



END-OF-YEAR MESSAGE TO MEMBERS

As 2025 draws to a close, CLGF extends sincere thanks to members of the Commonwealth Women in Local Government Network (ComWLG) for another year of leadership, solidarity and advocacy. Across regions, the network has continued to amplify women's voices, strengthen peer learning and influence policy debates on gender-responsive local governance.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE YEAR

In 2025, ComWLG strengthened its engagement in global and regional policy spaces. Through participation in **EU Gender Action Plan III (GAP III) dialogues**, CLGF ensured that the realities faced by women in local government informed discussions on gender equality within international cooperation, particularly in the green and digital transitions.

The network also contributed to international learning through engagement in high-level discussions on women's leadership, including a global meeting in Stockholm attended by CLGF's Secretary-General. These exchanges reinforced the importance of institutional reform, safe political spaces and sustained investment in women's leadership pathways.

Ahead of International Women's Day, ComWLG convened a well-attended webinar on **Women's Political Participation and the Role of Political Parties**, examining how parties can act as enablers rather than gatekeepers. The discussion highlighted both persistent barriers and practical strategies for reform across Commonwealth contexts.

International Women's Day itself marked the launch of CLGF's year-long **"30 Women Leaders" campaign**, celebrating women's leadership across the Commonwealth as part of CLGF's 30th anniversary. The campaign has created space for reflection, inspiration and visibility, and members are encouraged to revisit and share these stories as the year concludes.

A significant moment for the network came with the appointment of **Dr Odette Uwizeye** as Chair of ComWLG. Her leadership brings renewed emphasis on systems change, mentorship, youth engagement and embedding gender equality within local governance institutions.

LOOKING AHEAD TO 2026

In 2026, ComWLG will move further from advocacy into practical capacity-building, including the rollout of a **social media and digital engagement training programme** for women in local government. This responds directly to member priorities around visibility, narrative control and addressing online harassment.

The network will also continue its engagement with GAP III follow-up processes, while preparing for strong ComWLG visibility and contribution at the **Commonwealth Local Government Conference in 2026**.

As ComWLG looks ahead, the focus remains on supporting women not only to enter local government, but to lead effectively, safely and with influence. CLGF looks forward to continuing this journey with members in the year ahead.

With warm wishes for the festive season,
Commonwealth Local Government Forum

Key ComWLG Moments – 2025

- Webinar on Women's Political Participation and Political Parties (February)
- International Women's Day and launch of the 30 Women Leaders campaign (March)
- Appointment of Dr Odette Uwizeye as ComWLG Chair (November)
- GAP III Structured Dialogue engagement (December)

THE COMMONWEALTH WOMEN IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT NETWORK

Established to promote women's political inclusion, to support more women to get involved in local government as politicians and practitioners, and to increase the influence of women in the decisions made about local priorities