



COMMONWEALTH PARLIAMENTARY ASSOCIATION

COMMONWEALTH DAY YOUTH ENGAGEMENT HANDBOOK

About the CPA

The Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) connects, develops, promotes and supports parliamentarians and their staff to identify benchmarks of good governance and the implementation of the enduring values of the Commonwealth. The CPA collaborates with parliaments and other organisations, including the intergovernmental community, to achieve its statement of purpose. It brings parliamentarians and parliamentary staff together to exchange ideas among themselves and with experts in various fields, to identify benchmarks of good practices and new policy options they can adopt or adapt in the governance of their societies.

About the authors

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BACKGROUND

Commonwealth Day

What

A celebration of “unity, diversity and the links of the modern Commonwealth.” It is also a time to bring people together for dialogue and reflection upon the designated theme of the year.

When

Second Monday of March, every year since 1976. Although Monday is the official day marked in the calendar, it is generally celebrated throughout the entire week.

Where

Schools, governments and communities across the Commonwealth organise events. The Commonwealth Day Service is organised by the Royal Commonwealth Society and takes place in Westminster Abbey in London, UK.

How

Governments of Commonwealth member states and Commonwealth organisations can undertake activities, events and discussions on the theme chosen for Commonwealth Day.

Commonwealth Day is an opportunity for 2.7 billion people across the 56 Commonwealth countries to celebrate their shared Commonwealth values.

60% of the Commonwealth population are 29 years old and under so it is crucial that this often marginalised group is represented and that their voices are championed.



01 User Manual

Public engagement is crucial for parliaments and legislatures. This Commonwealth Day Handbook serves as a toolkit on how the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association's branches can use Commonwealth Day as a means of public outreach and engagement for young people.

For ease of use and reference, the structure of this Commonwealth Day Handbook has been divided into two parts; a handbook and some useful tools to support the handbook.

The handbook is broken down on the basis of the different areas in which parliaments can execute their public outreach programme. The sections fall into three categories; hosting young people in your parliament, school visits and organising inter-parliamentary events.

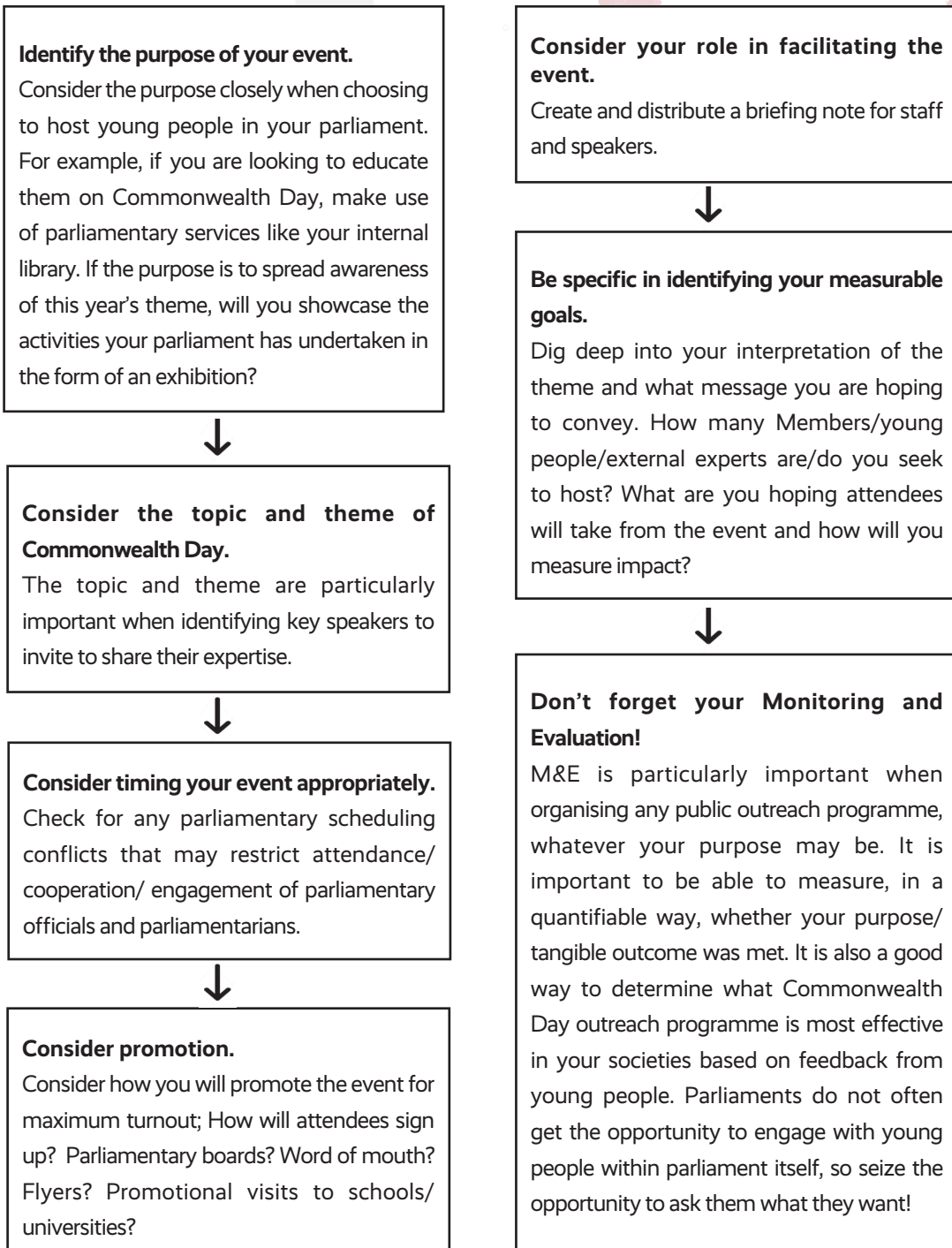
The Handbook also consists of a few useful tools that can be used to support the delivery of the programmes outlined in the Handbook. The tools include; Commonwealth Day quiz and fact sheet, activity cards, a wordsearch, and map and dictionary exercise to educate, engage and inspire your target audience. The template certificates included as part of this Handbook are designed to encourage wider participation.

The sections are supported by practical tips and other useful information to support the execution of the recommended activities and ways to accommodate virtual working, which can be found in beige boxes at the conclusion of some pages.



02 Hosting Young People in Your Parliament

2.1 Things to consider when planning your event



If hosting young people in your parliament is not feasible, hosting a webinar for young people is a great alternative! A webinar is an opportunity for young people to meet with parliamentarians and parliamentary staff who they may not otherwise get the opportunity to meet and engage in fruitful discussions with. The considerations highlighted above can also be used to plan your virtual event.

2.2 Organising a Youth Parliament

1. Outline your objectives:

To draft mock legislation in the form of a Youth Parliament? Will your Youth Parliament emulate a debate in the chambers in order to hold legislatures to account on policies relevant to the Commonwealth Day theme?

2. Develop your project:

Once you have established the finer details of your project, consider how you will develop your project; i.e. the structure of the parliament you are emulating, the makeup of your political parties, identifying key players who will contribute as human resources etc.

3. Plan your implementation:

Consider gathering support from parliamentary staff who have experience supporting/planning parliamentary activities and can transfer these skills into ensuring that your Youth Parliament is well-planned and a true reflection of your parliament's practices and procedures.

4. Know your audience:

Know your audience. This will ensure that your Youth Parliament is championed by young people and for young people. For example, in order to encourage the flow of new and fresh ideas be mindful of how much input you, as a parliamentarian or parliamentary staff, have in the discussions so as to not impose your own views.

To accommodate remote participation, you can also consider hosting a virtual Youth Parliament. An online Youth Parliament may be more cost-effective for you and the attendees so you may find that you are able to accommodate more young people, and in doing so, you will also be supporting a more sustainable future. You will save time on administrative tasks, like making travel arrangements, so more energy can be put into polishing the above steps!

VIRTUAL COMMONWEALTH YOUTH PARLIAMENT 14-18 December 2020



#VirtualCYP2020



2.3 Lead a Guided Tour of your Parliament

Liaise with your parliament's education service who may be able to assist in delivering an educational, informative and historical tour of your parliament. If this is not an option - consider becoming the tour guide using the following steps:

1. Do your research!

In order to give a good tour, you will need to learn all the relevant facts. Revise the historical link between your parliament and the Commonwealth prominent parliamentary activities pertaining to the Commonwealth and where they all took place! Young people are inquisitive so consider all the possible questions you may be asked beforehand to ensure that you are well-equipped to handle this tough crowd. Note: It may be wise to speak to the relevant parliamentary services responsible for giving tours or go on a guided tour yourself so that you can tap into their knowledge when organising your own.

2. Know your audience!

Be mindful of your vocabulary and the complexity of this tour especially if you have young people who have varied pre-existing knowledge on parliament.

3. Rehearse, rehearse, rehearse!

A tour should feel conversational and natural whilst being as informative as possible, which is why it is crucial that you learn the facts so that your delivery can be effortless. Don't be afraid to write tour cards as gentle reminders for yourself.

4. When on the tour, introduce yourself!

Make your tour personable and fun by getting to know your group. It is important to make a special effort in bridging the gap between parliamentarians/parliamentary staff and the public to alleviate any uncertainties and get personable.

5. Present an overview!

Present an overview of the route and what they can expect -hand out maps for guests to follow along. This is also something they can take away with them to ensure the day is memorable. Consider drawing attention to places on the map that accommodate people that require disability access.

6. Delivery is key!

Project your voice. It is also important that young people feel that their opinions are valued so be open to interjections and questions.

Parliament can be daunting to the public, particularly young people who may have little experience entering spaces like this, so ensure that you plan everything so there are no logistical hiccups along the way and study ways to accommodate them in order to make them feel most comfortable. If the young people are made to feel comfortable this will determine how receptive they are, which will in turn, lead to a successful outreach programme.

In the case that you are unable to accommodate in-person tours of your parliament, you can consider hosting a guided virtual tour in order to emulate the feeling of walking through parliament. This can be done in the form of a live online event with a tour guide presenting each room and sharing the historical relevance whilst interacting with the attendees. Alternatively, you can consider creating a pre-recorded tour video and sharing this with selected youth participants or making it accessible via the parliament website. Either way, a virtual tour is a great way of allowing young people the opportunity to truly experience parliament without physically being there.

2.4 Invite a Debate in your Parliament

Raise a motion in your parliament to open a conversation on Commonwealth Day and invite young people to watch and feel inspired.



Commonwealth Day school debate, New South Wales Parliament 2017



In raising a motion and opening up a discussion surrounding Commonwealth Day first identify what your motion is and what you are trying to accomplish.

In some cases - the motion can be something as broad as the entirety of the theme. Alternatively, you could choose to discuss a motion based on a specific policy area pertaining to the Commonwealth Day theme e.g. on sustainability.

Explore what the procedure is when seeking to move a motion in your parliament.

Is this something that requires notice in your parliament? If so, who are the key players, fellow parliamentarians or parliamentary staff, that should be notified for approval or consultation before you raise the motion at hand.

Gather support for your motion.

Identify key players who will be inclined to support your motion or entertain the Commonwealth Day conversation which will make it a fruitful discussion.

In 2019, on Commonwealth Day a series of debates and statements were heard in the UK House of Commons and House of Lords recognising the 70th Anniversary of the “modern” Commonwealth. A backbench debate also took place in the House of Commons and was titled “The Modern Commonwealth: Opportunities and Challenges.”

If your parliament holds virtual sittings, it is important that you as a parliamentarian, are not afraid to voice your thoughts just as you would in-person, whilst ensuring that you are following the relevant online protocol - and move the motion in your parliament to start the conversation!



2.5 Hold an Exhibition for Young People

An exhibition can be a great form of public outreach - particularly for young people. [Approximately 65% of people are visual learners](#) which means new concepts are more thoroughly and easily understood when demonstrated in images. If your aim is to engage or educate the youth on Commonwealth Day, an exhibition might just do the trick.

1. Identify the aim of this exhibition.

Are you looking to celebrate Commonwealth Day by showcasing your parliament's achievements in relation to the Commonwealth aspirations? Or to simply raise awareness of the day and celebrate diversity?



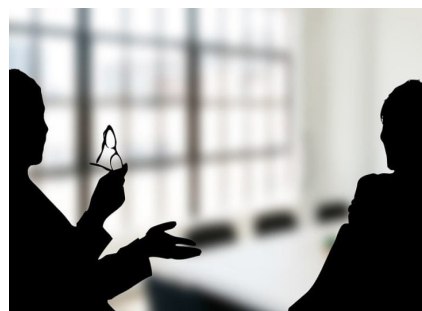
2. Source images.

Based on the above, decide how you will collate your photos. Is the parliament the best place to source photos that capture your parliamentary achievement pertaining to the Commonwealth Day Theme or will you accept external submissions of photos capturing broader Commonwealth values e.g. inclusivity/diversity.



3. Engage your guests.

Ask them to bring along their own photos for you to exhibit and encourage them to share their own thought/opinions.



The exhibition can be done virtually by collating and sharing the photos in the form of an online presentation and attendees can display their photos in the same way or hold them up to the camera. Discussions that arise can be noted in the chat function of your online platform during the exhibition and can later be used as a means of establishing what has worked well in your parliament or ways that your parliament can encourage great work being done outside the walls of parliament.

Ultimately, Commonwealth Day can be used as an opportunity to celebrate your achievements and inspire other parliaments with tips on how they too can excel.



03 Organise a School/ University Visit

3.1 Things to consider when planning your event

Carefully select the school/s of your choice before approaching them.

Identify the reason why you would like to select your chosen school and explore reasons for your visit. Has this school demonstrated having embraced Commonwealth values? What school do you feel will benefit most from this visit?

Outline the reason for your visit.

Commonwealth Day is fast approaching, so it may be wise to draft a programme for the itinerary of the day ahead of time or demonstrate a presentation that you hope to share on the day to secure your attendance.

Remain in communication with the school to keep them well-informed.

Keep the school well-informed on what your objectives are to ensure that they are in line with what the school is trying to achieve. For a good reception and an even better programme, keep the school informed on what you require from them, for example staff who are able to assist in facilitating the programme as they are most familiar with your audience and can assist with keeping them in line! Be sure to also keep them informed of the finer details, like what facilities you will require, for example projectors/mics.

You can also host a joint virtual event in collaboration with your chosen school by mirroring the way in which you would approach an in-person event. You can share a welcome video and outline the itinerary for the school to execute internally or for you to carry out virtually. To make this more interactive, you can video-call into the classes throughout the day to check-in on the progress and gather your feedback for monitoring and evaluation purposes!

3.2 Hold a Competition

Once you have identified your objectives, carefully select the type of competition you would like to hold with this in mind! For Commonwealth Day a good suggestion would be to encourage young students to draft a policy that they think best represents the Commonwealth theme and should be adopted in all 56 countries of the Commonwealth.

1. Collaborate! Consider who you can collaborate with in order to have the widest reach in gathering as many participants as possible. For Commonwealth Day, it may be useful to collaborate with a number of different schools rather than a single host school. Working in collaboration with a large number of schools that are inclusive and reflective of different ethnicities and abilities in the spirit of Commonwealth Day is a great idea.
2. Open it up! Although working with more than one school may seem daunting - there is a greater reward. Encouraging schools to hold internal competitions ahead of Commonwealth Day to shortlist names they wish to bring forward to represent their school on a larger scale may be useful.
3. Incentivise your competition! Consider suggesting that the winner's draft policy be put forward as a motion in your parliament and identify the key players that can facilitate this. For example, consider liaising with the constituency representative of the winning school to encourage them to champion this.



3.3 Commonwealth Day Quiz

Vary the difficulty of questions – but be sure to keep in mind who your audience are.

If you are trying to educate the youth on all things pertaining to Commonwealth values or a topic related to the theme of Commonwealth Day, note the age group of the youth who are participating and cater your questions to them. The questions should be challenging, but not so much so that they are impossible to answer.

Please also note that unless this is a quiz on vocabulary, it is safe to avoid using advanced vocabulary which could distract from the content of the question.

For learning and development purposes it might be a good idea to tell the young participants that they can anticipate a quiz towards the latter part of the day and the questions will therefore be reflective of things that have been discussed so that they are motivated to listen and learn throughout the day. Testing participants on their prior knowledge can in some cases knock their confidence and constrain their learning.

[Note: it may nonetheless be useful to hand out a quiz at the very start of your programme and at the end of your programme for Monitoring and Evaluating purposes].

Your Commonwealth Day quiz or competition can be hosted on an online video-conferencing platform, so it is important to ensure that you get familiar with the setting functions of your choice of platform prior to the competition and don't be afraid to get creative with the execution. If available, you can utilise a Question and Answer chat box function for attendees to submit their answers, have attendees raise their hands physically or virtually to answer or create polls. An online quiz may be slightly more difficult to carry out in larger groups, however, you can also see to organising multiple breakout rooms online so each group can submit one set of answers in order for you to keep up with the scores!

1. What is the general rule when writing a quiz?



Quizzes should be simple and fun!

2. How difficult should you make your quiz questions?



They should vary in difficulty!

3. What type of vocabulary should be used when writing a quiz?



Basic vocabulary!

4. What is the best way to ensure participants are capable and confident with partaking in a quiz?



Educate on the topic prior to handing out the quiz!

5. When should quizzes be shared?



Once the relevant information has been shared!

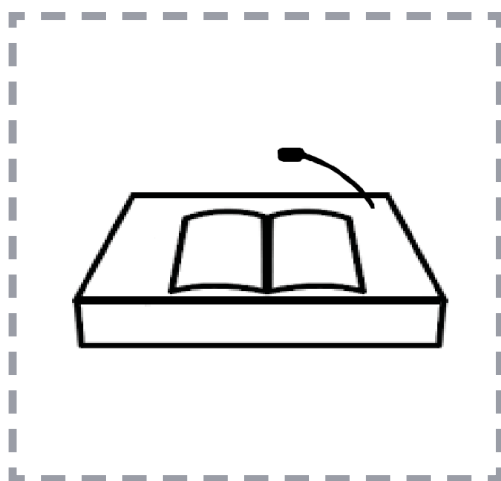


3.4 Create Activity Cards

Activity cards can help to educate young people and encourage them to think creatively! Here's how to create your own:

1. State your purpose, outcome or goal.

Is your purpose, outcome or goal to encourage creativity? Are you simply trying to open up a conversation on Commonwealth Day? Are you looking to try something innovative? Is your purpose to educate? Or are you looking to identify what about the Commonwealth inspires young people?

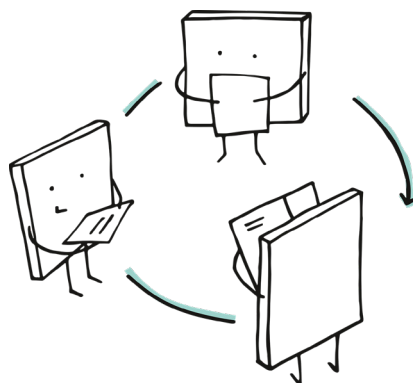


2. Make each activity card different.

A written exercise may encourage rational thinking in that it encourages a breakdown of thoughts and gives the writer time to reflect on their points, supporting evidence and reasons. A verbal exercise, however encourages the free flow of the most organic thoughts, feelings and ideas. Be sure to provide a variety of activity options by making each card different in order to capture all of the ideas/thoughts.

3. Plan your programme.

Plan the logistics of how each activity/exercise on the card should be executed. Consider the requirements of each card - a rap may require a larger group so that they can take to the stage to perform whereas a writing exercise can be done by one person. The official opportunity to celebrate Commonwealth Day comes around once a year so having a clear structure will ensure that the operation runs as smoothly as possible to make use of the time that you have.



04 Organise a Joint Event

4.1 Creating and Maintaining Strong Relationships

Address your location early on!

Distance is never a real problem when establishing strong connections between Commonwealth countries as a shared vision has and will continue to unite the Commonwealth - however it is important to address your location to determine what relationship you are building. If the school or the parliament you are partnering with are situated across the globe, financially and logistically this could be a strain. However, it is important to not let this stop you from building those very important relationships.

Establish alternative project ideas, like video-linking or partnering, to deliver the same programme in different areas of the world. You may find that a digital collaboration is more sustainable long-term and can achieve a greater longer lasting impact. But it is important to take into consideration the time-zone that your partners are in when arranging your virtual meetings.

Remember why you are establishing these relationships and, in the face of differences, focus on the common goal and keep going!

Contribute ideas of best practices.

It can be daunting working with people from different backgrounds and cultures, however it is important to remember that everyone's experiences are different and that different countries are progressive in different ways. To maintain a fruitful relationship, you must contribute to the discussion as there is always something you can learn and similarly, there is always something you can contribute!

Share Monitoring and Evaluation for previous projects that have worked and use this to plan any future projects you will partner on.





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Message from the CPA International Executive Committee

Commonwealth Day holds a special significance for the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association. It provides an opportunity to celebrate the collective achievements of our 180 branches with the 2.7 billion people that have felt their positive impacts first-hand. I would like to take this opportunity to extend my sincerest gratitude to all member branches of the CPA for working tirelessly in their efforts to embed our shared Commonwealth values into the heart of all that we do.

We look forward to wholly embracing the theme of Commonwealth Day and we are optimistic that our member parliaments will use their platforms to encourage greater adaptation and evolution within their own jurisdictions, whilst also deepening ties across the Commonwealth.

COMMONWEALTH DAY

In small groups, brainstorm what CPA benchmarks you would like to see your parliament implement this year.



COMMONWEALTH DAY

Draft a letter to His Majesty, King Charles III to inform him of your Branch's achievements that uphold Commonwealth values.



COMMONWEALTH DAY

Use recycled objects or materials to create a collage of ways your parliament can inspire other parliaments.



COMMONWEALTH DAY

Choose an inspirational Commonwealth leader and write a rap/poem about them.



COMMONWEALTH DAY

Choose one Commonwealth value you are most passionate and in 2 minutes explain to your partner how you think it will transform society.



COMMONWEALTH DAY

Draw a picture that you think best encompasses the theme on Commonwealth Day and get ready to present!



COMMONWEALTH DAY

Write down what your most memorable moment has been at this Commonwealth Day event.



COMMONWEALTH DAY

Create a wordsearch using key words that you think best encompass the theme of Commonwealth Day.



COMMONWEALTH DAY QUICK FACTS ABOUT THE COMMONWEALTH



Almost 1/3 of the world's population is in the Commonwealth.



There are 33 Small states (population under 1.5 million people)



The three largest Commonwealth countries:
1) India 2) Pakistan 3) Nigeria
The three smallest Commonwealth countries:
1) Nauru 2) Tuvalu 3) Saint Kitts & Nevis



The King is the Head of State for 14 Commonwealth countries



Commonwealth countries account for 16% of global Gross National Income



The Commonwealth population is 2.7 billion



Rwanda, Mozambique, Gabon and Togo were never a part of the British Empire



60% of the Commonwealth population are 25 and under

COMMONWEALTH DAY QUIZ

Name: _____ Age: _____ School/College/University: _____

Country: _____ Email: _____

COMMONWEALTH DAY QUIZ

1. In what year was the first ever collectively observed Commonwealth Day held?

1977

1965

1988

2. What is the combined population of the Commonwealth?

1.8 billion

3.7 billion

2.7 billion

3. What percentage of the Commonwealth population are aged 29 or under?

55%

60%

65%

4. What is the smallest Commonwealth member country by area?

Nauru

Tuvalu

Saint Kitts & Nevis

5. How many of the Commonwealth member countries is the King the Head of State for?

54

14

33

6. Which Commonwealth member countries were never a part of the British Empire?

Rwanda & Malawi

Botswana & Uganda

Rwanda & Mozambique

7. Which countries are the newest members of the Commonwealth?

Rwanda & Mozambique

Nigeria & Malaysia

Gabon & Togo

8. What percentage of the worlds Gross National Income do Commonwealth countries account for?

8%

16%

20%

9. How many Commonwealth member states are classified as small states (population of 1.5 million or under)?

33

10

28

10. Which Commonwealth country has the biggest population after India?

Bangladesh

Nigeria

Pakistan

COMMONWEALTH DAY QUIZ

Quiz Answers:

1. In what year was the first ever collectively observed Commonwealth Day held?

1977

2. What is the combined population of the Commonwealth?

2.7 billion

3. What percentage of the Commonwealth population are aged 29 or under?

60%

4. What is the smallest Commonwealth member country by area?

Nauru

5. How many of the Commonwealth member countries is King Charles III the Head of State for?

14

6. Which Commonwealth member countries were never a part of the British Empire?

Rwanda and Mozambique

7. Which countries are the newest members of the Commonwealth?

Gabon and Togo

8. What percentage of the world's Gross National Income do Commonwealth countries account for?

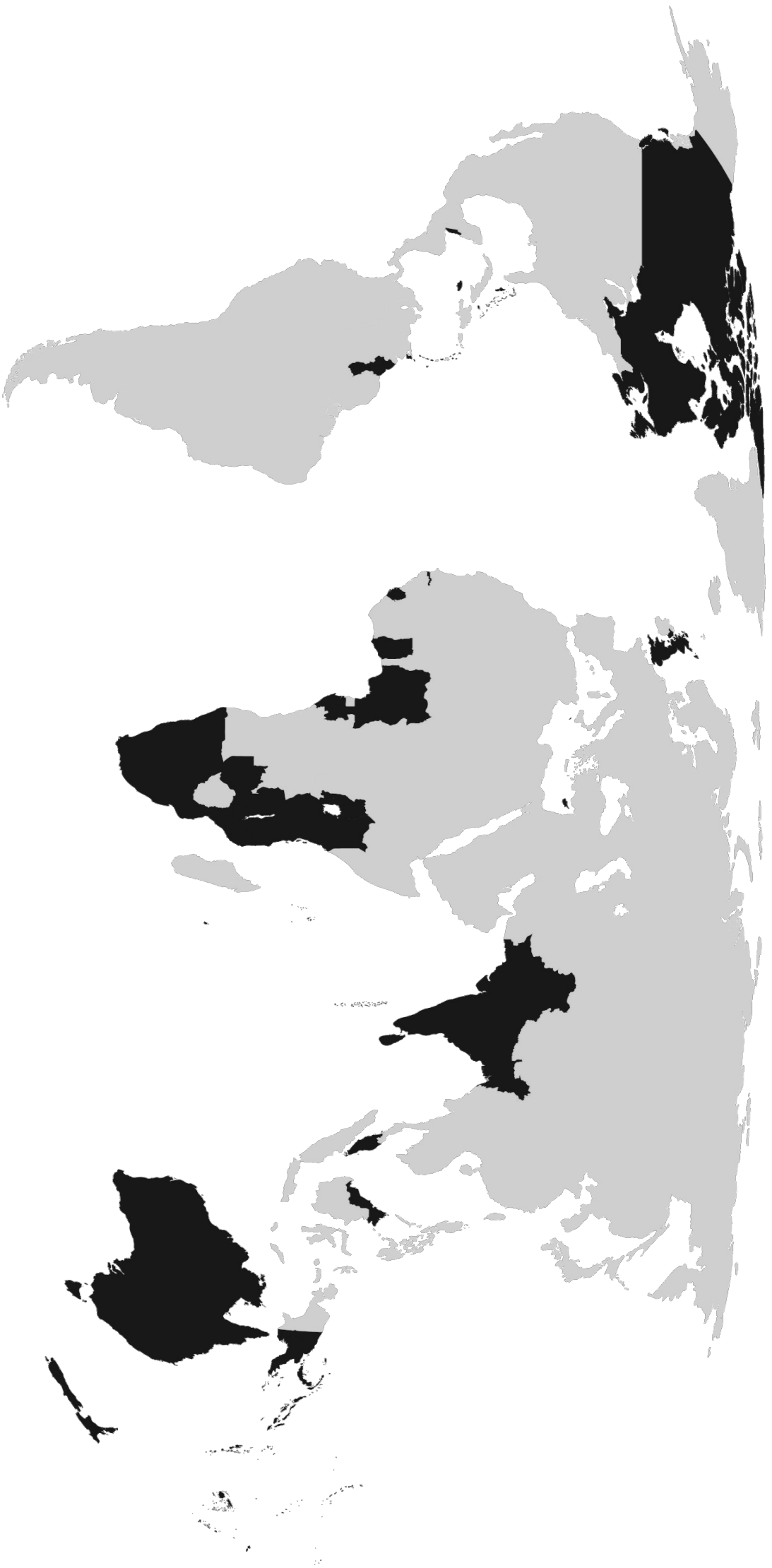
16%

9. How many Commonwealth member states are classified as small states (population of 1.5 million or under)?

33

10. Which Commonwealth country has the biggest population after India?

Pakistan

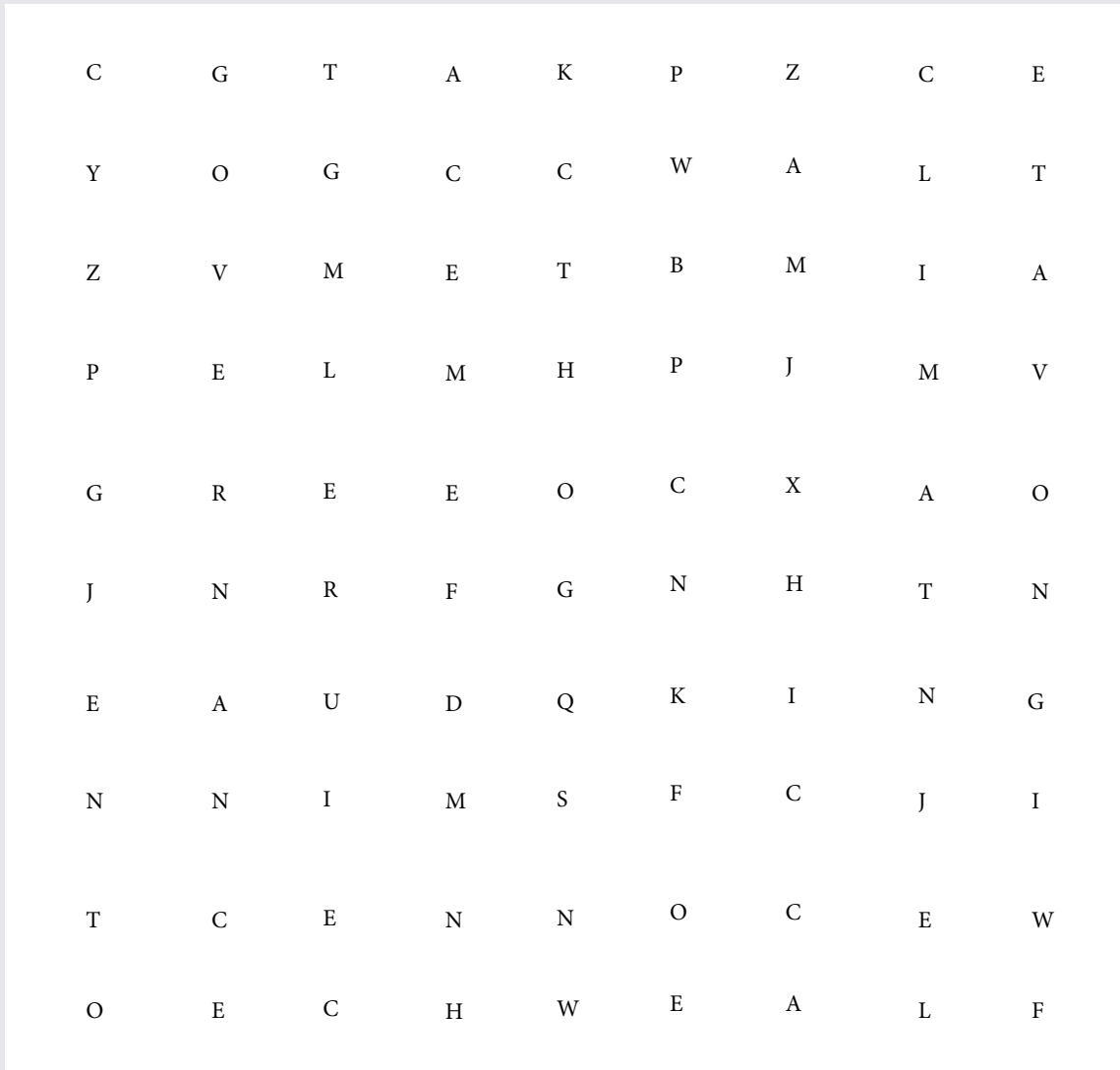


MATCH THEM UP!

COMMONWEALTH DAY	The presence of, or support for the presence of, several distinct cultural or ethnic groups within a society.
GOVERNANCE	The action or manner of governing a state, organisation, etc.
INCLUSIVITY	The state of being equal, especially in status, rights, or opportunities.
SUSTAINABLE	Make changes in something established, especially by introducing new methods, ideas, or products.
EQUALITY	The action or process of working together to the same end.
MULTICULTURALISM	The ability to be maintained at a certain rate or level/ avoidance of the depletion of natural resources in order to maintain an ecological balance.
INNOVATE	A system of government by the whole population or all the eligible members of a state, typically through elected representatives.
CO-OPERATION	The second Monday in March, on which the British Commonwealth is celebrated.
DEMOCRACY	The practice or policy of including people who might otherwise be excluded or marginalised, such as those who have physical or mental disabilities and members of minority groups.

COMMONWEALTH DAY

WORDSEARCH



LAW

CLIMATE

CONNECT

COMMON

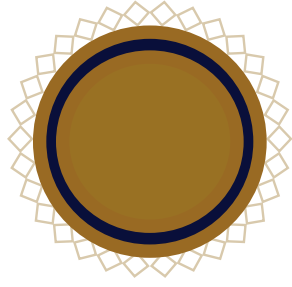
GOVERNANCE

INNOVATE

KING



Certificate of Participation



Awarded to

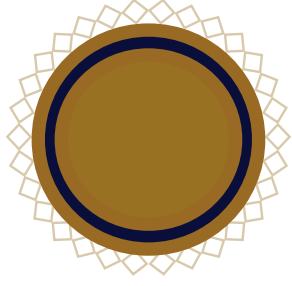
*for your valuable participation in the
CPA Commonwealth Day celebrations*

Signature

Date



Certificate of Appreciation



Awarded to

is awarded this certificate in recognition of

Signature

Date



For your reference, as quoted from the [Charter of the Commonwealth](#)

Good Governance - "We reiterate our commitment to promote good governance through the rule of law, to ensure transparency and accountability and to root out, both at national and international levels, systemic and systematic corruption."

Rule of Law - "We believe in the rule of law as an essential protection for the people of the Commonwealth and as an assurance of limited and accountable government. In particular, we support an independent, impartial, honest and competent judiciary and recognise that an independent, effective and competent legal system is integral to upholding the rule of law, engendering public confidence and dispensing justice."

Protecting the Environment - "We recognise the importance of the protection and conservation of our natural ecosystems and affirm that sustainable management of the natural environment is the key to sustained human development. We recognise the importance of multilateral cooperation, sustained commitment and collective action, in particular by addressing the adaptation and mitigation challenges of climate change and facilitating the development, diffusion and deployment of affordable environmentally friendly technologies and renewable energy, and the prevention of illicit dumping of toxic and hazardous waste as well as the prevention and mitigation of erosion and desertification."

Click here for
more info!



PARLIAMENTARIAN'S
TOOLKIT
A GUIDE FOR EFFECTIVE CLIMATE CHANGE ACTION





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