

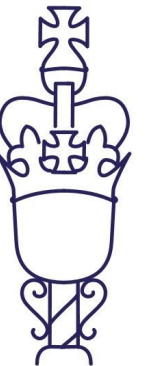


65th Commonwealth
Parliamentary Conference
Halifax, Canada • August 20-26, 2022



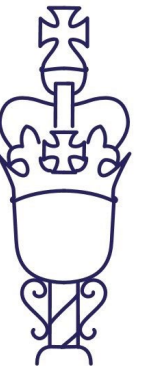
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du Commonwealth
Halifax, Canada • 20 au 26 août 2022

COMMONWEALTH WOMEN PARLIAMENTARIANS CONFERENCE





CWP BUSINESS MEETING



<p>1. Increasing women’s representation on the Executive Committee</p> <p><i>Each CPA Region shall nominate women comprising at least one third of the prescribed number of its Regional Representatives to serve on the CPA Executive Committee.</i></p>	<p>1. Increasing women’s representation on the Executive Committee</p> <p><i>Where practicable, each CPA Region shall nominate women comprising at least one third of the prescribed number of its Regional Representatives to serve on the CPA Executive Committee.</i></p>
<p>2. Increasing women representation on CPC delegations</p> <p><i>In determining Branch delegates, except only where it is impossible to do so, either by virtue of the composition of the legislature itself or limitations arising due to a single CPC delegate entitlement or otherwise, each Branch shall ensure that at least one third of its delegation to the General Assembly are women.</i></p> <p><i>(where ‘one third’ is not a whole number, the number should be rounded up or down to the nearest whole – e.g., one third of four would be one and one third of five would be two”).</i></p>	<p>2. Increasing women representation on CPC delegation</p> <p><i>In determining Branch delegates, where practicable, each Branch shall ensure that at least one third of its delegation to the General Assembly are women.</i></p>



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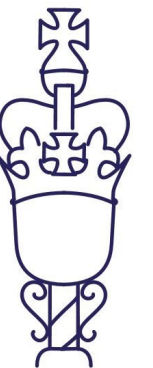
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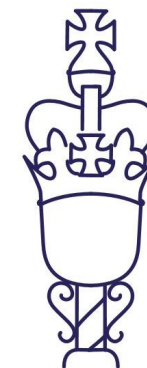


WORKSHOP A: Empowering Women Parliamentarians and Promoting Diversity/Intersectionality





Global Parliamentary Code of Democratic Conduct





The Role of Parliamentarians in Promoting Diversity and Equality

Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians (CWP) Conference
65th Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference
Halifax, Canada - 21 August 2022

Sneh Aurora
Director, London Office, CHRI

Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative

CHRI is an accredited Commonwealth Organisation working towards the **practical realisation of human rights**



Points of Discussion

1. Role of Parliaments as models and examples of equality and inclusivity
1. How diverse Parliaments promote diversity and equality legislation
1. Commonwealth Parliaments continuing to advance equality and inclusivity in both structures and outputs

The State of the World's Parliaments



- Women make **49.5%** of the world's population
- Only **25.5 %** of all national parliamentarians are women
- Only **19.5%** of Members of Parliament in the Commonwealth are women

The Right to Equal Political Participation

Women's participation in political life is a human right

- **Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR)** - Article 21
- **International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR)** - Article 25



The Right to Equal Political Participation

- **Convention on the Elimination of All forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) - Article 7**

States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in the political and public life of the country and, in particular, shall ensure to women, on equal terms with men, the right:

- (a) **To vote** in all elections and public referenda and **to be eligible for election** to all publicly elected bodies;
- (b) **To participate in the formulation of government policy** and the implementation thereof and **to hold public office** and perform all public functions at all levels of government;
- (c) **To participate in non-governmental organizations and associations** concerned with the public and political life of the country.



The Right to Equal Political Participation

- **Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) Target 5.5**

Ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life.



The Right to Equal Political Participation

An equal representation of women in Parliament is a reflection of real democracy



“Societies in which women are excluded from public life and decision-making cannot be described as democratic. The concept of democracy will have real and dynamic meaning and lasting effect only when political decision-making is shared by women and men and takes equal account of the interests of both”.

- CEDAW Committee
General Recommendation No. 23 on Political and public life

The Right to Equal Political Participation



Source: UN Women

The equal participation of women in parliament ensures women's voices and priorities are heard

...And this has an impact on laws and policies.

How Diverse Parliaments Promote Diversity and Equality Legislation

2018 Study- analysed **women's representation in national parliament** and the extent to which this had an impact on gender sensitive laws and policies.

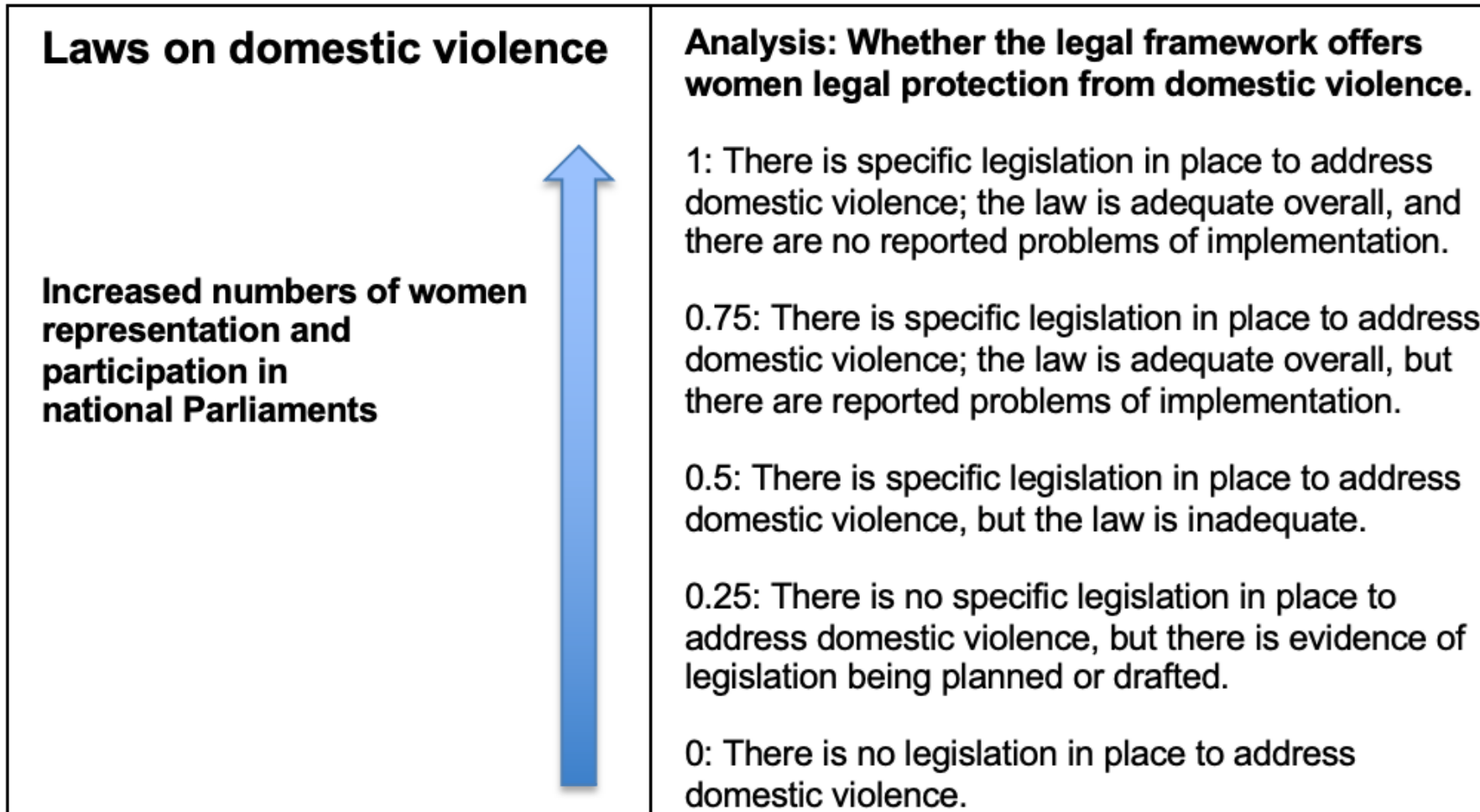
FINDINGS: There is a **positive correlation** between women's political representation **and the impact on gender sensitive laws.**

Examined laws relating to :

- quotas
- custody and women's rights to parental authority after divorce
- domestic violence, sexual harassment and rape, particularly offering legal protections to women

Developing countries that have a higher percentage of women in Parliament are more likely to have gender sensitive laws that are **more robust** in the protection of women's rights. Such laws are also **more likely to be passed and also more likely to be implemented.**

How Diverse Parliaments Promote Diversity and Equality Legislation



Gender-Sensitive Parliaments

- **What is a Gender-Sensitive Parliament?**

- Responds to the needs and interests of men and women in its composition, structures, operations, methods and work.
- Removes the barriers to women's full participation and ensures the promotion of gender equality.
- Is one in which there are no barriers – substantive, structural or cultural – to women's full participation and to equality.



Gender-Sensitive Parliaments

- **Special measures to close gaps in representation**

Quotas (reserved seats, candidate and political party quotas)



Uganda



Source: UN Women

- Art. 78.1 of the Constitution of Uganda - 1 woman rep in each district
- **Uganda has the highest percentage of women in a Commonwealth Parliament (33.8%)**

Gender-Sensitive Parliaments

- **Adopt gender mainstreaming strategies**

Gender mainstreaming => assessing policies, laws and programmes for their differential impact on men and women and on boys and girls.



Source: Toronto City News

Gender-Sensitive Parliaments

- **Establish structures and mechanisms dedicated to gender**



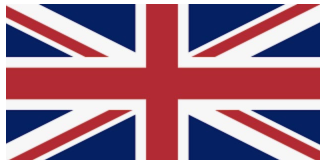
Kenya

- Kenya Women Parliamentary Association,
Prohibition of Female Genital Mutilation Act (2011)



Gender-Sensitive Parliaments

- **Strengthening linkages to gender equality experts and advocates outside parliament**



UK - monitoring progress



Parliamentary

Address of GBV



Gender-Sensitive Parliaments

- Capacity development, mentoring and other training programmes on gender equality



UK



Kenya



- Access to sex- and diversity-disaggregated data

Resources

- OHCHR, [Guidance Note: Strategies and good practices in promoting gender equality outcomes in parliaments](#)
- Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), [Plan of Action for Gender-sensitive Parliaments](#)
- OECD: [Women, Government and Policy Making in OECD Countries. Fostering Diversity for Inclusive Growth](#)
- OECD, [Toolkit for Mainstreaming and Implementing Gender Equality](#)
- OECD, [Why quotas work for gender equality](#)



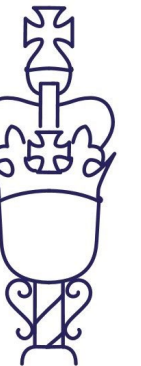
Thank you

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RECOMMENDATION:

“In promoting women’s empowerment and greater diversity in public office, parliamentarians and legislatures should take an institution-centric approach towards lasting change”



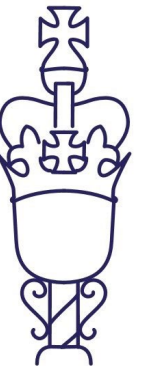


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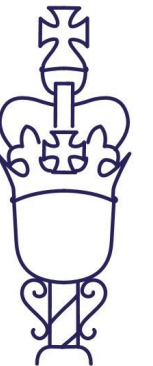
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WORKSHOP B: Effectively Combating all forms of Abuse and Harassment in Parliament





PARLIAMENT OF MALAYSIA

Effectively Combating All Forms of Abuse and Harassment in Parliament.

COMMONWEALTH WOMEN PARLIAMENTARIAN
65th COMMONWEALTH PARLIAMENTARY CONFERENCE,
HALIFAX, NOVA SCOTIA,
22 AUGUST 2022

Introduction



- ✚ Sexism, Harassment and abuse are intolerable violations of fundamental rights, right to equality, right to freedom, right against exploitation, educational rights, right to property and right to constitutional .
- ✚ Those rights are enshrined in international instruments including
 - the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights,
 - the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW),
 - the United Nations (UN) Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women.
 - The UN's Beijing Platform of Action, and
 - the Sustainable Developments Goals,

Introduction

- ✚ Harassment, sexist remarks and abuse or physical violence are among the most widespread human rights violations in the world of politics.
- ✚ The Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) studies, published in 2016 and 2018, shows that:
 - 82 per cent of female MPs who took part in an IPU international study had experienced psychological violence (sexual and sexist remarks, intimidation and threats, pictures published with humiliating or sexual connotations, etc.)
 - 65 per cent of these women had been subjected to sexist remarks, in most cases made on parliamentary premises by male colleagues – from both opposing and their own political parties.
 - 25 per cent had suffered physical violence.
 - 20 per cent had been sexually harassed.



Parliament Malaysia

- ✂ In Malaysia, women are free to participate in politics, as well as participating in elections. The number of female parliamentarians increase to 10.81 % in 2008 to the current years at 14.86% or 33 women parliamentarians out of 222 members of parliament. The statistic is still low compares to 23.8% of parliamentarians globally were women in 2018.
- ✂ UN Women have found that women's involvement impacts decision-making in a positive way.
- ✂ Women participation in decision making leads to more just and equitable and inclusive policy.



LEGAL FRAMEWORK AND POLICIES ON SEXUAL HARASSMENT




There are comprehensive laws, procedures and guidelines available on the protection against abuse, sexism, sexual harassment and violence in Parliament Malaysia.

- Federal Constitution(article 8 on the equality);
- the Houses of Parliament (Privileges and Powers) Act 1952,
- Standing Orders of Both Houses House of Representatives and Senate
- Penal Code, Employment Act 1955, A Civil Suit Under The Tort of Assault



the framework is subjected to a revision, to expand and adding measures to cater the need of its members from time to time to ensure that member of parliament can play their role as a representative of the people and as parliamentarians effectively and freely without fear.




LEGAL FRAMEWORK AND POLICIES



✚ This year, Parliament of Malaysia passed a Sexual Harassment Bill which seeks to provide for a right of redress for any person who have been sexually harassed, the establishment of the Tribunal for Anti-Sexual Harassment, the promotion of awareness of sexual harassment, and to provide for other related matters.

✚ Parliament plays an important role in ensuring the bill on sexual harassment tabled and passed. The Special Select Committee on Women Children Affairs and Social Development, analyzed and study on the Bill. Further, various motions, questions and debates on the issues related to sexual harassment been brought up and debated. It was reported that 15.25 percent of the questions in parliament during this 14th parliamentary term..

LEGAL FRAMEWORK AND POLICIES

- 
-  The Government of Malaysia has designed various initiatives and steps to eliminate any form of violence against women. Some of the initiative includes :
- Women against Violence (WAVE) Campaign,
 - Legal Literacy Programme,
 - The setting –up of One-Stop Crises Centers (OSCC) and Talian Nur 15999.(a toll-free line available to young women and girls)
-  the aspect of violence against women is as one of the focus in 13 key sectors under the Plan of Action for the advancement of women.

Conclusions

✧ The issue lies in the adequacy of existing legislations to combat cases of sexual harassment and to what extent the public aware of the laws, and other the related laws effective in deterring sexual harassment conduct.

✧ Parliament, plays an important role to ensure the effective implementation and oversight of legislation and government policies from a gender perspective. We should avoid any barriers-substantive, structural or cultural-to women's full participation and to equality between its men and women.

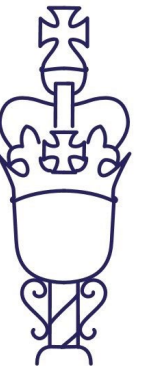




THANK YOU



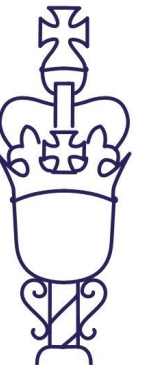
WORKSHOP B: Effectively Combating all forms of Abuse and Harassment in Parliament





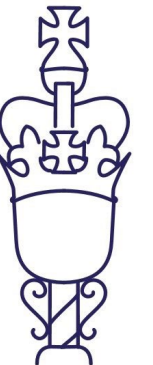
RECOMMENDATION:

“National and sub-national legislatures across the Commonwealth should ensure that their parliaments have policies and legislation in place to effectively tackle harassment and abuse in all its forms for all persons in parliament”





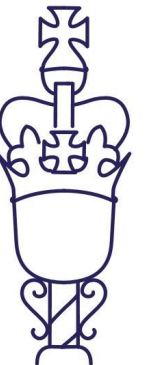
WORKSHOP C: Financial Empowerment of Women and Gender-Sensitive Budgeting





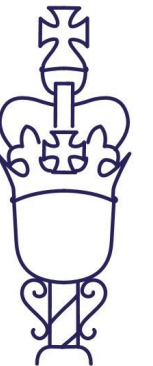
RECOMMENDATION:

“Commonwealth parliaments must ensure that all budgets incorporate a gender lens and all policies and agreements are gender sensitive”





WORKSHOP D: Promoting Gender-Sensitive Parliaments Post-Pandemic





RECOMMENDATION:

“Commonwealth parliaments should use lessons learnt from the COVID-19 pandemic to proactively explore gender sensitive practices and policies”

