

Foreword

The Commonwealth Secretariat has been a pioneer in promoting women's rights and gender equality since the 1976–85 UN Decade for Women, and of gender mainstreaming since the UN Fourth World Conference on Women — to which our 1995 Plan of Action on Gender and Development was a Commonwealth contribution.

This publication brings together case studies prepared in connection with the end-of-term review of the 2005–15 Commonwealth Plan of Action for Gender Equality. The case studies are based on submissions and interviews with government representatives, gender specialists and other stakeholders, including civil society organisations, from 20 countries representing all regions of the Commonwealth.

The examples were selected to demonstrate a range of strategies that can be employed to advance gender equality and women's empowerment. Together they help to show what perpetuates gender inequality and approaches that can be adopted to help end unjust discrimination.

The Commonwealth Secretariat continues to assist the governments of our member countries with the implementation of measures to mainstream gender equality through parliamentary and local government systems, human rights and legislative frameworks, economic and social protection programmes, and in the delivery of public services such as health, education and youth provision.

This publication comes at an opportune time as we embark on programmes towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals within the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. It shares for a wider audience successful interventions and lessons learned on how to end gender inequalities, and offers ideas and insights that can help accelerate positive and beneficial change.

The Rt Hon Patricia Scotland QC
Commonwealth Secretary-General

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