



Supporting the Caribbean Public Procurement Agenda

Regional Workshop – Cooperation and Integration, the
way to Government Procurement in the Caribbean

April 12-13, 2011, The Ritz Carlton Spa and Golf Resort, Montego Bay, Jamaica

Overview

1. Provide an overview of the Commonwealth and the Secretariat's public sector development strategy;
2. Outline how Public Procurement fits into the strategy; and
3. Identify initiatives to assist developing countries in the area of public procurement – communities of practice; and technical assistance





The Commonwealth

Who are we?

The Commonwealth

A voluntary association of **54 countries** that support each other and work together towards shared goals in democracy and development.

The Commonwealth Secretariat carries out programmes of work based on mandates set by Commonwealth Heads of Government at their biennial summit ([CHOGM](#)) and the responsibility for delivering these programmes rests with specific divisions and units.

www.thecommonwealth.org



Commonwealth Secretariat – Governance and Institutional Development Division

The Governance and Institutional Development Division (GIDD) contributes to the Commonwealth Secretariat's commitment to promote democracy and good governance by supporting public sector development in Commonwealth countries.





Public Sector Development

To advance good governance by assisting governments build public service capacity, strengthen public institutions and improve service delivery

Principles:

1. There are synergies between governance and development.
2. A strong and effective public sector is a necessary pillar to any public sector reform aimed at ensuring governments offer quality services that meet the needs of its citizenry.
3. A competent and skilled public sector is capable of addressing emerging challenges and opportunities; and is more responsive/proactive to the call for better service delivery.
4. Practitioners are in a more suitable position to identify workable solutions.

These principles have informed the Secretariat's public sector development strategy.



Commonwealth Secretariat – Governance and Institutional Development Division

The Division's work covers the full spectrum of public sector administration and management as well as issues relating to civil society and private sector institutions with public responsibility:

Thematic Areas include:

- Human Resource Development;
- Governance;
- Public Private Partnership;
- ICT;
- Local Government;
- Public Expenditure Management;





Public Sector Development

Connecting Public Procurement into the Public Sector Development Strategy

Public Expenditure Management Mandate



In 2003, the Commonwealth Heads of Government in the Abuja Declaration mandated the Commonwealth Secretariat to assist developing countries in improving their public financial management systems.

In 2005, Commonwealth Finance Ministers and the CHOGM endorsed guidelines for improving Public Financial Management and urged member countries to adopt measures to bring about reforms in this area.

Public Expenditure Management Mandate



Commonwealth has been and continues to place great emphasis on small states as most of its member countries fall in this category; it supports MDGs and designs programmes and activities to assist in these areas.

Its small state countries have numerous development challenges:

- Poverty and high unemployment;
- Environmental challenges – hurricanes, earthquakes and other natural disasters;
- Debt burdens and other economic challenges;
- Limited economies of scales; etc

Countries then have to learn to obtain and use their resources wisely.



Initiatives to Assist Developing Countries

- Communities of Practice
- Technical Assistance – short and long term

Community of Practice



Primary Aim:

- The coming together of a group of practitioners to share and critically interrogate their practice in an ongoing, reflective, inclusive, learning oriented, collaborative, growth promoting way.



Community of Practice

General Characteristics:

1. Shared vision that focuses on learning new developments in their profession;
2. Reflective professional inquiry to deepen their knowledge and competences;
3. Collaboration and teamwork; and
4. Collective and individual learning.



Community of Practice



Benefits of the Community of Practice Approach:

- Participants improve by analysing, evaluating and experimenting with their practice and peers;
- A desire to interact within the network forms the basis for sustainable relationships; and
- The practitioners' engagement informs the Secretariat as to where gaps exist; where leading practices occur; and informs as to where priorities should be placed.



Community of Practice

What is their impact?

1. As a convergent group of practitioners, they remove structures imposed by each other; create and disseminate information; add value to each others' processes while still achieving their own needs.
2. Introduce changes in public financial management processes and practices in their environment.





Example - Communities of Practice

- Commonwealth Public Procurement Network

Commonwealth Public Procurement Network (CPPN)



The CPPN was established by the Commonwealth Secretariat's Governance and Institutional Development Division (GIDD) on the premise that *practitioners (communities of practice) can best advise and learn from each other's needs and priorities under a south–south arrangement*. The network which is primarily based in Africa as a pilot has delivered huge results, and demands for its expansion to other regions of the Commonwealth have been felt.

Why Commonwealth Africa?

Procurement reforms are driven by independent regulatory agencies in Commonwealth member countries of that region.

The CPPN was conceptualized in 2006 after practitioners in Commonwealth Africa identified the need to have a forum to share their experiences, conduct peer reviews and keep current in public procurement.



Aim of CPPN

As a community of practice, CPPN aims to strengthen reforms in public procurement, procurement leadership and systems in Commonwealth countries.



Composition (CPPN)

A forum of heads and senior procurement officers drawn from procurement policy and regulatory agencies in Africa (14).

Now extending to other regions including the Caribbean (18) and the Pacific (9).

An informal structure with appointments of regional coordinators. Chairmanship's tenure is for one year held by the head of the procurement authority hosting the Technical Conference.

An interim working group has been established to revise the strategic plan of the Network.



CPPN Technical Conferences



Annual Technical Conferences are hosted by member countries since 2006 and serve as a forum where delegates maintain their currency in public procurement developments and share experiences in diverse ways beneficial to ongoing public procurement reforms.

The conference also serves as an important source of identifying, understanding and providing support to the needs of its members.



Technical Assistance

- Overview of Process – Demand Driven
- Possible Areas of Assistance in Public Procurement
- Examples of Initiatives

Overview of Process

- Demand Driven
- Point of Contact and Principal Contact Person
- Thematic Advisor – Public Expenditure Management
- Technical Cooperation and Strategic Response Group



Areas of Possible Assistance

- Review of legal and legislative frameworks (policy, regulations, standard bidding documents)
- Operation and market place improvement (institutional development capacity)
- Strengthened capacity i.e. training and development of procurement professionals; career streams
- Sustainable training programme for the public procurement process;
- Linkages between Trade and Public Procurement;
- Public Private Partnership



Types of Assistance

- Placement of technical experts;
- Regional study tours
- Country visits with technical advice, and
- Research work at the country or regional level



Example of Initiatives Undertaken

- Country Specific

Placement of an Expert in Botswana to provide technical advice on the country's government wide approach to e-procurement.



Example of Initiatives Undertaken

- Regional -The Commonwealth Governance Pacific Facility

Extra-budgetary resources are being sought from development partners for regional governance related projects, including a project to strengthen procurement good practices.

A consultant was contracted to revise the Project Design Document (PDD) to focus on articulating processes and systems for achieving two broad objectives: i) strengthening government procurement systems so as to achieve cost-savings and value for money procurement; and ii) assist Pacific Island Countries to implement appropriate requirements in [Pacific Island Countries Trade Agreement \(PICTA\)](#) and, where necessary, to negotiate effectively relevant parts in the PACER Plus and FPA relevant to Government Procurement



A Word of Encouragement

- The Commonwealth has a plethora of knowledge and experience amongst its people. Human resource capital is the most valuable of all resources; please tap into the Commonwealth reservoir.





Thank You!
