

20th - 22nd June 2023

Women in Trade Workshop

FINAL REPORT



CONTENTS & OUTCOMES

OBJECTIVE

Delegates will enhance their capacity to effectively scrutinise international trade agreements in their legislatures, specifically from a gender-sensitive lens.

OUTPUTS

1

Delegates will strengthen their understanding of trade policy, including the impact of agreements on gender equality and women's economic empowerment.

2

Delegates will explore mechanisms for parliamentary oversight of trade agreements and enhance their leadership and communications skills to conduct effective scrutiny.

3

Delegates will widen their network of Commonwealth women parliamentarians and experts, to share good practice on holding the executive to account.

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PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

Members of Parliament from across the Commonwealth participated in CPA UK's Women in Trade Workshop, held on 20 - 22 June 2023 in the UK Parliament.

CPA UK's first all-women in-person multilateral programme, brought together women parliamentarians from across the Commonwealth, for a three-day Workshop designed to strengthen their knowledge of international trade and to discuss specific impact of trade agreements on gender equality, poverty alleviation and the economic empowerment of women in the Commonwealth.

Throughout the programme, delegates heard from a wide variety of expert speakers, from within and outside the UK Parliament, addressing the Workshop's key themes of gender, politics and trade. Alongside knowledge building, the workshop also gave the participants the chance to improve their soft skills through communication and leadership training, and provided an environment for delegates to share experiences, challenges and discuss innovative solutions. Finally, the Workshop included a committee exercise on taking oral evidence from witnesses, exploring good practice with regards to research and effective questioning techniques.

The Conference was the latest in a series of CPA UK programmes focused on the theme of international trade, following on from engagements such as the February 2023 Trade Workshop for Overseas Territories and Devolved Legislatures, and the Africa Regional Trade Webinar in August 2022.



DAY 1: KNOWLEDGE BUILDING ON TRADE

UNDERSTANDING TRADE

This opening session of the workshop gave a global overview of trends and patterns in international trade across the Commonwealth today. Trade is fundamental to the Commonwealth, facilitated by the common use of the English language and having familiar business and legal practices. However, it is currently highly concentrated, with just 10 countries possessing 82% of the goods and services, with the African continent only representing 2.7% of world trade. In recent years there has been a call to diversify and reform the global approach towards trade, not only to encourage trade amongst smaller nations, but also to facilitate a more concentrated focus on social and environmental consequences of trade, including its potential role mitigating gender inequality.

Delegates also had the opportunity to learn from experts about the negotiation process of trade agreements. Countries are always developing and changing their approach to trade, and trade negotiations are constantly taking place, both at a domestic and international level. Parliamentarians and parliamentary scrutiny can play an important role during negotiations, as it ensures that the boundaries of engagement (such as environmental, social and security goals) are set and followed. Delegates questioned the importance of the role of parliamentarians due to their often limited legal influence on trade negotiations. However, panellists emphasised the importance of taking additional informal steps to improve scrutiny and knowledge building, such as through forming committees, publishing reports, and establishing relationships with officials and stakeholders.



HUMAN RIGHTS AND TRADE

Tariff reductions and facilitating the movement of goods and services are no longer the sole focuses when it comes to negotiating trade agreements. Countries are now subject to internationally imposed obligations to promote and support human rights, and speakers emphasised how this should remain a core focus when scrutinising trade activities.

Certain trading activities can have a direct, and in some cases, devastating impact on certain communities across the Commonwealth. Garment workers in South Asia, child cocoa farmers in Ghana, and women and girls are all at a higher risk of becoming victims of modern slavery, and subsequently more likely to experience abuse and discrimination.

A lack of transparency when it comes to company supply chains has been shown to exacerbate this issue. Therefore introducing legislation to make the publishing of reports on supply chains obligatory could mitigate the problem, with one speaker commenting that transparency is key to accountability.

Alongside introducing legislation to reduce human rights violations caused by opaque company supply chains, it is possible to address the problem during trade negotiations. This can be done by introducing specific frameworks in treaties, such as Human Rights Chapters or Climate Change Chapters, and subsequently exercising monitoring mechanisms. There is also a special emphasis on involving civil society during the negotiation process, to gain a full understanding of the issue.

Finally, delegates learnt how increased trade can directly affect gender equality, and the importance of facilitating trade through a gendered lens. Women can be blocked from entrepreneurship and business for a number of reasons, including lack of access to finance, digital resources and internet, as well as educational qualifications. Gender equality has been directly correlated with economic development. Therefore introducing reforms such as small and medium enterprises (SME) and Finance programmes for women, as well as trade facilitation reforms, can have a direct positive effect for women domestically and globally.



DAY 2: GENDER, TRADE AND POLITICS

WOMEN IN POLITICS

Many parliaments across the Commonwealth are moving away from their traditional male-dominated membership structures towards promoting gender equality. However, these often-historic institutions have frequently failed to make the necessary reforms to meet the requirements of their female colleagues. Delegates had the opportunity to not only learn more about the importance of gender-sensitive parliaments, but also the steps that other parliaments have taken to improve working conditions for female parliamentarians. Gender sensitivity should be about changing a parliament to meet the real needs of the people in it, leading to equal representation and quality of participation, which can be improved through initiatives such as introducing family leave, improving building facilities and reforming work culture. Participants learnt the importance of engaging with a variety of stakeholders when promoting gender sensitivity, both within the institution – such as clerks, parliamentary officials and sympathetic senior male MPs - and externally, such as with academics and women civil society groups.



Delegates similarly learnt that their influence on promoting gender equality was not limited to within their own institution, but there are ways to improve gender equality domestically and internationally through free trade agreements. Trade can have a direct effect on women's participation in a national economy, and therefore during trade negotiations and FTA scrutiny, it is important to incorporate a gender analysis. Delegates learnt how trade agreements often fail to address women's unpaid labour, nor recognise that women are often over-represented in areas of work that are sensitive or vulnerable to negative implications of a trade agreement, such as zero-hour contracts and feminised sectors with large gender wage gaps. This issue could be addressed by:

- adding and strengthening gender chapters throughout the agreement
- looking at the type of goods you are liberalising during negotiations
- taking note of the distribution of public procurement contracts, which tend to be awarded to men over women. .

Finally, delegates had an opportunity to hear from and share their own stories of becoming parliamentarians, and their experiences working in what in many jurisdictions is a male-dominated environment. Delegates shared how they have experienced first hand challenges as women parliamentarians, including harassment and bullying from their male colleagues, as well as online and verbal abuse from the public. The importance of awareness raising programmes to promote women's leadership was heavily emphasised, as well as mechanisms within the workplace to address problems with the work culture. Delegates concluded that as a woman parliamentarian, they have to work twice as hard to prove themselves, however, the good performance of women in politics lays the foundation for more women to be elected.

EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION FOR PARLIAMENTARIANS

Delegates were given the opportunity to learn how to enhance their presence and personal impact as a public figure in a male-dominated industry through specific communication techniques, led by Kate Faragher, founder of Bespoke skills. The workshop looked specifically at effective methods to present persuasive speeches, as well as effective questioning techniques during committee exercises. Using the 4 Pillars (Triple Purpose, Seek, Speak and Sustain), delegates learnt how to construct concise questions, structure concise and effective speeches, as well as techniques to reduce nerves and improve presence and body language.



DAY 3: SCRUTINY IN PRACTICE

SCRUTINISING TRADE POLICY

Hearing from experts and parliamentarians from across the Commonwealth, delegates were reminded of the importance of scrutinising trade agreements and activities, as well as the number of challenges that can prevent legislatures from doing this effectively. Delegates highlighted the important role that committees play in promoting and facilitating scrutiny. They also recognised that committees across the Commonwealth often face similar issues that can inhibit their success, such as no warning of a trade agreement, and a lack of adequate information provided by the government. Similarly, treaties are often very large, complex texts, and committee staff may not have the knowledge, capacity or time to effectively analyse them.

When scrutinising trade policy, sourcing reliable information and knowledge is imperative. Stakeholders play a significant role in offering different opinions and knowledge, with academics, businesses and representatives of civil society frequently being invited to act as witnesses or provide written evidence. Parliamentary research teams can also be useful, such as the UK Parliamentary Office of Science and Technology (POST) which provides impartial research for members. However, such departments do not exist across all Commonwealth legislatures.

There has been an increase in research from academics and international organisations focusing on gender and trade, and gender chapters have been included in recent free trade agreements (e.g. UK – Australia FTA). However, both the panellists and delegates agreed that more effort is needed in this area, and more data will be required to support stronger scrutiny of trade, especially when focusing on gender.

ENHANCING COMMITTEE KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS

Delegates were invited to join a committee exercise, focusing on trade negotiations between the UK and a fictional country, looking specifically at the agricultural, environmental and human rights implications associated with this FTA. This exercise offered delegates the opportunity to roleplay as a committee, with the guidance of a Committee Specialist who adopted a freeze frame method, where the simulation is paused for feedback or questions.

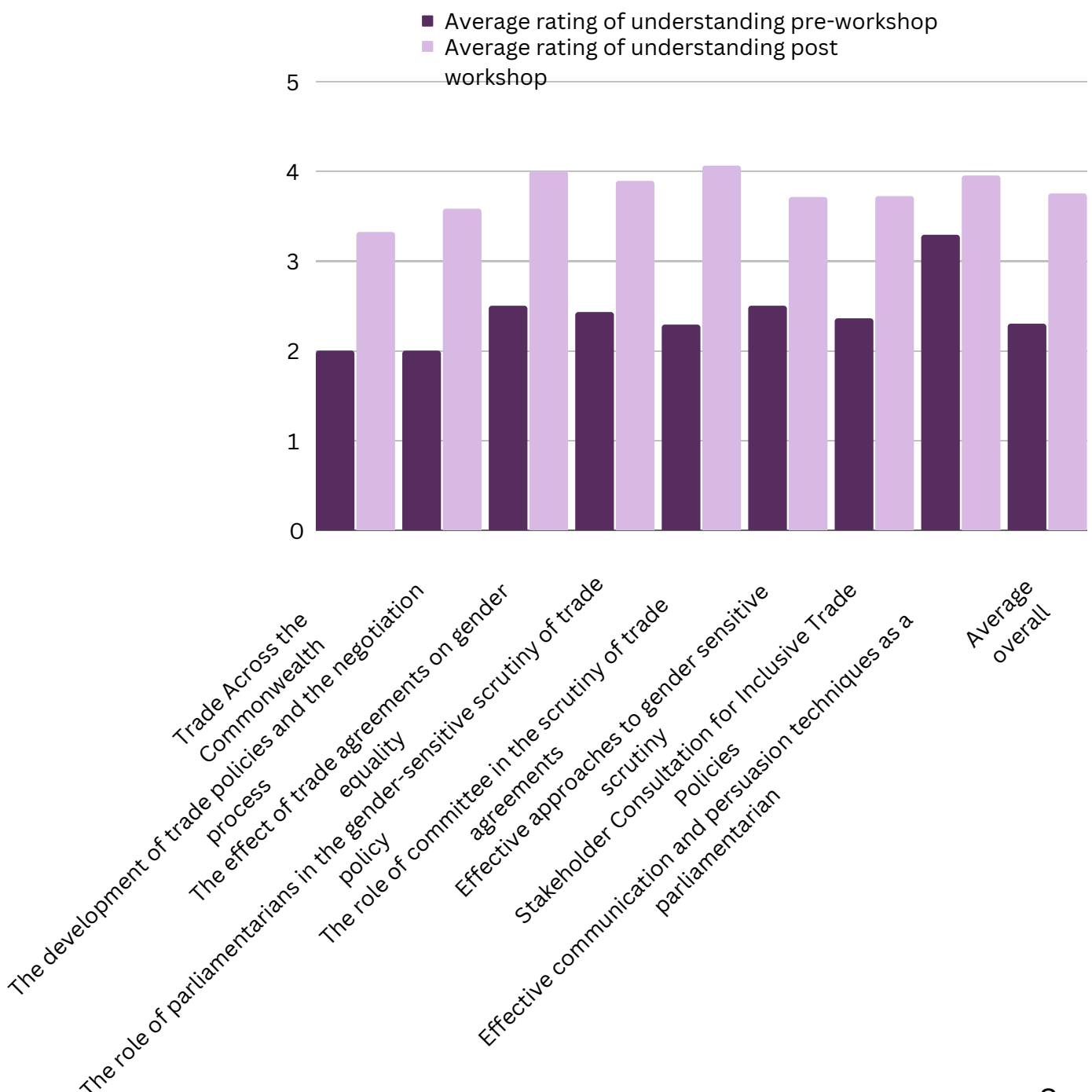
Prior to the exercise, delegates were given research packs, and were encouraged to analyse the information to determine which questions would be of a priority for the witnesses to be questioned. Throughout the exercise, delegates were invited to share and enhance their knowledge on questioning techniques, especially in situations where witnesses were avoiding giving clear answers.

Delegates were taught techniques to extract answers from difficult witnesses, such as asking for the witness to rank something out of 10, or to give a 'yes or no' answer. Despite these techniques, the delegates expressed their frustration at the evasiveness of some witnesses that come before their committees and emphasised to each other the importance of remaining transparent and honest as parliamentarians.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

At the beginning of the Workshop, each participant completed a pre-Workshop assessment and then completed a post-Workshop assessment at the end, evaluating their own level of understanding of the eight areas explored in the programme. The scale of understanding ranged from (1) "None" to (5) "In-depth".

Overall, participants found that they increased their knowledge in all seven areas, ranging from 20% to 79%, with an average of 64% across all areas, as illustrated in the below chart. Around 74% of participants found the Workshop 'fully relevant' to their role and 26% stated 'partially relevant' while no one said 'not relevant'.



Participating Legislatures

Asia-Pacific



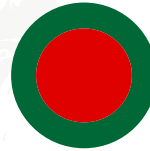
New South Wales,
Australia



Western Australia



Kiribati



Bangladesh



Sri Lanka



Nauru



Tonga



Maldives

Africa



Malawi



Kenya



The Gambia

UK Overseas Territories



Cayman Islands



Turks and Caicos
Islands

Americas, Caribbean and Europe



Guyana

Official Programme

DAY 1: KNOWLEDGE BUILDING ON TRADE

TUESDAY 20TH JUNE 2023

TIME	DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITY
0855 - 0915	<p>Welcome from Jon Davies & Overview of Programme</p> <p>Facilitator: Rahel Kibru, Programmes and Projects Manager, CPA UK</p>
0915 - 0930	<p>Goal Setting</p> <p>Facilitator: Matthew Hamilton, Monitoring & Evaluation Manager, CPA UK</p>
0930 - 1045	<p>Session 1: The Contemporary Trade Landscape</p> <p>This session will explore the current trends and patterns in international trade across the different regions of the Commonwealth. This will be an opportunity for delegates to share their experiences on trade and investment in their jurisdictions, and to create relationships to strengthen dialogue, networking, and collaboration on trade.</p> <p>Chair: The Baroness Merron, House of Lords, UK Parliament</p> <p>Speakers: Dr Brendan Vickers, Head of International Trade Policy, Commonwealth Secretariat</p> <p>Hon. Selima Ahmad, Member of the Parliament of Bangladesh and Founder of the Bangladesh Women Chamber of Commerce and Industry</p> <p>Jamie MacLeod, Trade Economist and Policy Fellow, London School of Economics Firoz Lalji Institute for Africa</p>
1100 - 1200	<p>Session 2: Negotiation Process</p> <p>Trade negotiations are an opaque process, with little known about the who/what/where and how of the deliberations. A question and answer session provides a chance for delegates to better understand the mechanisms that are at play, and the ways in which this should be taken into account by parliamentarians when scrutinising policy.</p> <p>Chair: Jacob Loose, Africa Regional Programmes Manager, CPA UK</p> <p>Speakers: Dr. Elitsa Garnizova, Director, Trade Policy Hub, LSE Consulting</p> <p>Dr. Minako Morita-Jaeger Senior Research Fellow in International Trade in the Department of Economics, University of Sussex Business School</p>

Official Programme

DAY 1: KNOWLEDGE BUILDING ON TRADE

TUESDAY 20TH JUNE 2023

TIME	DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITY
1200 - 1300	<p>Session 3: Promoting Human Rights through International Trade</p> <p>Bilateral, multilateral and regional trade offers nations the opportunity to not only further investment domestically but also advance human rights standards globally. From creating economic growth to promoting gender equality, international trade has the ability to enhance the lives of communities across the Commonwealth so it is important that the human rights impacts of agreements are considered at every stage. This session will explore the intersection between trade and human rights, as well as how parliamentarians can ensure they are effectively scrutinising trade policy with the promotion of human rights in mind.</p> <p>Chair: Theo Clarke MP, House of Commons, UK Parliament</p> <p>Speakers: Jane Korinek, Economist and Policy Analyst, Trade Policy Division, OECD Trade and Agriculture Directorate</p> <p>Lord Purvis of Tweed, Vice Chair, Trade Justice APPG and Member of the House of Lords, UK Parliament</p> <p>Ruth Bergan, Director, Trade Justice Movement</p>
1400 - 1515	<p>Witness the House of Commons International Development Committee oral evidence hearing on 'The Future of UK Aid'</p>
1520 - 1620	<p>Session 4: Transparency in Supply Chains</p> <p>There has been plenty of focus on improving transparency in supply chains to encourage companies to strengthen their due diligence processes. This is so the appropriate measures are put in place to mitigate human rights violations and to enhance the protection for women. This session will explore what universal treaties have already been established and what new initiatives are being implemented from different legislatures that others can learn from.</p> <p>Chair: Imogen Richards, Programme Officer, CPA UK</p> <p>Speakers: Sian Lea, Business and Human Rights Manager, Anti-Slavery International</p> <p>Hanh Nguyen, Senior Labour Rights Researcher, Business & Human Rights Resource Centre</p> <p>Olga Martin-Ortega, Lead, Professor of International Law, School of Law and Criminology, University of Greenwich</p>
	<p>END OF DAY 1</p>

Official Programme

DAY 2: GENDER, TRADE AND POLITICS

WEDNESDAY 21ST JUNE 2023

TIME	DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITY
0845 - 0900	Debrief of Day 1
0900 - 1000	Session 5: Creating Gender-Sensitive Parliaments This session will explore the ways in which legislatures can ensure they are scrutinising legislation from a gender-sensitive lens, as well as how institutions can ensure they are inclusive of all and promote women's political participation. Chair: Josephine Jengo, Programmes Manager and Women in Parliament Lead, CPA UK Speaker: Professor Sarah Childs, Professor of Gender and Politics at Royal Holloway University (TBC)
1015 - 1130	Session 6: Mainstreaming Gender in Trade Agreements The mainstreaming of gender into trade agreements and measuring the gender responsiveness of trade policy is a growing focus in the field. A number of countries have been seen to commit to consider the impact of trade agreements on women, including for example through dedicated gender clauses. This session will allow the panel and delegates to discuss the various approaches to gender mainstreaming in trade agreements and examine their effectiveness in ensuring women are not left behind when it comes to the benefits of bilateral and multilateral trade. Chair: Rahel Kibru, Programmes Manager and International Trade Lead, CPA UK Speakers: Judith Fessehaie, Head of Women and Trade Programme, International Trade Centre Amy Brooker, Senior Public Affairs Officer, Women's Budget Group
1200 - 1245	Witness Prime Minister's Questions Live
1515 - 1630	Session 7: Communications Workshop An interactive workshop focussed on women parliamentarians' communications skills and techniques for being an effective member. The session will look at persuasive speeches and effective questioning during committee inquiries. Facilitator: Kate Faragher, Founder and CEO, BeSpoke Skills

Official Programme

DAY 2: GENDER, TRADE AND POLITICS

WEDNESDAY 21ST JUNE 2023

TIME	DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITY
1640 - 1740	<p>Session 8: Women's Leadership in Politics</p> <p>At a time when women face numerous obstacles to their political participation, including targeted online abuse, this discussion will allow Commonwealth women parliamentarians to share their experiences of the barriers faced in their political careers, approaches to overcoming challenges and how all parliamentarians across the Commonwealth, including male allies, can ensure the younger generation of aspiring women representatives can succeed.</p> <p>Chair: The Rt. Hon. the Baroness D'Souza, Member of the House of Lords, UK Parliament</p> <p>Speakers: Hon. Akierra Missick MP, Member of the House of Assembly, Turks and Caicos Islands The Rt. Hon. Dame Maria Miller MP, Chair of CPA UK Executive Committee and Member of the House of Commons, UK Parliament Hon. Teima Onorio, Member of the Kiribati Parliament Hon. Eleni Petinos, Shadow Minister for Finance, Member of the Parliament of New South Wales</p>
	<p>END OF DAY 2</p>

Official Programme

DAY 3: SCRUTINY IN PRACTICE

THURSDAY 22ND JUNE

TIME	DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITY
0900 - 1015	<p>Session 9: Scrutiny Process in the UK and the Commonwealth</p> <p>One of parliament's main roles is to examine and challenge the work of the government. This session will allow participants to hear from a panel of members from the UK and the Commonwealth with experience scrutinising trade agreements and associated legislation. The panel will share the scrutiny process in their own legislatures, highlighting key challenges and any recent developments.</p> <p>Chair: The Rt. Hon. the Lord Haselhurst, House of Lords, UK Parliament</p> <p>Speakers: The Baroness Hayter of Kentish Town, Chair, International Agreements Committee, House of Lords, UK Parliament</p> <p>Alexander Horne, Former Special Advisor to the International Agreements Committee and Visiting Professor of Law, Durham University</p> <p>Hon. Agnes Nandi Nkusankhoma, Member of the Parliament of Malawi</p>
1030 - 1130	<p>Session 10: Research and Evidence-Based Scrutiny</p> <p>To effectively scrutinise trade policy and agreements, significant research and evidence gathering is vital. This session will explore avenues parliamentarians can take to source and utilise key research and evidence. It will also look into the important role stakeholders play to facilitate trade bill scrutiny.</p> <p>Chair: Selsabil Amine, Communications Officer, CPA UK</p> <p>Speakers: Emily Unell, Senior Clerk, Table Office and former Second Clerk to the International Trade Committee, UK Parliament</p> <p>Professor Christopher Dent, Professor in Economics and International Business and former Special Advisor to the House of Commons International Trade Committee, Edge Hill University</p> <p>Natasha Mutebi, Social Science Advisor, Parliamentary Office for Science and Technology, UK Parliament</p>
1130 - 1215	<p>Session 11: Committee Evidence Analysis</p> <p>An opportunity for delegates to put into practice key areas covered in previous sessions. Prior to the committee exercise, delegates will examine the evidence determining key areas of interest and of concern.</p> <p>Facilitator: James Hockaday, Committee Specialist, Business and Trade Committee, House of Commons, UK Parliament</p>

Official Programme

DAY 3: SCRUTINY IN PRACTICE

THURSDAY 22ND JUNE

TIME	DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITY
1400 - 1545	<p>Session 12: Committee Exercise</p> <p>Facilitator: James Hockaday, Committee Specialist, Business and Trade Committee, House of Commons, UK Parliament</p>
1545 - 1615	<p>Final Feedback</p> <p>Facilitator: Matthew Hamilton, Monitoring and Evaluation Manager, CPA UK</p>
1615 - 1630	<p style="text-align: center;">CLOSING CEREMONY</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Closing Keynote by Hon. Oneidge Walrond MP, Minister of Tourism, Industry and Commerce, Parliament of Guyana</p>

ABOUT CPA UK



Supporting and strengthening parliamentary democracy throughout the Commonwealth

CPA UK supports and strengthens parliamentary democracy throughout the Commonwealth. It focuses on key priority themes, including women in parliament, modern slavery, financial oversight, security and trade.

CPA UK brings together UK and Commonwealth parliamentarians and officials to share knowledge and experience through peer to peer learning. It aims to improve parliamentary oversight, scrutiny and representation and is located in, and funded by, the UK Parliament.



Building Stronger Parliaments and Advancing Democracy

CPA UK's core work is to build relationships with parliaments across the Commonwealth. This is achieved through a programme of parliamentary strengthening and capacity building activities.

CPA UK undertakes work at the request of other parliaments around the Commonwealth, and our tailored programmes include both individual country activities, and large scale projects and activities that bring together Commonwealth parliamentarians and clerks.

For more information about our work and activities, please visit our website: uk-cpa.org

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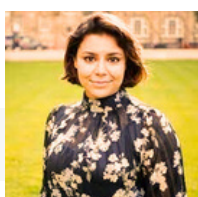
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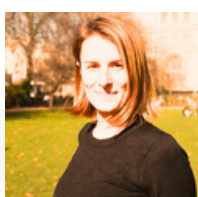
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