General, Commonwealth Secretariat
- **Ms Olivia Kaye** - Independent Researcher, Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning
- **Prof. Luis Franceschi** - Senior Director, Governance and Peace Directorate, Commonwealth Secretariat
- **Dr Ruth Kattumuri** - Senior Director, Economic, Youth & Sustainable Development Directorate, Commonwealth Secretariat
- **Ms Opeyemi Abebe** - Adviser & Head of the Trade Competitiveness Section in the Trade, Oceans and Natural Resources Directorate, Commonwealth Secretariat
- **Dr Anne Therese Gallagher AO** - Director-General, Commonwealth Foundation
- **Mr Paul Baker** - Chief Executive Officer, International Economics Consulting Ltd.
- **Dr Richard Longhurst** - Research Associate & Peer Reviewer, Institute of Development Studies

To register for this Session, please follow the link below:

<https://primetime.bluejeans.com/a2m/register/tzpaybbx>

Session 3: The Value of Multilateralism and International Cooperation, 14.00 - 15:30 UK Time

This session will highlight the role of multilateralism and global governance in delivering to the SDGs and particularly the value of the Commonwealth brand in safeguarding values, brokering key partnerships and amplifying the voices of small states. Through contributions from external stakeholders, this session will also draw on lessons learnt, and directions set by multilateral and intergovernmental organisations as well as challenge the approach outlined by the Commonwealth Secretariat.

Chair

- **Dr Nabeel Goheer** - Assistant Secretary-General, Commonwealth Secretariat

Panel:

- **Mr Oscar Garcia** - Director, Independent Evaluation Office, UNDP
- **Prof. Luis Franceschi** - Senior Director, Governance and Peace Directorate, Commonwealth Secretariat
- **Ms Francisca Pretorius** - Adviser and Head of the Office of Civil and Criminal Justice Reform, Governance and Peace Directorate, Commonwealth Secretariat
- **Amb. Manorma Soeknandan** - Deputy Secretary-General, CARICOM Secretariat
- **Ms Aimtonga Amani Makawia** - Knowledge Monitoring & Evaluation Expert, African Development Bank Group
- **Ms Ada Ocampo** - Peer Reviewer (Independent)
- **Mr Stefano D'Erriko** - Head of Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning, International Institute for Environment and Development

To register for this Session, please follow the link below:

<https://primetime.bluejeans.com/a2m/register/qqukvpgg>



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Day 2 Theme: Learn and Adapt

Sessions will focus on monitoring, evaluation and learning systems and capacities and the Commonwealth Secretariat's learnings, particularly in relations to its approaches to programme delivery. Presentations will cover analysis of delivery approaches, lessons learnt, outstanding gaps and opportunities for accelerating actions and building partnerships towards SDGs.

Session 4: Pathways to Enabling Change in the Commonwealth, 09:30 - 11:00 UK Time

This session will focus on how the Secretariat's impact pathways have worked to enable Member State's capacity to accelerate their own development and make national level reforms to contribute to Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Learning papers include: Policies and Legislation: The Enabling Environment for Change; Capacities and Capabilities for Sustainable Development

As governments and non-governmental actors work toward achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, evidence on progress remains fragmented. The challenge is at least twofold. First, regarding the question of *are we getting there*, many countries across the globe do not have the necessary data systems in place to adequately capture progress toward achieving the SDG targets. Second, regarding the question of *how do get there*, many countries do not have the systems and capacities in place to assess what works and why under what circumstances. This session discusses the work of the Global Evaluation Initiative as well as the Commonwealth Secretariat in strengthening monitoring and evaluation systems and capacities in countries across the globe.

Chair

- **Mr Dugan Fraser** - Programme Manager, Global Evaluation Initiative, The World Bank Group

Panel:

- **Ms Evelyn Pedersen** - Head of Evaluation and Learning in the Strategy, Portfolio, Partnerships and Digital Division, Commonwealth Secretariat
- **Ms Katherine Marshall-Kissoon**, Adviser, Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning in the Strategy, Portfolio, Partnerships and Digital Division, Commonwealth Secretariat
- **Dr Shagun Sabarwal** - Director, CLEAR South Asia
- **Dr Candice Morkel** - Acting Director of Centre for Learning on Evaluation and Results, CLEAR Anglophone Africa

- **Dr Rose Namara** - Head of Research and Innovation Centre, Uganda Management Institute
- **Mr Daniel Wilde** - Economic Adviser of Natural Resources in the Trade, Oceans and Natural Resources Directorate, Commonwealth Secretariat
- **Ms Brigid Watson** - Secretary-General, Commonwealth Lawyers Association

To register for this Session, please follow the link below:

<https://primetime.bluejeans.com/a2m/register/cbyardb>

Session 5: The Commonwealth Advantage in Consensus Building & Connectivity, 11:30 - 13:00 UK Time

This session will focus on the key learning and unique approach of the Secretariat to support work within the consensus building, connectivity and networks space and highlight the key lessons which we have learnt over the past decade.

Chair

- **Mr Layne Robinson** - Head of Social Policy Development in the Economic, Youth & Sustainable Development Directorate, Commonwealth Secretariat

Panel

- **Mr Stephen Twigg** - Secretary-General, Commonwealth Parliamentary Association
- **Ms Kathryn Paddock** - Planning, Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Officer, in the Strategy, Portfolio, Partnerships and Digital Division, Commonwealth Secretariat
- **Ms Jean Yuan** - Monitoring Evaluation and Learning (MEL) Support Officer in the Strategy, Portfolio, Partnerships and Digital Division, Commonwealth Secretariat
- **Ms Mithika D'Cruz** - Planning and Monitoring Officer in the Strategy, Portfolio, Partnerships and Digital Division, Commonwealth Secretariat
- **Mr Amin Abdullahi** - Senior Evaluation Specialist in the Operations Evaluation Department, Islamic Development Bank
- **Mr Brendan Vickers** - Adviser and Head of the International Trade Policy Section, in the Trade, Oceans and Natural Resources Directorate, Commonwealth Secretariat
- **Mr Kirk Haywood** - Adviser in Regulatory Framework & Connectivity Agenda in the Trade, Oceans and Natural Resources Directorate, Commonwealth Secretariat
- **Mr Jeff Ardron** - Adviser in Ocean Governance in the Trade, Oceans and Natural Resources Directorate, Commonwealth Secretariat
- **Mr Jonas Mikkelsen** - Senior Deputy Director & Peer Reviewer, Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
- **Ms Umm e Zia** - Evaluation Expert, Cynosure Consultants (Pvt.) Ltd

To register for this Session, please follow the link below:

<https://primetime.bluejeans.com/a2m/register/tryecysk>

Session 6: Adapting from Learning to Accelerate Action, 14.00 - 15:30 UK Time

This session will focus upon the how the Secretariat has reformed, adapted and learned to improve and build upon its performance and areas where we continue to learn.

Chair

- **Dr Arjoon Suddhoo** - Deputy Secretary-General, Commonwealth Secretariat

Panel:

- **Dr Balaji Venkataraman** - Vice President, Commonwealth of Learning
- **Ms Diana Copper** - Head of Portfolio Management in the Strategy, Portfolio, Partnerships and Digital Division, Commonwealth Secretariat
- **Mr Nick Kapoutzis** - Head of Learning & Organisational Development in the Human Resources and Facilities Management Division, Commonwealth Secretariat
- **Mr John Mark Williams** - Chief Executive Officer, Institute of Leadership and Management
- **Ms Hipolina Joseph-Charles** - Deputy Programme Manager, Strategic Management Unit, Caribbean Community (CARICOM)
- **Ms Bridget Dillon** - Vice President, UK Evaluation Society
- **Ms Diana Smallridge** - President, International Financial Consulting Ltd.
- **Mr Ehtisham ul Hassan**, Peer Reviewer, Commonwealth Secretariat
- **Dr Lennise Baptiste** - Independent Programme Evaluator & Peer Reviewer, ANEVER Ltd.

To register for this Session, please follow the link below:

<https://primetime.bluejeans.com/a2m/register/vkhuqtqt>



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Day 3 Theme: Accelerating Impact

The focus will be on the future and the Commonwealth's strategic thrust for the next 10 years - aligning with the global agenda to accelerate actions and impact towards the SDGs. Sessions will reflect on the complexities of development resulting from the effects of the pandemic in achieving the SDGs, what evaluative evidence exists or how data science may change the practice of evaluation considering the shift in the development paradigm.

Session 7: The Commonwealth as a Global SDG Partner of Value, 09:30 - 11:00 UK Time

This discussion will highlight the Commonwealth's advantages in supporting countries to meet their SDG goals and in generating knowledge and evidence on 'what works' which can be shared with the global community. Representing Member States, Commonwealth Organisations as well as Multilateral organisations will share their organisational experiences and provide their own reflections on the Commonwealth's potential in adding value and addressing SDG gaps.

Chair

- Dr Nabeel Goheer - Assistant Secretary-General, Commonwealth Secretariat

Speakers:

- Dr Ruth Kattumuri, Senior Director of the Economic, Youth & Sustainable Development Directorate, Commonwealth Secretariat
- Ms Judith Diment - Representative to the Commonwealth of Nations, Rotary International
- Mr Abhik Sen - Head of Innovation and Partnerships in the Strategy, Portfolio, Partnerships and Digital Division, Commonwealth Secretariat
- Ms Shaista Hussain - Results Based Management Specialist, Asian Development Bank
- Mr Zahid Rastam - Deputy High Commissioner / Charge d'Affaires ad-interim, Malaysia High Commission, London
- Ms Xiaojun Grace Wang - Deputy Director for Programme and Operations, United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation (UNOSSC)
- Mr Miguel Jimenez - Vice Chair & Peer Reviewer, United Nations Evaluations Group

To register for this Session, please follow the link below:

<https://primetime.bluejeans.com/a2m/register/udafyzxj>

Session 8: Advancing Resilience, 11:30 - 13:00 UK Time

The event and reflection day provides an opportunity to highlight the challenge to resilience faced by all organisations and Member States, particularly, small and vulnerable states. This discussion will be led by presentations across the spectrum of partners including Member States, Multilateral and Commonwealth Organisations.

Chair

- **Ms Pam McLaren** - Adviser and Head, Debt Management in the Economic, Youth & Sustainable Development Directorate, Commonwealth Secretariat

Speakers:

- **Ms Laurel Patterson** - Head of SDG Integration, UNDP Global Policy Network
- **Amb. Solo Mara** - Secretary-General, Pacific Islands Development Forum
- **Mr Travis Mitchell** - Adviser and Head of the Economic Policy and Small States Section in the Economic, Youth & Sustainable Development Directorate, Commonwealth Secretariat
- **Ms Lucy Slack** - Deputy Secretary-General, Commonwealth Local Government Forum
- **Mr Mark Albon** - Head of Countering Violent Extremism Unit in the Governance and Peace Directorate, Commonwealth Secretariat
- **Mr Zakaria Hanafi** - Operations Evaluation Department, Islamic Development Bank
- **Mr Garry Wiseman** - Independent Consultant & Peer Reviewer

To register for this Session, please follow the link below:

<https://primetime.bluejeans.com/a2m/register/caupbbju>

Session 9: Technology, Innovation, Digitalisation and Data Science in Evaluation, 14:00 - 16:00 UK Time

We are in the midst of a data revolution. In recent years, the volume and speed with which data are generated, collected and analyzed have significantly increased. This has created new opportunities (as well as challenges) for the field of monitoring and evaluation (M&E) of policy interventions. New sources of data, especially big data are becoming increasingly available for analysis. At the same time old data, often in combination with new data, can be analyzed in new ways using techniques from the emerging field of data science. This session will discuss some of the potential and challenges of using data science applications in the field of M&E.

Chair

- **Mr Jos Vaessen** - Adviser, Independent Evaluation Group, The World Bank Group

Panel:

- **Ms Carina Kabajunga** - Head of Information and Communications Technology, in the Strategy, Portfolio, Partnerships and Digital Division, Commonwealth Secretariat
- **Ms Liana Zanarisoa Razafindrazay** - Senior Geographer, Geo-Enabling initiative for Monitoring and Supervision (GEMS) team, The World Bank Group
- **Mr Constantin Cotzias** - European Director, Bloomberg
- **Dr Nabeel Goheer** - Assistant Secretary-General, Commonwealth Secretariat

The closing session will reflect on highlights of the week, identify commitments and action points that the Commonwealth and partners will take forward in strategy setting, collaboration and programme delivery.

Moderator:

- **Dr Nabeel Goheer** - Assistant Secretary-General, Commonwealth Secretariat

Panel:

- **Rt. Hon Patricia Scotland QC** - Secretary General, Commonwealth Secretariat
- **Ms Amina Mohammed** - Deputy Secretary-General, United Nations
- **Mr Dugan Fraser** - Programme Manager, Global Evaluation Initiative, The World Bank Group
- **Ms Evelyn Pedersen** - Head of Evaluation and Learning in the Strategy, Portfolio, Partnerships and Digital Division, Commonwealth Secretariat

To register for this session, please follow the link below:

<https://primetime.bluejeans.com/a2m/register/sgfphgay>