Gender Equality and Social Inclusion Strategy:
Strengthening Community-Led Accountability to Improve Service Delivery in Sierra Leone (SABI)

Version 1.1

Submitted by: Social Development Direct
# Table of Contents

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY .................................................................................................................. 5

1. SABI’S GESI FRAMEWORK ........................................................................................................ 6  
   1.1 Why SABI needs a gender equality and social inclusion strategy ............................................ 6  
   1.2 SABI’s understanding of gender equality and social inclusion ................................................. 7  
   1.3 SABI’S Conceptual Framework ............................................................................................... 8  

2. PURPOSE AND VISION: WHAT WILL A GESI-ORIENTED SABI LOOK LIKE? ........................ 9  
   2.1 A broader vision: accountability to all ................................................................................... 9  
   2.2 A programme that incorporates GESI guiding principles ....................................................... 10  

3. STRATEGIC APPROACH TO GESI .......................................................................................... 11  
   3.1 Strategic Area 1: Mainstreaming GESI within SABI (inward) ................................................. 11  
   3.2 Strategic Area 2: Integrating GESI in SABI grantees’ approaches (outward) ......................... 13  
   3.3 Strategic area 3: Undertaking and sharing learning on GESI (both internally and externally by SABI grantees) ............................................................................................................... 14  

4. DRAFT GESI Workplan .............................................................................................................. 16  
Annex 1: GESI Risks and Assumptions .......................................................................................... 16  
   1.2 External risks and assumptions ............................................................................................. 18  
Annex 2: **PLACEHOLDER** – GESI glossary of terms ................................................................. 20  
Annex 3: References ...................................................................................................................... 21
Acronyms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CSO</td>
<td>Civil Society Organisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DFID</td>
<td>UK Department for International Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GESI</td>
<td>Gender Equality and Social Inclusion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IPs</td>
<td>Implementing Partners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MEL</td>
<td>Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PDT</td>
<td>Presidential Delivery Team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PWDs</td>
<td>People with Disabilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PEA</td>
<td>Political Economy Analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SDGs</td>
<td>Sustainable Development Goals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ToC</td>
<td>Theory of Change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ToR</td>
<td>Terms of Reference</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Glossary of terms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Empowerment</strong></td>
<td>Empowerment is the expanding of opportunities and acquiring of power to make choices by those who previously had less power. It is also about extending people’s imaginations about what they could do. Empowerment has economic, political and social dimensions.¹</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gender Equality</strong></td>
<td>Gender equality is the absence of discrimination on the basis of gender in opportunities, in the allocation of resources or benefits or in the access to services, such that all individuals can enjoy equal standards of well-being. It is the full and equal exercise by men and women, boys and girls of their human rights: in this situation, women, men, boys and girls have equal rights and equal access to socially and economically valued goods, resources, opportunities and benefits; the different gender roles are valued equally and do not constitute an obstacle to their wellbeing and finally; the fulfilment of their potential as responsible members of society is possible.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>GESI Exploitative</strong></td>
<td>GESI exploitative programmes take advantage of rigid gender norms and existing imbalances in power to achieve programme objectives.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>GESI Blind or Neutral</strong></td>
<td>GESI blind or GESI neutral programs intentionally or unintentionally fail to acknowledge the role of gender or exclusion in their theory of change. GESI blind or neutral programs do not necessarily do harm, but may indirectly support the status quo and often miss an opportunity to address an important determinant that would likely add impact to their programmes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>GESI Sensitive</strong></td>
<td>GESI sensitive programmes include an understanding and an awareness of existing norms and inequalities between men and women, and between different groups. This awareness is applied through gender and social analysis to ensure that inequalities are addressed in strategies and plans.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>GESI Transformative</strong></td>
<td>GESI transformative programmes address broader structural relations and power structures that underpin gender inequality and social exclusion, often through collective action and influencing the enabling environment. These programmes seek to establish meaningful and sustainable changes for women and marginalised groups.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mainstreaming</strong></td>
<td>Mainstreaming is the process of assessing the implications for women, men, boys, girls and other excluded groups, of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programmes in any area and at all levels. It is a strategy for making the concerns of these groups an integral dimension in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies, programmes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Social Inclusion</strong></td>
<td>Social inclusion is the removal of institutional barriers and the enhancement of incentives to increase the access of diverse individual and groups to development opportunities. These barriers may be formal (written laws on spousal property for instance), or they may be informal (e.g. time village girls spend carrying water instead of attending school). In short, social inclusion is about evening the playing field by making the ‘rules of the game’ more fair.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Social Exclusion</strong></td>
<td>Social exclusion is a process by which certain groups are systematically disadvantaged (for example denied resources or recognition) because they are discriminated against on the basis of social characteristics. For example, ethnicity, race, religion, sexual orientation, HIV status, gender, age, disability, migrant status or where they live.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹ Chopra and Muller (2016)
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Strengthening Community-Led Accountability to Improve Service Delivery in Sierra Leone (SABI) programme is a DFID funded four-year programme (2016 – 2020) to support work with and by communities for improved service delivery, as part of wider support to the Sierra Leonean Presidential Recovery Plan\(^1\). For more information on the programme, please refer to the Introducing SABI brochure.

The purpose of this document is to present the Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) Strategy as a guiding framework for the incorporation of GESI into SABI. The GESI strategy is not a stand-alone piece of work with ‘independent’ or isolated activities, but on the contrary, is intended for embedding within the wider programme frameworks and operations. It is linked to other cross-cutting strategies and frameworks for SABI, such as the Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) framework; the Grants Strategy and the Community Engagement Strategy, as well as the design of the overall programme and day-to-day functions of both the programme and individual partner/grantee approaches. As such, ownership of this document needs to be broad. The key audiences (or, indeed, ‘owners’) for this strategy are the Programme Management Team (PMT) which includes all SABI consortium members (Restless Development, SDDirect, BBC Media Action, Mango and Christian Aid), operational staff, SABI Implementing partners (IPs) and DFID. It is the collective responsibility of these stakeholders to put the strategy into practice, with support from the SDDirect GESI team\(^3\). The strategy implementation will begin in January 2017, and used as a guiding document during discussions with both consortium, IPs and grantees.

SABI’s GESI objectives prioritise three strategic objectives, each intended to support the programme’s goal of improving access to entitlements and public goods and services for all – including women and other excluded groups; and to build long term meaningful and sustainable change for accountability. In short, SABI aims to be GESI sensitive but lay the foundations for GESI transformative change.

The three cross-cutting GESI objectives are:

- SABI is an accountability programme that also models the change it wants to see with regards to GESI as well as issues related to transparency and accountability to excluded groups.
- All SABI grantees and projects are GESI-sensitive (inclusive approaches, gender/social inclusion-sensitive analysis and M&E, results).
- SABI learning enables a better understanding of the ways in which pathways of accountability differ for men, women and excluded groups among them.

In section 3 of this strategy, we outline the rationale behind these objectives and the proposed approaches to achieving them. However, the more detailed outline is provided in a workplan in section 4 – this will be reviewed with the SABI team in January 2017 to ensure that it can be realistically put into action and that there is collective ownership of what is being proposed.

This strategy was developed by SDDirect in close collaboration with the SABI team – including consortium and implementing partners. To support this strategy, SDDirect carried out a contextual analysis of gender equality and social inclusion issues in Sierra Leone that brings together a rapid

---

\(^1\) Please see the Business Case and Christian Aid’s proposal for more information about the programme

\(^3\) SDDirect is a UK-based provider of innovative and expert social development assistance and research services, including on gender and social inclusion.
literature review and information obtained from a number of key informant interviews. This is an internal supporting document that can be obtained from the SABI team.

1. SABI’S GESI FRAMEWORK

1.1 Why SABI needs a gender equality and social inclusion strategy
A society which protects citizens’ rights and promotes “respect for and value of dignity of each individual, diversity, pluralism, tolerance, non-discrimination, non-violence, equality of opportunity, solidarity, security, and participation of all people, including disadvantaged and vulnerable groups” must by nature be rooted in gender equality and social inclusion.

Incorporating gender and social inclusion analysis into a programme increases the likelihood that it will achieve the maximum potential of its intended impact. A programme that seeks to strengthen citizens’ voices and improve accountability – like SABI – needs to understand who is excluded and why, in order to break down barriers and facilitate opportunities for those who need them most. Otherwise, it risks ignoring the most vulnerable, reinforcing patterns of exclusion and discrimination, or exacerbating tensions or conflict – in sum, if we fail to apply a gender and inclusion lens to our work, we risk doing harm.

Gender and social inclusion analysis examines the nature of power relations and their structural footings – for example, the ways in which discriminatory attitudes and norms, historical and cultural circumstances, and denial of rights and opportunities for some groups actively re-enforce exclusion at multiple levels (economic, social, political and cultural). These power dynamics, and their accountability dimensions, play out between individuals, groups and structures, and have significant impact on conflict, peace and development. Social norms based on discrimination and stigma, as well as institutional and policy barriers, tend to marginalise some social groups. Marginalised groups are less likely to know their rights and entitlements. Typically, they have limited ability to access services, articulate their needs, and participate in decision-making processes. By comparison, more powerful voices are usually ‘louder’ and tend to dominate. For a range of reasons that need to be closely examined in each context, not everyone can ‘speak up’, ‘be heard,’ engage effectively with the State or influence policy. For example, women and girls are typically disadvantaged in comparison to men and boys in the context of a patriarchal system which regards them as inferior.

This GESI strategy must also be understood within the higher-level policy framework. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) explicitly endorse gender equality, with a key goal of eradicating extreme poverty by 2030. Goal 4 (Achieve Gender Equality, Social Inclusion and Human Rights for all) aims to bring about transformative change to end gender inequality and all other forms of discrimination impacting on participation in social, political and economic life. The SGD sets out to leave no one behind, without distinction of any kind as to race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth, disability or other status. In meeting the Goals and responding to rising global challenges such as conflict, extremism, climate change and migration, success depends on putting into practice the principles of universality, accountability and the central commitment to ‘Leave No One Behind’ throughout all of Agenda 2030.
This higher-level policy framework puts people at the centre, shines a light on who benefits from development and who is excluded, and commits us all to address that exclusion. To align with these internationally agreed policy commitments, and to comply with the Gender Equality Act, all DFID policies and programmes must be, at a minimum, GESI sensitive in all political, economic and social spheres. This entails assessing and addressing the differentiated impact of an intervention on women, men, girls and boys and different groups among them throughout planning, design, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation – while also being conscious of their specific needs for facilitating a more active engagement in articulating demands and improving links to state structures. In addition, SABI and its partners aspire to be GESI sensitive because the project’s very objectives and ambitions are to address accountability in a transformational and inclusive way – striving for all members of civil society to be engaged. What this means in practice is outlined in Section 3 – Strategic Approaches.

1.2 SABI’s understanding of gender equality and social inclusion

SABI understands gender equality and social inclusion as distinct but overlapping concepts. Whereas ‘gender equality’ has been the subject of attention within international development discourse for decades, reflected in a range of initiatives and the literature more broadly, in contrast, ‘social inclusion/exclusion’ is a more recent concept originating from its use in the European context. Figure 1 below shows how SABI conceptualises gender equality at the core of social inclusion. This understanding will also be reflected in the way that SABI operates, in order to avoid a focus on social inclusion at the expense of gender equality (and vice versa), as can occur in some programmes.

It should, however, be noted that while the concepts of gender equality and social inclusion will be used to this extent within the programme and among the consortium partners, slightly different terminology will be used for implementation at the community level. This is because consultations with stakeholders during the design of the strategy indicated that the concepts of ‘gender equality’ and ‘social inclusion’ do not tend to be interpreted or understood by the majority of community members in Sierra Leone in the way in which this strategy interprets them. Therefore, the focus will be on emphasising broader inclusion in the process i.e. recognising that all citizens, regardless of sex, age, class, etc. should be informed, consulted and involved in the programme to create improved

---

4 DFID (2015)
5 Grant et al. (2000)
6 A series of tools will be developed which may include a GESI key words document to support those working in the field.
accountability of services to all. This is explained more in the contextual analysis that informed this strategy.

**Figure 1: Approach to gender equality and social inclusion within SABI**

![Diagram](image)

SABI will endeavour to advance greater inclusion and equality for all socially excluded groups. For some groups, exclusion is based on gender and for others on other parameters of difference such as ability, age, location and clan. However, for most, exclusion is based on a number of identities and factors across both dimensions, which shift in the context of diverse relationships and institutional settings.

### 1.3 SABI’S Conceptual Framework

The GESI model - Figure 2 - provides a way of thinking about GESI in broad terms that can be adjusted or tailored depending on the sector (health, education, etc.). The most ambitious end of the spectrum (right hand side) is **structural transformation** – closely associated with structural change in power and social relations, it also emphasises collective action. It creates an enabling environment for excluded groups to practice leadership at all levels (economic, social, political, and cultural) and in all domains (family, community, organisations, state and religious institutions, schools and the market). In contrast, the first level sets out the least ambitious end of the continuum where partners address the practical needs and vulnerabilities of women and marginalised groups within the accountability-seeking process. The mid category is more strategic but focuses more on individual empowerment. The level of ambition that is achievable and realistic for SABI (given the context and the timeframe of the programme) is outlined in the following section.

**Figure 2: SABI’s Conceptual Framework for Gender Equality and Social Inclusion**

- **Needs and vulnerabilities**
  - Accountability interventions include the assessment of and action to meet practical needs and vulnerabilities of marginalised groups within the process. This will involve consultation with groups and an inclusive approach to ensure that everyone’s voice is heard.

- **Strategic gender and inclusion**
  - Explicitly addresses strategic gender and inclusion issues in its core accountability focus as well as the process. Empowers individuals to make active choices, to build their access to information, rights awareness and pathways to accountability.

- **Structural Transformation**
  - Addresses broader structural relations and power structures that underpin gender inequality and social exclusion, often through collective action and influencing the enabling environment. Seeks to establish meaningful and sustainable changes to accountability pathways for historically marginalised groups.
2. PURPOSE AND VISION: WHAT WILL A GESI-ORIENTED SABI LOOK LIKE?

2.1 A broader vision: accountability to all

All activities will support the meaningful engagement of women and other marginalised groups and individuals to ensure that GESI is central to the programme’s objectives. To achieve this vision, it requires that the programme is conceived by all parties as centering henceforth, on accountability to all. Incorporating GESI approaches and actions will become everyone’s role and responsibility therefore SABI’s four outputs should collectively be able to deliver on this vision if GESI is mainstreamed throughout the programme – Annex 1 outlines risks and assumptions to GESI across the four outputs.

SABI’s GESI strategy aims to be GESI sensitive (by addressing levels one and two of the conceptual framework) whilst laying the foundations for a transformative agenda (see Figure 2). SABI recognises that not all partners and grantees will have the capacity to undertake GESI transformative work, and there will be limits to how much SABI can support its partners with this higher level of ambition. Furthermore, SABI recognises that it takes time to tackle social and cultural norms which play a large part in the exclusion of women and marginalised groups, i.e. achieve attitude and behaviour change. However, SABI will seek to lay the foundations for transformative action for GESI by identifying strategic entry points and opportunities to do more, where possible. This means going beyond the minimum standard of identifying and addressing women’s and other marginalised groups’ practical, basic needs or even the strategic empowerment of individuals, to support collective action of disadvantaged groups by challenging fundamental inequalities within accountability pathways.

As outlined in the Grants strategy (for output B), SABI is an adaptive programme which aims to continually reflect on periodic reviews and its Theory of Change (ToC) to identify thematic areas for grants -specific details for grants themes and objectives will react to programme developments but at least 60% of the grants’ beneficiaries will be women and other marginalised groups.

Objectives of the grants fund include:
• As SABI identifies gaps and opportunities from media and community engagement work from output A, the grants fund will be a means of filling these gaps, and in particular will focus on seeking to fund local community-driven ways of holding power bearers to account to make local improvements;
• Help ‘grow’ legacy organisations to take forward the work of SABI;
• Continue the work done by ENCISS to build the capacity and effectiveness of District Councils to be the key interlocutor between citizens and the service providers; and
• The innovations aspect of the grants fund will be used to seek creative ways of improving community accountability, in particular seeking and possibly piloting local solutions that could be replicated/scaled up.

SABI’s grant strategy includes a balance of targeted, open competitive calls, some more focussed grants which will only be available to a smaller sub-set of organisations and a strategic innovation fund available for innovative, locally led grants which could be pilots with a view to scale up if they

---

8 Meaningful engagement means going beyond participation (having a presence) to actively engaging in decision making processes (i.e. that they are invited to speak and they feel that they can and then do speak). Their participation should also then influence decisions made.
prove effective. There will be regular learning events involving grants stakeholders to help shape the ongoing grants process. Independents assessors will be brought in to review concepts notes across the fund. This GESI strategy will ensure that GESI is part of the selection process. When there is appetite and potential to build on GESI entry points, SABI will provide concerted support to those that have the capacity and opportunity to take on more GESI transformative approaches.

2.2 A programme that incorporates GESI guiding principles
The strategic approach to GESI in SABI will be framed by five recommended guiding principles or standards. These are outlined below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Guiding principle</th>
<th>What does this mean in practice?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Be GESI transformative where possible, GESI sensitive always. | ● Do no harm: understand the possible direct and unintentional impacts of interventions on the lives of men and women, girls and boys and marginalised groups among them. SABI will not work with partners, grantees or initiatives that are exploitative or GESI blind. It will monitor impact to ascertain and mitigate risks to vulnerable groups.  
● Avoid diminishing ‘gender’ by confusing it with ‘women’. All components of the population – young and old, men and women – are included in the notion of empowerment and gender equality. SABI will consult and engage with men and other influential groups to address inequalities.  
● Recognise that tackling gender requires tackling inclusion and vice versa – gender cannot be addressed at the expense of inclusion so there should be equal emphasis on both. |
| Facilitate change and inclusion at all stages in the programme cycle. | ● Actively support (and challenge) partners and grantees to consider gender equality and social inclusion in their design, implementation (including advocacy), monitoring and evaluation (M&E), learning and feedback loops (‘mainstreaming’). This will mean GESI is integrated across the 4 programme outputs.  
● Recognise that facilitating change will require resources for GESI mainstreaming i.e. for capacity building and learning.  
● Be inclusive in terms of participatory approaches (including female researchers and facilitators for example), as well as in the programme’s focus. Women and other excluded groups will be encouraged to participate right from the start of the programme, and be supported to lead activities where possible. |
| Be transparent and accessible | ● Establish protocols and feedback mechanisms to ensure that the programme is transparent and answerable to women and other excluded groups.  
● Ensure that data is accessible and adapted to all groups – including vulnerable and marginalised groups, to use in evidence based dialogue and planning, and to inform women and other marginalised groups of their rights. |
| Be locally-owned and driven | ● Facilitate and engage communities to become active participants in the process and to recognise their role in improving inclusive services i.e. developing and strengthening agency. |
3. STRATEGIC APPROACH TO GESI

This section provides an overview of the three strategic pillars for GESI in SABI. Further information about ‘how’ these pillars will be actioned and by whom is outlined in a draft workplan in section 4. This workplan will be discussed and revised with SABI’s inputs during a workshop scheduled in January.

SABI’s GESI objectives will prioritise three strategic areas intended to support the programme’s goal of improving access to entitlements and public goods and services for all – including women and other excluded groups; and to build long term meaningful and sustainable change for accountability. Each of these areas is discussed below, including the key actions and steps needed to implement them. The guiding principles set out in the section above, will be integrated into the three strategic areas (rather than treated as stand-alone areas of work), and are of relevance both to SABI core staff as well as IPs and grantees.

The three cross-cutting GESI objectives are:

- SABI is an accountability programme that also models the change it wants to see with regards to GESI as well as issues related to transparency and accountability to excluded groups.
- All SABI partners, grantees and projects are GESI-sensitive (inclusive approaches, gender/social inclusion-sensitive analysis and M&E, results).
- SABI learning enables a better understanding of the ways in which pathways of accountability differ for men, women and excluded groups among them.

3.1 Strategic Area 1: Mainstreaming GESI within SABI (inward)

3.1.1 Rationale:
SABI, as an accountability programme, must also model the change it wants to see in its consortium and implementing partners and others, with regards to GESI as well as issues related to transparency and accountability to excluded groups. For GESI to become central to the programme, mainstreaming GESI within SABI itself will also be addressed.

3.1.2 Key actions and approaches:
The following actions and approaches will be adopted by SABI itself to ensure that GESI is at the heart of what it does. SABI will:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Be collaborative, not confrontational</th>
<th>Create opportunities for women and other marginalised groups to lead and facilitate activities i.e. such as the score carding.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bring communities and service providers together to discuss and develop joint solutions with the aim of building on and improving relationships between them.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work closely with other key programmes and stakeholders, including the PDT to ensure communities are not overwhelmed with messages and in the process, model how the community and the government can work together.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
✓ Identify a GESI focal person within the core SABI team. This person will coordinate GESI inputs and the implementation of this strategy (under direct management of the Team Leader). This person will be supported by SDDirect as and when needed in order to ensure that GESI is being sufficiently tracked and monitored by all partners.

✓ Create buy-in and ownership of the GESI strategy. SDDirect interviewed all key stakeholders at the start of the strategy process, to make sure all consortium and implementing partners were involved in its development. Further efforts will be needed to ensure continual ownership of the strategy, and that IPs in particular, are committed and have the capacity to engage on GESI issues. For example, there will be a GESI workshop in January to discuss the strategy and its operationalisation to ensure that a) staff and IPs have engaged with the strategy and b) each person reflects on how to mainstream GESI into their work.

✓ Revise internal policies, systems and structures to be supportive of GESI objectives. For example, to:
  • Ensure that SABI is transparent and accountable (including to socially excluded groups) by putting in place accessible mechanisms for sharing feedback from partners and beneficiaries – this may include ensuring information is available in infographic form.
  • Ensure that GESI responsibilities are written into job descriptions of each SABI staff member i.e. in the operations manual;
  • Ensure that all other strategies are aligned with this GESI strategy i.e. GESI learning questions will be incorporated into the MEL strategy/framework. Some of the strategies will have more obvious implications for GESI than others, but all strategies will demonstrate an awareness of GESI issues;
  • Ensure that a ‘do no harm’ approach is taken during monitoring and evaluation by all SABI consortium and implementing partners and is outlined in the MEL strategy e.g. there is attention to creating safe spaces. SABI’s Team Leader with support from the GESI focal person and SDDirect, will be responsible for ensuring that all partners comply with this approach.

✓ Support consortium and implementing partners to:
  • Undertake stakeholder and power mapping that identifies the specific interests, influence, practical needs and vulnerabilities and generational differences of excluded groups (including women and girls). There was a training workshop on power analysis during the first few months of implementation. Further work is needed to ensure that partners can practically apply and use the tool to develop comprehensive social and power analyses – moving beyond looking at power holders (which tend to be men).
  • Collect and disaggregate data and evidence, where relevant, that reflect the lived experience of school children (girls and boys), women, youth, people with disabilities and other excluded groups as part of the research, action plans, M&E and mobilisation of theories of change. This will allow SABI to capture in the analysis the extent to which gender and other group identities shapes accountability pathways, and the extent to which patterns of behaviour vary across different categories of people. This will allow partners to examine who benefits and who is excluded, whether through intended, unintended, direct or indirect effects.
  • Apply participatory methods and techniques to engage actively with the perspectives of women, youth and other excluded groups, providing safe spaces for less powerful voices to be heard and generating both evidence and feedback from citizens most affected by the issues at play in interventions.
• **Adapt language at the community level.** SDDirect, with support from the GESI focal person will work closely with the SABI team and its partners to discuss the use of language at the community level. As noted in the earlier sections, gender has often been interpreted as women’s empowerment which has caused tension at the community level. For this reason, those engaged at the community level will sensitively address GESI from a broader inclusion lens.

• **Adhere to ethical practices and guidelines** in their engagement with women and other marginalised groups, including analysis and mitigation of risks for such groups that may arise from the different interventions and activities. As SABI will be engaging with young people for example, partners will need support in developing youth friendly approaches and ensuring that duty of care arrangements are put in place.

✓ **To incorporate GESI into the MEL framework and other guiding strategies i.e. the logframe and ToC.** The ToC assumptions should be reviewed on a regular basis – these include GESI risks and assumptions. This will ensure that GESI becomes part of reporting and performance assessment processes.

✓ **To create space for internal reflection and learning on GESI to cultivate a collective sense of responsibility for GESI and an awareness of GESI issues.** This is to be done through:
  - Ensuring that gender and social analysis is included in any contextual analyses undertaken by the SABI team and the grantees.
  - Aggregating GESI achievements for an appreciation of the “sum of the parts” and not just individual results to assess progress. The MEL team and the GESI focal person will be responsible for validating and reviewing results by having oversight at a higher level – seeing the ‘bigger picture’. The ‘live hub’ database will be reviewed on a regular basis so that emerging trends and findings related to GESI can be pulled out. This learning will be fed back to the partners so that emerging opportunities and entry points for GESI are picked up and if there is interest, particular issues may be looked at in more detail through commissioned pieces of research.
  - Monitoring internal progress on GESI – the Team Leader with support from the GESI focal person and SDDirect, will review capacity within SABI’s core team annually. A light touch gender and inclusion audit would help track progress and identify areas for improvement.
  - Putting in place capacity building and training for PMT and/or other staff where possible, on gender and inclusion.

3.2 Strategic Area 2: Integrating GESI in SABI grantees’ approaches (outward)

3.2.1 **Rationale:**
Mainstreaming is valued for its ability to ensure that GESI is factored into all programme work. The intention with this strategic area is to actively support all grantees to integrate GESI in their strategy and frameworks – be they policy or intervention focused. Differences and variations between women and men, and between different sections of the population, will inform analysis on perceptions, beliefs and behaviours and how these interlink with their surrounding context, including how interventions are experienced. This will help SABI to gain clearer answers on how interventions need to work differently for women and other marginalised groups.
3.2.2. **Key actions and approaches:**

SABI will support all grantees to comply with the International Gender Equality Act (2014) and DFID’s Leave No One Behind Agenda by mainstreaming GESI into approaches and interventions. This requires:

✓ **Ensure that GESI is considered in the selection of grants.** All concept notes, across the grant fund, will be reviewed to ensure the proposed approach complies with the minimum requirements of this strategy. SABI will reflect on the need to fund core GESI focused initiatives and whether there needs to be targeted calls.

✓ **Integrating gender and social analysis within their interventions/approaches.** This analysis will support projects to navigate cultural norms and traditions, whilst looking for locally-owned and driven initiatives and ‘footholds’ that can open up opportunities for change. According to DFID’s (2009) How To Note on this topic\(^{10}\), Gender and Social Exclusion Analysis is about “*Asking the right questions [that] can help identify the processes and mechanisms that prevent [excluded groups] from accessing the social, political and economic opportunities they need to get out of poverty, and the implications of this for economic development and growth, and for conflict and political stability*. The GESI focal person will overview this process, with the support of SDDirect and the Team Leader but the various Programme Officers will be responsible for ensuring that selected grantees integrate this analysis into their work. A gender and social analysis includes:
  - An elaboration of the gender, inclusion and power dimensions of issues addressed in the programme.
  - An exploration of systemic barriers to demand and accountability.
  - A clear analysis of risks, opportunities and anticipated outcomes for girls, women, youth and other excluded groups.

✓ **Collecting and disaggregating data and evidence,** where relevant, that reflect the lived experience of school children (girls and boys), women, youth and other excluded groups as part of the research, action plans, M&E and mobilisation of theories of change.

✓ **Applying participatory methods and techniques** to engage actively with the perspectives of girls, women, youth and other excluded groups, providing safe spaces for less powerful voices to be heard and generating both evidence and feedback from citizens most affected by the issues at play in interventions.

✓ **Adapting language at the community level.** Grantees will be provided guidance by SABI, through the development of a GESI key words document developed by SDDirect and the Communications Officers.

✓ **Adhering to ethical practices and guidelines** in their engagement with women and other marginalised groups, including analysis and mitigation of risks for such groups that may arise from the different project interventions.

**3.3 Strategic area 3: Undertaking and sharing learning on GESI (both internally and externally by SABI grantees)**

\(^{10}\) DFID (2009)
3.3.1 Rationale:
This section closely correlates with SABI’s MEL framework. There are opportunities to ask both higher-level, strategic GESI related questions through the MEL strategy, as well as more tactical questions that relate specifically to the structures or systems within the programme. The list of learning questions below outlines possible learning questions that SABI partners may want to explore (to be refined in the early stages of implementation). SABI will seek to engage partners and other stakeholders in crafting learning questions together. In this way SABI will not only clarify the learning agenda, but also stimulate a collective learning environment.

3.3.2 Key actions and approaches:
✓ To support internal iterative learning on GESI. SABI will facilitate joint peer learning events and processes, where partners will be convened to share emergent learning from their individual projects/components around gender, inclusion and accountability. To support external learning around accountability and GESI in Sierra Leone, GESI assumptions will be monitored as part of the overarching ToC review to understand what is working, but equally what is not working and why.

✓ To support partners and grantees to develop programme-level GESI learning questions. Learning questions will be developed which are of interest and relevance to partners and grantees’ proposed projects or programmes. This process will help identify what data and evidence each partner should and can collect and analyse in order to answer over-arching GESI learning questions.

Possible questions include:
● What are the principal ways in which accountability is ‘gendered’ in Sierra Leone? For example, what are the key obstacles to accountability faced by women, as distinct from men, in the Sierra Leonean context?
● What are the issues that motivate young people to seek accountability from government, and what pathways do they pursue? Is this changing in the light of ICT and social media, and are there any emerging opportunities? How can the media be effectively mobilised to boost accountability for young people?
● How does faith and religion link to empowerment and accountability? What is the role of faith and religious leaders in the accountability process? What implications does this have for gender equality and social inclusion?
● What are the prevalent norms and attitudes which affect demand from men, women, as well as youth and PWDs for services e.g. on maternal health, family planning, adolescent and youth services?

✓ To support partners and grantees to find ways to leverage learning for advocacy/movement building, including leveraging by community groups themselves. Key informants outlined how implementing CSOs, due to limited resources, often solely focus on implementation, and so do not gather key evidence which they could use for advocacy. At the same time, skills on how to undertake advocacy may be lacking – support on this may be an option.

✓ To support partners to move beyond collecting ‘the same old data’ but reflect on how to obtain better GESI insights. Several IPs have been undertaking community engagement for some time but there needs to be continual reflection on how people are engaged and who is benefiting from the process. There may be entry points to push for GESI transformative outcomes.
4. GESI Workplan: Available in separate excel document

Annex 1: GESI Risks and Assumptions

1.1 Internal risks and assumptions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Risks</th>
<th>Risk Mitigation - how SABI will address it</th>
<th>Residual Assumptions – what we assume will happen as a result</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>A. Strengthened and coordinated community feedback mechanisms to demand better services</strong></td>
<td>Power and social analysis tools are not properly embedded in partners/grantees’ approaches, or partners don’t prioritise, leading to poor uptake or application – power analysis training not useful to partners</td>
<td>Social and power analysis tools are used meaningfully to show who benefits and who does not, leading to disaggregation and effective strategies and approaches.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Inputs are tailored such that organisations can practically apply learning from training and use the tools and share learning with one another. SDDirect will input into the power analysis tool; programme officers and GESI focal person will provide support to partners; Power and social analysis will be updated regularly to assess impacts on different groups.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A key messaging framework will be developed and a communication strategy; SDDirect will engage with the Communication Officers and BBC Media Action.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Communication and messaging is GESI sensitive – relevant to the needs of women and marginalised groups and accessible</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SABI receives call for proposals that address GESI issues in an innovative way; proposals received (and pass screening) from a diverse range of organisations.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>B. Citizens and duty bearers engage/innovate to improve accountability – the innovation grant</strong></td>
<td>SABI fails to reach out to remote, small or hard to reach organisations that can offer genuinely GESI transformative options for the programme pipeline: proposals for the grants only from ‘the usual suspects’; means that the target of 50% of innovation grants demonstrating impact for women and vulnerable group is not met.</td>
<td>SABI will maximise stakeholder involvement in grants implementation, right from the conceptualisation of ideas, through submission of proposals, utilisation of funds, to monitoring and evaluation; The grants will be a balance of targeted open competitive calls, some more focussed grants which will only be available to a smaller sub-set of organisations (for example media organisations), and a strategic innovation fund available for</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SABI will maximise stakeholder involvement in grants implementation, right from the conceptualisation of ideas, through submission of proposals, utilisation of funds, to monitoring and evaluation; The grants will be a balance of targeted open competitive calls, some more focussed grants which will only be available to a smaller sub-set of organisations (for example media organisations), and a strategic innovation fund available for</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
innovative, locally-led grants which could be pilots with a view to scale up. Adaptive programming approach will mean SABI constantly scans and reflects on opportunities and GESI footholds as they arise – there may be opportunities for GESI calls for proposals (support activist groups/more transformative action).

**C. Improved understanding of what works**

GESI is seen as an add-on and not mainstreamed into learning

SABI will identify a programme staff member to be a GESI focal person (to coordinate implementation of the strategy), this includes pulling out learning around GESI; GESI learning questions will be developed in line with the overarching TOC; GESI focal person, with support from SDD, will review the ‘live hub’ regularly to pull out emerging results and lessons (to feed back into the programme and for grant selection/themes and learning events)

GESI results are aggregated to provide higher level learning and analysis on what works and what does not work around engaging on GESI issues etc.

Learning and results on GESI will be fed back into project activities and actions.

**D. Improved data – youth data collection**

SABI fails to take an inclusive approach to recruiting young people for the data collection i.e. there are challenges to recruiting female data collectors which may impact on the quality of data collected (as females may not want to engage).

Restless Development will be supported to take an inclusive approach to recruiting and selecting young people for data collection. Careful attention will be given to ensuring that young women are recruited;

Young people will receive training on identifying vulnerable and marginalised groups (scoping/mapping) and including them in data collection and analysis. MEL and the GESI focal person will oversee and monitor their approach, with other Programme Staff.

Youth data collectors, male and female, better consider the needs of women and marginalised groups in the data collection process.

**Outcome**

**Increased awareness and demand for improved services, with service providers increasingly accountable to citizens for results**

Communication methods are not accessible to the most vulnerable or most marginalised and therefore remain unaware of their rights, the President’s Recovery Plan and its targets, and cannot access governance structures.

SABI’s GESI strategy will be owned by its partners and grantees and will be implemented to ensure these risks are addressed.

Women and marginalised groups have improved awareness of their rights, and access to governance structures.
## 1.2 External risks and assumptions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outputs</th>
<th>Risks</th>
<th>Risk Mitigation - how SABI will address it</th>
<th>Residual Assumptions – what SABI assumes will happen as a result</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A. Strengthened and coordinated community feedback mechanisms to demand better services</td>
<td>Mobilising people on GESI issues around service delivery and decision making may create tension and conflict instead of stronger collective action.</td>
<td>A community engagement strategy will be drafted and a field manual prepared; partners will be trained and supported to use participatory methods and apply their social and power analysis to mitigate potential risks – apply duty of care to ensure a ‘do no harm’ approach is taken; MEL and GESI team will observe and monitor community engagement processes but they will be locally-owned and led; Reports that field staff will be submitting will include a section on GESI challenges/sensitivities etc. so that SABI is constantly monitoring whether this risk is becoming a problem; BBC Media Action’s national show will bring actors together and reflect voices of service providers as well as communities – a dialogue, not confrontation.</td>
<td>People are willing to mobilise around GESI issues.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Existing structures exclude and may be reluctant to change – doing ‘business as usual’.</td>
<td>SABI has four implementing partners that are well placed and networked at the community level and have experience in community engagement that they can build on; The community engagement model outlines specific actions to take to ensure that formally excluded groups are included in the programme, e.g. encouraging the development of PWD Leaders at Chiefdom level, working with groups separately so each gets their voices heard etc.</td>
<td>People will be willing to change their behaviours to be more inclusive of excluded groups.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Citizens and duty bearers engage/innovate to improve accountability –</td>
<td>Local government is not willing to engage on GESI issues or consider needs or vulnerable and marginalised groups.</td>
<td>The innovation grant will include initiatives that work with and build the capacity of local government. SABI partners will ensure that engagement with communities is sensitively led, community owned and that risks are constantly reviewed. A partnership approach will be used.</td>
<td>Local government engages on GESI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the innovation grant</td>
<td>Where contentious issues are raised or existing power holders’ status/resources are threatened, there is an active rejection of engaging with CSOs – particularly those groups working on GESI or are women’s groups etc.</td>
<td>Social analysis helps identify appropriate strategies. Careful conflict analysis to mitigate risk of doing harm. GESI alliances and networks build pressure for change.</td>
<td>Government, service providers and communities engage collaboratively, to discuss service delivery issues particularly for women and marginalised groups.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D. Improved data – youth data collection</td>
<td>Young people are put at risk – due to push back from communities (particularly elders), or are put in vulnerable positions.</td>
<td>Restless Development, as all other SABI partners, will put in place ethical guidelines and practices to ensure duty of care.</td>
<td>Young people are supported and positively engaged at the community level.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increased awareness and demand for improved services, with service providers increasingly accountable to citizens for results</td>
<td>That providing the state and service providers with GESI data does not lead to improved accountability for those groups – international evidence shows the role of evidence is often limited. It is crucial to understand context, politics and (dis)incentives as to why evidence/data may not be used (it is often about power, politics, social and cultural norms).</td>
<td>SABI will incorporate gender and social analysis into its programming to look at incentives and disincentives for change (address power, and norms). SABI’s approach is also premised on engaging people on the data/ key issues to facilitate a useful understanding of key issues, particularly for women and marginalised groups.</td>
<td>Service providers will be increasingly accountable to women and marginalised groups.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication methods are not accessible to the most vulnerable or most marginalised and therefore remain unaware of their rights, the President’s Recovery Plan and its targets, and cannot access governance structures.</td>
<td>SABI’s GESI strategy will be owned by its partners and grantees and will be implemented to ensure these risks are addressed.</td>
<td>Women and marginalised groups have improved awareness of their rights, and access to governance structures.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Annex 2: **PLACEHOLDER** – GESI glossary of terms

A GESI glossary of terms will be developed as a team during the GESI workshop in January 2017

- Equity vs Equality at community level
Annex 3: References


