

# COMMONWEALTH WOMEN PARLIAMENTARIANS

*"To promote the representation of women in CPA Branches and women's full and equal participation in all political and parliamentary leadership at all levels." Our Mission*

Find out more here: [www.cpahq.org](http://www.cpahq.org)



**The Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians (CWP)** is the network of women Members of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association's Parliaments and Legislatures. The CWP network provides a means of building the capacity of women elected to Parliament to be more effective in their roles, improving the awareness and ability of all Parliamentarians, male and female, and encouraging them to include a gender perspective in all aspects of their role - legislation, oversight and representation and helping Parliaments to become gender-sensitive institutions.

CWP represents over 3,000 women parliamentarians, in over 180 Commonwealth national and sub-national Parliaments, across all 9 Regions of the CPA.



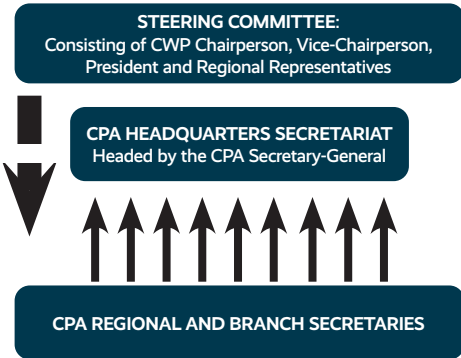
THE CWP IN FIGURES

**3,000+**  
PARLIAMENTARY  
MEMBERS (APPROX.)

**180**  
LEGISLATURES/  
PARLIAMENTS (MAKE UP  
THE NETWORK)

**32**  
NUMBER OF YEARS THE  
ASSOCIATION HAS BEEN  
WORKING

## How is the CWP organised?



- The CWP is governed by the CPA's **Constitution** established in 1993 and the CWP's Terms of Reference agreed in 2022.
- The **CWP Business Meeting** is the ultimate authority of the CWP.
- The **Steering Committee** of eleven Women Members usually meets twice a year and is made up of the Chairperson, CWP Regional Representatives and the CWP President
- The **CPA Headquarters Secretariat**, headed by the **Secretary-General**, administers the CWP with the support of the Network Coordinator. Support also emanates from **Regional and Branch Secretaries**, usually senior parliamentary staff who mobilise the resources of their Parliaments in pursuit of the aims and activities of the CPA and by extension the CWP.

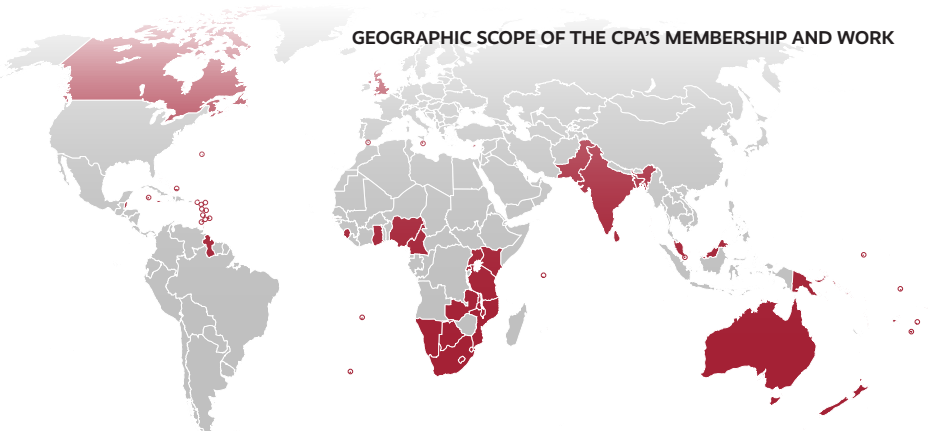
## What are CPA Branches?

The CWP is a network within the CPA.

- The CPA represents more than **180** Parliaments and Legislatures in **56** Commonwealth countries.
- The CPA network extends to over **17,000** Parliamentarians and parliamentary staff.
- The CPA is the only Commonwealth organisation to represent **national, state, provincial and territorial Parliaments and Legislatures**.
- CPA members are democratic, law-making Parliaments and Legislatures.
- All CPA Branches are autonomous and regarded as equal.
- There are nine regions of the CPA: **Africa; Asia; Australia; British Islands and Mediterranean; Canada; Caribbean, Americas and Atlantic; India; Pacific; South-East Asia**.

## History of CWP

Recognising the need of increasing women's representation in political institutions, the Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians (CWP) was founded by women delegates at the 1989 plenary CPA conference so women at future conferences could discuss ways to increase female representation in Parliament and work towards the mainstreaming of gender considerations in all CPA activities and programmes.





In 2004, the group was formally recognised in the CPA Constitution and its elected Chairperson became part of the CPA Executive Committee.

Previous CWP Chairpersons include:

- Hon. Dr Dato' Noraini Ahmad MP, Member of the Parliament of Malaysia (2016-2019)
- Rt Hon. Rebecca Kadaga MP, Former Speaker of the Parliament of Uganda (2013-2016)
- Hon. Alix Boyd Knights MHA, Speaker Emerita of the House of Assembly of Dominica (2010-2013)
- Ms Kashmala Tariq MNA, Former Member of the National Assembly of Pakistan (2007-2010)
- Hon. Lindiwe Maseko MP, former Speaker of the Provincial Legislature of Gauteng (2004-2007)

## What does the CWP do?

### Regional Strengthening Funds

The CPA supports the work of the CWP through its Regional Strengthening Fund. Funding is allocated to the nine CPA regions to provide assistance in undertaking projects and events which align with the CWP's strategic objectives.

### Gender Sensitive Parliaments

The CWP is an active advocate, seeking to ensure parliaments are gender sensitive institutions. In 2020, the CWP published a new set of guidelines, titled **CWP Gender Sensing Parliaments Guidelines: Standards and Checklist for Parliamentary Change**. This was followed in 2022 with



a **CWP Gender Sensing Parliaments: A Seven Step Field Guide** which collectively support parliaments in conducting self-assessment reviews and audits. Following the publishing of the Field Guide, the CWP Secretariat will support parliaments which undertake self-assessments as well as enabling them to achieve identified recommendations.

### Outreach and Engagement

The CWP actively marks International Women's Day across the Commonwealth and supports other global initiatives through many international meetings and events. In recent years, there have included the Commonwealth Women's Forum at the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting, the Commission for the Status of Women Meeting and Women Political Leaders Conference. Importantly of all is the **CWP Triennial Conference** which is held at the margins of the CPA's Annual Parliamentary Conference.

The CWP network also publishes a biannual e-Newsletter to its membership as well as hosting numerous social media accounts communicating news on CWP and related developments.

### Bilateral Support

The CWP works with individual parliaments to support them in establishing and strengthening their Women's Caucuses and to ensure, through the **CPA Recommended**

**Benchmarks for Democratic Legislatures**, parliaments and electoral practices adhere to international commitments, goals and standards, such as SDG 5 and CEDAW.

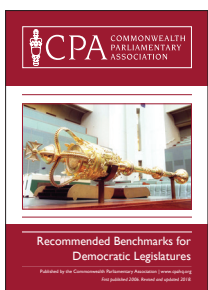
**CWP Workshop**

The CWP organises annual workshops on various thematic topics aligned to its strategic priorities. The next Workshop is scheduled for early December 2022 in the Australian Capital Territory (ACT) Legislative Assembly and will focus on **'Male Champions'**.



**Who do we work with?**

The CWP work with a wide range of organisations in achieving its aims, these include: **inter-governmental organisations; regional organisations; academic institutions; non-governmental organisations; professional training bodies; private businesses; think tanks** and **other research bodies**.



**SOME OF OUR RECENT RESOURCES AND PUBLICATIONS**



**SIGN-UP TO OUR MAILING LIST**



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**INVESTORS IN PEOPLE**  
We invest in people Standard

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