

# Accountable Now Report 2019 Response

November 2020



# Areas highlighted by the panel in its Improvement Analysis

## C.3 Inclusivity, human rights, women's rights and gender equality

- The panel suggests that in the next report Sightsavers gives enhanced attention to other minority groups, as well as strengthening its indicators in gender and inclusion. These comments will be fed back internally into the current SIM Card refresh process taking place throughout 2020 – 2021. Changes and progress will be reported in the next report.
- The findings from the synthesis review to promote gender equality will be included in the next report.

## J.4 Complaints handling mechanisms and overview of complaints (internal)

- In the next report, in line with the panel's comments, Sightsavers will investigate further the way in which the grievance policy and channels for raising grievances are publicised. In line with ACAS recommendations Sightsavers encourages staff to handle problems informally before moving to formal grievances, and our HR business partners are embedded in the organisation and well placed to support line managers in handling this. We believe this means grievance rates tend to be low. We also carry out bi-ennial employee surveys seeking to gain an understanding of the frustrations and challenges faced by staff (as well as things which are going well!). Whilst grievances raised through the policy were low in 2019, this widely responded to survey (which was completed in June 2020 and had a 99% completion rate) raised constructive feedback which allowed us to address staff concerns through alternative mechanisms.

## K.1 The governing body and management are held accountable for fulfilling strategic promises

- In the next report Sightsavers will enunciate more fully the mechanisms by which Council holds itself accountable. In brief, the Council evaluates itself every two years, individual members must be re-elected every four years, and are also subject to evaluation by the Chair and Co-Chair every two years. These mechanisms taken as a whole provide a strong accountability safeguard where commitments to accountability are both monitored and reinforced on a regular cycle.

# Supplementary information and clarification

## A.1 Mission statement and theory of change

The panel asked that the four change themes of our organisation as outlined in the Sim Card be detailed, they can be found at the link [here](#).

## A.4 Significant events or changes regarding governance and accountability

### Panel's feedback

*'It would be helpful in the next report to have an explanation of the steps Sightsavers has taken/is taking to add SIM key indicators, given that important indicators are missing, especially on partnerships, networks, and organisational abilities.'*

### Response

This point requires some additional explanation. Sightsavers use two different types of indicator on our SIM Card Dashboard, these are referred to as Lag and Lead Indicators. Lead Indicators are related to processes and Lag Indicators are related to outcomes. Certain indicators are not necessarily missing, but it may be that for certain objectives, e.g. "Establish strong strategic networks and alliances", we are using only a Lag Indicator because this objective focuses on an overall outcome and not a process, and therefore a Lead Indicator was not deemed to be of value. Not all of our objectives have both type of indicator, however as part of the strategy and SIM review process we are examining whether to have both components for all objectives, to close this gap.

In addition, we are reviewing all objectives and discussing whether the indicators are still relevant, examining what we want to focus on with regards to process and outcome towards each objective.

On Sightsavers' SIM Card tool, found [here](#), there can be found under our second ultimate aim 'Capacities', two indicators that examine our performance in developing effective partnerships, and establishing strong strategic networks. Under each of these objectives there are details of the performance by country for this first indicator, and by partner for the second, outlining our progress toward set targets.

## F.1 Evidence regarding the root causes of the problems you address

### Panel's feedback

*'The report does not include examples / evidence of Sightsavers having analysed root causes and adjusted its programme in response.'*

### Response

Sightsavers works closely with people with disabilities and their representative organisations at national, regional and global level to ensure that our policy positions and advocacy activities are well informed, evidence based and of the highest quality. This, alongside our analyse of public policies, ensures our influencing is targeted at addressing the root cause of disability exclusion. We seek to create what we term an enabling environment, where we work to empower and enable organisations of people with disabilities to engage and participate particularly in critical areas such as, but not restricted to, the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

## H.2 Safe working environment

### Panel's feedback

*'A Complaints Working Group was established to oversee the review of Sightsavers complaints management system, including the review and update of the definition of complaints and the development of an IT solution to administer complaints. Improvement plans are not included.'*

### Response

Sightsavers set up a working group in 2019 to address the Organisations overall complaints management system. Some initial tasks were reviewed and solved, which included an update of the definition of complaints and tackled some fundamental areas in complaint handling.

In 2020 the group was dissolved in order to create a more streamlined approach. We now have a project coordinator working closely with all relevant departments and country offices to update and improve processes. A separate working group has now been created to implement a new online complaints handling system, this system has been identified and the initial steps & discussions towards putting it in place are making positive progress.

We work with partners in low and middle income countries to eliminate avoidable blindness and promote equal opportunities for people with disabilities.

[www.sightsavers.org](http://www.sightsavers.org)