



Accountable Now Executive Summary Report 2017

The aim of this executive summary is to provide a meta-level update on the relevant changes, challenges and notable successes faced in the reporting period at the cluster level (Impact achieved, stakeholder involvement and organisational effectiveness).

Cluster A: What we want to achieve

Commitment 1: We will address injustice, exclusion, inequality, poverty and violence to create healthy societies for all.

Much like in previous years, in 2017, Sightsavers operated over 150 projects. These supported many millions of beneficiaries (14,093,230 people examined and 389,490 operations performed) and full details of our output statistics can be found in the annual report and accounts. In 2017, we supported the distribution of 157,234,410 NTD treatments.

In all of our eye health projects, we continued our efforts to make our programmes more inclusive of women and girls. In 2017, 84.38% of our eye health projects demonstrated clearly defined strategies to improve access by and reach a higher number of females than males, which represents nearly a 30% increase on our results for the same indicator in 2016. Sightsavers has developed a range of measures to which this increase can be attributed, such as the inclusion of gender access strategies in project funding agreements with implementing partners (India) and the use of community health workers to alleviate cultural issues often faced by women (Kenya).

We also continue to be optimistic as to the long-term impact of our education work. The majority of our projects in this area continue to perform strongly in terms of suitability for replication, with 88.89% of Education projects suitable for replication or adoption by government or other service provider. This is well above our target of 45%. Our inclusive education projects also continue to make progress towards human rights and inclusion objectives, with the percentage of education project countries where a government has an education policy in line with the UNCRPD up 11% on our 2015 results. However, this is still lagging behind our target of 30% with lack of government funding and commitment listed among the major obstacles to achieving this aim.

In 2017, we made significant progress to ensure that our social inclusion and education projects demonstrated effective inclusion and empowerment of people with disabilities. 75% of our project countries are now able to demonstrate effective approaches to inclusion and empowerment compared to just 50% of countries in 2016. Whilst we are pleased with this progress, we have also noticed that a number of our social inclusion performance indicators are consistently returning results that are above target, which could indicate that the systematic evidence required to verify these figures is not as robust as we would like. This signifies a potential accountability gap that we plan to explore further and rectify during our strategy refresh in 2018-2019.

Progress against our Neglected Tropical Disease indicators highlights further improvement over the course of this reporting period. In 2017, 95% of our NTD projects met or exceeded their Mass Drug Administration (MDA) targets for therapeutic and geographical coverage, which means that our performance against this indicator has increased year on year over the last three reporting periods. These consistent figures can be attributed to the robust relationships that Sightsavers has developed with Ministries of Health in the majority of our project countries along with the growing experience and technical abilities of our partners.

Commitment 2: We will promote women's and girl's rights and enhance gender equality

Gender and diversity dynamics are central components of our project design process and require articulation of how gender and disability will be included and strengthened as part of project implementation and the longer term sustainability of our work. We will continue to explore what level of engagement we can effectively have with other marginalised groups, but our focus in the short to medium term will be on gender and disability. Sightsavers also considers issues of gender and diversity in programme monitoring with all projects reporting disaggregated output data by sex. To achieve this, we work with our partners to ensure adequate systems are in place to collect this information within our projects.

Our first inclusive eye health pilot initiative, in Bhopal, India ended in June 2017. The project was an opportunity to develop our learning in this area and has successfully paved the way for the development of

Sightsavers' inclusive eye health model and toolkit. The inclusive eye health toolkit is aimed at supporting Sightsavers' staff in embedding inclusion in our health programmes. We are also developing a training module on gender mainstreaming and disability inclusion for health workers, plus checklists and guidelines on accessibility, gender and participatory approaches. A cross-departmental inclusive health task team was established in May 2017 to facilitate the embedding of inclusion in eye health and neglected tropical disease (NTD) programmes, and to establish Sightsavers as a leading organisation in inclusive health programming.

Throughout 2017 we continued to test the Washington Group Questions (WGQs) in a number of programmes to build an evidence base on how to disaggregate data by disability and to analyse data to improve programming and sector learning. We have appointed a Disability Data Disaggregation (DDD) project manager in recognition of the growing importance and profile of this area of work, and we are developing a DDD framework that will outline our approach for monitoring the inclusiveness of our health programmes. In all our data disaggregation work, we're working to improve the accessibility of our health programmes and our information, education and communication materials.

Commitment 3: We will protect the environment and enhance its ability to support life for future generations

We continue to monitor activities which have a negative effect on the environment and assess the ways in which we can minimise this negative impact. Whilst our carbon footprint remains similar to previous years, be assured Sightsavers continues to operate in a social and environmentally minded manner in all our operations and never knowingly to the detriment of our beneficiaries. At the end of 2017 we circulated an environmental survey to all of our country offices in an attempt to establish the extent to which environmental safeguarding procedures are in place. At the time of writing this report we are still collating the results and hope to produce a report with recommendations for improvements by the end of 2018. We will also continue to take steps to ensure that potential and existing suppliers or service providers take environmental sustainability seriously and have policies in place to ensure they act responsibly to protect the environment.

Commitment 4: We will deliver long-term positive results

We continue to learn from our successes and failures using various approaches such as, learning reviews, evaluations, research and learning seminars and specific learning events held globally or in our regions. We also implement appropriate approaches in line with our quality standards on learning. Externally, the organisation continued to engage with the rest of the sector through various forums to share its learning, including presentation at webinars and international conferences, publications in peer-review journals and improvement of our learning and research pages as part of the website redevelopment.

Overall, six evaluations and mid-term reviews were completed in 2017. Two of these were end of term evaluations for our EC and SIB funded eye health programmes in Sierra Leone. Our evaluation criteria are built on the OECD DAC criteria, and include two additional criteria specifically relevant for Sightsavers; coordination/coherence (reflecting our SIM objectives on partnership and strategic alliances) and scalability/replicability. In Q3 2017, we conducted a Learning Review on our inclusive eye health pilot in Bhopal to assess the process for developing an inclusive eye health model, understand what had been achieved and trialled and generate learning to inform future approaches.

Also in 2017, our programme systems and monitoring team undertook a review of our Quality Standards Assessment Tool (QSAT). As part of this review, recommendations were made to increase the effectiveness of the QSAT action plans which aim to build the capacity of partners and facilities. In 2018, further work will be undertaken to ensure technical leads and country teams work closely with partners to ensure action plans are completed.

Throughout this reporting period, we have also been able to learn valuable lessons from our ongoing monitoring and oversight processes. These processes provide immediate and direct feedback loops into programme management and implementation, ensuring that we are regularly reviewing the success or otherwise of our projects in addressing the issues we are tackling. In one example from 2017, our monitoring was able to identify a human resources gap in one of our redesigned projects and understand how this lack of capacity was affecting implementation and putting extra pressure on existing project staff. On this occasion, we were able to allocate the resources required to address the issue with minimal impact on project schedules and deliverables.

Cluster B: Our Approach to Change

Commitment 5: We will ensure that the people we work with have a key role in driving our work

Our Programme Partnership Policy continues to set out the principles behind our approach to partnership and how these are operated in practice. Our policy is short and straightforward and sets a clear tone for how we approach partnerships, what we value in them and how we see them working in practice. The policy is supported by a framework that ties partnership directly into our project cycle and provides our country offices with a suite of tools to help them manage partnerships in a safe, clear and equitable manner. The tool set includes processes for initial due diligence, ongoing quality assessment and managed exit.

Our engagement with women and men, girls and boys, arises from the circumstances of the programmes supported and our role and that of our partners, and flows largely from the decisions made with respect to the partners with whom we collaborate. In 2017 our new child safeguarding policy set out rigorous new protocols which stipulate that all of our partners must have a clearly articulated child safeguarding policy or accept our policy where they do not have one.

We currently have a number of beneficiary feedback approaches and mechanisms functioning across the organisation, which ensure that the people we work with have a key role in driving our work. Sightsavers conducts initial analyses at the outset of programmes to understand the local situation, and dynamics and implications for local communities, groups and individuals so that interventions can be designed appropriately to bring maximum benefit to those targeted or affected. For example, our behaviour change interventions in a number of our programmes are developed using participatory processes.

Our evaluations and research team regularly seek and analyse partner and final beneficiaries' feedback in order to learn about the impact and effectiveness of our work, and to learn more about particular contexts and particular groups who are affected or implicated. For example, much of our qualitative research employs peer-led and participatory methods where those directly involved in project settings will be conducting the research themselves.

In our education programmes, our new education quality standards process provides opportunities for teachers to be part of programme assessment, and we work closely with school management structures to ensure interventions are tailored for best effect for beneficiaries. During implementation across a variety of our programmatic work, we introduced guidance for beneficiary feedback collection during quarterly project visits, which is currently being tested, in our West Africa programmes.

Commitment 6: We will work in fair and respectable partnerships to achieve shared goals

Engaging with and leveraging our strategic networks and alliances is a strategic priority for Sightsavers. Our SIM card indicator in this area allows us to monitor progress against agreed goals and objectives for each of our strategic alliances in the areas of eye health, NTDs, education and social inclusion. In 2017 we reported that 100% of alliances where progress towards reaching these goals and objectives had been achieved, against a target of 75%. Highlights for the year included our work on disability with DFID, who announced a Global Disability Summit to be held in 2018, our launch of the Cameroon Cataract Impact bond with Fred Hollows, hosting an event for Gates managed by the Uniting support centre and a new grant for mapping of onchocerciasis (from the Gates Foundation).

Our relations with the World Health Organization remained a critical strategic priority and a welcome opportunity for mutual learning and engagement. In 2017 Sightsavers renewed its official relations with WHO, reporting on the previous periods work and setting out a new programme of work including: action on neglected tropical diseases; technical assistance to WHO Africa region; and, engagement in the development of the forthcoming World Report on Vision. Our work on that Report continues productively in 2018. In Mozambique, Malawi, Uganda, Kenya and Zambia our work under the CATCH programme (Coordinated Approach to Community Health) focused on strengthening national health management.

In 2017 Sightsavers has remained active in the advancement of Human Resources for Eye Health (HREH) initiatives in Sub-Saharan Africa. In December 2017, we hosted the West Africa College of Surgeons and Moorfields/Korle-bu (Ghana) HREH Alliance meeting, in which the framework for training sub-specialist

ophthalmologists was agreed. This new agreement lays the foundation for the faster training of much needed human resources for service delivery and will raise the level and competency of ophthalmologists in the region as a whole. Thus laying the foundation for a strong and vibrant ophthalmology health workforce in the future.

Commitment 7: We will address root causes by advocating for fundamental change

Throughout this reporting period the Policy and Global Advocacy (PGA) Directorate has focused on looking at our areas of concern – health, education and disability within the context of the follow up and review processes of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Our Policy and Global Advocacy Work Plan outlines the organisations influencing objectives as they relate to Sightsavers thematic areas. It also outlines the bi-lateral and multi-lateral actors we need to engage with to influence the relevant policy change.

At the global level the main accountability mechanism is the High Level Political Forum (HLPF) held annually to review thematic areas and voluntary national reviews (VNRs) submitted by countries. In 2017 we worked with civil society, disabled people's organisations (DPOs) and governments in India, Bangladesh, Kenya, Zimbabwe and Nigeria to support the submission of their respective VNRs, providing policy analysis and leadership where necessary. For example, in Bangladesh we set up the Disability Alliance for the SDGs, carried out a consultation with 71 local and national DPOs and were successful in getting a chapter on disability in the VNR report.

We attended the HLPF in July, and were invited to represent Government of Kenya during deliberations (based on the exceptional work carried out in that country). We also hosted an event with Together 2030 aimed at supporting partners to engage with the HLPF process and build strong relationships with member states, particularly Sierra Leone. We continued to work in Sierra Leone and Uganda, who submitted in 2016 and planning is ongoing to support Senegal in 2018. In Uganda we have worked with the government to draft disability inclusive planning guidelines, which is a direct outcome of the 2016 VNR policy dialogue process. Our aim throughout is to ensure that these processes are participatory and inclusive and reflect national policy concerns and successes.

At regional level, we engaged in a number of regional forums aimed at promoting the follow up and review processes. We participated in the Africa regional forum, and Sightsavers India and PGA participated in the Asia Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development with our national DPO representative who presented. We supported a local Indian DPO partner, Anuradha Pareek, to attend the Asia Pacific Regional Civil Society Organisation Engagement Mechanism meeting in April in Bangkok to represent disability perspectives within Asia Pacific civil society.

In 2017, we made good progress in our advocacy work and policy outcomes ensuring country offices were able to deliver across health, disability and education policy. By the end of 2017, 87.5% of countries and relevant teams were actively participating in international or in-country processes to influence change in policy or planning.

Commitment 8: We will be transparent about who we are, what we do, and our successes and failures.

We publish our detailed annual report, with full financial data, and our policies on our website. Our annual reports contain information on our governance, staffing and salaries, operations, complaints and budgets.

A detailed breakdown of Sightsavers' financial results for 2017 can be found in the Annual Report and Accounts, which will be published on the Sightsavers website (from July 2018). In summary, total incoming resources were £321.7m (2016: £302.0m), of which £248.0m (£229.5m) was gifts in kind (primarily the donation of Mectizan ® from Merck and Co. Inc.). Total resources expended were £321.7m (£298.2m), split primarily between costs of generating funds £19.3m (£18.5m) and charitable activities £302.2m (£280.9m). Sightsavers' net assets at 31 December 2017 were £16.4m. This is the net of £28.6m assets and £12.2m liabilities. (Please note, these figures have been disclosed with the caveat that they remain confidential and will not be made public until released as part of our annual report in July 2018)

Sightsavers takes data protection and privacy rights seriously. A body of work has been undertaken to ensure that Sightsavers is compliant with the EU General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) by May 25, 2018. This includes but is not limited to: a multistring employee awareness programme, a full review of our paper archives, implementation of a Privacy Impact Assessment (also known as a Data Privacy Impact Assessment), and updated organisational registers for personal data information assets and processing activities. Sightsavers' work on policies, processes and training is further supported by its work to address the technical security components of data protection. Cyber Essentials is a UK Government backed scheme aimed at helping organisations defend against internet-borne threats by developing key technical controls. This scheme includes an assurance framework against which organisations can be certified. Sightsavers is seeking the Cyber Essentials accreditation and is aiming to secure certification in 2018.

2017 saw us take a number of steps to protect the dignity and safety of our stakeholders by increasing our commitment to safeguarding and overhauling existing policies to make them more robust. An example of our progress in this reporting period was the roll out of our child safeguarding policy. We have also started to develop a new 'Safeguarding Adults at Risk' policy, the purpose of which is to ensure that Sightsavers' activities are implemented in a safe and protective environment where abuse, exploitation and neglect of vulnerable adults are effectively prevented as far as reasonably possible and responded to. It is intended to provide all Sightsavers representatives and partner organisations with a common understanding of safeguarding issues, develop good practice and increase accountability.

Cluster C: What we do internally

Commitment 9: We will invest in staff and volunteers to develop their full potential and achieve our goals together

Sightsavers is committed to the learning and development of all employees across our directorates. Investment in staff development is monitored via the SIM card, which identifies the expenditure spent on staff development as a percentage of total salary cost. In 2017, our expenditure on staff development as a percentage of total salary costs was calculated to be 4.72%, far exceeding our target of 2.5%. We are ahead of our target on this indicator at this stage with actual spend on learning and development up as a result of increased development activity linked to significant grants but also as a result of increased sterling costs driven by inflation and exchange rate shifts in country programmes following the decision to leave the EU.

In early 2017 the old Performance Development Review process (PDR) was replaced by the new Valuing Individual Performance' (VIP) system. This was developed for the organisation by the HR Business Partners following a staff survey, extensive consultation with the directorate leads of the organisation and taking feedback from managers to design a more user friendly process. The new VIP reviews have been embedded and are focused on identifying individual performance development so that managers can more effectively plan learning and development activities for their team and for individuals (managers hold their own training and development budgets). We will not be monitoring completion rates under this new process, as reviews will be conducted on a 'rolling' basis. Each staff member can expect a formal development review at least every 12 months and which will be the responsibility of line managers, who also hold responsibility for training and development budgets.

During 2017, four new modules were released on our global eLearning platform which consisted of Physical Security, Accessibility, Child Safeguarding and Cyber Security. Due to the variety of the modules on offer, this has raised the profile of the e-learning platform throughout the organisation.

In December 2017, we conducted Sightsavers' first disability data survey, which was sent to all 531 staff to complete. 77% of staff responded to the survey, 50% of respondents identified as male, 49% as female and 1% chose to not disclose their gender. Results highlighted that 8% of employees responded as having a disability as defined by the Equality Act 2010. 5% of employees responded that they self-identify as being a person with disabilities. Of those who stated that they have a disability as defined by the Equality Act 2010, 19 members stated that they had declared their disability to Sightsavers, 12 stated that they had not declared their disability.

Commitment 10: We will handle our resources responsibly to reach our goals and serve the public good

Sightsavers' Global Fundraising and Donations Acceptance policy covers our global fundraising operations in India, the Middle East and Europe. This policy provides guidance and clarity for staff, trustees and other volunteers to ensure compliance with the law and Charity Commission guidance and to protect Sightsavers' reputation. For internal procedure, the policy describes who has authority to take decisions concerning donation acceptance and its existence ensures that decisions taken are consistent and based on the needs of the organisation. The policy has been rolled out globally, to all fundraising and country offices and forms part of the core induction for new employees. This policy was in effect throughout the 2017 reporting period and is due to be reviewed in 2018.

Our policy covers all donations from third parties and applies in all conditions. Once a donor's contribution to Sightsavers exceeds the £10,000 threshold, either in a single donation or cumulatively over the preceding 12 month period, they become subject to a number of policy guidelines which protect our independence and ensure that we are not obtaining funds in a way which is contrary to our beliefs.

We also measure our strategic use of resources as part of our SIM monitoring process. For 2017 our support function spending was calculated to be 5.16% of total expenditure which sits below our target of 6% despite an increasingly complex regulatory and safeguarding environment. Our systems investment over the last few years has meant that we are able to manage business as usual operations without increasing staffing and spend, enabling us to ensure that resources are being used where they are needed to meet new donor and regulatory requirements.

Commitment 11: We will ensure our decisions are responsive to feedback from the people affected by our work, partners, volunteers and staff.

Sightsavers' governance structure is conceived and managed to allow us to be highly flexible and responsive to changing conditions, whilst conforming all operations to an over-arching vision and mission. The Council has global authority for the organisational strategy, which is implemented by our staff. All of our charitable services are performed in developing countries where programme management is structured on a branch office basis.

Sightsavers key internal stakeholders are employees and volunteers. We do not have established formal mechanisms for employees below executive level to provide recommendations or direction to the Council of Trustees. Formal mechanisms do exist for employees to provide recommendations and direction to the Strategic Management Team. An employee survey is held every two years that examines the relationship of employees with the organisation and the senior directors. In the 2015 survey, 69% of staff who completed the survey agreed that 'The organisation practises open and honest communication and shares information and that information sharing systems in the organisation are effective'. The 2018 employee survey is currently being completed at the time of writing this report.

Sightsavers also has a fully operational complaints policy. A direct link has been established between our complaints policy and our internal control and assurance mechanisms. Complaints that are received, both internally and externally, now influence our approach to assurance and are featured in our audit programme. Testing has been incorporated into internal audits to ensure that operational changes in response to complaints are adequate in order to mitigate future grievances. Guidance procedures on how to handle complaints and process documentation to be completed when a complaint arises is available on our intranet. The policy is supported by an internal Complaints Handling Procedure, which provides staff with practical guidance on how to implement the policy.

Commitment 12: We will ensure our management and governing body are accountable

Council members, all of whom are wholly non-executive, are drawn from diverse, international backgrounds and bring a broad range of relevant experience and skills to Council discussions. Trustees are elected to Council by other trustees for a maximum total term of eight years (they must be re-elected after the first term of four years). All trustees attend an induction programme to familiarise themselves with their statutory responsibilities, their role within the Council, the governance framework and Sightsavers' objectives.

The Council of Trustees evaluates itself typically every other year. The evaluation does not cover the Council's economic, environmental, and social performance separately from that of the organisation as a whole. Sightsavers has an extensive and highly advanced programme and outcome measurement system; the determinants and review of which are the direct responsibility of the Council. Individual trustees are evaluated by the Chair and Vice Chair every two years.

The management team structure consists of a series of leadership groups, covering specific areas. This ensures the right people are involved in the right areas of decision-making i.e. that they have the correct knowledge or skill base and not just levels of seniority. Leadership groups exist for Strategy, Management and Operations, People and, External communications. Core membership consist of cross department directors and managers. There are clear distinctions between the roles of Council and the leadership teams, to which day to day management is delegated. Matters such as policy and strategic plans are prepared by them for consideration and approval by Council.