



## **Inception Report**

19 October 2015 – 18 April 2016

**Submitted by: Christian Aid**

**20 May 2016**

## Table of Contents

List of figures.....	4
List of Acronyms.....	6
1. Executive Summary.....	8
1.1 Key Achievements:.....	8
1.2 Key Lessons Learned .....	9
1.3 Key Next Steps .....	10
2. Introduction .....	11
3. Background .....	12
3.1 Inception phase .....	13
4. Progress to date.....	16
5. Strategic Framework.....	19
5.1 Political Economy Analysis (PEA) .....	19
5.2 Theory of Change.....	20
5.3 Gender and Social Inclusion.....	21
5.4 Working with Parliament.....	23
5.5 Working with the Media .....	25
5.6 Civil Society Strengthening .....	25
5.7 Our Approach to Grants and Grant-making .....	26
5.8 Non-grants support to partners .....	28
6. Performance and Learning .....	28
6.1 Monitoring and Evaluation .....	28
6.2 Communications .....	29
6.2.1 Development of Strategy .....	30
6.2.2 Digital presence .....	30
6.2.3 Brand refresh .....	30
6.2.4 Election Call Launch .....	30
6.3 Value for Money .....	31
6.4 Learning .....	32
7. Programme governance and management.....	33
7.1 Programme governance .....	33

7.2	Programme Management.....	34
7.3	Risk Management .....	38
7.3.1	Managing programmatic risk.....	38
7.3.2	Managing grant partner portfolio risk – balancing risks with results.....	38
7.3.3	Managing fiduciary risks .....	39
7.3.4	Managing risks relating to transition to autonomous entity .....	40
8.	Operations .....	40
9.	The Elections Call .....	40
10.	DFID Annual Review.....	43
11.	Finance.....	43
11.1	Finance Manual.....	43
11.2	Budget Performance .....	43
12.	Lessons Learned.....	46
13.	Priorities for Year 1 (Implementation phase) .....	48
13.1	Strategic Framework.....	48
13.2	Performance and learning: .....	49
13.3	Programme governance and management.....	49
13.4	Finance.....	50
13.5	Elections Call .....	50
13.6	Operations .....	50
14	List of Annexes .....	52

## **List of tables**

Table 1:	Details of original and revised inception phase deliverables	13
Table 2:	Status of inception phase deliverables	17
Table 3:	PMT roles and responsibilities – inception phase	34
Table 4:	Overview of proposed changes to PMT structure and composition	36
Table 5:	Election call facts	40

## **List of figures**

Figure 1:	STAR-Ghana theory of Change	20
Figure 2:	Overview of STAR-Ghana's GESI framework	23
Figure 3:	PMT structure – inception phase	34

**Basic data sheet**

**Name of programme:** STAR-Ghana

**DFID Reference:** PO7120

**Christian Aid Reference:** 6DDF005

**Name of Organisation:** Christian Aid

**Contract value:** £22,000,000

**Programme purpose:** The purpose of STAR-Ghana is to increase the effectiveness of civil society in influencing the delivery of public goods and services. The programme goal is to develop a vibrant, well informed and assertive civil society, able to contribute to transformational national development for all Ghanaian citizens in an inclusive manner.

**Programme duration:** 19 October 2015 – 18 October 2020

**Status of report:** Progress report covering the inception phase of the contract

## **List of Acronyms**

3C+L	Convening, Coordinating, Catalysing and Learning
3C+L	Convening, Coordinating, Catalysing and Learning
CA	Christian Aid
CB	Capacity Building
GESI	Gender Equality and Social Inclusion
GTAG	GESI Technical Advisory Group
CBOs	Community Based Organisations
COPL	Communities of Practice and Learning
CS	Civil Society
CSOs	Civil Society Organisations
DANIDA	Danish International Development Agency
DFID	UK Department for International Development
EU	European Union
EU	European Union
FAQs	Frequently Asked Questions
FC	Funders Committee
GP(s)	Grants Partner(s)
GSC	Grants Sub-Committee
MEL	Monitoring, Evaluation & Learning
M&E	Monitoring & Evaluation
MDAs	Ministries, Departments & Agencies
ODI	Organisational Development Institute
PE	Political Economy
PEA	Political Economy Analysis
PCR	Programme Completion Report

PMT	Programme Management Team
PWD	Persons living with Disability
SC	Steering Committee
SP	Service Provider
SDDirect	Social Development Direct
STAR-Ghana	Strengthening Transparency, Accountability and Responsiveness in Ghana
TAP	Technical Approach Paper
TOC	Theory of Change
VFM	Value for Money

## 1. Executive Summary

The Inception Report provides a summary of the work undertaken during the Inception Phase of the Strengthening Transparency, Accountability and Responsiveness in Ghana programme (STAR-Ghana) and presents our strategy for the Implementation Phase.

We have achieved the agreed targets set for the inception phase and completed the inception phase deliverables detailed within the TOR in the timeframe agreed. Our achievements are summarised in table 1.

### 1.1 Key Achievements:

The major results from the period are:

*We have built a strong and capable team to implement the programme.*

A senior management team, comprising qualified Ghanaians and reflecting our commitment to gender equality was mobilised and in place from the start of the inception. This team has been gradually built up over the period to ensure that key staff were mobilised as and when required to ensure value for money and a focus on key tasks.

*We have developed our approach and systems for programme implementation.*

We have developed the key strategic frameworks, approaches and principles, based on the imperatives in the key design documents and the directives of the SC.

We have conducted a political economy (PE) scoping study focusing on identifying key lessons from how PEA was used in STAR1 and a number of key issues for further analysis during the implementation phase. Gender equality and social inclusion (GESI) lies at the core of the STAR-Ghana and this is reflected in the fact that a GESI strategy is among the key strategic frameworks developed by the PMT.

Learning is central to our approach and development of a community of learning and practice process and strategy has commenced.

Finance and Operations manuals have been developed to guide programme implementation at the levels of both the PMT and grant partners. We have also developed a risk management strategy to help the programme prevent or manage both internal and external risks.

*We successfully developed and implemented the 2016 Elections call*

Despite the tight deadlines, and the fact that the PMT was in the midst of defining and developing key programme approaches for the implementation phase, we were able to scope, develop and implement an elections call within a turn-around period of approximately 12 weeks without compromising on the rigor, transparency and partnership ethos STAR-Ghana was noted for during its first phase. To date, 35 civil society and media organisations are implementing projects aimed at improving the quality of citizens' participation in the electoral processes and contributing to peaceful, credible and inclusive elections.

*We have reviewed our logical framework and developed a monitoring and evaluation (M&E) framework consistent with the Business case and Theory of Change. The M&E plan is linked*



to key programme strategies such as GESI, the approach to due diligence and how it will communicate internally and externally to enhance programme effectiveness and minimize risk.

*We scored an A in the DFID Annual Review of the programme despite the fact that the review took place four months into programme inception.*

We have advised the SC on options for transition.

## **1.2 Key Lessons Learned**

*Inception phase call:* An Inception phase call can be useful in helping to engage stakeholders while the programme's strategic framework is being developed and in some cases helps to pilot approaches which may be adapted for use in the implementation phase. However it can also divert critical PMT resources and attention to the development and implementation of the call. It could also stand in the way of setting a new tone for the programme's engagements with stakeholders.

*Phased approach to recruitment:* The programme adopted a phased approach to mobilising staff, starting with the management team and gradually bringing other members of the team as required in the workplan. This approach offered significant VfM in addition to ensuring that scarce management team was not tied up with orientations.

*Continuity:* The continuity provided by having the SC continue from STAR1 and the former STAR1 Team Leader as Programme Director of STAR2 helped immensely in delivering on the Inception phase priorities. However a more structured handover of STAR1 documentation and facilitated handover to STAR2 is needed.

*Reaching diversity of CS:* Open competitive calls usually privilege big organisations with the capacity to write good proposals. Going forward, to remain true to its principles, the programme will need to introduce specific measures and calls targeting these organisations.

*GESI:* The Election call highlighted the need to have in-house GESI capacity in the PMT to support grant applicants and subsequently GPs to help them implement their projects. Bringing in external TA does not embed the capacity in-house, does not offer VfM and the external consultants may not be able to contextualise their support within the wider framework of the programme's overall strategic approach.

*SC Working Groups:* The SC set up a GESI Technical Advisory Group (GTAG) chaired by a member of the SC to, initially support the development of the GESI strategy and subsequently enabling ongoing dialogue and dialogue with programme stakeholders. This approach worked very well and it is recommended that it be replicated for other key areas of work such as the PEA, Media and CS strengthening.

*Governance* – we have developed strong relationships with SC and donors. Open dialogue is needed between the SC/donors/PMT/Christian Aid for effectiveness at every level, and very clear lines of delegation of authority from SC/donors to the PMT.

### **1.3 Key Next Steps**

A detailed Gantt chart workplan for Year 1 of the Implementation phase and indicative workplan for Years 2 and 3 of implementation phase have been developed and attached to the report.

The focus of activities in Year 1 of the Implementation phase will include:

- Conducting a ‘foundational’ PEA to inform the selection of key areas and issues for the programme’s engagement;
- Defining, launching and implementing calls linked to the PEA;
- Selection and implementation of strategic partnerships with a limited number of CSOs and media organisations;
- Development of, and/or refining, key programme strategies and approaches;
- Conducting key researches, including PEAs of civil society, exclusion and corruption, to inform programme strategy and engagements;
- Finalisation of programme logframe and baseline;
- Implementation of the strategies on GESI and Learning;
- Supporting the Steering Committee to identify and convene conversations and catalyse actions on key national and strategic issues;
- Finalisation and implementation of processes leading to the development of an independent entity by Year 3.

For Years 2 and 3, the PMT will continue with implementation of activities started in Year 1, including continuous updating of the PEAs, supporting programme partners with the implementation of their actions and projects and monitoring and reporting to key stakeholders.

## 2. Introduction

This inception report provides a summary of the work undertaken during the inception phase of the Strengthening Transparency, Accountability and Responsiveness in Ghana programme (STAR-Ghana) and presents our strategy for the implementation phase. It defines the programme's instruments of change, including its approach to the use of political economy analysis (PEA) in programme design and implementation, the logframe and M&E framework, and our approach to managing the project and achieving its objectives.

We also present our work plan and budget for the next three/one years of programme implementation respectively. It is expected that by the end of Year 3, the programme would have transitioned into an independent national entity led by the Steering Committee (SC). The entity will subsequently develop a work plan for Year 4 and 5.

The inception report is structured as follows:

1. **Introduction and background:** the introductory sections provide background to the STAR-Ghana programme. It summarises the aims for the programme, and the context in which the programme is operating.
2. **Progress to date:** summarises the status of the inception phase deliverables and priorities agreed with DFID and the SC for the period.
3. **Strategic framework:** this section details work done on our approach to the use of PEA in programme development and implementation, our theory of change and strategy for gender and social inclusion. It also outlines our thinking, to be fleshed out during the implementation phase, on how we propose to work with Parliament, civil society strengthening, the Media and grants and grants-making.
4. **Performance and learning:** covers our work on Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E), including a revised draft logframe and M&E framework and our Communication strategy. The processes for developing our approach to Value for Money (VFM) and Learning are also outlined.
5. **Programme governance and management:** summarises the programme governance structure, including the Steering Committee and its associated/sub-committees; programme management team and consortium; and our approach to managing programme risk.
6. **Finance:** This section provides an overview of programme budget performance;
7. **The Elections Call:** We implemented a strategic opportunity call targeting the 2016 parliamentary and presidential elections, even while we were still in the process of defining and detailing our strategic approaches. This section covers the process and learning from the implementation of the call.
8. **Lessons learned:** We summarise key learnings from the implementation phase as input to decision-making at all levels of programme implementation.
9. **Next steps:** sets out programme priorities and a work plan for Years 1-3 of the implementation phase.
10. **Annexes:** include the strategies and supporting documents referred to in the main body of the report.

The programme is managed by a consortium led by Christian Aid with Mango, Social Development Direct, Overseas Development Institute, Nkum Associates and On Our Radar. The consortium brings together a range and depth of expertise combined with a shared vision to deliver an effective programme and establish STAR-Ghana as a Ghanaian owned and led entity mobilising active citizens and civil society around accountability.

### 3. Background

During design of the second phase of STAR-Ghana, the core strategic lesson was that a better funded civil society is necessary, but insufficient on its own, in terms of driving societal change, even for a relatively large intervention such as STAR1. Linkages have to be facilitated with 'supply-side' governance actors such as Parliament, District assemblies and other agencies of the Executive arm of government.

Other lessons included:

- The default role as a grant-making facility has worked well and has given STAR access and credibility across civil society in Ghana. At the same time, there are clear limitations to grant-making only.
- In order to facilitate deeper societal improvements STAR needs to adopt a clear strategic focus around a convener, coordinator and catalyst role *not only supporting established civil society*, but also working in innovative ways to engage citizens.
- Established civil society can be hard to incentivise into citizen-focused action-oriented initiatives and there are substantial limitations in terms of civil society analytical capabilities as well as ability to organise collective action and to communicate effectively with decision-makers and the public.

In addition to these lessons from STAR1, key developments in the programme's external context which informed design included:

- Governance indicators (World Bank Country Policy and Institutional Assessment and the Mo Ibrahim Index) are stagnating and in some cases deteriorating. Linked to these, perception indicators such as Afrobarometer on corruption, service delivery and credibility of state institutions have shown deterioration.
- Political space is good by Sub-Saharan standards. Elections are hard-fought, with limited focus on substance or ideology. Political parties are well-established, but very much as election machines. Party finance, policy debate, analysis and internal party transparency remain a challenge.
- Parliament is also well-established, even though comparatively relatively weak vis-à-vis the executive.
- Media space remains good, but with a degree of self-censorship and other informal constraints.

The implication of these lessons for the programme has been that though STAR2 has similar objectives to STAR1, the way in which these objectives will be achieved is different, with much more focus on STAR2 playing a strategic, analytical, convener, coordinator and catalyst role backed up by a small number of long-term partnerships and competitive calls

for proposals. It is expected that programme implementation will lead ultimately to the establishment of STAR as a self-sustaining, wholly Ghanaian institution.

The long-term programme goal is to develop a vibrant, well informed and assertive civil society, able to contribute to transformational national development for all Ghanaian citizens in an inclusive manner.

**There are three programme outcomes:**

- Support citizens' ability to influence change;
- Support the creation, utilisation and institutionalisation of spaces for collective civil society engagement in order to increase responsiveness of the executive and key state institutions at both local and national levels – in other words “magic” transformative spaces identified and used
- A credible national organisation in place (clear governance structures, capable financial and strategic management)

**3.1 Inception phase**

Programme implementation began in October 2015 with the signing of the contract between DFID and Christian Aid. The contract includes a six-month inception phase, originally ending in April 2016 but being extended to June 2016 to allow for SC and DFID sign offs of deliverables, for the development of key operational systems, definition of the programme's overall strategic architecture, fleshing out of key implementation phase approaches and strategies and establishment of a programme office. These deliverables were subsequently revised by the SC and DFID to take account of the pressures on the PMT's capacity and resources occasioned by the implementation of the 2016 Elections call.

Table 1 provides details of the original and revised deliverables for the Inception phase as agreed by the SC and DFID.

**Table 1: Details of original and revised Inception phase deliverables**

	Original Deliverables	Revised Deliverables
1	SP is expected to mobilise to site in Ghana by October 19, 2015	Establish a fully operational office including critical recruitment and procurement
2	Establish a fully operational office including full recruitment and procurement	Review and refine relevant manuals and procedures from STAR1 for grant applications and approval - to include the various funds, oversight and quality assurance, accounting and procurement plus determining the financial ceilings for delegated grant approvals by PMT;
3	Review and refine relevant manuals and procedures from STAR1 for grant applications and approval - to include the various funds, oversight and quality assurance, accounting and procurement plus determining the financial ceilings for	Conduct a top level PEA scoping exercise process and undertake any necessary supportive analytic work, based on existing STAR analysis – this to feed into a Draft Technical Approach paper.

	delegated grant approvals by PMT;	
4	Develop robust fund manager processes with justifications for proportion allocations and mechanisms to enable flexibility	Develop and begin implementation of a communications strategy and outreach plan
5	Revisit and clarify programme management arrangements and technical inputs to ensure optimum effectiveness and value for money	Prepare the gender equality and women's empowerment strategy
6	Identify transition issues and prepare options for handling	Finalise the design of the M&E framework, and ensure the M&E framework and draft M&E manual is gender responsive and can also disaggregate by age
7	Conduct a Political Economy Analysis to select the initial priority themes and undertake any necessary supportive analytical work, based on existing STAR analysis	
8	Develop and begin implementation of a communications strategy, a resourcing framework and outreach plan	Launch at least one call for Proposals
9	Prepare the gender equality and women's empowerment strategy	Disburse the first grants
10	Prepare an outline youth engagement strategy	Submit an inception report by the end of the inception phase
11	Prepare/refine a strategy for knowledge management and performance monitoring	Revisit and clarify programme management arrangements and technical inputs to ensure optimum effectiveness and value for money.
12	Finalise the design of the M&E system, and ensure the M&E system and draft M&E manual is gender responsive and can also disaggregate by age	Finalise the activity log, and identify measurable targets for the agreed outputs.
13	Collect baseline data and revise/populate the programme log-frame - review proposed outputs, indicators and assumptions and propose modifications, agree these with SC, DFID/others (FC), populate/collect data for baselines (using data sources agreed with SC/FC);	Update the risk assessment and mitigation strategy.
14	Finalise the activity log, and identify measurable targets for the agreed outputs	Develop a detailed Year 1 work plan (with defined, measurable outputs) and a two year and three year indicative work plan with detailed costs for delivery.
15	Update the risk assessment and mitigation strategy	

16	Develop a Value for Money (VfM) strategy with clear measureable indicators to enable VfM to be effectively assessed during the course of the programme	
17	Scope and make preliminary recommendations for off-log-frame work aimed at estimating the value (for money) of demand side accountability work	
18	Advise the SC and the FC on the topics for the Thematic Funding Window, criteria and process for CSO grant selection, the financial ceiling for delegated grant approvals by the Programme Management Team (PMT) and the initial allocation of funding to the grant windows and any other information deemed necessary	
19	Identify with the SC potential core national partners and possible roles and focus areas as well as links to other partners	
20	Launch at least one call for Proposals	
21	Disburse the first grants	
22	Review existing best practice in CSO capacity development and identify initial service providers for capacity development	
23	Develop a detailed first year CSO capacity building work plan and budget for SC approval	
24	Develop a detailed Year 1 work plan (with defined, measurable outputs) and a two year and five year indicative work plan with detailed costs for delivery	
25	Suggest KPIs and milestones for the implementation phase	
26	Submit an inception report by the end of the inception phase	

The programme management team (PMT) put together by Christian Aid (CA) for the management of the programme was guided by the following in the implementation of the inception phase and delivery of the key priorities:

- SC Design framework for STAR2;
- DFID Business Case;
- STAR-Ghana 1 Programme Completion Report (PCR).
- Christian Aid tender document

#### **4. Progress to date**

The six-month inception phase has enabled the PMT to set up the programme to deliver against the Business Case and DFID contract with Christian Aid. The major results from the period are:

##### **We have built a strong and capable team to implement the programme.**

A senior management team, comprising qualified Ghanaians and reflecting our commitment to gender equality was mobilised and in place from the start of the inception. This team has been gradually built up over the period to ensure that key staff were mobilised as and when required to ensure value for money and a focus on key tasks. At the end of the inception phase, the PMT has the following key staff in place:

- Programme Director: Ibrahim-Tanko Amidu;
- Head of Programmes: Seth Lartey;
- Head of Operations: Wendy Boamah;
- Head of Finance: Harriet Asomani;
- Senior M&E Manager: Frank Amoateng;
- Grants Manager: Nicholas Ayensu-Appiah

In addition, Grants and Communications managers, Finance and Programmes Support officers and support staff have been recruited and are in place.

Christian Aid's Africa Divisional Manager – Service Contracts, Mark Vyner, is the key Christian Aid contact with the PMT, SC and DFID. He has been closely involved in the work of the PMT, providing support, coordinating CA support to the programme and quality assuring key deliverables and inception phase outputs. In addition, the programme has leveraged the resources of Christian Aid, Ghana, as necessary to support analysis and development of outputs. Key Christian Aid staff involved in the inception phase were Ernest Okyere and Joyce Ashun from the Christian Aid Ghana team, and Charles Gay, Kathryn Irwin, Sarah Miseldine, and Pascale Hall from the Christian Office in London, UK.

##### **We have developed our approach and systems for programme implementation.**

We have developed the key strategic frameworks, approaches and principles, based on the imperatives in the key design documents described in the background section of this report and the directives of the SC.

We have conducted a political economy (PE) scoping study focusing on identifying key lessons from how PEA was used in STAR1 and a number of key issues for further analysis during the implementation phase. The scoping study, together with a technical approach paper (TAP) will guide the SC and PMT in the implementation of the programme's approach to PEA which seeks to embed PEA, through longitudinal studies and reflections, programme development and implementation. Gender equality and social inclusion (GESI) lies at the core of STAR-Ghana and this is reflected in the fact that a GESI strategy is among the key strategic frameworks developed by the PMT.

Finance and Operations manuals have been developed to guide programme implementation at the levels of both the PMT and grant partners. We have also developed a risk management strategy to help the programme prevent or manage both internal and external



risks. These programme strategies and manuals are in the final stages of refinement and will be subject to review periodically to ensure their relevance.

**We successfully developed and implemented the 2016 Elections call**

Despite the tight deadlines, and the fact that the PMT was in the midst of defining and developing key programme approaches for the implementation phase, we were able to scope, develop and implement an elections call within a turn-around period of approximately 12 weeks without compromising on the rigor, transparency and partnership ethos STAR-Ghana was noted for during its first phase. To date, 35 civil society and media organisations are implementing projects aimed at improving the quality of citizens' participation in the electoral processes and contributing to peaceful, credible and inclusive elections.

**We have reviewed our logical framework and developed a** monitoring and evaluation (M&E) framework consistent with the Business case and Theory of Change. The M&E plan is linked to key programme strategies such as GESI, the approach to due diligence and how it will communicate internally and externally to enhance programme effectiveness and minimize risk.

**We scored an A in the DFID Annual Review** of the programme despite the fact that the review took place four months into programme inception.

Overall therefore, the programme has achieved a successful inception phase, delivering all the key priorities identified for the period. The table below provides an overview of the status of delivery of the Inception phase priorities.

**Table 2: Status of Inception phase deliverables**

Priorities for the inception phase	Status
SP is expected to mobilise to site in Ghana by October 19, 2015	Completed
Establish a fully operational office including critical recruitment and procurement	<p>Recruitment of key staff was prioritised by the PMT to ensure the right personnel were in place to deliver on agreed deliverables in the inception timeframe:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) Programme Director – in post</li> <li>(ii) Head of Programmes – in post</li> <li>(iii) Head of Finance – in post</li> <li>(iv) Head of Operations – in post</li> <li>(v) Grant Manager - in post</li> <li>(vi) Communications Manager – in post</li> <li>(vii) Senior M&amp;E Manager – commences 3 May 2016</li> <li>(viii) Finance Officer – commences 3 May 2016</li> <li>(ix) Due Diligence Officer - position will be re- advertised</li> </ul>

Review and refine relevant manuals and procedures from STAR1 for grant applications and approval - to include the various funds, oversight and quality assurance, accounting and procurement plus determining the financial ceilings for delegated grant approvals by PMT;	Completed for the 2016 Election Call.  A more detailed review of the grants and other manuals will be done in the implementation phase incorporating learning from the elections call.
Conduct a top level Political Economy Analysis scoping exercise process as agreed in the concept note submitted to the SC and undertake any necessary supportive analytical work, based on existing STAR analysis – this will feed into a Technical Approach paper.	PEA review and scoping completed, TAP completed.
Develop and begin implementation of a communications strategy and outreach plan	Communications strategy developed and in use. Resourcing strategy will follow when transition to entity is clearer.
Prepare the gender equality and women's empowerment strategy	Completed
Finalise the design of the M&E framework, and ensure the M&E framework and draft M&E manual is gender responsive and can also disaggregate by age	Completed. The Log Frame has been reviewed and suggested changes for discussion will be delivered with inception documents. The Log frame will not be fully populated with a baseline data; this to follow early in implementation once indicators agreed.
Update the risk assessment and mitigation strategy	Completed
Launch at least one call for Proposals	Completed. Election call launched and grants awarded.
Disburse the first grants	Completed.  All grant partners have received first tranche payments
Submit an inception report by the end of the inception phase	Due 20 May April 2016

Revisit and clarify programme management arrangements and technical inputs to ensure optimum effectiveness and value for money	Revised PMT structure and revised budgets submitted.
Finalise the activity log and identify measurable targets for the agreed outputs	Completed for inception. Work plan to supersede activity log and measurable targets to be agreed once the work plan agreed.

## 5. Strategic Framework

This section focuses on approach to the use of PEA in programme development and implementation, our theory of change and strategy for gender and social inclusion. It also outlines our thinking, to be fleshed out during the implementation phase, on how we propose to work with Parliament, civil society strengthening, the Media and grants and grants-making.

### 5.1 Political Economy Analysis (PEA)

Key elements of our PEA approach include:

- Embedding a PEA approach in programme development and implementation. This is to enable the programme draw on contextual knowledge to inform decision making processes on an on-going basis and thereby support an iterative learning process and adaptive approach to programming.
- Supporting key programme stakeholders through, for example, capacity building and technical assistance to continuously update their understanding of the context and issues and draw lessons and implications to guide their actions. This will move the focus away from the use of external consultants to conduct periodic one-off PEAs to integrating a PEA approach in how we and our partners work.
- The PMT conducting regular ‘light touch’ analysis and regular reviews of the theory of change to test assumptions and update planned strategies and activities as a result. The PEA will also contribute to the programme baseline, and then into subsequent monitoring and evaluation.

A three-phase process was therefore designed to support implementation of this approach, namely:

- Review of the PEA work undertaken during STAR-Ghana phase I to inform strategic programming. This scoping review will also identify broad issues which the SC can test with key stakeholders in order to identify potential entry points for change.
- Develop a Technical Approach Paper (TAP) to guide the PMT and other programme stakeholders develop a more systematic and participatory approach to PEA;
- Conduct a ‘foundational’ PEA, building on the scoping review and focusing primarily on a review of existing PEAs, to identify issues with potential traction for achieving programme objectives and the main actors and how to engage with them. This

‘foundational PEA’ will of course be updated continuously during programme implementation.

- Building a body of evidence on what works, which analyses how change has been achieved (or otherwise).

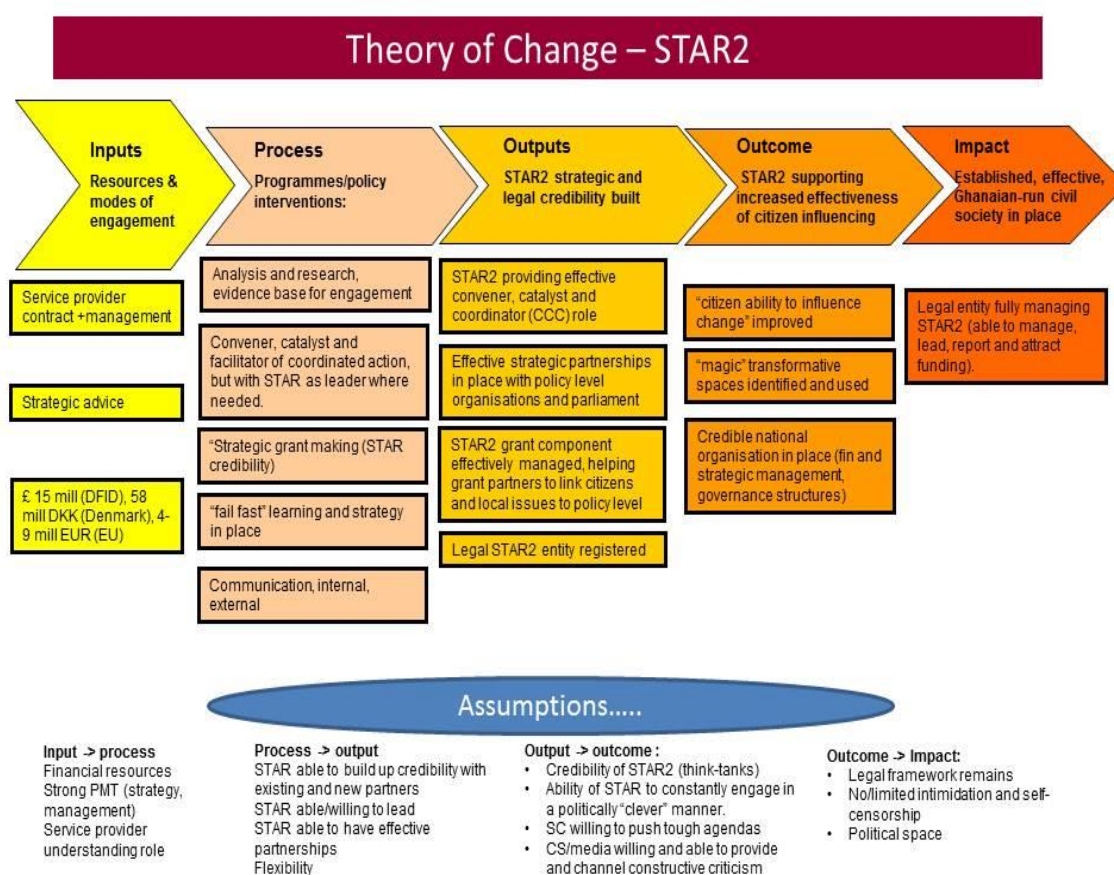
The first two steps in the process have been achieved. The Overseas Development Institute (ODI), one of the Christian Aid consortium partners, led on the scoping study the report of which is attached to this report as Annex 1. The PMT has also developed a draft TAP which will be reviewed and finalised early in year 1 of the implementation phase.

We have also planned PEAs on civil society and on exclusion. These will feed into refining our programme strategies, including selection of partners at all levels of governance.

## 5.2 Theory of Change

The Theory of Change (ToC) used by the PMT during the inception phase to guide the development of the strategic frameworks and in the SC’s dialogue with stakeholders is the version set out in the DFID Business Case. See Figure 1:

**Figure 1: STAR-Ghana Theory of Change**



The TOC will be updated in Year 1 of the implementation phase to take account of the findings and recommendations of the programme and civil society PEAs to be commissioned by the SC. The TOC will be reviewed constantly by the SC as stakeholders learn more about the context and implementation throws up lessons on how transformational change happens and what role a programme like STAR-Ghana can play in that process.

### **5.3 Gender and Social Inclusion**

The gender equality and social inclusion (GESI) strategy, attached as Annex 2, defines an approach which ensures that equal opportunities for women, girls, men and boys, and a 'level playing field' for all social groups are core values and practices within STAR-Ghana. The ultimate aim is to imprint GESI into the programme's 'DNA' and into its role as a convenor, coordinator and catalyst of civil society.

To meet this objective, the strategy looks 'inward' to what is happening within the programme as well as 'outward' to its programmes and partnerships, and focuses on four strategic objectives:

1. Organisational/institutional development
2. Mainstreaming
3. Collective action and movement building for social inclusion
4. Collective action and movement building for gender equality.

The strategy applies a gender and social justice framework to STAR's institutionalisation process<sup>1</sup>, commits to carry out GESI analysis in all programmes, and supports the achievement of specific GESI results. It aims to:

- Develop an institution and workplace that embraces social inclusion and equality;
- Support programmes and grant partners to consider equality and social inclusion in their design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation (M&E); and
- Facilitate collective action and movement building in respect to gender equality and social inclusion.

The GESI strategy is a work in progress and will continue to evolve in response to changes in the context, priorities and lessons learnt.

The strategy recommends the use of six GESI principles or standards:

- Placing equal emphasis on gender equality and social inclusion;

---

<sup>1</sup> That is, the process of progressing from a donor project to an independent and freestanding legal entity.

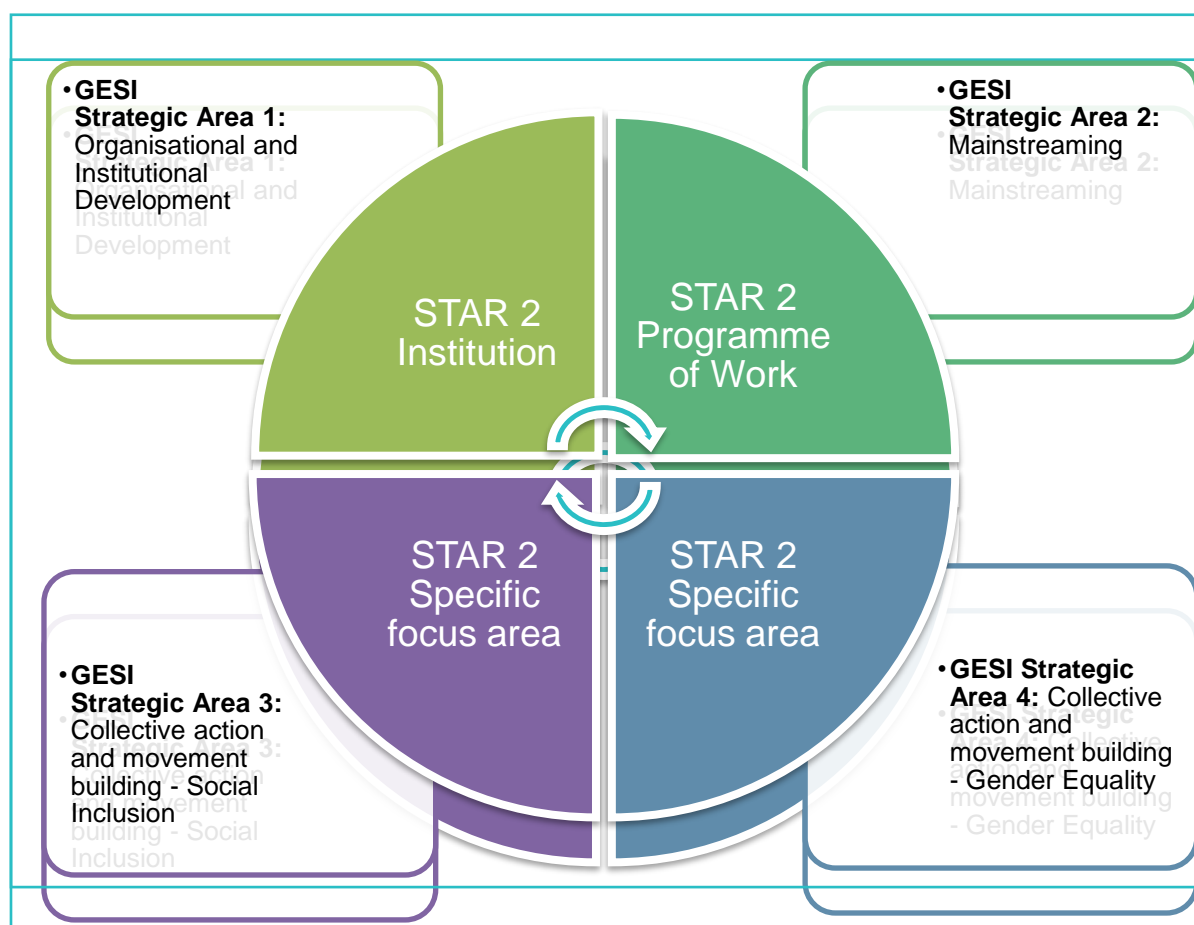
- Interpreting exclusion to encompass social groups (for example, youth, people living with disabilities (PwDs) and migrants) as well as other factors influencing exclusion (e.g. one's location, type of civil society organisation);
- Addressing systemic issues, including institutional structures, policies and social norms that underpin gender inequality and social exclusion;
- Disaggregating data based on gender and exclusion, finding where inequalities overlap (for example women with disabilities);
- Consulting and engaging with men and other groups that influence conditions for the empowerment of women and other excluded groups, but not at the expense of the meaningful involvement of women and girls; and
- Focusing on transformative change related to gender relations and power relations between influential and excluded groups.

In addition, it proposes the use of a selection of tools that will give the strategy implementation some power and clout, in the form of authority, expertise or financial resources. These include:

- Earmarking funds for the achievement of GESI objectives;
- Exploring the possibility of establishing grant calls that are specific to GESI issues and themes;
- Creating a full time and senior GESI officer position with additional responsibility for capacity building (CB);
- Ensuring STAR-Ghana's leadership is representative of women and excluded groups and that they champion GESI;
- Incorporating the GESI vision, targets and indicators into STAR-Ghana's M&E framework;
- Promoting GESI in all activities that are branded as elements of STAR-Ghana.

Figure 2 below provides an overview of STAR-Ghana's GESI framework.

**Figure 2: Overview of STAR-Ghana's GESI framework**



#### **5.4 Working with Parliament**

The STAR-Ghana1 Parliament support strategy will be reviewed in the first six months of the implementation phase, to take account of STAR2's focus and overall strategic directions and the findings of the PEA.

The rationale for seeking to continue to work with and support Parliament has been made in both the DFID Business Case and the SC Design Framework. The design documents recognise the fact that Parliament's two major roles as an oversight body and creator of legislation put it on both the demand-side and supply-side of governance and therefore critical to the achievement of the programme's goal and objectives.

STAR1's successful working relationship with Parliament, which took 4.5 years to develop to the point that it achieved results, such as the revision of the Standing Order process, will be leveraged to help focus the partnership on addressing the systemic constraints to Parliament's effectiveness.

The programme will continue to commit time and other resources to:

- Build relationships with key individuals in Parliament;
- Build trust through working to the grain rather than against the grain, at least in the initial stages of the re-engagement in STAR2;

In addition, the influence of the SC will be leveraged to help ‘open doors’ in Parliament for both the PMT and its civil society partners. The strategy of ‘leading from behind’ and being guided by Parliament’s own priorities for intervention will continue to inform how the programme works with Parliament. .

Based on the programme’s strategic objectives and the results and lessons from STAR1, it is expected that its partnership with Parliament will focus on:

- **Strengthening the capacity and effectiveness** of key units of Parliament – in particular the Leadership, Parliamentary Committees, and Parliamentary Service, with the intention of finding innovative and more effective ways of working. This may include institutionalising the Leadership Forums, linking the proposed Scrutiny Office more organically with the Research Unit of Parliament, and strengthening spaces for civil society-Parliament dialogues, particularly at the committee levels.
- **Catalysing Parliamentary engagement with citizens** through innovative mechanisms. Social media has proved a popular and cost-effective means of engaging individuals in Parliament’s oversight role. For example, building on a pilot funded by STAR-Ghana, Parliament launched the “Connecting Citizens to Parliament” digital platform project. This will widen the ability of citizens and CSOs to directly monitor projects and interventions promised by the Executive.
- **Engage Parliament on more difficult issues**, such as the relationship with the Executive, the process of constitutional review (ie. the way in which the review is done, as opposed to the issues that need changing), debates over secret voting, and working with political parties. Having built trust through STAR1, STAR2 can now focus on catalysing conversations and actions on these systemic issues.
- **Convene spaces** for more effective engagements between Parliament, CSOs and the media, for example by scaling up joint outreach, as CSOs and Parliament successfully did in the education sector in STAR1. STAR2 can make this happen by linking up groups and providing evidence of the benefits this brings for both parties.
- **Coordinate partnerships** between Parliament, citizens, CSOs and media through learning conventions, communication of successes and challenges, and monitoring progress. While STAR1 organised thematic platforms of Parliament and civil society, STAR2 will go further to encourage thematic alliances to mobilise themselves and invite Parliament to join. STAR2 can use its convening power to build linkages between alliances and Parliament and actively push Parliament to join these groups.

In STAR1, the SC started exploring the concept of parliaments to encompass the National Parliament and District Assemblies (DAs) and how to engage with and support these bodies. The Christian Aid tender document also mentioned the importance of DAs in the country’s governance architecture. We will, together with our strategic national partners, explore entry points to engage with and support DAs as part of increasing the effectiveness of citizens’ voices in governance.



## 5.5 Working with the Media

The approach to working with the media is one of the strategies to be developed in the early stages of the implementation phase. It will build on the results and lessons from STAR1s' work engaging with the media.

The media is a critical partner for STAR2, both as an agent of change and subject/recipient of the change processes. A strong media can enable accountability through amplifying issues. Programme support to the media will:

- **Support partners to work on media reform**, for example reform of the legal and institutional framework.
- **Build capacity of media organisations** to provide quality journalism of national development issues, through mentoring and peer learning. In particular, we will strengthen the capacity of the Parliamentary press corps.
- **Build the critical “media – civil society – Parliament nexus”** through proactively linking partners in civil society and Parliament to media organisations to better push for change and amplify issues.
- **Use the media to share STAR-Ghana's work** – for example through documentaries, press reports, radio series and social media. STAR1 funded 'Mission Ghana' on TV3 and during the 2012 election call, funded roving reporters to give colour to the work of STAR's media grant partners.
- **Support media organisations develop and implement projects**, through a combination of grant funding, technical assistance and linkages with other stakeholders, to develop and implement projects aimed at increasing transparency, accountability and responsiveness in Ghana. The STAR1 Media call provides useful lessons for the development of this area of support.
- **Support the innovative use of social media** to connect citizens with government, particularly in the rural areas and for excluded social groups. The programme, with support from On Our Radar (one of the consortium partners) will roll out a pilot to connect citizens' voices with local government bodies for improved service delivery in the early stages of implementation. The lessons from this intervention will provide input for scaling up and consolidating this approach.

## 5.6 Civil Society Strengthening

Capacity building (CB) support to programme partners, particularly CSOs, is critical to the achievement of the programme's strategic objectives. We will use a combination of 'tools', including grants and CB to drive change.

The planned Year 1 programme and civil society PEAs will provide input for the development of STAR-Ghana's approach to civil society strengthening. This approach will draw on the lessons from STAR1 and similar programmes and Christian Aid and other consortium partners' own experiences to develop an approach that takes account of the needs and context of the types of CSOs the programme aims to engage with. Our Approach to Grants and Grant-making

## 5.7 Our Approach to Grants and Grant-making

The programme's grants strategy will be developed early in the implementation phase. This section therefore sets out the PMT's initial thoughts for the strategy, based on the programme's design documents, particularly the Business Case and the SC Design framework; it is also informed by the approach set out in Christian Aid's tender for STAR2. These initial thoughts will inform the development of the strategy.

Grant making enables civil society to carry out activities, build coalitions for change, and operate within the available spaces. Evidence from STAR 1 and other programmes have shown that giving grants alone does not lead to transformational change. To achieve impact, grant making must:

- Fit within a broader strategy;
- Be based on sound evidence, both in situation analysis and in an understanding of how change happens;
- Incorporate strong evidence gathering to inform subsequent actions.
- Be looking to a sustainable post grants future phase.

In STAR2 therefore, grants will be one among the diverse 'tools' for driving change. Specifically, they will be used strategically to unlock blockages to change and catalyse citizen action through piloting approaches, developing evidence and building alliances among stakeholders.

The key elements of the programme's grants strategy will therefore be based on the following broad principles and recommendations:

- Grants will be integrated into how the programme works to achieve its strategic objectives. STAR-Ghana will shift from being primarily a grant-making mechanism to a programme which uses a combination grants and other tools and approaches to address systemic challenges to achieving inclusive and transformational development;
- A combination of competitive and more 'managed' funding will be used to reach and support a variety of stakeholders and to help address diverse issues.
- Competitive funding encourages applicants to deliver safe, lower-risk projects where results can be better assured, but limits impacts and change, especially at national level.
- Managed calls bring together alliances and specifically create the opportunity to engage the media, the private sector and "new" activist groups more likely to result in high impact results around key issues. This will also include piloting/taking to scale models of citizen mobilisation and engagement;
- A Strategic Opportunities Fund enabling rapid reaction to emerging 'hot' issues that can be key to achieving systemic change. The SC, with support from the PMT, will identify these key issues through longitudinal PEAs embedded in programme implementation and interactions with stakeholders;

- The programme budget for the duration of the programme is £15.6m, and we propose this is broken down into 80% for grant costs and 20% for other programme costs as follows:

<b>Grant Allocation</b>	Competitive grants	£2.5m
	Managed grants	£2m
	Strategic opportunities fund	£1.8m
	Engagement with Parliament	£1m
	Elections Call (2016)	£1.8m
	Endowment fund	£1.5m
<b>Sub-total [a]</b>		<b>£10.6M</b>
<b>Other programme costs</b>	M&E	£400
	3C&L	£200
	Capacity Building	£910k
	Steering committee	£390k
	Communications & Learning	£300k
	Grant support	£2m
	Technical Assistance	£800
<b>Sub-total [b]</b>		<b>£5M</b>
<b>Total programme budget [a] + [b]</b>		<b>£15.6M</b>

- Capacity building will be integrated into grants support to GPs, both state and non-state actors;
- A conscious effort will be made to reach and work with a wider range of CSOs, including those working with and supporting excluded social groups and with less formally organised citizens' groups and movements. The proposed update of the civil society (CS) PEA will inform the approaches to be used in reaching and working with these broad range of CSOs;
- Part of the grants, to be managed by the SC, will be used to convene collective influence and strengthen spaces for engagements particularly between CS and Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) at national and local levels. This will also include the costs of building networks, gathering evidence (especially at local level), undertaking dialogues, communicating results, sharing learning, and monitoring and assessing the impact of the changes achieved – at national and local levels;
- Grants will also be used to help 'grow' legacy organisations to take forward the work started under STAR1's sustainability workstream;
- Continue to build the capacity and effectiveness of Parliament to be the key interlocutor between citizens and the Executive; and
- Part of the grants budget will be set aside to cover the costs of mentors to help the PMT manage grant delivery, expenditure and performance, particularly among non-traditional partners.

## 5.8 Non-grants support to partners

We recognise that giving grants alone does not lead to transformational change; grants will have to be complemented by non-grant support in order to help drive change.

We will define these non-grant ‘tools’ early in the implementation phase. These may include:

- **Providing evidence, tools and innovative ways to mobilise resources:** We will facilitate access to evidence, links to other partners with evidence, and assistance in packaging and communicating evidence for the greatest impact. This will be complemented with ‘technical’ tools and mechanisms for interacting with government and other power-holders, as well as assistance to improve ‘resourcefulness’ through developing diversified funding sources and innovative ways of mobilising resources;
- **Facilitating alliances, aided by the credibility of the STAR ‘brand’:** Alliances are central to STAR2’s collaborative approach for stimulating citizens’ action. We will support formal and informal coalitions of change actors.
- **Providing integrated capacity building support to partners:** Our capacity building strategy will combine support in strengthening partners’ technical abilities with strengthening the ability to act politically. We will also review and take forward the civil society sustainability workstream under which CSOs were supported to develop and implement action plans towards their longterm sustainability.
- **Convening dialogue on critical and sensitive national issues:** STAR-Ghana has developed a strong convening power, which has enabled it to bring together influential individuals in a way that previous donor-funded civil society initiatives had been unable to do. CSOs have often shied away from tackling sensitive national issues, no matter how critical these may be. The effect has been to limit their effectiveness. In such cases, the programme will actively create spaces for change or push through blocked issues.

## 6. Performance and Learning

Covers our work on Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E), including a revised logframe and M&E framework and our Communication strategy. The processes for developing our approach to Value for Money (VFM) and Learning are also outlined.

### 6.1 Monitoring and Evaluation

The approach to M&E will be a strategic one, using M&E to inform programme decisions and to optimise learning at every level of the programme as well as evidence and demonstrate results. Christian Aid’s approach is to support partners of all kinds to be very specific about the desired changes, and the logic behind how their activities could bring about those changes. For STAR-Ghana we will build on the systems developed during STAR-Ghana 1 and develop a refined and results orientated approach based on realistic intervention logics.

The programme team will conduct a rolling programme of field visits to grant partners on a quarterly basis to discuss progress and challenges in achieving outputs, outcomes and overall objectives, changes in the context and solutions to any problems encountered. There will also be a particular focus on discussing and reviewing VfM, equity, and gender. Monitoring visits will also be used to assess and discuss capacity building needs with the

partners, and identify similar issues across projects within the same regions, which will feed into the capacity building plans of grant partners

During inception, the primary focus was on reviewing the logframe, developing the M&E manual, and M&E framework. The work was carried out by an M&E consultant who was hired for the duration of the inception. The logframe is the main reference document on strategic level indicators. During the inception, the M&E consultant did a thorough review of the programme logframe which involved holding discussions with stakeholders at two programme retreats held in April and May respectively, as well as extensive discussions with the PMT and consortium partners. Proposals for revision to the logframe have emerged from these consultations, which are now presented to DFID and the Steering Committee for review discussion and approval.

In this period, the PMT has also developed an M&E manual which outlines the programme approach to monitoring, evaluation and learning. The manual is oriented towards informing STAR-Ghana's needs for learning, improved performance and evidence. It aims to provide concise guidance as well as promote a common understanding on processes, standards, principles and requirements of monitoring, evaluation and learning within STAR-Ghana programme context.

This will be further developed and tested, in particular the specific M&E tools and templates/reports early in implementation.

A light touch baseline report of STAR-Ghana programme indicators as outlined in the logframe has also been developed. The baseline is also informed by the Political Economy Analysis (PEA) scoping study. The purpose of the baseline is to establish the pre-intervention situation of indicators relevant to both internal and external actors and stakeholders. It will serve as the basis for measuring progress and change over the programme's life cycle. During inception, the logframe was not fully populated with baseline data; this to follow early in implementation once indicators have been agreed and complementary primary data has been collected.

In the Christian Aid tender we outlined proposals to procure a Management Information System based on the detailed context analysis and results framework to be developed as below during the inception phase. This will be taken forward in the first year of implementation once the results framework is agreed, commencing with a VfM consideration of what is most appropriate for STAR based on experience and learning to date.

The revised draft logframe, M&E Manual, M&E framework, complement of indicators, and baseline report, are attached as Annexes 3a, 3b, 3c, 3d and 3e respectively.

## **6.2 Communications**

At the heart of programme implementation is communications. The programme outcome and outputs all require robust, coordinated communications to guarantee their success. Communication is therefore being used as a tool to achieve programme objectives and to support citizens to hold the state accountable and responsive at all levels of governance.

### **6.2.1 Development of Strategy**

A draft Communication strategy (Annex 4) is tied to the development of the draft key Phase II messages has been developed to help the programme communicate the shift in focus between Phase I and Phase II. The strategy defines an approach for facilitating and promoting the sharing of information, replicable models, lessons and results within the programme, between the programme and its stakeholders and among stakeholders.

To enable the programme effectively communicate the evidence of change produced by the programme, communications will be integrated within all the other work streams to ensure a more rounded communication with a diverse range of audiences.

The strategy also seeks to champion citizen voice communications, support the achievement of the programme goal and contribute to the body of evidence of what works and what doesn't work in the Ghana context.

### **6.2.2 Digital presence**

STAR-Ghana's digital communication channels have been updated and refreshed. This includes the development of a sub-site of the Phase one website for the Election 2016 Call. The site is updated with content that reflects the strategic direction of this phase of the programme. In the implementation phase, the Phase I website will be reviewed and redesigned with a CMS that is optimised for digital devices.

The Programme's social media pages such as Facebook, twitter and YouTube have been reactivated with up-to-date and relevant information and content (specifically on the Election Call).

The Programme's digital presence enabled the STAR-Ghana to communicate widely to other audiences specifically during the GPs orientation workshop. It also provides an opportunity for Partners to continuously engage the programme through their social media channel.

### **6.2.3 Brand refresh**

STAR-Ghana has refreshed its programme logo to give it a very vibrant appeal. For coherence and consistency, external branding guidelines to guide partners on their external communication activities in relation to STAR-Ghana's support has been developed and disseminated to Partners. Key branding materials such as Frequently asked questions (FAQs) document that has answers to anticipated questions on Phase II, funding windows, grants, the grant process, call for proposals, the application process, media engagement, etc. and a programme brochure on STAR-Ghana specifying how phase II is different from phase I will be developed early in the implementation phase.

### **6.2.4 Election Call Launch**

Communications support to the Elections 2016 Call for proposals included advertisements in the national newspapers, announcements, press releases, website with online application form. The programme has since inception organised seven communication events in

support of the election call. These included: four zonal information sessions to take prospective applicants through the grant application process and its requirements, a Grants award signing ceremony to formally seal the relationship with the successful applicants, a Press Interaction and a Grant Partners Orientation workshop which provided a platform for Grants Partners to better understand STAR-Ghana's reporting requirements; clarify expectations before projects commenced and provided a platform for identifying synergies amongst grantees and key stakeholders within the electoral cycle.

Following, the GPs Orientation workshop, thirteen GPs came together to jointly launch their projects on 21<sup>st</sup> April 2016. These partners include: ABANTU, LRC/LADA, CDD, Citi FM, MUSIGA, AWLA, BloggingGhana, FSDA, SocioServe Ghana, National Media Commission, Ghana Federation of the Disabled, IDEG and GII. This is a pointer to how useful the Orientation workshop has been in facilitating linkages and collaboration between partners.

Information sessions have proved crucial in reducing the misunderstanding in the grant cycle and also served as a feedback loop to applicants. Following the feedback received from the information sessions the following key application documents were reviewed: the Results Framework (to include Results for Year 2 for the Strategic Component); and the Budget Template (to include a dollar conversion).

### **6.3 Value for Money**

A VfM framework is to be delivered and embedded in reporting early in implementation. Mango will be assisting with this, and we will be using learning commissioned by ENCISS Sierra Leone to assist in coming up with appropriate VfM indicators. The process of developing a robust VfM framework will include learning from STAR 1 initiatives such as the pilot measuring the value of social projects, and other reflections from STAR1 as well as other Christian Aid managed programmes. VfM is proposed to be built into all programme strategies with appropriate indicators, and partner capacity building will include on VfM capacity.

The "4 E" approach is central to our approach, with Equity being fundamental – this is already reflected in the focus on GESI but subject to SC approval will also be reflected in grant strategies, balancing risk against ensuring the programme reaches those organisations and citizens who might typically be overlooked.

It is too early in inception to report on VfM substantively. However:

The biggest event in VfM terms so far has been the elections call. The budget for the Call, and also the structure of it, were designed so as to maximise the reach and benefits of the Call – a robust mixture of strategic national grants, media support and an open call to ensure a wide reach. Learning from STAR 1 elections work was used to assist in setting the overall budget for the Call. 15% of the total call budget of GBP1.88m was set aside for preparation of the call, due diligence, orientation and learning events which will significantly enhance the value of the grants.

VfM has been built into our approach to documenting decision making already, which is a key aspect of VfM, ie documenting a clear VfM basis of decisions taken at every step. We ensure all internal decisions are documented, visiting consultants submitting reports demonstrating the outputs from trips, procurements including of consultants being documented. Where possible systems have been adopted from Christian Aid or STAR 1 to avoid creating additional cost and disruption. Where cost effective, assets were transferred from STAR 1 including the office.

Our revised staff structure proposed is based around VfM – ensuring a PMT that is fully fit for purpose for the new STAR2 role while ensuring where possible roles are combined/ the need for external consultants (such as for due diligence and monitoring) are minimised.

#### **6.4 Learning**

Learning has been an integral part of the STAR-Ghana programme. Under STAR1, this included ongoing learning from own practices, as well as learning from related experiences such as learning from Bangladeshi and Tanzanian experiences in the development of national entities. STAR 1 was also active in supporting broader learning processes among key stakeholders. .

The further development and systematisation of the STAR-Ghana learning platform was identified by the Steering Committee as an important task for STAR 2. In the tendering process for management of STAR 2, the Christian Aid (CA) Consortium developed a tentative approach to continuous learning through a ‘Community of Practice and Learning (COPL).’ The COPL was informed by a vision of STAR-Ghana an important innovation laboratory for transparency, accountability and responsiveness in Africa backed with a strong commitment to ‘learning by doing’ and ‘learning from trial and error’ (harvesting lessons from and success and setbacks).

The COPL has been conceptualised with two major focus areas:

- Internal Star COPL, including: STAR-Ghana SC and PMT as well as the Consortium partners;
- External STAR-Ghana COPL, including GPs, strategic partners and key stakeholders.

Rather than being one learning entity, COPL is understood as communities of learning bound together by shared objectives and methods in support of overall STAR-Ghana objectives. Strengthening the role of STAR-Ghana as a learning programme and as a learning hub for Ghanaian civil society and other relevant stakeholders, is a means as well as an end in the development of the programme into an autonomous entity, with an enhanced role beyond a grant-making.

The overall objectives of the COPL include:

- Realise STAR-Ghana’s full potential as a partnership of knowledge, practice and learning.



- Foster continuous learning for STAR-Ghana through an integrated approach to evidence, sharing knowledge and building capacity.
- Create dynamic spaces for learning, trust-building and collective action on lessons and challenges as they emerge (including facilitation of collaboration between key research/think tank, media and policy partners).
- Enable STAR-Ghana to share its unfolding story of innovation with a range of key audiences, in Ghana and beyond.

Consultations were started at the tail end of the inception phase to develop the above thinking into a detailed strategy. This was led by SDD, a consortium partner. It is expected that the strategy will be ready within the first quarter of the implementation phase.

## **7 Programme governance and management**

This section presents the programme governance structure, including the Steering Committee and its associated/sub-committees; programme management team and consortium; and our approach to managing programme risk.

### **7.1 Programme governance**

The SC is the main governing body for STAR2. The composition of the SC during the inception phase was the same as it was during STAR1.

The role of the SC in the current phase of the programme is significantly more strategic than in the previous phase. It leads on strategic programme development and management oversight (including workplan approvals, reports, reviews and audits), as well as the drive towards the development of the independent entity. The SC has three sub-committees, namely the Grants and Finance and Audit sub-committees.

It is envisaged in the contract with Christian Aid that in the initial 3 years formal implementation will be through Christian Aid, who will manage grants, put in place a programme management team (PMT), provide strategic advice to the SC and PMT, as well as specific advice on establishment of a body corporate entity, capable of receiving and managing accountable grants from year 4. A transition to the SC assuming control of an independent entity was envisaged.

The Funders' Committee (FC) comprises DFID, DANIDA and the European Union.

In addition to its regular bi-monthly meetings, the SC held one retreat to review programme strategies, particularly in relation to the transition to an independent entity (report attached as Annex 5a). Christian Aid and Social Development Direct (SDD) participated in a specific session of the retreat which dealt with the transition.

A second retreat was held at the end of the inception phase to review programme implementation to date and provide feedback on the programme's emerging strategic

framework. In addition to the SC members, participants included the consortium partners, donor partners and the PMT (see report attached as Annex 5b).

This governance structure is as it is to enable a smooth transition to a Ghanaian led entity able to continue beyond the end of the contract. However it does create a significant degree of programme risk which was highlighted by the DFID Annual Review. There needs to be a clearer understanding of the extent of delegation of operational decision making to the PMT/Christian Aid as the day to day management of STAR Ghana and a clear understanding of the strategic and oversight role of the SC and relationship with the donors as it transitions to a Board of an independent entity.

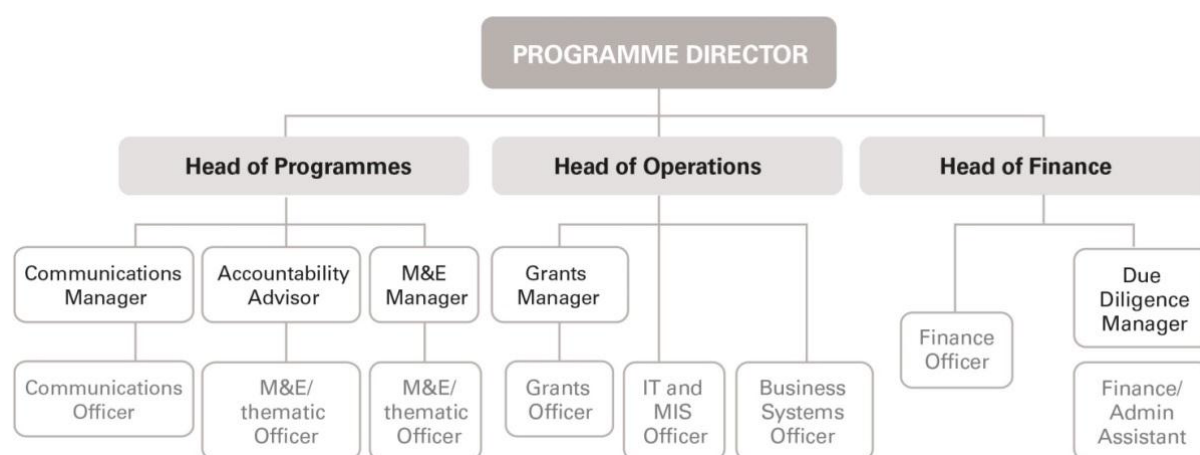
## 7.2 Programme Management

STAR-Ghana is managed by a Service Provider (SP), Christian Aid, working with consortium partners Social Development Direct (SDD), MANGO, Nkum Associates, Overseas Development Institute (ODI) and On Our Radar (OOR). CA holds the contract with DFID and is the lead consortium partner.

The consortium has established a Programme Management Team (PMT), based in Accra, to manage the day-to-day running of the programme.

The structure of the PMT during the Inception Phase is shown in Figure 3 below.

**Figure 3: PMT structure – inception phase**



The roles and their roles and responsibilities are summarised in Table 3 below:

**Table 3: PMT roles and responsibilities – inception phase**

Programme management team	Areas of responsibility
Management Team	Led by the Programme Director and comprising the Heads of Programmes (Deputy Team Leader), Finance and Operations.

	Provides strategic direction and overall management, reporting to the SC and within CA: presenting plans, monitoring progress and use of resources, managing risks, identifying and obtaining necessary support and advice, and initiating corrective action where necessary.
Finance Team	Led by the Head of Finance. Manages STAR-Ghana's financial operation, and leads on support to Grant Partners to ensure their compliance.
Operations Team	Led by the Head of Operations. Manages the Human Resources, administrative and logistics functions within STAR-Ghana. Ensures compliance with the Operations Manual, policies, contracts, procedures and other project processes. Ensures collective responsibility and stewardship of programme resources and assets.
Programmes Team	Led by the Head of Programmes. Provides technical insights, ensures effective implementation of programme activities, in accordance with the strategy, logframe and the work plans. Oversees on-going programme monitoring of outputs and outcomes. Ensures effective knowledge management of the programme involving monitoring, evaluation, research, reporting, documenting and sharing and learning internally and externally.
Grants and Due Diligence Team	Led by the Grants Manager. Responsible for the overall management of grants and fiduciary risks; management of the grant selection process, and the grants cycle process.
Monitoring & Evaluation Team	Led by the Senior Monitoring and Evaluation Manager. Ensures that STAR-GHANA's outputs remain on track, and that best practice and lesson learning are continually fed back into the programme. Also providing M&E technical support to grant partners.
UK Support Team	Provides oversight, technical and contractual support to the PMT.

At the end of the Inception phase in April 2016, a number of changes are being proposed to the structure for the implementation phase and through to the transition of the programme into an independent national entity.

These changes are being proposed to help improve effectiveness and efficiency of the Programme Management Team (PMT) and its relations with key STAR-Ghana stakeholders. They are also intended to ensure that the programme's focus on civil society strengthening, convening and facilitating spaces for dialogue between 'supply' and 'demand' actors in governance` and a more explicit focus on GESI, find expression and are adequately resourced in the PMT structure. The proposed revision will therefore:

- reflect the programmatic focus of STAR2, particularly on civil society strengthening, GESI and strategic engagements between citizens and policymakers;
- help to address fiduciary risks at the level of GPs through the strengthening of the due diligence function in the programme;
- Strengthen the PMT and GPs' capacity to embed PEA as a way of working to enhance the effectiveness of STAR-Ghana influencing actions.

Overall the intention is that the PMU is fit for purpose to transition to managing an independent entity after 3 years.

**Table 4: Overview of proposed changes to PMT structure and composition**

Position	Original Structure	Revised Structure
Senior Management Team	<b>3</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Programme Director;</li> <li>• Head of Programmes, Finance and Operations</li> </ul>	<b>4</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Programme Director;</li> <li>• Head of Programmes, Finance and Operations</li> <li>• <b>Accountability &amp; Governance Advisor</b></li> </ul>
Communications Team	<b>2</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communications Manager</li> <li>• Communications Officer</li> </ul>	<b>1</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communications Manager</li> </ul>
Results Team	<b>4</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• M&amp;E Manager</li> <li>• Accountability Advisor</li> <li>• M&amp;E Officers x 2</li> </ul>	<b>3</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Senior M&amp;E Manager</li> <li>• M&amp;E Officers x 2</li> </ul>
Finance Team	<b>3</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Finance Officer</li> <li>• Finance Assistant</li> <li>• Due Diligence Manager</li> </ul>	<b>3</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Finance Officers x <b>2</b></li> <li>• Finance Assistant x 1</li> </ul>
Grants & Due Diligence Team	<b>2</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grants Manager</li> <li>• Grants Officer x 1</li> </ul>	<b>2</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grants &amp; <b>Due Diligence</b> manager</li> <li>• <b>Due Diligence Officer x 1</b></li> </ul>
Civil Society Support Team		<b>2</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Capacity Building &amp; GESI-support Manager</b></li> <li>• <b>Civil Society Support Officer</b></li> </ul>
Parliamentary Support		<b>1</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Parliamentary Support Manager</b></li> </ul>
Programme Support Team	<b>4</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• IT Officer x1</li> <li>• Business Systems Officer x1</li> <li>• Drivers x 1</li> </ul>	<b>5</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Programme Support Officer x1</b></li> <li>• <b>Cleaner/caretaker x 1</b></li> <li>• Drivers x <b>2</b></li> <li>• <b>Gardener x 1</b></li> </ul>

### **7.3 Risk Management**

STAR-Ghana's risk management strategy is based on the recognition that the programme must innovate and take risks, particularly to engage citizens and non-traditional partners. It is also based on the lessons from the first phase of the programme, particularly around managing fiduciary risks.

The strategies for managing transition, programmatic and fiduciary risks focus on flexibility, balancing risk and the drive for innovation and seeking to achieve transformational changes and continuously scanning for and adapting to new risks. From the outset, the PMT will:

- Identify all risks likely to impact on the programme;
- Assess both the probability of the risk occurring and the impact of the risk on programme delivery;
- Determine what mitigation measures can be put in place and the impact this has on the risk;
- Mitigate risks to an acceptable level by reviewing the Risk Matrix every quarter and incorporating lessons learned in the course of programme delivery
- React to emerging and changing political risks by updating the Risk Matrix and, in consultation with DFID and the SC, making appropriate revisions to programme strategy to ensure that approaches to implementation are appropriate to the changing context

#### **7.3.1 Managing programmatic risk**

Delivery of phase 2 of STAR-Ghana relies on assumptions regarding the overall state of governance, space for engagement and ability and desire of partners to engage collectively around issues. A proactive approach will be taken to identifying risks that could undermine these critical assumptions, and will continuously review approaches to delivery. The use of political economy analysis and embedding the analysis in on-going programme implementation and the PMT's engagement with the SC, DFID and other stakeholders will ensure that these risks are managed appropriately. Responsibility lies with the Programme Director (see risk matrix attached as Annex 6a).

#### **7.3.2 Managing grant partner portfolio risk – balancing risks with results**

STAR-Ghana needs to balance the risk of innovation with the need to achieve outputs and deliver VFM. The PMT will work with the SC to assess all interventions and grant fund allocations by:

- *Taking a portfolio approach to risk:* The programme will adopt a range of activities, including 'safer' ones and those that are more innovative. We will pilot several different innovations, using short feedback loops in the M&E system to determine which to scale up and which to immediately close down. This will spread the risks across a range of activities and will assist the SC in picking effective interventions.

- *Carefully analysing the risks relative to potential returns:* The programme will take risks for activities with the potential to greatly enhance citizen engagement, create space for dialogue and deliver high impacts. An example is working with political parties. The programme will not take high risks for activities where the potential payoff is much less. An example, from STAR1, was the SC's evidence-based decision, together with the SC, not to provide dedicated LGBT support, but rather to mainstream issues of exclusion within other initiatives.
- *Developing Risk registers for each Call:* Based on the findings from the longitudinal PEA studies, and the scoping studies preceding each call, the PMT will develop a risk register specific to each call. This register will be signed off by the SC and monitored regularly during the lifetime of the call and appropriate recommendations made to the SC for relevant remedial actions, if necessary, to be taken (see annex 6b attached for Election Call Risk Register).

Responsibility for this lies with the Head of Programmes.

### **7.3.3 Managing fiduciary risks**

The programme's processes for managing grants will build on learning from STAR1 and other Christian Aid managed grants funds and take account of the higher risks inherent in innovative projects and new partners and transition to the new organisation.

Mitigation is through effective grant processes (ensuring sound basis for awards), strong due diligence (and the role of MANGO in the consortium is a crucial advantage here), integrated financial and programmatic monitoring and grant level cash flow management. Responsibility lies with the Head of Finance, working with the Head of Programmes and Grants Manager. Specific measures put in place include:

- *Robust cost control by grantees:* Each partner must demonstrate good cost control that costs have been accounted for and represent best value. This will be monitored through the ongoing due diligence reviews and monitoring by the MEL team and the annual external audit.
- *Due diligence of grantee financial systems and controls:* Any significant defects will be remedied before grant disbursement. Applicants such as non-traditional partners and associations, will be trained to use a cash book based accounting tool or appoint a partner to manage monies to ensure STAR-Ghana can also fund activities.
- *Requiring grantees to open a dedicated bank account:* for grant funds. Grant agreements will contain clauses covering this and set out DFID compliant requirements on misuse of funds including fraud.
- *Development of Risk rating for GPs (attached as Annex 6c):* Based on the findings from the pre-award due diligence and experiences from STAR1, a risk register will be developed assessing the risk for each grant. This register, which will be updated with findings from audits and post-awards due diligence assessments, will form the basis for programme actions, including capacity building support, towards each GP.
- *Ensuring the corporate body has the right systems and resources in place to manage fiduciary risk:* A major element of the transition process will be to ensure that the new organisation can assume its fiduciary responsibilities from the outset. Initially Christian Aid's very robust PROMISE grants

management system will be used.

#### **7.3.4 Managing risks relating to transition to autonomous entity**

A number of risks have been highlighted relating to the transition to an autonomous body, both practical organisational issues and around fulfilling the intended role:

- *Ability of the Steering Committee and staff to take on the full additional responsibility:* This risk, highlighted by the Annual Review in February 2016, can be mitigated through a three-year transition process to allow for a gradual and considered shift of responsibility and roles to the SC, and development of a clear understanding of the operational decision making and delegation processes from donors to SC to PMT. The consortium is intentionally equipped to provide organisational development capacity building to the SC through the transition phase. Current arrangements are considered the primary risk faced by STAR Ghana as noted above.
- *Sound legal and financial status:* Christian Aid and Mango bring high-level and global experiences which will be brought to bear in supporting the SC address this risk.
- *Ability to source future funding:* This is a critical risk for sustainability. Mitigation is through a model that is flexible (able to operate at low cost at minimal level, and able to expand responsibly to manage significant additional resources) with secure transition funding. Further mitigation will be through the ongoing transitions options work commenced during inception.

#### **8. Operations**

- A fully functional programme office has been established (details attached as Annex 7).
- All planned procurements have been implemented and assets registers opened for each category of assets according to DFID guidelines;
- A draft Operations Manual has been developed and will be finalised based on feedback from DFID and the SC;

#### **9. The Elections Call**

A competitive call for proposals was launched in December 2015 targeting CSOs and other non-state actors interested in undertaking interventions aimed at enhancing transparency of activities around the electoral cycle and increasing the accountability and responsiveness of key electoral stakeholders.

Given the Electoral Commission's intention to bring forward the date for the presidential and parliamentary elections, the PMT had to develop a call process that would ensure that grant partners had enough time to implement their projects without sacrificing the rigor and transparency associated with the programme's grant making. In addition the PMT had to contend with the fact that the call was being launched at a time when the programme was



still in the process of defining its key strategic approaches and setting up operational systems.

The call process involved the following steps:

- Commissioning of technical papers collating lessons learned from previous STAR-Ghana and other donor-supported election related projects.
- A roundtable discussion to discuss the technical papers and make recommendations to STAR-Ghana focusing on a short-list of key issues around which STAR-Ghana could develop an election call (strategic and open); strategies for implementation of Election call taking cognisance of planned/ongoing actions by other actors; and opportunities for improved collaboration and networking among actors. See attached for Roundtable report;
- Advertisement of the call and information sessions in Accra, Tamale, Sunyani and Takoradi;
- Initial shortlisting by Independent assessors, due diligence assessments of shortlisted applicants, review of shortlist by the Grants sub-committee of the SC and approval of finalist of grant partners (GPs) by the SC;
- Contracting, orientation and disbursement of funds to GPs.

A detailed report on the Election Call is attached as Annex 8. Summary information on the approved projects is presented in table 5:

**Table 5: Election call facts**

Call Objective and Components	<p>To contribute to the achievement of peaceful, credible, issues-based and inclusive elections in 2016.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Open Component targeting all eligible CSO, irrespective of size, typology, location or programmatic focus and covering all activities in connection with the 2016 elections</li> <li>• Strategic Component targeting national level research and advocacy organisations and media houses with the capacity and credibility to mobilise broad alliances of stakeholders for long-term electoral reforms critical to strengthening democratic and accountable governance in Ghana</li> <li>• Media component to support the media work more effectively with other CSOs towards peaceful, credible and inclusive elections</li> </ul>
Grant Total	\$2.6m
Grant Partners	35 ( 5 Strategic, 21 Open and 9 Media)
Grant Duration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• – 12 months for Open and Media projects;</li> <li>• 12- 18 months for Strategic projects;</li> </ul>

Intervention areas	
Strategic Component	Electoral Reforms, Peace and Security, Adjudication of Electoral Disputes
Open Component	Voter Education, Inclusion and Participation, Issue Based Campaign / Manifestoes, Monitoring and Observation, Peace and Security
Media Component	Voter Education, Issue Based Campaign / Manifestoes, Monitoring and Observation, Inclusion and Participation

The Elections Call has enabled the programme to pilot tools for improving the quality of the grant making process, including integrating due diligence detailed budget assessments more effectively in the call process. These will be mainstreamed in the grants strategy in the implementation phase based on the lessons learned.

Key lessons learned include:

- For the projects to gain traction and contribute to the achievement of credible and inclusive elections, calls should be launched at least a year and a half ahead of the elections date. This enables the building of relationships and trust with key actors;
- Linked to the above is the period allowed interested organisations to develop their proposals. The longer the lead time allowed applicants, the better they are able to develop collaborations and contextualise their proposals. A lead period of at least 8 weeks is required for quality proposals.
- Given the tight timelines for the implementation of the call, the PMT forsook the two-stage application process in favour of a one-stage one. The downside of this approach was the huge numbers of full proposals that had to be assessed and the inability of the PMT to be more actively involved in shaping the final proposals;
- Despite the wording to that effect in the call advert and at the information sessions, it has been difficult to get CSOs to collaborate in submitting joint proposals or linking their proposals more clearly to complementary projects being undertaken by other CSOs. The silo or 'islandist' approach observed in the first phase of the programme was evident in the project proposals submitted. The programme will have to seek innovative approaches to incentivise joint working among CSOs;
- Competitive calls for proposals open to all CSOs usually tend to discriminate against smaller NGOs and CBOs. The number of CBOs and smaller organisations (who usually tend to be organisations of excluded social groups) who were awarded grants under this call was less than 5% of the total grant partners. The programme should consider allocating specific targets (in terms of budget or number of GPs) under each call for GESI organisations.
- Despite the CB support to a very large number of NGOs under the first phase of the programme, the quality of proposals received was generally quite poor, even for some of the big NGOs. This points to non-institutionalisation of capacity within the

organisations and should be factored into the development of STAR-Ghana's CB strategy.

## 10. DFID Annual Review

Attached at Annex 9

## 11. Finance

### 11.1 Finance Manual

A finance manual has been developed (attached as Annex 10) to support the implementation of STAR-Ghana and guide day-to-day financial management activities for the first three years of the Programme period. Financial management is the responsibility of all staff working on the STAR-Ghana programme. The manual has been informed by Christian Aid's policies and financial procedures and also draws on lessons and experiences from other programmes Christian Aid has managed. Mango also input to it.

### 11.2 Budget Performance

#### Inception Financial Report

#### Budget vs Actual to date

	GBP		Oct-Apr Actual	Variance	%
	5year Budget	Revised Inception Budget			
Daily living	136,805	21,880	13,147	8,733	40%
Equipment	133,025	98,090	28,677	69,413	71%
Management fee	5,255,194	674,073	491,603	182,470	27%
Office	963,616	116,926	196,969	(80,042)	-68%
Steering committee	389,400	5,280	8,388	(3,108)	-59%
Communications	107,370	9,956	5,065	4,891	49%
Programmatic activities	13,550,984	218,229	565,390	(347,161)	-159%
Support in Grant Making	-	-	95,739	(95,739)	-100%
Learning and capacity building	814,825	27,378	50,918	(23,541)	-86%
Other expenses	267,269	2,709	990	1,719	63%
Travel	311,513	41,895	25,640	16,255	39%
Vehicles	70,000	70,000	45,806	24,194	35%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>22,000,000</b>	<b>1,286,415</b>	<b>1,528,331</b>	<b>(241,916)</b>	<b>-19%</b>

**Note:** a revised budget has been submitted to DFID for approval based on a revised organogram. This report compares to the current budget. An extension of inception phase through to 20 June is also being requested but phasing of budgets has not been changed for this in this report.

**Note:** a revised budget has been submitted to DFID for approval based on a revised organogram. This report compares to the current budget. An extension of inception phase

through to 20 June is also being requested but phasing of budgets has not been changed for this in this report.

PBR milestones for implementation will be agreed following approval of the inception phase deliverables as these feed into KPIs and milestones.

Forecasting has been within expected tolerance in inception. It is noted that the grants and associated costs cannot be forecasted with accuracy until grants scoping has been done and calls undertaken, and this will be a feature of the forecasting process.

### **Behind the Figures:**

The inception budget was developed to support the original inception phase deliverables. There was an agreed revision to these deliverables which had an impact on the overall inception budget largely due to the need to launch a full grants call, including payments to grantees, within the six months. The variance of £242k relates mainly to the grants call. An extra £443k was a result of grants related spend, although this variance was nearly halved as a result of the inception phase savings made on management fees, travel, daily living and equipment. (Note: these are not offered as absolute savings but timing differences which will allow a total economy approach to implementation.

- **Travel/Daily Living**

Whilst travel specifically covers international and domestic flight cost, internal/ local transportation, vaccination, visa fees etc., daily living covers travel related accommodation cost and subsistence. Much of the cost pertained to consortium member travels to and from Ghana for their various assignments – this was budgeted for inception particularly to ensure rapid scale up. By effectively combining travels, delaying and combining some trips and planning ticket purchases to bring down unit price, value for money has been enhanced and savings made reducing budgetary pressure in first year of implementation when it is anticipated consortium visits etc will need to continue.

- **Equipment/Vehicles**

A lot of value for money was gained with the procurement of two vehicles for the Programme. With support from DFID in the procurement process, STAR Ghana had a competitive supplier who offered durable products with good rates and terms. STAR Ghana also used DFID as a conduit to get duty free status for the vehicles. Computers and other office set up equipment were procured from Christian Aid UK office. Using their leverage and competencies in procurement, group rebate and quality has been enhanced reducing the vehicle costs by GBP 24k which would be effectively allocated to other programme needs.

- **Management Fee**

Management fees cover fees for STAR Ghana dedicated staff, consortium members and Christian Aid support in country and in the UK. Recruitment of a full-fledged STAR Ghana is on-going, accounting for the initial low spend in the Management fees. Some recruitment was held back to ensure that the team structure could be reviewed in line with the implementation phase and therefore provide more effective support in the longer term. A proposed organogram has been put forward for review and agreement with DFID and SC and recruitments cannot be finalised pending this being agreed. These variances have been taken account of in the revised budget submitted to DFID.

- **Office**

Whilst covering the general office running consumables, STAR Ghana office cost not only covers utility cost but also vehicle maintenance, vehicle fuelling, insurance and IT retainer cost. The variance in the office cost relates to the office rent being paid in advance for the full length of the programme. This was not expected in the original budget but had to be done as per the contract with the landlord. With recent hikes in utility cost, incessant increase in fuel and fuel related products/parts, Office cost is a budget line that needs to be flagged and also monitored closely.

- **Steering Committee**

The inception phase saw more Steering Committee and Subcommittee meetings than expected in the original budget due to the need to meet for reviews and decision making especially on the various stages of the grant making processes. Additional transportation and accommodation cost etc., thus account for the large variance to budget. This budget line will need to be reviewed for implementation to ensure it covers the necessary costs to support the steering committee oversight, in particular with proposals for SC members to be paid daily rates for certain activities which is outside the PMT's control.

- **Communications**

This so far has covered cost on web hosting and initial work on identity branding. More cost is envisaged in the implementation stage.

- **Grant-Direct to Grant Partners**

The need to have the election call within the inception phase meant a larger spend on grants than was initially planned. Steering Committee approved c GBP1.85m for the election call grant including support for the grant making process. GBP 1.6m out of this was approved to thirty-five Grant Partners. The initial first tranche is GBP 565k.

- **Grant-Support in Grant Making**

Initial STAR 2 Contract Budget based on DFID pro forma had an overall "programme activities" line which was not broken down.. Learning from STAR 1, has necessitated

discussion on clearly earmarking designated amounts from grant money as support for the grant making process. For the election call, support cost in the Grant making process include cost for round table discussions, information sessions in four zones, cost relating to independent assessment and due diligence process in selecting grant partners, orientation workshop for Grant Partners etc. and were 15% of the total call budget. The VfM framework to be developed will take this into account and similar grants support costs will be associated with each call.

- **Learning and Capacity Building**

Cost included initial work on PEA and GESI, and M&E framework consultancy support.. Consortium/Staff learning retreat has also charged to this budget line.

- **Next Steps**

A revised budget has been submitted to DFID for approval based on a revised organogram. This report compares to the current budget. This would enable us submit a revised year one phased budget to DFID. However as the shape of future grants calls is subject to ongoing PEA work and the quality of proposals etc as agreed, the grant side of the budget will be provisional and subject to revision. This is an unavoidable feature of grants calls and is envisaged to be managed by the monthly forecast that accompanies each invoice.

An extension of inception phase through to 20 June is also being requested but phasing of budgets has not been changed for this in this report.

PBR milestones for implementation will be agreed following approval of the inception phase deliverables as these feed into KPIs and milestones.

## **12. Lessons Learned**

***Inception phase call:*** An Inception phase call is useful in helping to engage stakeholders while the programme's strategic framework is being developed and in some cases helps to pilot approaches which may be adapted for use in the implementation phase. These benefits need to be balanced against the diversion of critical PMT resources and attention to the development and implementation of the call. In addition, given STAR2's approach and focus, starting its major engagement with CSOs with a grant call makes it more difficult to shift the tone of the dialogue away from grants as the main means of engagement.

***Phased approach to recruitment:*** The programme adopted a phased approach to mobilising staff, starting with the management team and gradually bringing other members of the team as required in the workplan. This approach offered significant VFM in addition to ensuring that scarce management team was not tied up with orientations.

**Continuity:** STAR2 builds on the results and lessons of STAR1. This requires some continuity to enable a nuanced appreciation of the results, lessons and relationships, something that no amount of documentation can do. The continuity provided by having the SC continue from STAR1 and the former STAR1 Team Leader as Programme Director of STAR2 helped immensely in delivering on the Inception phase priorities – however a more structured handover of STAR1 documentation and facilitated handover to STAR2 is needed (and planned)

**Reaching diversity of CS:** The final selection of GPs for the election call demonstrated once again that the programme either needs to go beyond open calls to target smaller and less formally organised CSOs for support, or the calls process needs adapting to allow for this. Less than 5% of the 35 CSOs and media organisations awarded grants under the call can be classified either as CBOs, community radio or less formally organised CSOs. The qualifying criteria and assessment framework privileged big organisations with the capacity to write good proposals. Going forward, to remain true to its principles, the programme will need to introduce specific measures and calls targeting these organisations.

**Embedding technical capacity:** STAR1 invested significant resources in strengthening the technical capacities of its GPs. Most of these GPs applied for grants under the Elections Call and the expectation was that the CB from STAR1 would reflect in the quality of their proposals. This was however not the case, particularly in the areas of budgeting and developing results framework. In the Implementation phase, the programme's CB strategy will have to address the issue of how to support CSOs embed capacities for sustainability.

**GESI:** The Election call highlighted the need to have in-house GESI capacity in the PMT to support grant applicants and subsequently GPs to help them implement their projects. Bringing in external TA does not embed the capacity in-house, does not offer the same level of VFM and the external consultants may not be able to contextualise their support within the wider framework of the programme's overall strategic approach.

**SC Working Groups:** The SC set up a GESI Technical Advisory Group (GTAG) chaired by a member of the SC to, initially support the development of the GESI strategy and subsequently enabling ongoing dialogue and dialogue with programme stakeholders. This approach worked very well and it is recommended that it be replicated for other key areas of work such as the PEA, Media and CS strengthening.

**Governance arrangements:** the programme will be most effective where there is open dialogue at all levels between the SC, the donors, the PMT and the SP Christian Aid. The governance arrangements need clarifying and clear lines of delegation to the PMT from SC/donors establishing.

### **13. Priorities for Year 1 (Implementation phase)**

A detailed Gantt chart workplan for Year 1 of the Implementation phase and indicative workplan for Years 2 and 3 of implementation phase are attached as Annex 11. The workplan has been developed to the end of September 2018, after which the transition to the independent entity is expected to have been completed and the remaining two years work plan depends largely on the shape of the entity

The key priorities for the period are set out below:

#### **13.1 Strategic Framework**

##### **PEA**

- Conduct PEA update to inform selection of issues and actors for programme engagement;
- Update STAR1 civil society PEA;
- Finalise Technical Approach Paper (TAP) to guide embedding of PEA in programme development and implement;
- Strengthen PMT and partners' capacity to implement PEA approach;
- Facilitate periodic PEAs by programme and partners as integral part of project design and implementation.

##### **GESI**

- Finalise GESI strategy;
- Facilitate implementation of strategy, including strengthening the programme's GESI Technical Advisory Group (GTAG) and recruitment of GESI-support staff in the PMT;
- Consideration and possible scoping of and implement a GESI-focused Call.

##### **Parliament Engagement**

- Develop strategy for Parliamentary engagement and support;
- Define and implement grants strategy for Parliament linked to overall strategy;
- Implement Parliament engagement strategy.

##### **Capacity Building**

- Develop capacity building strategy, linked to a civil society PEA and overall programme strategic approach;
- Develop database of capacity building service providers;
- Implement capacity building strategy.

##### **Media Engagement**

- Develop Media support strategy;
- Support implementation of Media strategy;
- Scope and implement a Media call in line with Media strategy and programme's overall strategic approach.



## **Grants**

- Develop Grants strategy;
- Finalise Grants Manual based on approved Grants strategy
- Define and implement calls and other grants support linked to PEA recommendations and grants strategy;

### **13.2 Performance and learning:**

#### **Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning**

- Finalise programme logframe and M&E plan
- Finalise programme baseline
- Finalise GPs' quarterly, semester and annual report templates;
- Conduct periodic outcome analyses;
- Design of M&E guidance notes to support partner learning around M&E.
- Support GPs linked to various calls to develop results frameworks;
- Monitor implementation and results of GPs' projects;

#### **Communications**

- Finalise strategy, linked to M&E plan, GESI and Learning strategies and other key programme approaches and strategies;
- Support programme partners develop and implement communication strategies linked to the overall programme strategies;
- Implement strategy as approved by the SC.

#### **Value for Money (VFM)**

- Develop and implement programme's approach to measuring and reporting on VFM;
- Review STAR1 pilot on measuring the social value of projects and take forward lessons as approved by the SC;
- Review relevant programme strategies to incorporate key principles and elements of VFM strategy;
- Facilitate partners' capacity building on VFM.

#### **Programme Learning.**

- Develop programme learning and communities of practice strategy;
- Facilitate implementation of strategy linked to Calls and workstreams;

#### **Transition**

- Positioning paper and associated advice for SC to be finalised early in implementation
- Longer term discussions to continue with SC
- The SC have agreed to do some external stakeholder analysis and consultations as the next stage of this strand of work.

### **13.3 Programme governance and management**

**Steering Committee**

- Facilitate quarterly ordinary meetings and any other meetings and events of the SC as required;

**Programme Management Team**

- Implement PMT restructure as approved by the SC and DFID;
- Recruit staff as per approved PMT structure.

**Risk Management**

- Finalise risk register based on SC and donors' feedback;
- Continuously monitor and update risk register based on findings of periodic PEAs and learning from programme implementation;
- Develop risk registers for each Call and continuously monitor throughout the life of the Call;
- Develop and update risk ratings for all GPs.

**13.4 Finance**

- Finalise Finance manual;
- Finalise financial reporting templates for GPs;
- Review GPs' financial reports;
- Commission annual audits of GPs;
- Develop training manual for GPs on financial management;
- Support the implementation of activities to strengthen financial management capacities of GPs;
- Undertake monitoring and due diligence reviews of GPs;
- Preparation and submission of required financial reports;
- Facilitate implementation of annual programme audits.

**13.5 Elections Call**

- Provide technical assistance to GPs to implement and report on their projects;
- Facilitate implementation of projects through brokering of horizontal and vertical linkages among GPs and with other stakeholders;
- Monitor implementation of projects;
- Conduct at least two learning events;
- Commission an end-of-call review;
- Collate, document and share learning from call.

**13.6 Operations**

- Finalise Operations Manual;
- Periodic Update and Review of Operations Manual
- Draft and periodic update of Procurement Manual
- Staff Performance Reviews

- Periodic updates of Assets registers
- Provide logistical support for programme events as required;

## **14 List of Annexes**

- I. Annex 1 STAR-Ghana Political Economy Scoping and Review
- II. Annex 2 STAR-Ghana Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) strategy
- III. Annex 3a STAR-Ghana Logframe
- IV. Annex 3b STAR-Ghana MEL Manual
- V. Annex 3c STAR-Ghana Programme baseline report
- VI. Annex 3d STAR-Ghana complement of indicators
- VII. Annex 3e Rationale for Proposed logframe revisions
- VIII. Annex 3f M&E framework
- IX. Annex 4 STAR-Ghana Communications Strategy
- X. Annex 5a STAR-Ghana SC Retreat, Akosombo
- XI. Annex 5b STAR-Ghana Programme Retreat, Aburi
- XII. Annex 6a Programmatic Risk Register
- XIII. Annex 6b Elections Call Risk Register
- XIV. Annex 6c Risk Ratings for Grant Partners
- XV. Annex 7 STAR-Ghana Operations Manual
- XVI. Annex 8 STAR-Ghana Detailed Report on Elections 2016 Call
- XVII. Annex 9 DFID Annual Review
- XVIII. Annex 10 STAR-Ghana Finance Manual
- XIX. Annex 11 STAR-Ghana Year Workplan (Y1-3)
- XX. Annex 12 STAR-Ghana Transition Options paper