# Irish Aid PG II <<Country>>

Annual Programme Report 2020

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| **Note**: *the purpose of this report is to provide information for the annual report to Irish Aid, written by Christian Aid Ireland. This report should supplement your Strategy Testing report and Results Framework – please avoid duplication.**Please contact CAI if any sections are not clear.* Please provide concrete specific information and avoid generalised or abstract statements. The ‘max word count’ is a suggested limit, not a target! |

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| CONTEXT ANALYSIS AND THEORY OF CHANGE ADAPTATION |
| **Guiding Questions*** Please describe any significant changes in programme context over 2020, including but not limited to COVID-19 and its effects. Where readily available, please include references/ data.
* How did these context changes affect programme implementation? What changes to strategy & approaches were made as a result?
* How did these context changes affect programme / partner ToCs and assumptions about *how* change happens? What, if any, adjustments were made to assumptions and strategies?
* How did these context changes affect different marginalised and excluded groups (or increase the risk of marginalisation and exclusion for others)? As a result of this did the programme/ projects change which beneficiaries were targeted, or the mechanisms to identify and reach beneficiaries?
* During the year, what mechanisms/ processes/ spaces did the programme /projects use to assess changes in context and adapt? What sources of information informed these decisions? Were the priorities and views of beneficiaries used to inform these decisions?
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**Political**

1. Government abandoned the enactment of Constitutional Instrument No 10 seeking to suspend accountability laws (PFM & NPPA Acts 2016) on the use of COVID-19 funds after CSOs working on PFM issues led a robust media campaign which led the government to reverse that decision.

**Political**

1. The appointment of a Deputy Minister II, responsible for tax and revenue generation in the Ministry of Finance during the first six months of 2020 has increased constructive engagement with BAN, hence increases BAN’s chances to have more direct engagements with different PFM players at all levels.

**Political**

1. The launching of Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment Policy by President Bio (December 3, 2020) presents an opportunity for BAN to push further the advocacy on gender responsive budgeting. The policy provides clear directives to all MDAs in terms of providing services for men, women, boys and girls with clarity on inclusion (leave no one behind).

**Political**

1. The Ministry of Basic and Senior Secondary School Education launched the Education Gender Mainstreaming Policy. This will help to fulfil government’s commitment to achieving gender equality in the education sector in Sierra Leone.

**Economic**

1. The presentation of the supplementary budget by the Ministry of Finance (July 24, 2020) was meant to respond to COVID-19 pandemic challenges, hence reducing the capacity of government to raise the projected domestic revenue needed for service delivery.

**Economic**

1. The decision by government to revise the 2020 revenue projections downward after the declaration of the Health State of Emergency in the country has a negative impact on funds for the provision of social services. This will constrain BAN to push for more allocations in the social services sector, hence affecting service delivery.

**Economic**

1. The Bank of Sierra Leone provided financial support to SMEs in April as a way of softening the economic burden caused by the COVID-19 to businesses and to also enable them to import essential commodities into Sierra Leone, so that they will have the ability to continue to pay taxes. This will support domestic revenue generation and hence will improve on government capabilities to support development projects in the country.

**Economic**

1. The government of Sierra Leone has also secured a credit from the IMF to support government to help meet the urgent balance of payment and fiscal needs stemming from the COVID-19 pandemic. This credit comes with some conditionalities around transparency and accountability and transparency on the use of public resources. For example, there is a clause which says government should publish all large contracts for the corona including the beneficiary ownership of the contractor. This drive will strengthen BAN’s call for transparency and accountability on the use of public resources.

**Social**

1. (In April-June 2020) BAN’s ways of working with staff and partners changed. COVID-19 restrictions kept a social distance and for the most part, meetings are done online via skype, zoom, Facebook and other handles. It impacted differently on the mode of work as it affected BAN’s cycle of operation, hence reducing on project activities’ timelines.

**Social**

1. Lifting of COVID-19 restrictions (October 27, 2020), which include inter-district lockdowns, dusk to dawn curfew and social gatherings helped BAN to increase the level of engagements with stakeholders during the implementation of project activities.

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| Evidence of Change: progress towards results |
| **Guiding Questions (applicable to each of the three programme objectives below)**Please do not repeat content that is already adequately captured in the strategy testing report – use this section to cover new areas or provide additional detail/ framing if necessary. Please include areas where there is less progress than hoped for, as well as positive progress. *In addition** *For each Objective,* please share the outcomes/ achievements which you believe are most noteworthy and why.
* *For each Objective* where progress was weaker than hoped for, what adaptations will be made in 2020?
* *For each Objective*, how did women and other marginalised or different groups (youth, people with disabilities, ethnic or indigenous groups, etc experience the programme? Did they experienced different benefits or consequences compared to others?
* If the numbers of beneficiaries reached per objective is different to previous years, please explain on why this is.
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**Objective 1 Governance & Human Rights:**

1. **Proactive disclosure of information**: The government of Sierra Leone now discloses financial information to the public on time. The Ministry of Finance increased their compliance in providing the monthly financial statement of accounts to the public in line with the Public Financial Management Act of 2016.
2. Health budget increased (Nov 2020): The government of Sierra Leone increased budget allocation in 2020 to Le 794.2 billion (11%) compared to Le 674.7 billion (7.3%) in 2019. This increment speaks to government’s commitment to achieving the 15% budget allocation to health spending in line with the Abuja Declaration.
3. Government developed framework for the implementation of the OBS report recommendations

**Objective 2 Tackling Violence & Building Peace:**

**Objective 3 Greater Gender Equality:**

1. Gender Unit established at the RSLAF and Correctional Services. Concept note developed at the Ministry of Lands and Housing and Country Planning for the establishment of a gender department.
2. Three MDAs (SLP, Ministry of Education, Social Welfare) incorporated Gender Budgeting as part of their budget development processes going forward. This was as a result of the involvement of 15 CSOs in gender responsive budget advocacy in 2020.

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| Evidence of Change: Engagement at micro, meso and macro levels |
| *This section is a continuation of ‘progress towards results’ but is focussed on linkages between macro, meso and micro and issues of sustainability. Please focus on work funded by PG II only.* **Guiding Questions*** In 2020 how did the programme work across multiple levels (micro, meso and macro) to support change, where different from previous years?
* In 2020 how did the programme engage regional and national actors? Or contribute to national and regional clusters, co-ordination, and technical working groups?
* What has worked well in terms of micro, meso and macro engagement? What have been the key challenges and how will the programme adapt in response to these challenges?
* In 2020 what actions, if any, did the programme undertake to enhance sustainability?
* From your observations in 2020 have there been any successes or barriers to sustainability?
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* Dissemination of national study reports (Tax Perception Survey, the Open Budget Survey report, the Budget Credibility report, the audit scorecards etc) to district level CSOs and stakeholders across Sierra Leone.
* Support provided by the Ministry of Finance, Audit Service the National Revenue Authority and stronger collaborations with other MDAs and Local Councils in the delivery of programme activities relating to transparency and accountability.
* The enhancement of district CSOs to take leadership in undertaking budget tracking and engaging district stakeholders on budget transparency and accountability related issues

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| Partnership:  |
| In this section ‘partner organisations’ refers to our partner agencies as well as any host government institutions we work with, or wider civil society. **Guiding questions:*** How did the programme contribute to partner capacity strengthening in 2020?
* What evidence is there of strengthened capacity in 2020? *Please be as specific as possible and refer to any partner capacity assessments undertaken and results of same.*
* Did Christian Aid offer specific support to partner organisations due to Covid 19? If so, what was the result of this support? (Please focus on partner capacity rather than project activities). Please make sure to include any innovative or different solutions used to address partner capacity in 2020 and any challenges encountered.
* In 2020 did the programme use any new approaches to working in partnership?
* Were there any challenges within the partner portfolio or with the on-granting process in 2020? If there are any anticipated changes to the partners in this programme please share details.
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* BAN trained district level CSOs on budget tracking, gender responsive budgeting, data collection and analysis as a way of strengthening their capacities to be able to engage district stakeholder.
* In 2020, district CSOs that are working with BAN on transparency and accountability led the engagements with Local Council authorities on the budget tracking report.
* In 2020 BAN signed an MoU with 15 CSOs working on gender responsive budgeting as a new approach of working in partnership.

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| Accountability:  |
| **Guiding questions:*** In 2020 what community accountability mechanisms were introduced or continued?
* In 2020 how was programme/ project information shared with communities?
* How did target communities/ beneficiaries participate in the programme cycle in 2020 (i.e. how did their views, priorities and opinions influence programme/ project decisions?)
* What feedback has been provided to and from communities during the reporting period?
* How many complaints have been processed in 2020?
* What changes to programme approaches or organisational systems have been made as a result of complaints and feedback from communities?
* Please share any insights on the roll out of systems to support strengthened accountability to communities. Overall, do you envisage any changes to your accountability approach in 2021?

*Across this section please include reference to women and different marginalised or excluded groups.*  |
| ***Suggested word Count:*** *300 words* |

* In 2020 BAN introduced safeguarding to communities as accountability mechanism. This is to ensure that communities provide feedbacks on the operations of BAN staff with the communities.
* Programmes/projects information in 2020 was shared through meetings, workshops, radio programmes, published reports on newspaper and online in BAN websites and other websites.
* Communities and targeted beneficiaries participated in BAN programme in the development of the ToC, Strategy testing, workshops, information gathering and dissemination of BAN published works to stakeholders.

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| Programme Management:  |
| **Guiding Questions:*** Please share any initiatives taken to strengthen monitoring and learning in 2020 and comment on their effectiveness.
* Where Covid 19 disrupted routine monitoring, how did the programme monitor partner work, and how did partners monitor changes at community level?
* Did the programme convene any reflection, learning and adaptation spaces in addition to annual strategy testing? In 2020 how was monitoring evidence used to strengthen the programme/ project?
* Where Covid 19 disrupted in-person implementation (in communities or at meso and macro level) please share any remote approaches taken. Please share any reflections on the successes or challenges of these approaches, including whether it was possible to take gender and inclusion into consideration.
* Were there any other changes made to programme management because of Covid 19? Please share.
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| ***Suggested word Count:*** *300 words* |

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| Targeting & Inclusion:  |
| **Guiding Questions:*** Have you or partners made any changes to the programme target groups or communities? Why?
* How are you documenting this, e.g.? disaggregation?
* How did women/men/people with a disability/affected by illness/other forms of exclusion experience the programme action and have they experienced different benefits or consequences? If you or partners did not take any concrete steps to ensure that those who are normally left behind were included, what prevented you from doing so?
* Did the change have any unintended consequences (e.g. protection, gender dynamics; etc.)?
* Has power shifted as a result of the programme, and if so, how?
* What worked particularly well? What didn’t work at all?
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| ***Suggested word Count:*** *350**words* |

* BAN changed the primary target group (media) for the launch of the OBS report. From organising a press conference to launching the report on national television which attracted the wider public audience. This was as a result of the COVID-19 restrictions on social gathering. The launching was streamed live on social media for which links are available.

## Additional documents and notes:

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| **Counting numbers of people reached** | Please use the template (insert link when finalised by PQOD) provided in the Global Annual Report guidance, making sure to disaggregate numbers for each of the Irish Aid Objectives.  |
| **Case Study** | Please complete one case study illustrating a programme success this year. Please select a case study whose theme is centred on one of the three programme objectives. Although Covid 19 was a significant issue in 2020 please do not focus on health, hygiene, or livelihood responses.Please use the Irish Aid case study template [here](https://christianaid.sharepoint.com/%3Af%3A/r/teams/nations/ireland/irlshared/PDU/Irish%20Aid%20Programme%20Grant%20II/Reporting/2020/Annual%20Templates%20%26%20Guidance?csf=1&web=1&e=noZOno), and contact CAI if we can provide any support on this.  |
| **RICSA** | Please insert a link to the most recent country-level RICSA. If this has not been updated to account for Covid 19-related risks, please insert relevant risks below, along with associated likelihood and impact scores and mitigation strategies.  |
| **Partner List** | Please complete the template saved [here](https://christianaid.sharepoint.com/%3Af%3A/r/teams/nations/ireland/irlshared/PDU/Irish%20Aid%20Programme%20Grant%20II/Reporting/2020/Annual%20Templates%20%26%20Guidance?csf=1&web=1&e=noZOno). (Most information can be copy and pasted from previous years) |