



Accountable Now Biennial Report

September 2017

Statement from the CEO

In recent months the aid sector has been rocked by scandal – first Oxfam, with press stories of sexual misconduct against beneficiaries, and then Save the Children, where the issues were related to allegations of sexual harassment of junior staff by senior men. Aside from the nature of the allegations themselves, there has been criticism around whether the organisations dealt with them in a transparent and appropriate way. In short – were they properly accountable for their actions? The fallout from this continues today and it is clear that there will be implications for the whole sector.

For me, this demonstrates that accountability is not just of strategic importance; it underpins an organisation's fundamental existence – what some call its licence to operate. Accountability is essential to ensure trust, and without the trust of its stakeholders, an organisation cannot thrive. Indeed, it may not even survive.

At Sightsavers, we see accountability as a fundamental requirement, where failure to perform brings existential risk. We have also seen that a failure by one organisation in the sector can have an impact on another, even if the organisations are not working together in any way. We have been working to improve our accountability for a long time – well before recent events – and over the last two years we have taken a number of key steps.

Beneficiaries and communities: Our focus has been on improving the way in which beneficiaries and communities can participate in our programmes, providing input at the design stage as well as feedback as the programme proceeds. We have increased the amount of participatory research we do, and have made a step change in our advocacy partnerships with disabled people's organisations (DPOs) to ensure the voices of people with disabilities are heard.

We also recognise that ensuring that our programmes continue to deliver more impact is critical for beneficiaries – and last year we reached more people than ever before. Our work for people with visual impairment was recognised last year by the Champalimaud Foundation who gave us the coveted Champalimaud Foundation Vision Award.

Partners: All our work relies on partners – whether in coalitions (particularly for our neglected tropical diseases programmes) or via bilateral partnerships in-country. We involve our partners at all stages of the programme cycle, and in our coalition building we ensure that the key partners come together well before bids are due, to co-create the proposal as much as possible.

Supporters: Over the last two years we have recognised the concerns of supporters that their data should be safe and used appropriately, and we have done a great deal of work to be ready for the new General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). We have invested significantly in cyber security and should reach accreditation on Cyber Essentials shortly.

We pride ourselves in our approach to supporter care, and were pleased to be the top charity in the Top 50 Customer Service awards for the second year in a row (and placed 6th overall).

Employees: We have just completed the analysis of an anonymous, independent survey of all our staff across the world (which we undertake every two years). We had a 95% completion rate and this showed a very high level of staff satisfaction with 91% saying they thought Sightsavers was a great place to work. 90% said we operate to high ethical standards (only 1% answered this negatively, the rest answered 'do not know') and 90% said the CEO and senior management team provided strong leadership. This, together with staff attrition levels below the sector norm, point to a highly motivated employee group.

We recently strengthened our whistleblowing policy to make sure that anything we receive does not go through senior management but goes directly to a trustee with HR expertise.

The wider public and sector: We have put all our significant policies on the website so the wider public and members of our sector can see what we do. Our annual report includes complaints statistics and shares failures as well as successes.

In past reports I have stressed the strategic importance of accountability, and how we have used input from the panel (and other work Accountable Now has done) to strengthen this. However, with the sector's reputation in great peril, never has accountability been more important. This rests not only on having strong policies and processes, but also on having clear leadership and a culture within the organisation which is mission focused and respectful of all stakeholders, both internal and external. I believe that we do have this culture, and that the evidence we have gathered and the results we are obtaining substantiates this view, although it is critical never to become complacent.

Cluster A – What we want to achieve

1.1. What is your mission statement and your theory of change?

Sightsavers is an international organisation working with partners in developing countries to eliminate avoidable blindness and promote equality of opportunity for people with disabilities. Sightsavers' vision is of a world where no one is blind from avoidable causes and where visually impaired people participate equally in society.

The core operational aim of all Sightsavers' projects is twofold: to directly contribute to our four change themes, and to demonstrate what can be achieved so that others can take this work to scale. To achieve this second aim, we have increasingly invested in our capacity to undertake research and gather evidence. This ensures that our programmes make an impact and are cost effective, and enables the advocacy undertaken to support the demonstration approaches to have a strong foundation.

Advocacy is usually done with partners or other coalitions as this is more effective. In Sightsavers' social inclusion work, supporting blind and disabled people's organisations in advocating their members' rights is emphasised, as this is more powerful than operating just as Sightsavers.

Thematic strategies exist for eye health, education, social inclusion and research. These guide our programmatic approach to delivering programmes across each thematic area.

1.2. What are your key indicators for success?

Sightsavers' [SIM](#) (strategy, implementation and monitoring) card remains the central tool used to track progress against our strategy through the design, implementation and evaluation of our policies and programmes. Sightsavers' ultimate aims focus on sustainability, government ownership and the empowerment of people with disabilities to participate equally in society.

Organisational objectives at beneficiary level of our SIM card have been developed across the thematic areas in which we work (eye health, education, social inclusion and NTDs), while objectives focused on effective partnerships, advocacy and strategic alliances describe what we need to excel at as an organisation in order to deliver for our beneficiaries. Specific indicators under each objective measure our progress in areas such as making our programmes more inclusive of women and girls, and people with disabilities.

In addition to the SIM card, internal policies and procedures govern how we engage with our different stakeholder groups. These include the partnership policy and framework (indicator 4.1), where feedback from partners helped shaped the due diligence tools, global fundraising and donations acceptance policy (annex 4), complaints handling mechanism (indicator 10.3) and policy development guide (indicator 4.1), all of which are described in detail under relevant sections of this report.

1.3. What's the progress achieved and the failures encountered against these indicators over the reporting period?

Over the reporting period, we have achieved some excellent results and identified some areas for improvement. Performance results against SIM indicators are published on our [SIM card dashboard](#).

In 2017, Sightsavers operated more than 150 projects. These supported many millions of beneficiaries, with 14,093,230 people examined and 389,490 operations performed. Full details of our output statistics can be found in our [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. We have 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).

In 2017 we made significant progress to ensure that our social inclusion and education projects demonstrate 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. Our education projects 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%. However, we continue to encounter challenges when it comes to achieving our target of 30% of countries with education projects where the government has an education policy in line with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. The major obstacles to achieving this aim are lack of government funding and commitment.

Progress against our neglected tropical disease (NTD) 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 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.

In 2017, we made good progress in the advocacy work and policy outcomes that 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.

1.4. What were your notable 'wins' in this period, especially regarding innovation or collaboration?

2017 has been a significant year for Sightsavers with a number of notable wins. In 2017, we were awarded Independent Research Organisation (IRO) status in recognition of our in-house capacity to carry out research. IRO status enables us to sustain and consolidate our internal capacity to generate high quality evidence for more effective programming and allow Sightsavers staff to act as Principle Investigators in collaborative research projects. Sightsavers is one of only a handful of NGOs that have been awarded IRO status.

In 2017, we were the highest ranked charity in the Top 50 Customer Service Awards. Our overall position in this ranking has risen from 15th overall in 2016 to 6th overall in 2017. We take great pride in the consistency of these results and it shows the importance we place on collaboration with our individual donors.

In 2017, we won the António Champalimaud Vision Award for our contribution towards preventing and alleviating blindness and visual impairment in developing countries. The Champalimaud Foundation carries out biomedical research and develops scientific solutions to improve the health of people around the world. The jury of international scientists and public figures highlighted Sightsavers' work leading the Global Trachoma Mapping Project (GTMP), the largest infectious disease survey ever undertaken, which ended in 2016.

Our NTD projects supported a record number of treatments in 2017, which has allowed us to reach our target of one billion treatments in December 2017 and would not have been achievable without the ongoing support of our donors and partner organisations working in the field. The billionth treatment was an

integrated antiparasitic treatment for river blindness and lymphatic filariasis. It was administered to a seven-year-old girl named Dorcas, who was at risk of NTDs in a community in Kaduna State, Nigeria as part of UNITED, one of our flagship programmes. In December 2017, Professor Stephen Hawking led global celebrations to mark the delivery by Sightsavers and its partners of one billion treatments for neglected tropical diseases, and to honour the work of his father, Dr Frank Hawking, who made a significant contribution in the fight to end NTDs.

In 2017, the UK Department for International Development (DFID) commissioned a due diligence assessment that was undertaken by Mannion Daniels. The process included a financial management assessment and was completed through a review of our documentation, interviews with key staff members, and a site visit to Sightsavers' UK headquarters. Findings revealed that Sightsavers is "well established with a proven history of managing international aid grants" and we have a "robust and detailed due diligence process to assign risk ratings to implementing partners." Our overall risk rating was 'minor'. Sightsavers was among the first to sign up to DFID's new Supply Code of Conduct.

We continued to receive excellent feedback on project reporting to our donors, including DFID, which rated our UNITED project A+ and our UK Aid Match CATCH project A++ in 2017. We were awarded new UK Aid Match funding for inclusive eye health projects in Bangladesh and Pakistan that will enable us further test our inclusive health toolkit, and continue testing use of the Washington Group questions in health programmes, to better understand how people with disabilities are accessing our services.

1.5. Have there been significant events or changes in your organisation over the reporting period of relevance to governance and accountability?

In 2017 Sightsavers welcomed three new trustees:

- Professor Christopher Whitty is an epidemiologist and physician at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine and an expert in international public health. He is also Chief Scientific Advisor at the UK's Department of Health and currently the interim Chief Scientific Advisor to the British government.
- Abia Akram is Chief Executive of the National Forum of Women with Disabilities in Pakistan. An influential advocate for people with disabilities, particularly women, she holds important roles in the UN, the Commonwealth and the wider Asia-Pacific region.
- Mavis Owusu-Gyamfi is a political economist with expertise in investment and international development, both with governments and non-governmental organisations. She is Director of Investment with UK-based foundation The Power of Nutrition.

Charlie Lamson was appointed to serve as the new CEO of Sightsavers Ireland. Charlie joins us from DCU Educational Trust and was previously Head of Development for Frontline Defenders for a number of years.

Despite a challenging external environment, we had a good year for fundraising. In 2017, we reached our target of raising £30 million (over four years) to fund a million cataract operations, thanks to our fundraising campaign, A Million Miracles, which launched in 2014. We were honoured to receive the Antonio Champalimaud Vision Award in 2017. At the ceremony in Lisbon, our Mozambique Country Director Izidine Hassane gave a speech and received the prize from the president of Portugal. Development organisation CBM was also given a prize and we shared the €1 million award.

In the time since our last full report, Sightsavers has concluded its programmatic operations in the Caribbean and Sri Lanka. After 20 years working in Sri Lanka, we have been able to close our project activities, leaving behind eye health services that function efficiently without our intervention. Also in this reporting period, in March 2017, we celebrated the completion of our work in the Caribbean.

In June 2017, Sightsavers was awarded Independent Research Organisation (IRO) status, which recognises our ability to carry out and lead high-profile research programmes. The next step is for Sightsavers to establish a Research Centre to oversee our research activities. We have set up a task team to identify what the Research Centre will look like and work out what we need to do to fulfil our obligations as an IRO.

2.1. What have you done to ensure that people and partners will maintain and further advance the changes you collectively achieved? Is there evidence of success?

Sightsavers' primary operating model is to work with partners in our programme countries. We aim to increase the capacity of our partners to deliver sustainable programmes through supporting training, processes, and infrastructure development where needs are identified. We believe that strengthening partner capacity will support the sustainability of the programmes after the financial support from Sightsavers has ended.

Our partnership policy (detailed under indicator 4.1) sets out seven key principles for working with partners and is underpinned by a practical partnership operating framework. These principles are central to ensuring the sustainability of collectively achieved results. Our project design process (PDP) places emphasis on how project design is critical in addressing how projects will be implemented, monitored and measured, how learning from successes and challenges will be disseminated and how achievements will be sustained once the funding period has ended. Through this process, sustainability and exit are core components of the design of a project. Our PDP and project exit processes form part of our project cycle management practice and are available to all staff via our intranet.

In 2017, Sightsavers completed two end-of-term evaluations for eye health projects in Sierra Leone, which demonstrate the sustainability of the work that was jointly undertaken. In both projects, gains were made in strengthening human resources for health, the introduction of eye health indicators into the Health Management Information System (HMIS) and enhanced access to care and empowerment among people with disabilities. For both projects the capacity, membership and profile of in country DPOs was raised and people with disabilities were more aware of their right to approach duty bearers in general, and specifically in relation to health. However, while these projects have achieved significant milestones in the integration of eye health care into government health systems, we are aware that issues pertaining to data quality and financial dependence do still require attention.

In our NTD programmes, there is evidence from countries that are progressing towards the elimination of diseases such as trachoma and onchocerciasis, that collective achievements are being advanced in order to achieve elimination goals. In 2017, this was most recently demonstrated by the World Health Organization's acceptance of Ghana's Trachoma Elimination Dossier, as well as through our partnership with the Carter Center, working towards the elimination of transmission of onchocerciasis. The success of this work has resulted in the stoppage of treatment to 1.9 million people in Uganda who are now in post-treatment surveillance for elimination.

In 2017 Sightsavers 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 training allows 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, laying the foundation for a strong and vibrant ophthalmology health workforce in the future.

Last year, the Ghana Health Service took the decision to continue the collection of disability data using the Washington Group questions, administered by community-directed distributors (CDD) in NTD programmes and previously supported by Sightsavers. The Ghana Health Service continued the data collection unsupported, based on feedback from CDDs that administering the Washington Group questions had a positive impact on their awareness of and interaction with people with disabilities in the community.

2.2 What lessons have been learnt this period from your successes and failures?

We continue to learn from our successes and failures using various approaches including 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.

Evaluations are conducted as a systematic, impartial and objective assessment of our projects, in order to generate insightful, credible information and learning that can be used to inform decision-making, future

planning, and to report on and communicate results and achievements. Evaluations are published to IATI and [are also available on our website](#).

Overall, six evaluations and mid-term reviews were completed in 2017. Two of these were end-of-term evaluations for our European Commission and Standard Chartered 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. Results are summarised using a traffic light rating system.

Project title and donor	Relevance	Effectiveness	Efficiency	Impact	Sustainability	Coherence/ coordination
Sierra Leone Eye Care Programme – EC						
Sierra Leone Eye Care Programme – SiB						

Overall, the projects were considered relevant, efficient, coherent and effective and made positive contributions to strengthening local health systems. One of the main project achievements was the extent of collaboration and coordination among stakeholders which contributed to the effective integration of project planning and activities within all partner organisations.

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. The learning review (attached as annex 1 to this report) identified a number of successes and failures in the areas of human resources, training and sensitisation approaches, methodologies for testing new project components and tools, and accessibility audits. Representatives from Sightsavers' research, evaluations, programme development, programme systems, programme finance, communications and India office teams attended a workshop to review the draft report and the learning points generated, and to co-create the recommendations. A learning seminar to disseminate findings to global staff internally will be held in January 2018.

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 into programme management and implementation, ensuring that we are regularly reviewing the success or limitations of our projects in addressing the issues we are tackling. In one example from 2017, our monitoring meant we were 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.

Externally, the organisation continued to engage with the rest of the sector through various forums to share its learning, including presenting at international conferences, running webinars, publishing articles in peer-reviewed journals and improving our learning and research pages as part of the website redevelopment. 2017 was also a busy year for Sightsavers' learning seminar series. Since the beginning of 2017, all seminars have been advertised to global staff, with participants able to join remotely. Several of the seminars were also hosted remotely. The recordings for these seminars are available on the Sightsavers intranet portal (Iris) evaluations page, and a promotional email link has been circulated to all staff. These seminars provide vital opportunities to share knowledge and lessons learnt with stakeholders across the organisation. A full list of 2017 seminars is attached as annex 2 to this report.

3.1. How does your organisation provide leadership on your strategic priorities, and is there evidence this leadership is recognised and welcomed by your peers and stakeholders, especially affected populations?

Our employee survey, (being conducted for 2018 at the time of writing this report) generates a range of evidence that helps us to gauge the perceived strength (or weakness) of organisational leadership on our strategic priorities. From an internal staff perspective, 90% of the responses collected at the time of writing have commented positively that the CEO and senior directors provide effective leadership to and overall management of the organisation.

Internal stakeholders are also kept up-to-date with strategic developments through quarterly video messages from the CEO, which provide updates on our key priorities and future prospects. These videos also present an opportunity for the CEO to recognise the achievements of employees when it is not possible to do so in person.

Our SIM dashboard provides a snapshot of how the organisation is progressing against our strategic priorities. In 2017, we continued to make progress across against our SIM objectives, in particular the objectives that focus on establishing strong and effective networks and alliances as well as in strategic use of resources.

At the individual country level, Sightsavers has developed a strong network of country teams led by knowledgeable country directors and technical leads. In many of the contexts we work in, these staff members have built strong connections with government and non-governmental partners alike who value Sightsavers as a technical partner. For example, the Sierra Leonean government has requested that Sightsavers' NTD project help collect some additional epidemiologic data to assist with planning that will inform a national river blindness elimination strategy and framework for 2019.

3.2. How is your organisation exemplary at being a) inclusive and protecting human rights, b) promoting women's rights and gender equality and c) minimising negative impacts on the environment?

Our organisational vision and mission statements articulate our commitment to promote equality of opportunity for people with disabilities. Our organisation strategy and SIM card set out clear objectives and indicators to meet this commitment. Our [empowerment and inclusion strategic framework](#) explains our rights-based approach to mainstreaming disability throughout our programming and operations. Through implementation of this strategy, we continue to support targeted interventions which redress the inequalities experienced by people with disabilities in the countries where we work. Specific programmatic objectives under this strategy focus on: mainstreaming inclusion through our health, education and NTD projects; empowerment of people with disabilities through voice, agency and participation; addressing stigma and discrimination and economic empowerment; and cross-cutting objectives focusing on equal rights for women and girls with disabilities.

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 gender. To achieve this we work with our partners to ensure adequate systems are in place to collect this information within our projects.

Throughout 2017, we continued to test the Washington Group questions 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 aiming to improve the accessibility of our health programmes and our information, education and communication materials.

We continue to monitor activities that have a negative effect on the environment and assess the ways in which we can minimise this negative impact. Our last environmental audit was completed in 2015 and in compliance with legal standards we will undergo an audit in 2019. Our flight data shows an increase in long haul flights which is reflective of the increased scope and size of our projects in 2017.

CO2 (tonnes)	2017		2016		2015		SE Asia	
Journey type	CO2	%	CO2	%	CO2	%	CO2	%
Short haul (Europe)	29.20	1.6	24.55	2	25.99	1.9	18.43	1.9
Short haul (other)	537.61	28.8	645.55	53.4	59.58	4.5	56.16	5.8
Total short haul	566.81	30.4	670.09	55.4	85.57	6.4	74.59	7.7
Long haul	1296.94	69.6	540.05	44.6	1242.5	93.6	902.48	92.3
Total	1,864	100	1,210	100	1,328	100	977	100

Paper consumption and recycling

Printers at our UK head office capture usage and enable us to report the environmental impact of our in house printing, scanning and photocopying. The software requires staff to use a programmed pass in order to release any print jobs, ensuring paper is not wasted. In addition, our default print settings are set for duplex, grey scale printing to further reduce the number of sheets and energy used. Against the known average of 10,000 printed sheets per employee per year, Sightsavers is pleased to present an average of 1,471 sheets per head office employee totalling 1.105 tonnes of CO2.

Over the course of this reporting period, our fundraising teams have taken particular care with data selections and continue to make a conscious effort to minimise the volume of mail that goes out to supporters. We use FSC accredited paper for all of our fundraising printing and materials.

Environmental impact	Measure	2017	2015
Total printed sheets	Sheets	245,609	249,676
Trees consumed	Trees	3.05	3.1
Equivalent bulb hours	Hours	69589	70741
Total CO2 produced	Tonnes	1.105	1.124

Energy: Electricity

The table below relates to the UK head office location only. All conversions to CO2 (tonnes) are reported based on information provided by our energy provider or management company at the time. Currently, we are unable to collate data from overseas offices in respect of indirect greenhouse emissions arising from energy usage as many of their local energy providers lack the facility to calculate the emissions resulting from energy generation. We will continue to monitor this position with the aim to report when data is made available.

CO2 (tonnes) Electricity – UK only	2017		2015	
	KWH	CO2	KWH	CO2
Gas	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Electricity	256793.0	110.4	255570.0	109.9
Total	256793.0	110.4	255570.0	109.9

DHL remains our preferred logistics and transportation provider to globally transport the majority of our project resources and equipment. Wherever possible, consignments for transportation are consolidated and

we look to purchase stock in bulk to minimise both cost and the environmental impact emitted through transportation. While corporate social responsibility is integral to DHL's strategy, its environmentally-focused Go Green policy is fundamental. DHL now not only offsets CO2 but also other greenhouse gases such as methane and nitrous oxide, meaning its Go Green programme has progressed from carbon neutral to climate neutral. We are looking to obtain emissions reports from parties throughout our supply chain so we can monitor our impact more closely. We are currently in the process of re-tendering our preferred freight forwarder and hope to incorporate emissions reports into any new agreement. With regard to monitoring the mileage of Sightsavers-owned vehicles overseas, at the time of writing this report we are still in the process of accurately collecting initial vehicle information and will need to invest in a vehicle asset tracking management system to monitor mileage effectively.

Sightsavers has not yet developed a systematic approach to assessing the environmental impact of our projects in developing countries; we carry out a vast number and variety of projects and work with a large number of partners all over the world, which makes the formalisation of this extremely difficult. While we continue to work towards understanding how we can collect this data, we continue 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.

3.3. Do you have targets? Is progress monitored? What progress was achieved?

As described under indicator (1.3), our efforts to make our programmes more inclusive of women and girls increased by 30% in 2017 with 84.38% of our eye health projects demonstrating clearly defined strategies to improve access by and reach a higher number of females than males. We know that more women than men are affected by blindness, so achieving 50:50 coverage is not adequate. 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. Our advocacy efforts within these projects have contributed greatly to these 2017 figures.

Our [annual inclusion report for 2017](#) highlights progress towards the objectives set out in our empowerment and inclusion strategic framework. The report consolidates both successes and failures and is disseminated to key stakeholders internally and externally. A significant highlight from this reporting period is the establishment of a cross-departmental inclusive health task team 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. In 2017 we also strengthened our capacity to incorporate gender mainstreaming into our project design and inception. This process included the undertaking of an in depth analysis of our sex-disaggregated data from the past five years to draw out patterns and themes which may cause barriers to women's empowerment.

The Programme Portal, our central programme database, requires disaggregated targets and results to be input and our reporting tools allows disaggregated data to be visualised and reported on, helping to measure the impact of programmes on beneficiaries of different diversity groups. This has been particularly valuable in helping us to understand why we often see higher rates of cataract surgery uptake among males when cataract prevalence is traditionally higher among women. In Pakistan, we have been able to utilise this disaggregated data to combat this trend and have seen the percentage of female cataract surgery recipients rise from 45.8% in 2016 to 49.5% in 2017 (based on roughly 30,000 surgeries per year).

Analysis of the 2017 environmental survey completed by our country offices will generate recommendations and targets that we will outline and report progress against in the 2018 report.

3.4. How do you ensure your organisation does no harm itself?

Sightsavers has a suite of organisational policies and procedures that are reviewed and updated every three years. These policies are available to all staff via our intranet and are [available on our website](#). In addition, a

comprehensive eLearning programme has been developed that all employees complete as part of their induction, or when new or updated policies are developed.

Our global whistleblowing policy was reviewed and updated in 2017 with the final version due to be published on our website in February 2018. It has been designed to allow staff to disclose information which they believe shows malpractice, unethical conduct or illegal practices in the workplace, without being penalised in any way. It is also designed to ensure that concerns go directly to an identified trustee to ensure nothing can be suppressed by senior management.

In 2017 we updated and strengthened our child safeguarding policy. This is accompanied by a new code of conduct for both employees and representatives of Sightsavers as well as a rigorous new process for ensuring Sightsavers' partners have child safeguarding policies and procedures in place. This policy has also been accompanied by a new child safeguarding induction, which provides an overview of our safeguarding approach as well as our organisational expectations and key resources. It is mandatory for all new starters and existing employees to undertake this safeguarding training.

Sightsavers is committed to improving practices to combat slavery and human trafficking. We have a zero-tolerance approach to modern slavery within our operations, and strive to act ethically and with integrity to ensure modern slavery is not taking place in any part of our organisation. As part of this, we expect all of our suppliers to sign our code of conduct relating to safeguarding and modern slavery. Our slavery and human trafficking statement was last updated in April 2017 in accordance with the Modern Slavery Act 2015.

Our conflict of interest statement is available to all staff on our intranet. It was last updated in 2014 and is due to be reviewed and updated again in 2018. Sightsavers has mechanisms and processes in place to ensure that conflicts of interest for governing bodies are identified and managed responsibly. The council of trustees has a Conflict of Interest policy and a related party transactions policy. These are reviewed by the trustees annually.

Sightsavers has an embedded fraud and anti-corruption policy that is updated regularly and approved by the audit committee. It was last reviewed and updated in September 2016. Sightsavers has a frequently maintained risk log which ensures that we take the necessary steps to predict and mitigate any potential risk factors that could cause harm to anyone impacted by our activities. This was most recently reviewed at our March 2018 council meeting with further updates included in the April meeting of the audit committee.

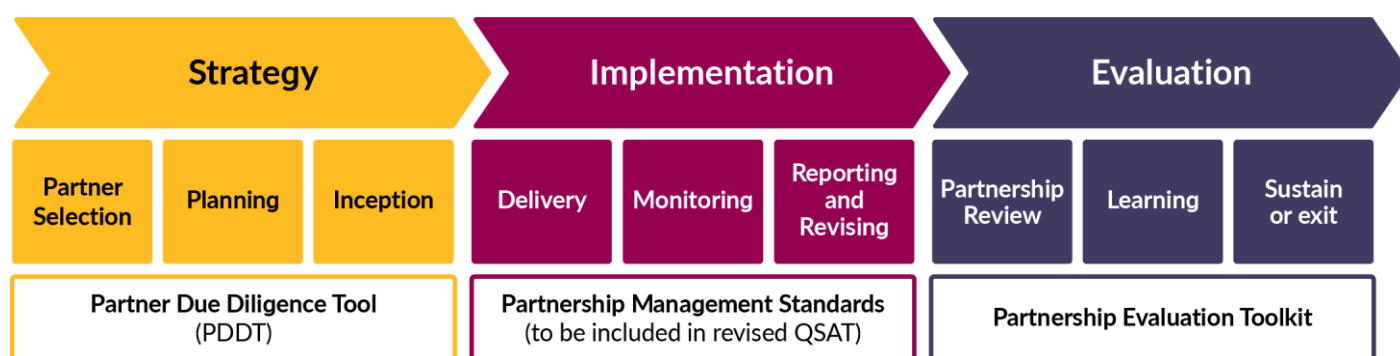
Our complaints policy is fully operational and a direct link has been established between our complaints policy and our internal control and assurance mechanisms. Complaints that are received, both internally and externally, now influence our approach to assurance and are featured in our audit programme. Testing has been incorporated into internal audits to ensure that operational changes in response to complaints are adequate in order to mitigate future grievances. In 2017, Sightsavers' internal audit function advised that this policy be updated, as well as our approach to obtaining complaints information from country offices. We plan to formally audit our complaints mechanisms in 2019. The complaints policy and procedure forms part of core employee induction and the internal roll out has ensured that all staff are aware of its existence. 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.

We undertake robust due diligence with all partners prior to entering into partnership agreements. Tailored tools for minimum partnership criteria and due diligence assessments are in place for three main types of partner: governments, disabled people's organisations and civil society organisations; and NGOs or the private sector. Our partners are usually working in our areas of strategic focus (eye health, NTDs, inclusive education, social inclusion) or allied sectors. The updated toolkit also includes questions related to child safeguarding and prevention of modern slavery. We have a complementary partnership review tool that is a mechanism for annual monitoring and updating of the action plans that emerge from the due diligence assessments.

Cluster B – Our approach to change

4.1. How do you identify your partners and other key stakeholders?

Our programme partnership policy and framework 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. In addition, detailed situational analysis is conducted through the project design process (PDP) and identifies key stakeholders at the national level which need to be prioritised for engagement during project design and implementation.



Our [research strategy](#) sets out the governance principles for all research activities that we support and provides guidance to staff, consultants and partners on the entire research process, including conceptualisation, design, partner selection, implementation, analysis and dissemination.

Our donors are actively solicited from the general public in the UK and the rest of the world, particularly Ireland, Sweden, Norway, Italy, India and the United States. Our global fundraising and donations acceptance policy (available as annex 4 to this document), along with our money laundering policy, sets out the key issues to be considered in accepting a donation from an individual, corporation or foundation. The engagement with corporate donors specifically is also governed by our corporate engagement policy. We also solicit and accept donations from governmental and institutional funders. Engagement with these donors is considered on a case-by-case basis.

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 updated 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 and implement our policy where they do not have one.

4.2. How do you ensure you listen to those who are impacted or concerned by your work?

We currently have a number of beneficiary feedback approaches and mechanisms functioning across the organisation in a variety of different settings. We regularly conduct 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.

In our education programmes, our new education quality standards process provides opportunities for teachers to be part of the programme assessment, and we work closely with school management structures to ensure interventions are tailored for best effect to beneficiaries. During implementation across a variety of

our programmatic work, we have introduced guidance for collection of beneficiary feedback during routine project visits conducted quarterly, and this is currently being tested in our West Africa programmes.

Our evaluations and research team also 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.

We have robust complaints and safeguarding policies which are closely managed so that responses to feedback from anyone affected, and any necessary action, are provided swiftly. Complaints that are received, both internally and externally, now influence our approach to assurance and are featured in our audit programme, with any complaints received from our programmes at country office level being collated and managed centrally to ensure full accountability at organisational level. A full breakdown of the complaints received in 2017 is available under section 10.3 of this report.

The responsibility for responding to complaints sits with the relevant line director, with the possibility for escalation to the CEO, chair of trustees or relevant external bodies if necessary. We have committed to acknowledging complaints within 14 days and responding within 30 days

Our current mechanism for consolidating complaints received at country office level is managed by our corporate services team. Country offices submit a quarterly complaints return and during the reporting period no complaints were received. A review of the country-level complaints mechanism was added to the 2017 internal audit programme to assess whether the current process is robust and providing accurate data. In relation to complaints at partner level, our partnership due diligence tool and thematic quality standards require implementing partners to have adequate policies and protocols in operation that allow beneficiaries to provide feedback on services. Complaints that we receive from supporters are logged and managed by our dedicated supporter care team which is able to escalate complaints to senior management as and when required.

As previously reported, we have two formal mechanisms in place for internal stakeholders to raise issues: the grievance policy and the whistleblowing policy. Under these policies, employees are protected from any victimisation or discrimination as a result of their disclosure, provided they act in accordance with the policy. All complaints raised through these two procedures are escalated to our HR business partners or the CEO. In the case of whistleblowing, these are automatically escalated to a trustee who is an HR specialist. Employees may also email these complaints to a dedicated email address. During the reporting period, one internal complaint was made through the grievance process. Through implementation of the grievance policy, the complaint was resolved satisfactorily and further evidences that the policy is both well known by employees and fit for purpose. A complaints mechanism is also included within the child safeguarding policy, and further information is provided under section 3.3.

4.3. How do you maximise coordination with others operating in the same sectoral and geographic space?

Engaging with and leveraging our 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 showed progress towards reaching these goals and objectives, against a target of 75%. Highlights for the year included:

- Our work on disability with DFID, which announced a global disability summit to be held in 2018;
- Our launch of the Cameroon Cataract Impact bond with the Fred Hollows Foundation;
- Hosting an event for the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation managed by the Uniting support centre, and a new grant for mapping of onchocerciasis

(The Uniting support centre (which we host) provides secretariat support to the Uniting to Combat NTDs public-private partnership. It is also responsible for the production of an annual scorecard to track progress, and raises visibility of NTDs through advocacy, communications and events)

As previously described, the programme partnership policy sets out the principles behind our approach to partnership and how these are in practice. We are committed to developing relationships where the partner organisations can collaborate beyond programme work, both formally and informally. With increasing complexity within our partnership network, partners can be categorised into global strategic alliances, international programme partnerships and implementing project partnerships.

Our global strategic alliances include international bodies and professional associations that we actively support to coordinate efforts to influence change and share learning. Our international programme partnerships directly support programmatic work through co-design, learning, and support to implementation.

Our primary partners on health and education are the relevant line ministries or organisations providing services within the systems overseen by the ministry. In social inclusion work, we work with organisations providing services for people with disabilities as well as organisations representing the interests of people with disabilities in advocating for improvements to lives and livelihoods or access to rights. These partners are involved in all aspects of project design, implementation, and monitoring/evaluation.

Situation analysis is a central component of our project design process and tools have been rolled out to support the review and analysis of available evidence that exists at the relevant national and district levels, to provide a consolidated overview of the current country context. This analysis will provide a thorough understanding of current gaps and opportunities in health, education and social systems, and will help to identify problem statements and inform the design of interventions to address the identified problem.

Our levels of influencing tool is a framework for programmes to build a suitable and appropriate set of measures for advocacy, and allow for a mixture of qualitative and quantitative indicators. The tool includes a mapping exercise to understand the current context in relation to the engagement of policy stakeholders. It is also intended to be flexible enough to allow for the iterative nature of advocacy, and will allow for a level of narrative reporting alongside more quantitative indicators. The tool enables advocacy measurement to be standardised, comparable and quantifiable, while recognising the need to tailor measurement to account for differences in context and issues.

Sightsavers has strong team leadership and management skills embedded throughout the organisation, with the expertise and capability to lead high-value, complex, multi-partner, adaptive programmes. Sightsavers has a proven track record from DFID in managing multi-agency consortia and has experience of leading a number of consortia programmes with a value of almost £100m. The approach the organisation takes in managing large consortia contracts is to establish a core fund management team to be directly responsible for the programme delivery. fund management teams benefit from significant control over their own programmes while being supported by staff at HQ to ensure learning from each programme benefits the others. An example of this is the UNITED Integrated Northern Nigeria NTD programme, which is led by Sightsavers in consortium with non-governmental development organisations, academic partners, private sector partners and private sector suppliers. A mid-term review of the programme praised the “strong coordination structure” and regarded the consortium model as “a key strength of the UNITED programme” as learning is being disseminated by partners to non-UNITED supported programme states. Sightsavers also coordinates with other NTD stakeholders across the country through the National Taskforce for NTDs, where joint planning ensures that work is complementary, with no overlap, and where lessons can be shared between different agencies.

Throughout this reporting period, the policy and global advocacy team has focused influencing efforts on health, education and disability within the context of the follow-up and review processes of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The policy and global advocacy work plan outlines the organisation’s influencing objectives as they relate to Sightsavers’ thematic areas. It also outlines the bilateral and multilateral actors we need to engage with to influence the relevant policy change.

5.1. Which evidence demonstrates that key stakeholder groups acknowledge your organisation is good at listening and acting upon what you hear?

Sightsavers' SIM card remains the central tool used to track involvement of affected stakeholder groups in the design, implementation and evaluation of our policies and programmes. Sightsavers' ultimate aims focus on sustainability, government ownership and empowerment of people with disabilities to participate equally in society. Organisational objectives at beneficiary level have been developed across the thematic areas in which we work, while objectives focused on effective partnerships, advocacy and strategic alliances describe what we need to excel at as an organisation in order to deliver for our beneficiaries.

Sightsavers' thematic strategies in eye health, education, empowerment and inclusion, and [research](#) set out our programmatic approaches that will lead to achievement of our strategic aims. Introduction of the thematic strategies, coupled with the organisational restructure in 2013, has placed responsibility of programme design with our global technical leads (responsible for thematic strategy and strategic direction of global portfolio) and country teams, with emphasis on co-design and co-accountability. Implementation of projects is led by country teams, with the various functions from across the finance and performance, and policy and programme strategy teams, supporting both design and implementation of projects.

In 2016 we participated in an impact assessment commissioned by Accountable Now, looking at six key areas of accountability. Overall, we were extremely pleased with the results, and identified a gap: that we did not have an open information policy. In response, we developed our own [open information policy](#), which has been rolled out across the organisation.

As described earlier in the report, in 2017 we were awarded first place in the charity section of the UK 'Top Customer Service' Awards and came 6th overall. At a time when there is a great deal of criticism of the way charities interact with the public, we feel very proud that our efforts are recognised.

As previously discussed under indicator 4.2 we utilise numerous beneficiary feedback approaches and mechanisms in our evaluations and research to ensure that we listen to stakeholders and act upon this information. In April 2017, we held a reflection workshop to review, consolidate and build consensus around our practices and knowledge relating to primary eye care. This workshop allowed Sightsavers staff to discuss key learnings, experiences and best practice from our projects and identify the key challenges we face in the provision of primary eye care. Our management response mechanism also provides country staff with an opportunity to discuss strategic evaluations and provide feedback that can later be incorporated into an updated action plan. Internally, the initial responses from our 2018 employee survey indicate that staff feel that the results will be used and actioned by senior management.

5.2. Which evidence confirms a high level of stakeholder engagement in your activities and decisions from beginning to end?

Partner involvement in Sightsavers' project design process begins at context analysis and concept stage, where key stakeholders are mapped and engagement begins. In accordance with the thematic strategies, projects align with national government plans (where available) and a crucial stage of context analysis is scoping out the policy context in order to develop advocacy objectives, linked to the thematic theories of change. Means of verification within the project cycle management and thematic quality standards assessment tools require representative stakeholders, including beneficiaries, to be invited to participate in project design. This structure and delivery system has seen positive results:

- Increased ownership and buy-in from partner, country and regional teams at design and implementation of projects
- Shared global understanding of direction of the global programme portfolio and project specific goals
- Opportunities for learning on specific programmatic themes/systems
- Improved quality of reporting and documentation of evidence and learning

Strategic review and decision making on the direction of the portfolio is managed by the reflection, oversight, analysis and review (ROAR) group. The purpose of this group, which meets quarterly, is to review and analyse the multiple sources of evidence generated by our programmes and use these to assess progress

against implementation of the thematic (eye health, social inclusion, education) and technical (eg research, influencing) programme strategies and agree the shape of the future programme portfolio. The group uses a variety of data sources (QSATs, SIM data, research articles, evaluations, output statistics, annual reports etc) to undertake this assessment. ROAR also provides a top-level mechanism for programme accountability and delivery assurance, providing a support function to the strategy leadership group and the programme expert group led by the Chairman of Sightsavers' board of trustees.

Partner involvement in project design and monitoring are embedded in our organisational processes and measured by our project cycle management quality standard assessment tool (PCM QSAT). Our governmental and non-governmental partners are consulted and actively involved in the situational analysis and design steps of our project design process. During project start-up, partners are engaged in workshops to review the project design and agree on implementation plans, partner budgets and reporting. Throughout the project life cycle country office staff solicit feedback from partners through monitoring visits where they take the opportunity to discuss project performance, management and learning. Often, planning and learning workshops are also conducted with the partners. Learning from our partners is integrated into project narrative reports.

In our neglected tropical disease (NTD) work, one of the primary approaches we have developed with governments, which is now globally adopted, is the community-directed treatment approach. The central theory behind this approach is that communities themselves are the best placed to judge how to effectively reach the treatment targets set for NTDs by the World Health Organization. Community-directed distributors, who are trained and provided with the tools required, work with community leaders and primary health care workers to develop and implement plans for regular mass drug administration. The effectiveness of this approach in the huge reduction in transmission of onchocerciasis in many countries is well documented. It is a clear and leading global example of community leadership in public health programmes.

Our research work in East and West Africa has included an inclusive methodology: community-based participatory research (CBPR). This methodology involves shared decision-making and ownership. Members of the community are involved in planning, gathering and analysing evidence, and sharing what is discovered. In 2017, Sightsavers' community-based participatory research findings have ensured that the experiences and ideas of children and young people with disabilities, their parents and their teachers have shaped Sightsavers' education and social inclusion interventions in their contexts. Approaching research this way has identified enablers and barriers to effective inclusive education as identified by children with disabilities, their parents and teachers. It has also explored effectiveness of economic empowerment models as identified by young people with disabilities. Beyond findings, CBPR has supported boys and girls with disabilities, men and women to realise their potential through voice, agency and participation, whether as community researchers or research participants.

The quality standards assessment tool (QSAT) continues to be a valuable source of evidence for ensuring that stakeholders are engaged in our activities from beginning to end. In 2017 we undertook a full review of our QSAT process to see where improvements were needed. As part of this review we interviewed staff members who are key stakeholders in the QSAT process and sent a questionnaire to those with lesser involvement in the process. These interviews and questionnaires were designed to be open and provide space for the stakeholders to talk about what was working well, what difficulties they perceived there to be and what can be changed to make the process better. The findings from this review will be discussed in April 2018 and we will be making changes to ensure that stakeholder engagement in the process remains high.

5.3. What do key stakeholders like and not like when co-evaluating results? How have you reacted to their feedback?

We have a robust process for reviewing results and other evaluation findings through evaluation report review by internal stakeholders and partners. This is important in ensuring that key stakeholders have an opportunity to comment on findings and have input into final reports. Final reports take account of these inputs and discussions to improve learning and presentation of findings and evidence. At the end of evaluation fieldwork, a presentation/debriefing is normally conducted with country staff and partners (where

possible). This is a key opportunity to validate findings of the external team. Our standard management response is also the official mechanism for our country teams to discuss results of external evaluation and co-develop an action plan for those recommendations that are accepted.

As part of our overall evaluation process, we periodically seek feedback from evaluators we work with in order to ensure our commissioning and evaluation procedures are of high quality and conducive to good working relations. We use this feedback to improve our engagement with external evaluation stakeholders and adjust our processes if necessary, something that external consultants have valued.

Our successes in achieving sustainability in our programmes also feature heavily in donor feedback, with positive responses to our advocacy successes in leveraging support from partners and governments to expand or sustain programmes beyond our agreed funding.

Many institutional donors are increasingly focused on data disaggregation by gender, but also by other areas to ensure that we are effectively meeting the needs of the most marginalised groups. This has been a growing area of expertise for Sightsavers and we have been improving and accelerating the collection, analysis and use of data disaggregated by disability, age, gender and poverty level within our programmes, and sharing our findings with the wider sector. This data allows us, for example, to design and implement respective actions with a clear understanding of context-specific dynamics, actively promoting the participation of marginalised groups in the programme cycle and developing interventions that challenge inequality.

We report results to our individual major donors, family and corporate trust donors and corporate partners in a format and on a schedule agreed with each donor, according to their requirements and the availability of data. Reports may be delivered in writing, verbally by phone or in a formal presentation at a meeting, as per the donor's preference, followed by discussion as needed. These donors have a wide variety of interests and expectations, but common themes that have emerged include very positive responses to programmes where beneficiaries' personal stories are highlighted, such as the transformational impact on their lives. Questions of sustainability have also begun to feature heavily in donor feedback, with positive responses to our advocacy successes in leveraging support from partners and governments to expand or sustain programmes beyond our agreed funding.

In 2017, we received some constructive feedback from a donor about how we could meet the challenge of reaching more women in some of our eye health projects. Specifically, the feedback related to the way we were adapting programme design in line with rapid assessment of avoidable blindness (RAAB) reports. RAABs are population-based surveys of visual impairment.

We have addressed the issue together with the donor through joint meetings with one of our experts on RAABs and also with our global technical lead on social inclusion. We received feedback on how to improve the process, which we have taken on board, and have engaged our country office teams to ensure they think through new ways/approaches to target more women; for example, working with women's groups. Our gender-sensitive approaches are resulting in progress in this area; though it's fair to say that we have further to go.

5.4. How do you know that people and partners you worked with have gained capacities, means, self-esteem or institutional strengths that last beyond your immediate intervention?

During the reporting period we have been working to improve our evidence base to demonstrate that the partners have the increased capacity to sustain programme activities. We have a comprehensive project exit process that forms part of the programme cycle management package, incorporating tools and guidance for risk assessment and financial management. This provides a more systematic approach to building sustainability into project design from the outset.

Our Connecting the Dots project is an economic empowerment programme in Uganda funded by Sightsavers, the European Commission and the Big Lottery Fund that provides vocational training to young people with disabilities. The first intake saw 324 students graduate, with the majority now in employment and financially supporting themselves. This success led to the project being renewed for a further four years. At its awards event in Vienna, the Zero project (supported by the Essl Foundation and set up to recognise

creative solutions to the problems faced by people with disabilities around the world) gave Sightsavers Uganda an award for 'Innovative Policy/Practice 2017 on Employment, Work and Vocational Education and Training'. Edith Kagoya, Project Coordinator from Sightsavers Uganda, was in Vienna for the presentation. This global recognition was validated by an external evaluation of the project, which concluded that it "succeeded in meeting its objectives and has impacted positively on the lives of youth with disabilities and their families." The evaluation also noted that the project "was successful in addressing both the practical challenges of individual persons with disabilities as well as the institutional barriers that inhibit their full participation in the socio-economic life of their communities." A key learning point was the need to integrate a gender approach from the start of programming in order to systematically understand and address specific barriers affecting the choice of training courses and equitable recruitment into the project.

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 so that action plans are completed. Actions completed in 2017 included the completion and provision of a clinical protocol for cataract surgery provision, development of a national human resources for eye health plan, and infrastructural changes in Senegalese (Louga and Kaffrine) facilities to make the facilities more accessible. All of these will have long and significant positive effects on the quality of patient care in our partner facilities.

In 2017 facilities in Zambia, Mozambique and Uganda were re-assessed using the QSAT with scores increasing, on average, 9.27%. This shows that the overall quality of the health facilities used within the activities have increased over the course of the projects. The QSATs themselves measure quality across service delivery, health (and other) workforces, infrastructure and technology, medical products and equipment, patient and provider safety, and programme effectiveness. All of these areas are essential in ensuring the long-term quality of patient care at a facility.

In 2017 we also adapted the MEASURE routine data quality audit (RDQA) for use by our projects. This gives Sightsavers staff a tool to assess the data quality of a partner facility, or health system, and work with the partner to develop an action plan to improve the data systems. Accurate high quality data is essential for good decision-making, and will ensure that in the future our partners have the information they need for good management and service delivery. For example, one of the actions from an RDQA completed in Q3 2017 in Singida, Tanzania, was "Eye Coordinator to ensure the District Medical Officer and Executive Director receive quarter performance from eye care department." When completed this will ensure that key partners in Singida region are receiving quarterly reports to help build their understanding and make informed decisions.

We support people in gaining initial professional qualifications that will last a whole lifetime, and that will also increase human resource capacity within their home country (examples of professional qualifications we support include ophthalmologists, cataract surgeons, ophthalmic nurses). Many of our projects also support medical staff, education staff and social workers/rehab workers to go on short courses to improve their skills or to gain specialist expertise, which will also last far beyond the duration of the project. Since our inception, we have supported over 8,200 medical staff to gain an initial professional qualification, 590 education professionals to gain an initial professional qualification and over 1,850,000 community volunteers to undertake training in a variety of skills, including mass drug administration and screening.

A wide range of training aimed at building capacity of individuals is provided, including daily living skills, mobility and orienteering, rights and entitlements, living skills, vocational training and economic empowerment. These courses give beneficiaries the means to lead independent lives, and the skills learned can be life-changing and long-lasting. Since 1950 we have supported the training of over 224,000 people with visual impairment or disabilities. Where our partner due diligence has revealed risks or weaknesses, we draw up action plans with our partners outlining the action that will be taken to strengthen and support them as organisations. This could include the purchase of new/improved software (eg accountancy packages or management information systems), new equipment, staff training/mentoring, funding additional staff posts,

or supporting the development of new policies or operational protocols. Much of this investment will endure far beyond the life of the project.

6.1. How do you identify and muster evidence regarding the root causes of the problems you address? Relates to commitment 7 (our advocacy will address the root cause of problems)

From Sightsavers' perspective, if we are to influence policy change and achieve better outcomes for people, it is essential that the organisation's policy influencing and advocacy work is recognised as having integrity and experience, and that our work is of the highest standard. For this reason, we look to ensure that all that we do is evidence-based.

For Sightsavers, a key aspect is the engagement and participation of people with disabilities, ensuring that our policy and advocacy work accurately reflects people's views and experiences. This guides our extensive engagement with disabled people's organisations at national and international level and our continued commitment to the national level processes that drive that engagement. Sightsavers' influence over this period is evidenced in the diversity of activities to which we were invited to attend and the successful progress and outcomes that we were able to deliver in the areas of health, disability and education. In 2017, this was particularly apparent within the context of Agenda 2015 at country and global levels, our bilateral engagement with DFID and our multilateral engagement with World Bank, UN Women, WHO and UN DESA.

In terms of access to evidence that informs policymaking, research is carried out by Sightsavers' internal research team, which carries our primary research at national level and has recently achieved Independent Research Organisation status. This research helps inform our health and education work. In addition (as highlighted in Commitment 6, in terms of strengthening internal processes), we have initiated joined-up country visits on priority areas and developed our own internal context analyses to ensure that the organisation's policy positions accurately reflect the national context.

6.2. How do you ensure that stakeholders support your advocacy work and appreciate its effects?

Sightsavers' Put Us in the Picture campaign is a global policy campaign aimed at delivering disability-inclusive development, by which we mean ensuring that international development policy is inclusive of people with disabilities. The campaign engages the public, parliamentarians and policymakers in order to deliver real policy change and impact.

A significant aspect of this is our engagement with members of the public (new and existing campaigners). The campaign shares our policy work with the public and seeks their support by asking them to take action. In 2017, Sightsavers' Put Us in the Picture campaign and parliamentary work sought to raise the issue of disability-inclusive development within the context of the UK general election campaign. More than 7000 people signed our election petition calling for inclusive development. 460 campaigners contacted more than 1000 parliamentary candidates calling on them to take action, 109 of whom subsequently pledged to support disability-inclusive development. Lastly, 137 supporters joined our Thunderclap on Twitter with a potential social reach of 324,132 people. This enabled us to measure the reach and relevance of our messaging and, in turn, its impact.

7.1. Are your annual budgets, policies (especially regarding complaints, governance, staffing/salaries and operations), evaluations, and top executive remuneration easily available to all stakeholders on your website? Please provide links.

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 as they have not yet been approved by the board and will not be made public until released as part of our annual report in July 2018.)*

Sightsavers' approach to remuneration is to ensure our reward package is competitive with other equivalent organisations in the areas where we work (both geographically and by type of role), so it is able to attract and retain high-quality staff. We see our ability to recruit and retain key staff as fundamental and it features as a key organisational risk on our risk log. Salaries are compared across other INGOs and, where appropriate, other types of organisations, and we look at medians as the basis of pay. This is not rigid as there are times when there is a need to offer more, and times when an individual is still growing into a role so less is offered. A number of different survey providers are used and, where appropriate, a direct comparison with other similar NGOs is undertaken. The remuneration committee sets the salary for the Chief Executive, approves the salaries of her direct reports and the overall reward structure and policy. Our audited and published annual report and financial accounts provide a breakdown of salary levels as required by the statements of recommended practice (SORP).

As of April 2017, Sightsavers' chief executive Dr Caroline Harper earned an annual salary of £129,500. She has no bonus scheme or car allowance, and the same pension rights as all other UK staff. This data is published on our website separately from the annual report.

A list of key policies is also provided on our website and can be accessed using the following [link](#).

Further information relating to our transparency and accountability to stakeholders can be accessed by on our [IATI](#) and [Development Portal](#) pages.

7.2. What is the salary ratio between your top and bottom salaries?

Sightsavers has been responsive to external interest in the salary ratio between the highest paid employee (CEO) and the lowest paid employee in the UK. Our 2017 ratio is currently 6:1 (excluding interns who are all paid the Living Wage), down from 7:1 in the previous pay review. The ratio of highest to median is 3:1, which remains the same as in the last reporting period. We have also completed a review examining the current [gender pay gap](#) at Sightsavers. In the interests of accountability and transparency, we have published the results of this analysis on our website. The difference in mean pay during the pay period between male and female employees was 1% higher for men. The difference in median pay during the pay period between male and female employees was 3% higher for men. This compares well with other organisations in the sector. The table below shows numbers of male and female relevant employees according to quartile pay bands A, B, C and D.

Quartile	Women	Men
1 st Quartile (lower quartile)	68%	32%
2 nd Quartile	68%	32%
3 rd Quartile	58%	42%
4 th Quartile (upper quartile)	66%	34%

7.3. How do you ensure privacy rights and protect personal data?

Sightsavers takes data protection 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 Cyber Essentials accreditation and is aiming to secure certification in 2018. The initiatives undertaken further complement Sightsavers' continued enhancement of its ICT infrastructure and information security framework. In addition to the development of its technical controls and system management processes, Sightsavers has implemented a number of robust anti-malware solutions, aimed at safeguarding its networks and data from an ever-evolving landscape of cyber threats.

In 2016, we participated in an impact study commissioned by Accountable Now to understand how well NGOs perform against their promises of accountability and where the sector can develop in the future. Results of the study showed that Sightsavers was demonstrating strong commitment to accountability across six areas of accountability (transparency, participative response, responsible advocacy, sustainable impact (MEL), effective financial management, environmental responsibility). Recommendations on areas for improvement highlighted a policy gap in relation to open information. Based on this recommendation a decision was taken at senior management level to develop an [open information policy](#) to further strengthen our commitment to transparency and accountability.

7.4. How do you protect the dignity and safety of affected/involved stakeholders?

Sightsavers takes great care to protect the dignity and safety of its stakeholders. 2017 saw us take a number of steps to increase our commitment to safeguarding while also overhauling existing policies to make them more robust. Examples of our progress in this reporting period include the roll out of our child safeguarding policy and the development of an ethical content policy. The latter governs the collection of fundraising and case study material and ensures that we do not misrepresent our stakeholders or perpetuate stereotypes of people living in developing countries. We also continue to use our QSAT tool to critically assess the quality of practice by Sightsavers' projects or project partners/facilities and to verify that we are adhering to strict quality standards. In order to ensure the safety of our staff, Sightsavers utilises a thorough resilience protocol, which is overseen by our resilience manager, to fully assess and mitigate any risks that could affect staff who travel overseas (including staff based outside the UK).

In 2017 we developed our adults at risk framework which ensures 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, to develop good practice and increase accountability. In 2018 we will be developing our adults at risk policy which will be incorporated into our broader safeguarding policy and procedures. As described earlier in the report, we have a modern slavery policy in place which also supports our work to protect the dignity and safety of affected and involved stakeholders.

Sightsavers' work with beneficiaries is guided by the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), with specific reference to article 19 on protection from all forms of violence, injury, exploitation, abuse, neglect, mistreatment and sexual abuse, and the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD). It also recognises the rights of people with disabilities to services, to access to justice, and to full participation in their communities, in line with the CRPD. This means that effective safeguarding from the additional risks faced by children and adults with disabilities does not include preventing them from accessing these rights.

Our project work is guided by a robust research governance framework which outlines how we protect the dignity and safety of people involved in our research studies. This document will be updated at the end of 2018 and can be found as annex 3 to this report. For all research studies, clinical trials and surveys involving human subjects and requiring clinical interventions including trial of medicines, the research protocol must be independently reviewed and comply with the ethical principles outlined in the World Medical Association Declaration of Helsinki and with any other international and European Union guidelines applicable. All study participants requiring medical treatment must be referred to treatment services. Ethics approval is sought from national or local bodies with formal ethical approval systems in the country in which the research is undertaken. In addition, there may be requirements for ethical approval from collaborating institutions in the UK or elsewhere. Participation in research should always be voluntary and free from

external pressure, whether this be direct participation in research activities or indirect through the provision of personal data or human tissue and organs. Appropriate arrangements must be in place for obtaining informed consent from participants. Any information that may affect a prospective participant's willingness to participate should not be withheld. Additional authorisation and approvals may be required for information sourced through secondary data sets such as databases or registries.

Extra care is needed when seeking consent from children and vulnerable adults such as those with mental health problems, learning difficulties or disability. Arrangements must be made to ensure that relevant information is provided in an accessible and appropriate form and that the role of parents, carers, or supporters is clearly understood. Confidentiality of personal information and the anonymity and privacy of study participants must be maintained. Circumstances or requirements that may limit this obligation should be communicated to prospective participants.

Where at all possible Sightsavers will avoid undertaking any research that may require the use of animals. In instances where there are no alternatives, research requiring the use of animals will only be done in collaboration with institutions that are appropriately licensed and rigorously respect all animal research protocols.

Cluster C – What we do internally

8.1. Provide evidence that recruitment, employment and staff development is fair, transparent and in line with your values.

The size and composition of the total workforce at Sightsavers for the 2017 reporting period is detailed in the table below.

	Sightsavers	Europe	UAE	WARO	ECSA	India	SE Asia
Full time		167	4	127	97	61	32
Part time		37	1	3	0	0	1
Total	531	204	5	130	97	61	33
Permanent		167	3	42	7	0	13
Fixed term		37	2	88	90	61	20
Total	531	204	5	130	97	61	33

Our global diversity and equality policy sets our commitment to employing a workforce that reflects the diversity of local contexts and cultures. Sightsavers' recruitment practices promote our commitment to hiring local staff at all levels by advertising all roles via online advertising and local print media. Where appropriate, all roles are also advertised internally so that all employees receive notifications of new vacancies and can be considered as an internal candidate. Employees are offered contracts in line with national terms and conditions. As evidenced below all senior managers were hired locally in 2017 and Sightsavers has a successful record in the development of employees and internal promotions. Senior managers include the management team, strategy team, regional and country directors.

Region	Senior managers	Hired locally	Proportion	
	2017	2017	2017	2016
East, Central and Southern Africa	2	2	100%	100%
India	2	2	100%	100%
West Africa	0	0	100%	78%
South Asia	1	1	100%	100%
Europe	4	4	100%	100%

A strategic objective in our empowerment and inclusion strategic framework is to “scale up efforts to achieve diversity in the workplace.” Since 2016 our efforts to mainstream inclusion have been led by a vibrant interdepartmental community of practice, the social inclusion working group. The key outputs of the group so far have been: the launch of a lunchtime seminar programme where speakers are invited to talk to staff on social inclusion and accessibility; the introduction of a compulsory disability inclusion training session in 2017 for all staff; new learning opportunities for staff to attend training sessions with the RNIB and learn British Sign Language; and the creation of accessible guidelines and document templates for staff (available on our e-learning module).

Data obtained from Sightsavers HR information system provides a breakdown regarding gender and ethnicity within each region.

	Sightsavers		Europe	West Africa	ECSA	India	South Asia	UAE	USA
	2017	2013							
Total	531	398							
Male	286	209	70	88	59	42	24	2	1
Female	245	189	135	42	37	19	9	3	0
Ethnicity									
White British	154		151	1				2	
White Other	18		18						
White Irish	9		9						
Black African	178		4	105	69				
Black other	5			1	3		1		
Asian other	9		4		1		3		1
Asian Indian	44		1			42		1	
Asian Pakistani	10						10		
Asian Bangladeshi	13		1				12		
Mixed heritage other	4		1		3				
Mixed heritage White & Asian	3		3						
Undisclosed	84		13	23	20	19	7	2	
Age:									
Under 30	59								
30 - 50 years	387								
Over 50	85								

As part of Sightsavers’ commitment to be an employer of choice for people with disabilities, we have joined the Business Disability Forum and gained ‘Disability Confident Level 2’ accreditation from the UK government’s Department for Work and Pensions. We also guarantee interviews for candidates with disabilities who meet the minimum criteria for our vacancies and have expanded the adjustments available at interview, such as providing assistive technology, like the Roger Pen, for people with hearing impairments.

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. In 2016, only 16 staff were recorded as having a disability based on the responses given on the equal opportunities form they filled out when commencing their employment at Sightsavers. The remaining challenge is to quantitatively demonstrate the impacts of the initiatives we have undertaken. We plan to do this by developing metrics and looking at the retention and career progression of staff in this demographic. By gathering reliable data and tracking it over time, we hope to gain further insight into key areas for development.

8.2. What steps have you taken this period to enable staff / volunteers to do their job better and to take leadership?

The learning and development of employees is managed across the organisation by senior managers and line managers, and is dependent on organisational and departmental needs and objectives. Administrative support when required is provided by the HR operations team. Internal coaching and team building is available to all employees from two HR business partners, both of whom have extensive experience in performance and organisational development. One HRBP is an accredited Insights Discovery Client Practitioner – carrying out individual profiling and coaching and team-building workshops, while the other HRBP is shortly to qualify with a Level 7 Certificate in Executive Coaching and Mentoring. The HRBPs work closely with management to identify and support individual and team development on an ongoing basis but additionally through developing and running 'Knowledge Cafés' which are designed for anyone with people management responsibilities. Several were run during 2017 and the HRBPs are currently preparing the programme for 2018, due to start in the spring. HRBPs choose the topics based on feedback from managers and the regularity of issues arising on a particular theme. The HRBPs are also expected to undertake regular travel in order to provide support to our country offices.

In early 2017 Sightsavers' performance development review process (PDR) was replaced by a 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 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. At the time of writing this report, we have not conducted an explicit review of why the PDR process returned low completion rates; however, we have recently conducted the 2018 employee survey and included a number of questions relating to performance management. It is hoped that these survey responses will provide further insight into how staff engage with the new VIP process and how this differs from their engagement with the old system.

Sightsavers undertakes a number of key initiatives (outlined below) that enable our staff to be more productive and take leadership in their roles:

- **Policies and procedure** – During 2017 all HR policies were fully reviewed or updated. These updated policies and procedures are available on Sightsavers' intranet and form a part of the core induction process for all employees.
- **HRBP newsletter** – Employees receive a regular HRBP newsletter that updates on the initiatives underway and their progress.
- **Employee surveys** – The employee survey provides an opportunity for staff members to provide feedback to the organisation in a broad range of areas. The 2015 response rate was high at 98%, with over 94% of employees reporting that they were proud to work at Sightsavers. The next employee survey was run in Q1 2018 with results still to be disseminated.
- **Manager induction** – HRBPs have informally met with all new managers to provide early support and during 2018 will be working on an objective to develop a new formal approach for managers.
- **Employee support** – Employees have access to a 24-hour confidential employee assistance programme helpline which provides a wide variety of support and advice

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. This expenditure figure only covers formal staff development activities. Many more informal activities are available to staff including workshops, seminars and informal mentoring opportunities.

Increased spending on compliance training activities, including the creation of online training modules for cyber security and child safeguarding, have also contributed to these costs. During 2017, four new modules were released on our global e-learning platform: on 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.

9.1. How do you acquire resources in line with your values and without compromising your independence? Who are your five largest donors?

Sightsavers' global fundraising and donations acceptance policy, included as annex 4 to this report, covers our global fundraising operations. 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 in regard to 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.

With regards to transparency and accountability to our supporters and beneficiaries, we have a [dedicated page on our website](#) which outlines our 'fundraising promise' and provides detail on our membership to the Fundraising Regulator, Direct Marketing Association and the Institute of Fundraising. It also provides contact details for directing queries relating to fundraising activities. This dedicated page is accompanied by our [supporter promise and privacy policy](#) in which we make a number of promises to protect the data of our supporters and outline how their data will be managed.

We are members of the Fundraising Regulator, which has taken over from the Fundraising Standards Board. The Fundraising Regulator is the independent regulator of charitable fundraising in England and Wales, established in 2016 following the Etherington review of fundraising self-regulation (2015) to strengthen the system of charity regulation and restore public trust in fundraising.

Information on major institutional gifts and gifts in kind are fully disclosed in our [annual report and accounts](#).

Sightsavers has a strategic objective of growing income, driven by a desire to increase organisational activity and maximise impact. We have historically had high levels of voluntary income from individuals, corporate donors and trusts, but we have also focused in recent years on investing in capacity to raise and manage institutional funding. This has been highly successful. As lead agency in wider consortia programmes we continue to manage a number of significant institutional grants, funded by DFID and The Queen Elizabeth Diamond Jubilee Trust, with a combined value of almost £100 million, for the implementation of our work on neglected tropical diseases. Sightsavers' operational model for these programmes allows for adaptability and flexibility, with learning and communication a central theme of the programme cycle.

During 2016 and 2017, we maintained investment in our capacity to raise voluntary income, increasing this in locations including India and Scandinavia so that we could continue to benefit from the flexibility that such income provides for the organisation while also diversifying geographically. This increased activity in the UK, Ireland, India, Scandinavia and Italy continues to benefit the organisation, with income from individuals rising to £24.56 million in 2017 compared with £22.48 million in 2016. The year-on-year growth in these markets is promising, but we will continue to assess performance carefully and adjust investment accordingly. We assess our fundraising on the basis of return on investment: channel by channel, and country by country.

Overall, we continue to see increases year-on-year with 2017 income (excluding gifts in kind) at roughly £73 million, up by £1 million on 2016 levels. We have continued to receive significant gifts in kind from Merck and Co. Inc. in the form of Mectizan® tablets to treat onchocerciasis and lymphatic filariasis. In 2017 this was valued at £221.9 million, roughly £30 million more than in 2016. Along with donated Zithromax® (which is particular to Sudan and related to sanctions issues), this puts our overall income at roughly £321.7 million. (Please note that all 2017 figures are not to be circulated externally. They are to be considered as in draft status and unaudited. Official figures will be released in the annual report July 2018.)

2017 Income

Category	2017 £'000	2016 £'000
Gifts in kind	248,536	229,893
Incoming resources from charitable activities	25,121	23,591
Individuals	24,564	22,484
Legacies	9,384	12,726
Grants within voluntary income	4,456	7,660
Companies	2,620	2,873
Trusts	4,608	1,912
Community service and other organisations	2,118	581
Investment income	279	224
Other	25	73

Our largest donors in 2017 and 2016 were:

Donor	2017 £'000	2016 £'000
UK Department for International Development	14,400	17,960
The Queen Elizabeth Diamond Jubilee Trust	7,917	6,635
Givewell	2,442	0
Irish Aid	1,531	1,189
The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation	1,471	978
Lions	1,129	0
Conrad N. Hilton Foundation	969	423

9.2. How is progress continually monitored against strategic objectives and resources re-allocated to optimise impact?

We continue to use our organisational SIM card to track overall strategic performance and feed any performance issues back into the process. A review process took place in 2014 to refresh some of the indicators being used to track objectives that were no longer providing us with appropriate insight. Our new indicators have tightened criteria for measurement and now provide the insight required to assess performance and influence resource allocation. We report against these indicators on an annual basis with results published on our website in the form of an interactive dashboard. In 2018 we will be undertaking a strategy review process to refresh the overall organisational strategy for the next strategic period.

Sightsavers continues to maintain a strong resource allocation and financial control framework which adopts a multifaceted approach, incorporating: governance; organisational structure; appropriately skilled, qualified, accountable and supervised managers and staff; documented corporate policies, established internal procedures and processes; and external monitoring including audit.

With regard to resource allocation, we have continued to strengthen our processes so that allocations are increasingly driven by strategic priorities. The organisation's senior management strategy team leads on overall resource allocation agreeing on appropriate levels of investment in fundraising, programme and management oversight and governance activities.

Programme development and resource allocation is separated from existing programme implementation so that decisions taken on programme priorities for the future and subsequent funding are made from an organisational perspective rather than being driven by the programmatic status quo within specific countries or regions. Thematic strategies for eye care, uncorrected refractive error, social inclusion, education and research have been developed to provide frameworks for this strategic decision-making on programme allocation.

Formal structures have been built to guide the process. Technical experts identify thematic gaps and opportunities and work with country teams to develop programme responses. A strategic decision-making body meets quarterly to review the options put forward and decide which can move forward to implementation. Resources allocations for programmatic activity made during the annual planning process flow directly from this review and decision-making. Projects are then designed through the project design process. The project reporting and oversight process is a crucial element of overall programme monitoring that highlights specific issues in key projects that may need addressing by additional investment, changing project design, etc.

Investment in fundraising is driven by ongoing analysis of performance across all of the fundraising territories in which we operate. The organisation has developed a range of reporting that enables comparison of performance across geographies and specific income streams so that allocation decisions can be made that maximise our return on investment.

We have continued to maintain a focus on value for money and efficiency. We have worked to ensure that expenditure on support functions is appropriate and tightly controlled. We have streamlined our programme delivery structures through the significant scaling down of our regional offices, reducing costs and also improving efficiency by linking our country offices into global team support more directly. We have also removed administrative complexity and duplication through the rollout of global systems, including direct financial payments to partners and some suppliers from the central finance team, and have embedded human resource activity within core departments, improving performance and saving approximately £250k per year.

The main elements of our control environment outlined in our previous report have been maintained and strengthened in a number of ways. We have strengthened our organisational assurance framework, overseen by our internal audit manager. The oversight work carried out by our regional finance managers has been reviewed by internal audit and the scope and structure of their work is such that it can be used formally as part of our overall assurance reporting.

Our programme database, the programme portal, provides quarterly reporting of output statistics and enables us to routinely assess progress of both financial and programmatic outputs in tandem. For large grant-funded projects we have implemented specific quarterly oversight reporting which brings together key stakeholders to review and assess progress and performance and highlights and addresses programmatic or financial issues.

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 necessarily having to increase staffing and spend, enabling us to ensure that resources are being used where they are needed to meet new donor and regulatory requirements.

9.3. How do you minimise the risk of corruption, bribery or misuse of funds? Which financial controls do you have in place?

Sightsavers has an embedded fraud and anti-corruption policy that is updated regularly and approved by the audit committee. It was last reviewed and updated in September 2016 (policy attached as annex 5 to this document). Staff are reminded of its existence and it is available on our intranet. Business partners are informed about the policy as part of our contracting arrangements and methodology. As part of their induction, all new members of staff are informed of our policies and associated procedures with respect to fraud and zero tolerance is effectively communicated. An electronic training package has been developed for use by all staff. Completion of this package will be continuous on a rolling programme basis and key staff (for example those working in financial roles) will be required to work through the package every 12 to eighteen months, with all other staff updating their training every 24 to 36 months.

In 2017, at the request of the audit committee, we undertook additional assessment analysis on our 2014 formal fraud and abuse risk assessment, which fed into the audit committee meeting in April 2017. Sightsavers' external auditors, as part of their annual report, and based on information provided by internal audit and other testing, include a formal fraud risk assessment, which is considered by the audit committee each year in April. As part of Sightsavers' response to financial action task force (FATF) recommendation 8 this will include a specific assessment of the risk exposure to anti-terrorism funding and money laundering across the territories in which we operate.

Our financial framework is fully embedded across the organisation and forms the principal mechanism for the control, prevention and detection of fraud. A range of structured controls and measures operate to deter and stop abuse. Internal audit, external audit and regional finance managers play a specific role in monitoring the performance of these systems, and specifically the controls to prevent abuse. The financial framework will be updated in 2018, in line with existing policy, and this will include a review of the fraud and abuse control framework to ensure that the latest developments in thinking and practice are properly incorporated and included. As part of the above, Sightsavers is making increased use of spend management system PROACTIS as its main procurement management tool. The embedded stratified control features and reporting mechanisms are contributing to our fraud management framework.

In 2017, we updated and rolled out our partnership management framework, tightened up and centralised the process around our minimum partnership criteria and due diligence, and completed a fundamental review of procurement across the business resulting in a procurement transformation process that is now underway.

As we continue to develop our cyber risk management strategy and response, fraud and abuse prevention and detection will form a key component, especially around protecting funds: protecting our valuable data, our mechanisms for transferring funds internationally, and our donors.

The level of both referrals and enquiries has been increasing over the period, which is a strong indicator that the policy and process is embedded across the business. Enquiries can take the form of asking whether a particular event or occurrence should be reported as abuse; or actually anticipating an issue (deterrence) asking whether some proposed activity is appropriate and in accord with policy and procedure. Recently, there was an enquiry regarding the propriety/legality of our ability to acquire vehicles on behalf of another entity. All of this indicates increased levels of awareness. What has been particularly encouraging is the increased number of referrals from partners on alleged fraud and abuse, which demonstrates that they are aware of the policy and contractual obligation; and, that their internal systems are operating. The investigation mechanism and inter-partner liaison on this is working effectively.

All incidents in relation to fraud are formally reported to the head of internal audit (HIA) and the director of finance and performance. The data is captured on registers maintained by the HIA, who is designated as the primary investigator into all allegations. These are used to inform internal audit and regional finance manager annual review programmes.

Sightsavers' audit committee has a fixed agenda item on fraud and abuse. The HIA reports all incidents to the audit committee, including the outcomes of any investigations. The role of the audit committee is to: satisfy itself that incidents and allegations have been appropriately investigated and addressed; decide

whether any particular incident needs to be escalated to full Council because of its seriousness and reputational risk implications; and decide whether to recommend that an issue or allegation needs to be reported to external regulators. Specific incidents would be highlighted internally to the management team, especially a control weakness that is potentially systemic across the business. The HIA discloses instances of fraud to the INGO heads of internal audit meeting (along with other HIAs) to highlight potential weaknesses that might be impacting other INGOs so learning can be communicated across the wider INGO family. A similar approach is adopted at the charities internal audit network meeting.

Since 2013, some 21 allegations of fraud and abuse have been received and investigated, which involved a financial loss exposure of just under £55,000. They were discovered by internal audit reviews; management checks and anonymous allegations/whistleblowing. The allegations comprised a wide range of abuse, including: false invoicing; soliciting improper payments from beneficiaries; submitting 'inflated' data on surgeries (claiming for work not done); laptop and other valuable equipment theft; fraudulent expense claims; 'inflated' invoicing; and conflict of interest involving undisclosed employment of relatives, etc. A number of allegations were lodged with the police (in addition to the theft of all physical assets). A variety of penalties were imposed: monies paid were recovered or reimbursed and staff were either formally disciplined or ceased to be employed. Prosecutions were pursued in several instances.

10.1. What is your governance structure your policies/practices regarding replacing and recruiting new trustees/board members?

Sightsavers has a governing [council of trustees](#) which consists of 15 trustees. The council is committed to maintaining a high standard of corporate governance. Sightsavers' governance structure is conceived and managed to allow us to be highly flexible and responsive to changing conditions, while conforming all operations to an over-arching vision and mission.

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.

Trustees serve up to two terms of four years each. No trustee has been dismissed from the council, but the governing documents provide a process to do so for a range of reasons. The council appoints new trustees from time to time as trustees reach the end of their terms. The process for appointment may involve advertising, consultant search, and other forms of candidate recruitment, and includes interviews and consideration by the governance committee prior to council appointment. Trustees are selected on the basis of a review of skills and attributes to ensure a balanced and diverse board.

10.2. How does your board ensure the appropriateness of policies, resource allocation, and processes for complaints and grievances?

Sightsavers' governance structure is conceived and managed to allow us to be highly flexible and responsive to changing conditions, while 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.

Authority is delegated through the project design process and a financial policy and control framework, which are under regular review by the charity trustees. The directors of regional and country offices report to senior management at headquarters. Independence from specific governments, political parties and the business sector is assured by employing performance indicators that focus our work, and the expectations of our partners, on our global mission.

We raise funds or engage in informational marketing in Europe, the Middle East, India and the United States. In these countries, charitable or non-profit organisations with independent boards of directors operate under the Sightsavers brand through licensing and management agreements.

Sightsavers' key internal stakeholders are employees and contractors. We do not have established formal mechanisms for employees below executive level to provide recommendations or direction to the council of trustees apart from the whistleblowing mechanism. Opportunities are provided by informal opportunities to meet, with employees often attending and presenting at board meetings and away days. Formal mechanisms do exist for employees to provide recommendations and direction to the 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% out of the 98% 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 analysed at the time of writing this report.

10.3. Please describe the complaints (internal and external) you have received this period and how these were addressed/resolved?

Our [complaints policy](#) is available on our website. Sightsavers' customer care team is responsible for handling all direct complaints and responses differ depending on the fundraising activity. In 2017 all complaints were resolved satisfactorily by the customer care team without escalation to senior management teams being required. In addition, complaints can be raised to Sightsavers via the Fundraising Regulator (in 2017 we received one complaint from the Regulator that was resolved.) Our complaints monitoring report for the 2017 reporting period is as follows:

Type of Fundraising	Volume	Complaints
Telephone fundraising	3812	0
Addressed direct mail	1,136,708	48
Email fundraising	1,194,916	2
TV ads	180,000,000	9
SMS fundraising	3985	0
Press ads	4,802,145	0
Magazine/inserts	9,699,239	2
Face to face	0	0
Outdoor events	50	0
Raffles	275,211	1
Fundraising from business	257	0
Trusts and foundations	1280	0
Major donor fundraising	1425	0
Online fundraising	3,600,398	0
Volunteer fundraising	0	0

As outlined in section 4.2, our current mechanism for consolidating complaints received from our programmes at country level is managed by our corporate services team. Country offices submit a quarterly complaints return which will be logged and actioned by corporate services as required. In 2017 we did not receive any complaints from programmes at the country level. A review of the process in 2017 determined that this mechanism should be updated and strengthened in 2018 to ensure that complaints are not missed.

Sightsavers and its entities operate in compliance with a number of internal guidelines and a broad range of legal national standards and voluntary codes. The requirements of these standards and codes, along with our internal procedures, govern how we manage fundraising activities and report against complaints that are received. We are also members of the appropriate regulatory bodies in all of the countries in which we fundraise.

11.1. How do you ensure an independent and effective oversight of your strategic direction, legal compliance, risk (incl. corruption) and performance?

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, ie 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 consists of cross department directors and managers. There are clear distinctions between the roles of the 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 the council.

There are four committees of the council: audit monitors audit activities, risk and control framework and process effectiveness; investment monitors investment performance (including whether pension trustees are managing the pension fund appropriately) and treasury activities; remuneration monitors remuneration policy and key salary decisions; and governance advises on overall governance structure, monitors legal and registration issues in the countries where Sightsavers operates and advises on the appointment of trustees and honorary officers. Committees may include specialists who are not members of the council but who volunteer to use their expertise to assist the committees on an ongoing basis. Risk management and the maintenance of the risk register is the direct responsibility of the Chief Executive reporting into the council. The senior management group and audit committee are both responsible for reviewing and updating the risk register on a quarterly basis. All relevant policies, partner contracts and control processes require compliance with relevant laws and regulations.

There are currently 15 members of the council of trustees, all of whom are independent. The chair of the council of trustees is not an executive officer of Sightsavers. The most senior executive officer within Sightsavers is the Chief Executive, who reports to the council. The roles of the council and management team are clearly defined and distinct from one another. In broad terms, the trustees are concerned with ensuring that Sightsavers is accountable for the ways in which we use donated money, approving our strategy and delivery approach, and overseeing good governance in terms of financial propriety, effective risk mitigation and the delivery of the best quality assured service to our beneficiaries.

Trustees focus on the organisation's purpose and what we can reasonably achieve in a given context and time period. Trustees set the parameters, policies and values within which management and staff are free to act. Once the parameters are set, employees are empowered to make reasonable judgements about planning and organising the work to achieve the agreed aims. The trustees' role is then to monitor performance. Trustees have their own version of the SIM card, which is based on the roles and responsibilities of trustees, and which includes KPIs that assist in performance management.

11.2. How is the governing body and management held accountable for fulfilling the above 12 commitments?

The Accountable Now governance and management commitments are championed within the organisation by our CEO, Dr Caroline Harper, who sits on the board of Accountable Now. The process of reflection that is required prior to the writing of the Accountable Now report is given appropriate emphasis and it is understood across the management team that all parts of the organisation need to understand their commitments within the framework and must contribute to the overall information contained in the report. The process is discussed and reviewed at management team level, by the key operational management group in Sightsavers, as part of a standing agenda item on transparency and value for money. As a result of this positioning, all key managers feed into the Accountable Now report and ensure that the key commitments remain central to their management approaches and decision-making.

Feedback from Accountable Now on our report is taken very seriously by the CEO and management team. Sightsavers has a strong track record of acting upon the recommendations we have received from Accountable Now to strengthen our accountability systems and processes. Many of these run through this report including the strengthening of our complaints process and investing in improving our ability to incorporate beneficiary feedback into our work.

Our council understands our commitments and responsibilities to accountability and transparency to all of our stakeholders and holds the management team to account through the mechanisms described above.

The CEO has an annual appraisal conducted by the chair at which she is held accountable for delivery of management objectives as agreed each year with the council.

11.3. What steps have you taken to ensure that all staff know these 12 accountability commitments and use them to continuously improve their performance?

This report has been developed in alignment with the new Accountable Now reporting and assessment framework 2017. The report has been produced with contributions from various functions within the organisation including HR, global fundraising, finance and performance, research and evidence, programme systems, policy and advocacy, and the NTD teams. This ensures accountability is embedded within the organisation to deliver against areas of commitment highlighted in the report. The CEO has read and commented on the full report herself.

The report is circulated internally within the organisation together with the feedback received from the independent review panel. Our internal transparency working group meets quarterly to track and ensure efforts to engage with transparency and accountability initiatives within the organisation are joined up and disseminated. Membership of this working group represents both programme and finance and operations departments with the aim of strengthening cross-organisational understanding of transparency and accountability and embedding it into policy and practice.

We make this report publicly available through the [governance section](#) on our website, and believe it also has the capacity to be an additional mechanism for our beneficiaries, partners and key stakeholders to hold us to account.

11.4. What is your accountability report's scope of coverage? What authority or influence do you have over national entities and how are you using it to ensure compliance with the accountability commitments and to drive the overall accountability agenda?

As of December 2017 we had eight subsidiary undertakings, established to facilitate alternative fundraising activities in the UK or to expand our fundraising operations and establish a permanent presence overseas.

- Sightsavers (Trading) Limited – UK registered. The key activities of the company are sales of Christmas cards, merchandise and receipt of corporate sponsorship.
- Sightsavers International Inc. (DE) and Sightsavers Inc. (MO) – registered in the USA.
- Sightsavers (Ireland) – registered in Ireland.
- Sightsavers International (Italia) – registered in Italy.
- Sightsavers Middle East Consultancy FZE – registered in the UAE. (voluntarily liquidated in 2017, awaiting cancellation of its licence)
- Insamlingsstiftelsen Sightsavers International, Sverige – registered in Sweden
- Stiftelsen Sightsavers International Norge – registered in Norway

Each of these entities has a formal legal structure under the relevant country laws including a board of directors or trustees, and all are compliant with our accountability commitments. Sightsavers has included the activities of these subsidiaries within the boundary for reporting purposes. These entities operate integrally with the core organisation, so their reporting for this report and their performance reported are equally integrated.

Country-level management is split into four regions – ECSA, West Africa, South Asia and India (which has its own board and CEO) – and below this, by country/area. Sightsavers currently works in 32 countries in Africa and Asia. There are regional offices based in Senegal (West Africa), Kenya (East, Central and Southern Africa) and India (for India as a region) with management oversight of the South Asia region reporting directly into the finance and performance department. There are country offices in 22 of the countries. Where we do not have an established country office, Sightsavers' staff are embedded with the partner organisation.

This report, along with panel feedback, is circulated to all 531 employees, as well as being published on our website and uploaded to our staff intranet. The report and feedback is shared with employees globally and areas for further work discussed at management group meetings. Our internal transparency working group, set up in 2014, meets quarterly to track progress and ensure efforts to engage with transparency and accountability initiatives within the organisation are joined up and disseminated. Membership of this working group represents both programme and finance and operations departments with the aim of strengthening cross-organisational understanding of transparency and accountability and to embed it into policy and practice.

In 2017, we have also taken steps to drive the accountability agenda forward, both internally and externally. With support from DFID, we have begun to explore ways in which we can incorporate IATI processes more widely within our country offices and programme activities. We aim to pilot these new approaches in 2018 and have plans to roll out new initiatives that will introduce partner organisations to IATI data reporting.

Annexes

Annex 1 – IEH learning review

Annex 2 – 2017 learning seminars

Annex 3 – SSI's research governance framework

Annex 4 – global fundraising and donations acceptance policy

Annex 5 – fraud and anti-corruption policy