BRITISH COUNCIL

Diversity Unit

—

Equality Screening and Impact Assessment

November 2023

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Equality Screening and Impact Assessment

Introductory Guidance

What is it?

Equality screening and impact assessment (ESIA) helps us consider the effect of our policies and practices[1] on different people. It helps us minimise negative impact and potential discrimination and promote opportunities to advance equality, inclusion and good relations between different groups of people.

It is deliberately a time and resource intensive process because it encourages us to slow down and build in perspectives from a range of different people.

There are **two** main parts to equality screening and impact assessment.

- **Part 1 (Equality Screening):** The first part of the form presents a set of equality screening questions. These questions help determine whether the policy is relevant to equality and whether it needs to go through an equality impact assessment.

- **Part 2 (Equality Impact Assessment)**: The second part of the form, is the equality impact assessment. This is where a panel of people review the proposed policy, particularly thinking about its impact on different groups of people, trying to identify and counter any potential negative impact and promote any opportunities to enhance equality. The panel suggests actions for the policy owner to adopt.

Why do we do it?

The process helps us improve our policies and build equality into our work. Equality screening and impact assessment (ESIA) helps us consider the potential impact of what we do on different groups who are susceptible to unjustified discrimination, some of whom are legally protected against this, whether by UK or other law. It helps us demonstrate that we have proactively considered equality when developing our policies.

When should we do it?

Assessing the impact on equality should start early in the development of a new policy or review of an existing policy. Assessing the impact on equality should be ongoing rather than a one-off exercise because circumstances change over time, so equality considerations should be taken

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[1] Consistent with its broad definition in Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act and other equality legislation, this guidance uses the term 'policy' as a shorthand for policies, practices, activities and significant decisions about how we work and carry out our functions.

into account both as the policy is developed and also as it is implemented. The guidance here is to help assess the impact on equality before the policy is implemented.

It takes some time to properly set up an equality impact assessment meeting if one is needed, so the equality screening questions should be considered as early as possible once the policy is drafted. If an equality impact assessment is required it will take a little time to identify a chair, a note-taker, a diverse panel and to set up the meeting arrangements.

In addition, once the meeting has taken place there are likely to be actions to be implemented before the policy is launched. All this needs to be considered when determining the best time to address equality screening and impact assessment.

When we are implementing a policy that has been developed elsewhere, for example by a government department, or by a partner organisation we also need to assess the impact on equality. Although responsibility for the policy itself rests with the organisation that developed it, we may have choices in how it is implemented that can help eliminate potential discrimination and promote equality, inclusion and good relations.

For existing policies, please note that an ESIA must be carried out every five years or when any substantial change/review is taking place, whichever is soonest. In this context 'Substantial change/review' means it would affect people in a different way than identified when the original ESIA was carried out.

How do we do it?

Consider the purpose of the policy, the context in which it will operate, who it should benefit and what results are intended from it. Reflect on its potential impact on people with different equality categories and think about which aspects of the policy, if any, are most relevant to equality. Answer the equality screening questions to determine whether an equality impact assessment meeting is necessary.

If an equality impact assessment panel meeting is necessary, identify someone to chair the meeting, and someone to take the notes. The chair and note-taker play a crucial role and specific guidance has been developed to support them:

- ESIA Guide for Chairs;
- ESIA Guide for Note-takers

A diverse panel should be approached, including a range of colleagues from different teams / departments / countries / regions as appropriate, some of whom should be directly involved in or impacted by the policy.

Panel members should be sent the part-completed ESIA form (i.e. Part 1 and Section 1 of Part 2) and the policy documents, giving them at least a full week to read them and prepare for the meeting.

The panel will review the proposed policy, particularly thinking about its impact on people in different equality areas as listed in Part 2, Section 2 (point 3), trying to identify and counter any potential negative impact and promote any opportunities to enhance equality. The panel will suggest actions for the policy owner to implement.

The impact assessment panel meeting must be held, and Part 2 of this tool used, when you still have time to make changes, otherwise it does not have real value. As such the panel meeting should be held **at least one month** in advance of the planned implementation date for the policy.

After the meeting, the action points identified by the panel are reviewed by the policy owner and implemented as appropriate. The policy owner confirms implementation of the action points or provides a planned date for implementation (and outlines a justification for any action points that will not be taken forward) and then signs off and sends the completed form to the audit inbox for audit by the Diversity Unit.

Northern Ireland

There is specific legislation in Northern Ireland which requires a more detailed process of equality screening and impact assessment for policies that are deemed to have high relevance to equality. This includes external consultation with relevant contacts and organisations, which is done through publication on an external website available to the public.   Given this, there is a need to confirm whether the proposed policy affects anyone in Northern Ireland. **If it does, all parts of the form need to be completed and the guidance at Annex A must be read and followed.**

Wales

As a public body operating in Wales there is a legal requirement for us to produce any information intended for the general public in Wales in the Welsh language. Therefore, there is a section in the form seeking confirmation of whether the Welsh public will be affected by the proposed policy.

Procedural notes

Please note, the document will be considered invalid for audit if not correctly completed. More information about the audit process can be found in the Guide to the audit of EDI planning tools.

- Complete Part 1 (Equality Screening) ensuring the Record of Decision is signed and dated by the policy owner (a digital signature including typed name is acceptable)
- If Part 2 (Equality Impact Assessment) is required progress to Part 2
- If Part 2 (Equality Impact Assessment) is **not** required, send the Part 1 (Equality Screening) form to the audit inbox for audit by the Diversity Unit.

Submitted tools which pass the audit are uploaded to SharePoint and form part of a database of examples accessible by colleagues.

ESIAs that pass audit will inform and may be used as evidence of completed actions in the EDI planning tools section of the country/business area EDI action plans. Please note that this only applies where an Impact Assessment has taken place and both Parts 1 and 2 of the ESIA form have been completed.

Part 1: Equality Screening

Policy Details[2]

Title of policy	**Rapid Deployment Approach**: Enabler of the Accelerating Leadership Programme
Name of policy owner	Sam Harvey
Planned implementation date (dd/mm/yy)	16 September 2024 (start of the Accelerating Leadership Programme)
Policy type (for example global, regional, cluster, country, business area, department, sector policy)	Global
Country/Business Area	International Operations

Background

Provide brief background information about the policy or change to it. Include rationale, intended beneficiaries and expected outcomes. Use as much space as you wish, the table below will expand as you enter information.

Key internal and external drivers for Rapid Deployment to date
The implementation of the Rapid Deployment approach was precipitated by the following situations:
• Business continuity was needed to manage transitions and handovers from incumbent CDs to their successors during times of planned and unforeseen circumstances, especially during Transformation.
• Colleagues moved on to new roles leaving vacancies of up to 3 to 6 months, which could not be filled immediately.
• A further delay in the recruitment or selection process, or in the successor being released for their new role.
Therefore, due to the above operational challenges, there was a need to identify resource wider, for role holders to take up duties rapidly, to continue to leverage meaningful stakeholder engagement and manage impact of geopolitical changes in country caused by global socio-economic downturns.
On a wider level, the external environment in which we operate also challenges us to evaluate and review how we deploy staff in times of planned and unplanned change. Rapid Deployment has

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[2] Consistent with its broad definition in Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act and other equality legislation, this guidance uses the term 'policy' as a shorthand for policies, practices, activities and significant decisions about how we work and carry out our functions.

been identified as a key requirement globally to support the dynamic large-scale geopolitical shifts that have emerged since the COVID 19 Pandemic.

In this regard key external initiatives, which have a direct impact are:

- The 'Consular and Crisis Strategy 2022' by the Foreign, Commonwealth Development Office (FCDO), which emphasises the need for 'resilient and agile resourcing which can be rapidly scaled up to support unprecedented spikes in demand'.

- The report on 'Dynamic talent allocation in shaping the future of work' by McKinsey & Company, which highlights that future-planning organisations are choosing flow-to-work operating models which create pools of resources that can be deployed flexibly' based on similarity of skills rather than on similarity of business functions; making it easier for organisations to access the right skills when they need to.

Given the impact of these shifts and subsequent geo-political socio-economic downturns, it was recognised overall that there was a critical need to respond rapidly with a more agile approach to resourcing, developing a more flexible, mobile workforce that will help meet critical business needs and react to evolving priorities.

Current Context

Currently, 11 Rapid Deployment Programmes for interim Country Director roles have been implemented globally, with both assignees and countries generally rating the experiences as positive. The interim assignments have been taken up by colleagues on both UK and country contracts.

This pilot programme held over the last year since November 2022 was deemed to have been successful. The benefits identified through feedback were:

- The Rapid Deployment programme opens doors to a group with career aspirations towards country leadership, who regard themselves as "Internationalists" due to their strong global interests and networks within and across sectors.

- It provided an opportunity for assignees to see how countries in the regions share and pool experiences and for International Operations to seek achievement of goals through a greater diversity of people working in the country, region and across whole organisation.

- Access was facilitated to a talent pool which will bring new skills and perspectives, which could potentially meet the needs of our business area priorities in the future. i.e. new ways of connecting through the Arts, Education and English & Exams shared learning from international education, partnership work etc.

- Assignees had specific insights into the impact of delivering an integrated offer (One British Council) in the geographies they led and the significance of being accountable for an integrated country plan that includes Cultural Engagement and English and Exams targets.

- The experience an assignee takes back to the original team on completion with different perspectives of the organisation was identified as being a tremendous benefit to the Business.

- Overall, it was recognised that embedding Rapid Deployment within the Country Leadership Development Programmes as an enabler, can help take conventional talent approaches to a new level, rapidly moving talent across from teams at country, regional and global levels into International Assignee roles in high risk/ high impact areas where it is needed most.

Equality Screening Questions

To determine if an EIA is necessary, please answer the following by ticking yes, no or not sure:

Question	Yes	No	Not sure
Is the policy potentially significant in terms of its anticipated impact on employees, or customers/clients/audiences, or the wider community?	Yes		
Is it a major policy, significantly affecting how programmes/services/functions are delivered?	Yes		
Might the policy affect people in particular equality categories in a different way?	Yes		
Are the potential equality impacts unknown?		No	
Does the policy have the possibility to support or detract from our efforts to promote the inclusion of people from under-represented groups?	Yes		
Total responses Yes / No / Not sure	**4**	**1**	

Deciding if an Equality Impact Assessment is necessary

If you answered 'yes' to any of the questions, then an equality impact assessment is necessary. Please answer these additional questions, by ticking yes, no or not sure:

Question	Yes	No	Not sure
Will the policy have an impact on anyone in Northern Ireland? (*)	x		
Will the policy need to be communicated externally in Wales and therefore translated into Welsh?		x	

When you have answered these questions, please move to the '**Record of decision'** section below and record confirmation of this by indicating "is required"; **then progress to Part 2**.

(*) If the proposed policy affects anyone **in Northern Ireland**, all parts of the form need to be completed and the guidance at Annex A must be read and followed.

If you answered 'no' to all the Equality Screening Questions above, then an equality impact assessment is not needed. Please move to the '**Record of decision'** section below and record confirmation of this by indicating "is not required".

If there are any 'not sure' responses to the Equality Screening Questions above, then please discuss next steps further with the Dedicated EDI Lead in your region/sector or with the Diversity Unit, who will help you decide if an equality impact assessment is necessary.

Record of Decision

I confirm an equality impact assessment **is required / is not required** (delete as relevant).
Policy Owner (Name): Sam Harvey
Policy Owner (Role): To represent the Business on the oversight of the policy and its implementation.
Policy Owner (Signature): _Sam Harvey_ (A typed signature is sufficient)
Country/Business Area and Region: Geographic Directorate, International Operations
Date (dd/mm/yy): 24.01.24

Procedural notes

Note 1: If an equality impact assessment **is required**, please complete Part 2, Section 1 and send this part-completed form to the panel along with any relevant background documentation about the policy **at least one full week** prior to the EIA meeting. This should include the draft policy and any supporting data or relevant papers.

Note 2: If an equality impact assessment **is not required**, this Equality Screening section (i.e. Part 1) of the form **must** be sent to the audit inbox for audit by the Diversity Unit.

Part 2: Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)

Section 1

This section is to be completed before the EIA panel meeting and sent at least
one week in advance to the panel along with the policy and other relevant documents.

Title of Policy	Rapid Deployment Approach: Enabler of the Country Leadership Development Programme

1.   Please summarise the purpose of the policy, the context in which it will operate, who it should benefit and what results are intended from it.

How would we define the Rapid Deployment Approach?

Rapid Deployment is a process through which assignees, pre-assessed through the first assessment level for the Country Leadership Development Programme are deployed swiftly into interim roles in country Leadership roles. In this capacity, an individual can be assigned to an interim Country Leadership role either within International Operations, Cultural Engagement or English Exams for a period of up to 6 months.

In order, to provide business continuity in these situations some CD roles require cover through temporary/ interim assignments. These assignments can range from about three months, if the appointment of a successor is imminent or has been completed, up to 12 months if an external recruitment process is required where candidates have notice periods of three or more months.

The process described can be considered a rapid deployment approach based on swift selection of potential assignees based on customer practice to date, to provide the business with flexibility to meet business critical needs. In the long run this approach would inform a sustainable policy on rapid deployment to strengthen business planning.

Context for Rapid Deployment

The rationale and suitability of assignees for Rapid Deployment will vary in the two circumstances described below:

Business Operational Gap - Business Continuity to meet imminent needs.

There are various scenarios which require imminent filling of interim Country Director roles. In such cases vacancies cannot be filled immediately due to the length and/ or timing of the recruitment or selection process, or a delay in the successor being released for their new role.

These assignments can range from about three months if the appointment of a successor is imminent or has been completed; up to 6 months if an external recruitment process is required where candidates have notice periods of three or more months.

The deployment can be reviewed at the six-month point.

In these circumstances the experience would be considered a deployment for learning.

Crisis Management

Due to the unpredictability of global events, the organization will need to identify an experienced individual in global leadership and crisis management swiftly, to help the operation limit the negative impact of a crisis.

Any operation, large or small, may run into a crisis that can take many forms — a pandemic, a civil or international war, terrorist attack, a data breach or natural disaster. In these situations, it would be high risk to compromise on experience on leading from the front on unplanned, sudden, and unexpected events that can lead towards instability.

In such circumstances the assignment would be considered a Deployment of knowledge and Experience.

How is an Assignee identified?

The pool of assignees identified will be those who have submitted an Expression of Interest (EOI) from within the development pool pre-screened at the First Assessment level for the Country Leadership Development Programme.

More details are outlined in the Guiding Principles Document.

Assignees will be selected factoring in the curiosity, knowledge and experience to date on how the organisation operates in an international context, Stakeholder Management and knowledge of how the FCDO works, Risk Appetite, together with the overall Country objectives in mind. This approach is based on the premise that within existing policy, appointments of up to six months do not require a recruitment process.

If assignments are extended beyond six months there should be a formal process. The maximum duration of an assignment is one year.

2. Please explain any aspects of the policy you've been able to identify that are relevant to equality. This will contribute to the equality-focused discussion the panel will have.

The approach on selection will be influenced by organisational agility, diversity, transparency and talent mobility.

Agility

- This process is developed to support the organisational need to adapt and change quickly in rapidly changing business environments and the need to deploy different skills and expertise as the needs change.

- Decisions on selecting an assignee will be governed by two specific circumstances described in the table below and will be made in a fair and equitable way.

- We aim for consistency in how the decisions are applied, taking account of the prevailing organisational context.

Diversity

- The views of stakeholders and colleagues on the development of this approach will be sought including through agreed consultation processes with Equality Screening and Impact Assessment.

- Diversity and inclusion are promoted to ensure all staff have access to opportunities to undertake assignments through Rapid Deployment linked to the Country Leadership Development Programme.

Transparency

- Colleagues should understand the approach for Rapid Deployment, how it operates and the implications for them personally.

- There is a decision-making process that provides clarity on how decisions are made, who makes them and how they are evaluated.

Talent mobility

- Rapid Deployment will support a more flexible cross business wide approach globally between sectors and business teams.

- Fluid internal mobility, both lateral and upwards, will be leveraged to meet future priorities through experiential learning toward Global Leadership.

3. Please outline any equality-related supporting data that has been considered. This could include consultation with Trades Union Side or staff associations, equality monitoring data,

responses from staff surveys or client feedback exercises, external demographic and benchmarking data or other relevant internal or external material.

Rapid Deployment Statistics to date

Roles
CD Tanzania
CD Rwanda
CD Ethiopia
CD Colombia
CD Ukraine
DD China
CD Kazakhstan
CE Business Development Director SSA
Libya
Spain
Israel

Pay band	UK appointed	Country appointed	Total
PB8	3	2	5
SMP	4	0	4
LMFG	1	1	2
Total	8	3	11

Gender	UK appointed	Country appointed	Total
Female	4	1	5
Male	4	2	6

International Operations Directors Demographics

International Operations - Directors

- Female
- Male

	Employee - Country Contract	Employee - UK Contract
Female	67%	34%
Male	33%	66%
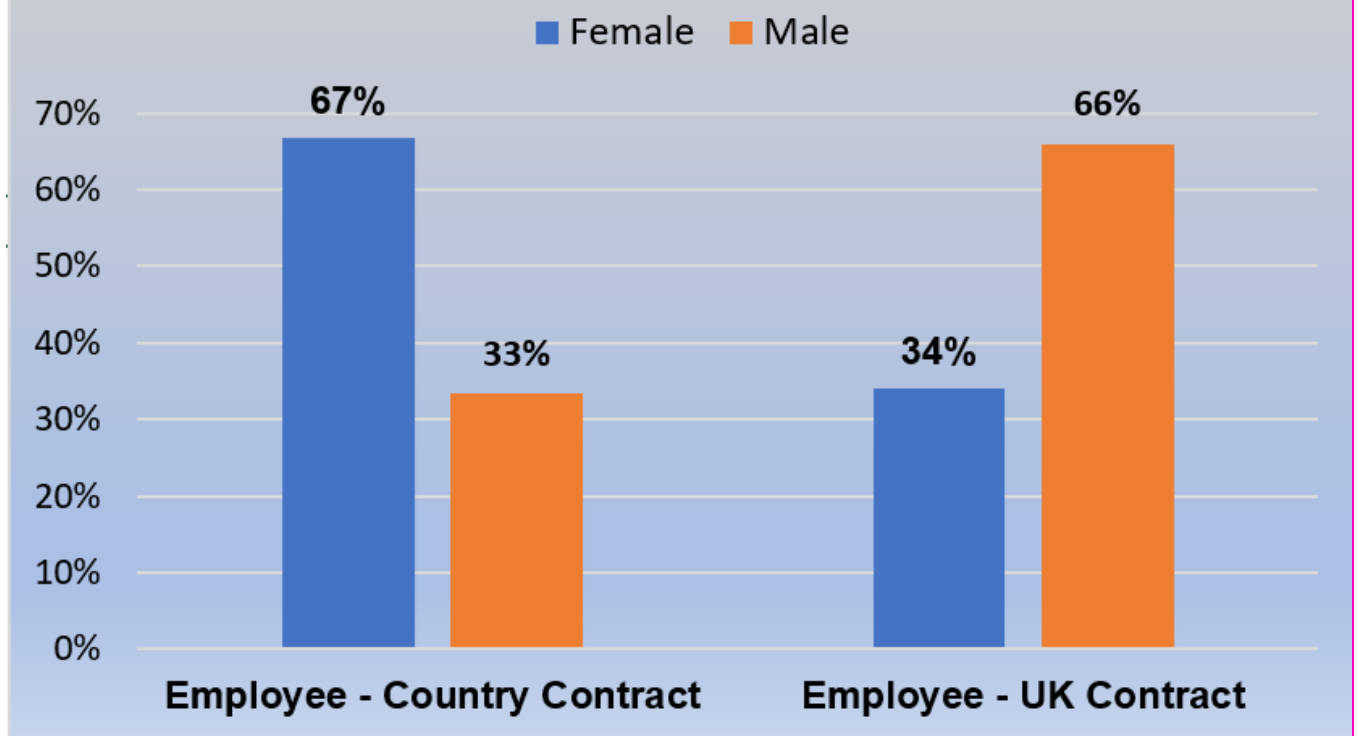
- This approach makes way for colleagues interested in Country Leadership positions across all sectors to gain strategic experience internationally.

Section 2

This section captures the notes of the Equality Impact Assessment panel meeting.

Title of Policy[3]:	**Rapid Deployment Approach**: Enabler of the Accelerating Leadership Programme
Date of EIA Panel Meeting: (dd/mm/yy)	**2 February 2024**
Name of Panel Chair:	**Shannon West**
Name of Note-taker:	**Olga McIntosh**

1. Please list the names, roles/business areas and geographical location of the panel members. If contributions have been received in writing by people who could not attend please list their details too and note 'input in writing' by their name.

International Operations

- Sam Harvey, Regional Head, South Asia and East Asia, Geographic Directorate, Geographic Directorate, UK (policy owner)

- Savi Vijayaratnam, Senior HRBP, International Operations, UK (workstream lead for Rapid Deployment)

- Olga McIntosh, Executive Assistant and Project Officer, UK Region; UK (note taker)

Panel

1. Shannon West, Principal Consultant, UK Schools Lead, UK

2. Eugenia Asare, Change Lead for Chevening and Marshall Scholarship, UK

3. Angus Bjarnason, Acting CD Kazakhstan, International Operations/Wider Europe Region, UK

4. Darren Coyle, Country Director Colombia and Peru, Mexico; (beneficiary of rapid deployment)

5. Leigh Gibson, Regional Head for MEAN AND SSA, UK; (beneficiary of rapid deployment)

6. Monomita Nag-Chowdhury, Programme Lead, The Climate Connection, UK

7. Calum O'Byrne Mulligan, Regional Manager SSA and South Asia, UK

8. Chikodi Onyemerela, Director Programmes, Nigeria

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[3] Consistent with its broad definition in Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act and other equality legislation, this guidance uses the term 'policy' as a shorthand for policies, practices, activities and significant decisions about how we work and carry out our functions.

9. Rebecca Picton, Senior Consultant, Schools, UK (beneficiary of rapid deployment in 2012 to Norway)

10. Awais Shah, Teaching Systems - Data Migration Lead, E&E, UK (beneficiary of rapid deployment in 2015 to Pakistan)

11. Catherine Sinclair-Jones, Area Director East China/ regional EDI lead for East-Asia, China

2. Summarise the main points made in the discussion, noting which documents were reviewed. Note any points relating to clarity / quality assurance as well as points relating to equality issues.

Introduction

The Chair outlined the principles of the ESIA exercise and provided an overview of the meeting structure. The discussion focused on examining potential negative impact and opportunities for positively promoting EDI initiatives within the Rapid Deployment approach.

Both the policy owner and the workstream lead have set the context of the Rapid Deployment Approach as part of the broader Accelerating Leadership Programme and referred to the Rapid Deployment Guiding Principles & Process documents under review.

Succession planning

It was queried by a panellist whether rapid deployment was considered a form of succession planning.

In response, the workstream lead clarified that the Rapid Deployment approach contributes to succession planning by providing opportunities for colleagues to upskill, feeding into career conversations and succession planning for leadership positions.

Evaluation

A panel member sought clarification on whether the current approach to rapid deployment was based on a comprehensive evaluation of the 11 rapid deployments conducted to date.

The workstream lead stated that there is an ongoing evaluation of these 11 rapid deployments. Furthermore, it has been recognized that there is a connection between rapid deployment and career conversations. This connection has underscored the necessity of developing a structured approach for rapid deployment, hence the need to formulate the broad principles around rapid deployment that will be integrated into the Country Leadership Development programme.

It is also recognized that there is flexibility for rapid deployment to be considered outside the framework of the Accelerating Leadership Programme. For example, stakeholders, such as the UK Region, are particularly keen to explore this possibility.

Rapid Deployment – Guiding Principles & Process Document review

The panel has discussed the presented document on the rapid deployment looking at any potential negative impact as well as the opportunities to promoted EDI within the approach. The panel also focused on communication and whether the language of the document is inclusive.

Fundamentals behind the approach

Agility

- In the 2nd bullet point, the Chair suggested that a greater emphasis on the alignment with our commitment to EDI should be made.

- A panellist has suggested that the latter part of the third bullet point, "taking account of the prevailing organizational context," may raise concerns about deviating from a consistent approach and recommended providing more detail on what this phrase actually entails. This ties into the importance of transparency in communication, ensuring that it is simple, honest, clear, and reaches everyone in the global network. Emphasizing the need to strike a balance between meeting business priorities and upholding our commitment to talent development and EDI principles is important.

- Additionally, a panellist suggested that establishing simple criteria for decision-making and sharing them with colleagues would be beneficial.

  The workstream lead clarified that the criteria for selection are set out later in the document.

Diversity

- The chair noted that the link to the EDI should be mentioned in this section rather than in the previous section.

- 2nd bullet point: a panellist suggested that more context on the country leadership development programme is added in the 2nd bullet point, as it is not clear what the programme entails.

- It has been also queried whether the country leadership development has gone through the ESIA.

  The workstream lead replied that the ESIA is planned to take place in a few months' time.

- It has been suggested that the rapid deployment as well as the accelerating leadership programme are taken through an additional screening by the disability advisory board.

Transparency

<u>Governance and potential restrictions</u>

- A general observation from a panellist was regarding the transparency of the programme, particularly concerning any potential restrictions. For instance, there may be nationality restrictions due to visa requirements or specific screening criteria for certain roles. Such limitations could potentially hinder individuals from applying, especially if they don't meet specific criteria.

  The workstream lead replied that it is explained further in the document that there will be a governance around the process.

<u>Reporting and case studies</u>

- Another suggestion has been made about introducing a periodic reporting on the results of the rapid deployment, as this would help to increase transparency.

- Additionally, a suggestion to include case studies to illustrate potential scenarios as this may help colleagues understand what it may entail. There may be perceptions that these opportunities are for UK appointed staff only; women with childcare responsibilities may think this is not for them. Elaborating further on the potential scenarios, the requirements and the selection process may be helpful to promote the message that the intention is to make these types of opportunities accessible to all colleagues.

  It has been suggested that more explicit references are made throughout the approach about how these opportunities are open to all highlighting the organisation's commitment to support any reasonable adjustments needed.

<u>Communication approach and governance</u>

- A panellist queried the communication approach and whether there is a programme board who will be looking at the programme's reports and planning to ensure that every person feels part of one British Council.

  The workstream lead assured that there is a programme board and the governance structure is reflected in the slide deck shared with the panel.

- A further suggestion has been made to add information about established governance (i.e. the Board) into the 1st bullet point under Transparency section.

Talent mobility

- 2nd bullet point: a suggestion has been made to change the language under the 2nd bullet point under 'talent mobility' to make it more accessible, i.e. change 'lateral' to 'opportunities at the same pay band/ or on promotion'.

- A panellist queried whether talent mobility applied to broader roles including Deputy Director and Area Director roles and whether this included bringing talent from the global network to the UK.

The workstream lead clarified that the intention is for this initiative to be fluid and offer both outward and inward talent mobility opportunities for a broad range of roles depending on the needs arising.

- It has been further suggested that the term 'country director' is changed to 'country leadership' instead, as well as providing a definition of country leadership, and that the scope of the programme should be revisited to include Cultural Engagement roles, including UK based roles.

Context for Rapid Deployment

Business operational gap

- A panellist asked to clarify whether the point around '*the deployment can be reviewed at the six-month point*' implied review for extension.

The workstream lead explained that the opportunity should be advertised after 6 months following a standard recruitment procedure, recognizing that in exceptional circumstances there may be exceptional cases for extensions without recruitment.

Assigning Principles

Roles and accountabilities

- It has been suggested that the second sentence under the 'Assigning Principles' section is amended to reflect the balance between business priorities, but also our commitments to talent and development, mobility and diversity.

The workstream lead commented that the visibility of opportunities will be ensured through publishing them on the SharePoint site, which will be accessible for all colleagues (not only for those on the Accelerating Leadership Programme) to express interest.

- It has been noted, regarding the first and second bullet points under 'Assigning Principles', that there is a need for further clarification around the roles of SLT members, business leads, and line managers in the process, as the language regarding accountabilities is confusing.

The workstream lead explained that the need for rapid deployment is typically identified through the most senior role in the region (i.e., the regional director), meaning that the sign-off for rapid deployment is at the regional director level. The Terms of Reference are developed by the line manager of the role in question, which may be a different person.

- A panellist raised a question about who is accountable for identifying opportunities.

The business lead clarified that at the inception, the need will be identified by the relevant business lead, and rapid deployment will be signed off by the appropriate

senior leadership team member. These principles will be further highlighted in the Rapid Deployment approach.

Experience vs Skills

- A comment has been made regarding the requirement for an "experienced individual in global leadership," noting that global leadership can encompass roles from PB7 upwards. However, if an individual possesses skills but lacks experience, it raises questions about their eligibility. There appears to be a lack of clarity surrounding the criteria for selection.

  The workstream lead explained the distinction between deployment for learning and deployment for crisis management. In crisis situations, experience is paramount, potentially necessitating specific pay band requirements.

- Another panellist, drawing from personal rapid deployment experience, emphasized the specific requirements around experience, language and pay band.

- Suggestions have been made to include a list of baseline criteria in the document and to highlight pay band requirements for different types of rapid deployment (e.g., PB7+ for development-focused deployment; SMP+ for crisis management). It has been noted that certain expertise may sit outside the designated pay band and that flexibility should be allowed.

- Additionally, adding case studies under the business operational gap and crisis management sections could provide illustrative scenarios and necessary requirements for rapid deployment.

- It has been suggested that there may be a need for a broader piece to identify various strands of expertise available within the British Council, particularly in managing crisis situations.

  The workstream lead clarified that this initiative is already underway and will inform decision-making processes.

- A suggestion has been made to include Specific Knowledge and Experience (SKE) criteria in the guiding principles, outlining specialist skills required for each opportunity.

  The workstream real explained that the threshold level criteria will be published in the ToRs and outlined in the Rapid Deployment Guidance. For example, this may include: International Curiosity, Stakeholder Management, Knowledge of FCDO operations, Risk Management.

- The Chair requested clarification on whether the pool referenced in the fourth bullet point pertains to a pre-screened pool of assignees.

  The workstream lead clarified the process, stating that every opportunity will initially be published on SharePoint accessible to everyone. Expressions of interest will be reviewed by a subset of the Talent Board, which will also consider applicants from the country leadership programme. The aim of rapid deployment is to attract a broad

audience of potential candidates, including those outside the leadership development programme.

- A concern has been raised that priority consideration may be given to the country leadership development programme pool, with access to the wider pool only if no successful candidate is identified within the leadership development pool in the first instance.

The workstream lead directed the panel to the core principles of the rapid deployment process outlined in the PowerPoint presentation (shared with the panel), which explain the relevant principles of the process.

- It has been suggested that the fourth bullet point needs rewording to emphasize who gains access to rapid deployment opportunities and how these opportunities will be communicated to broader audiences. It's important to consider utilizing a broad set of communication channels to advertise the opportunities effectively. In addition to sharing the information through the SharePoint, other relevant platforms can be used for socialising (e.g. Senior Management forum; Diversity Forum).

More detail to be provided on the interdependencies with the Accelerating Leadership Programme. This includes elaborating on how individuals are nominated for the CLDP list and the criteria used for consideration as well as the diversity principles applied.

- A panel member expressed concerns about how information regarding these international opportunities is communicated to wider groups of colleagues and how to ensure accessibility in line with equality, diversity, and inclusion principles. There are currently gaps in disseminating information about these opportunities to all colleagues at the SMP level. Information about other practical considerations such as visas, resettlement, and culture shock should also be communicated as part of the briefing.

The workstream lead emphasized the intention to be open, transparent, and inclusive in ensuring that when rapid deployment needs arise, colleagues are widely informed rather than targeting specific individuals. This is the rationale behind developing the rapid deployment guiding principles, which aims to bring about necessary changes in the selection process.

- A query was raised by a panellist regarding the potential for decolonizing the British Council's work through the rapid deployment programme. It was suggested that a diverse flow of people in different roles could demonstrate a commitment to decolonization, particularly if there is a perception that rapid deployment is primarily suitable for white, male, older, British citizens. There is a perception that leadership opportunities are exclusively reserved for UK colleagues, so there may be an opportunity to position rapid deployment as promoting opportunities for locally appointed country contract colleagues.

The workstream lead reassured that diversifying the British Council's leadership cadre and opening doors to opportunities for a wide range of colleagues has been a key aspect of the rapid deployment design. However, there may be instances where

diplomatic status is a prerequisite for specific rapid deployment opportunities, requiring a diplomatic passport holder, i.e., a UK citizen.

- It was suggested that making explicit references throughout the approach about how these opportunities are open to all and the commitment to supporting any reasonable adjustments needed would be beneficial.

Further comments

The panel were asked to send any further comments in the chat.

Written comments were received from one person who couldn't attend the panel meeting.

3. Capturing information about the protected groups / characteristics

Based on the notes of the discussion (section above), record here any potential for negative impact identified and any opportunity to promote equality, inclusion and good relations. (The header row in the table will repeat if the table continues on to a new page.)

Equality categories (with prompts to guide full consideration)	Potential for negative impact	Opportunity to promote equality, inclusion and/or good relations between different groups
Different **ages** (older, middle-aged, young adult, teenage, children; authority generation[4]; vulnerable adults)	Potential negative impact on younger age categories who may lack extensive experience. There may be a preconception that leadership is inherently associated with older age. Additionally, assumptions about pay bands may suggest age-based overlaps, further exacerbating disparities	Don't ask for years of experience; ask for demonstrated experience instead
Different **dependant responsibilities** (childcare, eldercare, care for disabled and/or extended family)	There's a potential negative impact on colleagues with non-school-age children and elderly parents. Through experience with 11 rapid deployments to date, it's been evident that those with young children may have been excluded due to lack of financial support. Discussions with the SLT Board indicate a willingness to provide additional support, like childcare	As we adjust to new way of fluid and agile working, there is opportunity to explore the best solutions and incentives that would meet our emerging business needs. Housing, flight and visa support can be flexible enough to allow assignees to be accompanied by their spouse/ partner and non- school age children. Further work is being carried out to facilitate more flexibility in the mobility short-term posting package (incl. visas and work permits).

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[4] The term 'authority generation' refers to cultural or national norms and customs in relation to particular age generations. For example, in some countries older people are held in high esteem and are considered to have a form of social authority by virtue of age. In addition, different generations (Generation X, Y, Millennials, Baby Boomers) are also thought to have varying common attitudes towards authority, with for example Baby Boomers commonly questioning authority.

Equality categories (with prompts to guide full consideration)	Potential for negative impact	Opportunity to promote equality, inclusion and/or good relations between different groups
	assistance. For employees with school-age children, taking them out of school for short overseas assignments could risk their place at school, adding further barriers.	Add a section on financial support available in relation to dependants (e.g. childcare), clarifying issues around affordability, visas, and any other practical considerations.
Disabled people (physical, sensory, learning, hidden, mental health, HIV/AIDS, other) and **neurodiversity**	There may be a potential negative impact on disabled people which we are not aware of.	A review by the Disability advisory panel is advisable as there may be other hidden barriers the group is not aware of. Add a section on reasonable adjustments being made should they be needed.
Different **ethnic/racial** and **cultural groups** (majority and minority, including Roma people, people from different tribes/castes/clans)		Promote opportunities through minority ethnic communication channels
Different **sexes and genders** (men, women, non-binary, transgender or intersex people, other issues)	Acknowledging the intersectionality between gender and caring responsibilities is important. Women may face greater exclusion from certain opportunities, such as career development opportunities, due to factors like unsocial hours, which disproportionately affect them.	There is a significant portion of colleagues who may not see these roles as viable options for them. This sentiment extends across various categories, not solely related to gender. Perhaps there's a need for line managers to engage in broader communication efforts to address this issue. Additionally, there should be a clearer connection established between career discussions and rapid deployment opportunities. Ensuring that employees understand how these opportunities align

Equality categories (with prompts to guide full consideration)	Potential for negative impact	Opportunity to promote equality, inclusion and/or good relations between different groups
		with their career goals and development aspirations can help foster greater engagement and participation.
Different **languages** (Welsh and/or other UK languages, local languages, sign language/s)	Specific Language requirements for certain roles	Mention language requirements for specific roles.
Different **marital status** (single, married, civil partnership, other)	These opportunities may affect individuals of different marital status including married individuals, individuals in relationship, with child care or other types of dependants.	To ensure transparency, the ToR should explicitly outline whether each opportunity is accompanied or unaccompanied.

It could be beneficial to incorporate case studies that illustrate different personal circumstances, showcasing the diverse range of opportunities and mobility packages available. This approach can provide clarity and help employees better understand how these opportunities align with their individual needs and circumstances. |
| Different **political views** or **community backgrounds** (particularly relevant to Northern Ireland) | | Community background monitoring takes place in Northern Ireland to minimise any risk of negative impact on a particular community background or political opinion |
| **Pregnancy, maternity, paternity** and adoption (before/during/after) | | Add information on support available for colleagues with dependants (as per section above)

Consider making a specific effort to communicate with people due back from |

Equality categories (with prompts to guide full consideration)	Potential for negative impact	Opportunity to promote equality, inclusion and/or good relations between different groups
		parental leave who might wish to take up a deployment but may not see general communications
Different or no **religious** or philosophical **beliefs** (majority/ minority/ none)	There may be concerns around access to specific places or communities to practice faith in a particular location.	Clarification in the ToR regarding the local context surrounding this protected characteristic may be helpful. Offering a conversation with a local colleague, prior to submitting an expression of interest, may help gain insight into specific issues or contexts related to religious backgrounds.
Different **sexual orientations** (gay, lesbian, bisexual, heterosexual)	Considerations about partners/ accompanied/ unaccompanied; what is local context in the country	Clarify in ToR on the local context around this protected characteristic. Know respective existing laws of the country – directing people to FCDO guidance or offer an opportunity to speak to
Additional equality grounds (such as **socio-economic background**, full-time/part-time working, geographical location, other[5])	Concerns around any potential impact on employees' current contracts, pensions, and financial security due to a short-term role. Employees from lower socio-economic backgrounds may have concerns about affordability, as well as broader concerns (e.g. obtaining visa etc). Part-time employees may perceive this role as unsuitable for them and require clarification	Rapid Deployment relies on the business's capacity to release and reabsorb employees. Ensuring the possibility of returning to previous roles is crucial and the business is responsible for facilitating this process. The conversation is required between the individual and the line manager, presenting it as an interim development opportunity with the potential to return to the substantive post.

[5] Any other categories people share that might impact on how the policy affects them.

Equality categories (with prompts to guide full consideration)	Potential for negative impact	Opportunity to promote equality, inclusion and/or good relations between different groups
		Implementing open and transparent communication regarding mobility packages for each opportunity is essential to address the glass ceiling for mobility.
British Council **values** (open and committed; expert and inclusive; optimistic and bold)		Opportunity to promote British Council values through the fundamentals of the Rapid Deployment Approach: To adapt and change quickly in rapidly changing business environments. To promote Diversity through Global Promotion and Access. The process will be published on a Share point site to ensure visibility globally. Leveraging Mobility lateral and upwards to meet future priorities through experiential learning towards Global Leadership.
Alignment with our commitments to **decolonise** our work (positioning of UK and other countries, power, status and privilege)	There may be a perception that these leadership roles are for UK appointed people, white people, at senior pay bands.	In some countries there's a requirement to have diplomatic status which is linked to having UK passport. But the programme is generally aimed at diversifying leadership programme and make the opportunities available to a wide range of colleagues.

4. Agreed actions

Insert additional rows for more action points and number each individual action point. (The header row in the table will repeat if the table continues on to a new page.)

Action identified by Panel	Agreed by Policy Owner (Yes / No)	If not agreed, please provide justification	Has action been completed? (Yes / No)	If not, indicate planned date to complete
Work through the suggested amendments to text made by different panel members and make changes as appropriate	Yes		Yes	
In the 3rd bullet point under Agility, elaborate further on what is meant by 'taking account of the prevailing organisational context'	Yes		Yes	
Set out criteria for decision making on rapid deployment	Yes		Yes (added on the SharePoint)	
2nd bullet point under Diversity section: elaborate on our commitment to equality, diversity, and inclusion, highlighting the efforts to diversify the leadership cadre	Yes		Yes	
2nd bullet point under Diversity section, add context on the country leadership development programme	Yes		Yes (information added on the SharePoint)	
Conduct an additional screening for both rapid deployment and the country	Yes		No	Planned for 2024/ 2025 FY

Action identified by Panel	Agreed by Policy Owner (Yes / No)	If not agreed, please provide justification	Has action been completed? (Yes / No)	If not, indicate planned date to complete
leadership development programme by the Disability Advisory Board				
Consider running an annual report on the results of the rapid deployment to promote transparency	Yes		No (The rapid deployment for the ALP programme hasn't started yet. Once it is operationalized, the annual reporting will be incorporated as part of the monitoring and evaluation process)	May 2025
Add a section on governance, elaborating on potential restrictions, such as visa requirements or specific screening criteria for certain roles.	Yes		Yes (when a rapid deployment is advertised for the ALP, the visa requirements and/ or specific screening criteria are published accordingly).	
Include case studies to illustrate potential scenarios, requirements and selection process	Yes		No (in progress)	By end September 2024
Add information about established governance/ Board into the first bullet point under Transparency section	Yes		Yes (the information has been published on ALP SharePoint)	
Change the term 'country director' to 'country leadership'; add definition of country leadership	Yes		Yes (changed to 'Accelerating Leaders Programme')	

Action identified by Panel	Agreed by Policy Owner (Yes / No)	If not agreed, please provide justification	Has action been completed? (Yes / No)	If not, indicate planned date to complete
Revisit the scope of the initiative to include Cultural Engagement roles, including UK based roles	Yes		Yes	
Include a list of baseline criteria in the document and highlight pay band requirements for different types of rapid deployment	Yes		Yes (this is determined on a case by case basis for each rapid deployment and published accordingly).	
Add case studies under the business operational gap and crisis management sections to illustrate scenarios and necessary requirements for rapid deployment	Yes		No (this will be highlighted in the case study document (see above)	End September 2024
Include SKE criteria in the guiding principles, outlining specialist skills required for each opportunity	No	SKE will be included as part of the Terms of Reference for each Rapid deployment assignment, not in the main document 'Guiding Principles on Rapid Deployment for ALP'	No	
Amend fourth bullet point under 'Assigning Principles' to clarify who gains access to rapid deployment opportunities and how these	Yes		Yes	

Action identified by Panel	Agreed by Policy Owner (Yes / No)	If not agreed, please provide justification	Has action been completed? (Yes / No)	If not, indicate planned date to complete
opportunities will be communicated to broader audiences				
Add more detail on the interdependencies with the Accelerating Leadership Programme, elaborating on how individuals are nominated for the ALP list and the criteria used for consideration as well as the diversity principles applied	Yes		Yes	
Use a broad range of communication channels to disseminate information about rapid deployment opportunities widely (e.g. senior management forums; EDI forums). Consider making a specific effort to communicate the opportunities with colleagues due back from parental leave.	Yes		Yes	
Implementing open and transparent communication regarding mobility packages including information on support available for colleagues with dependants and other groups of	Yes		Yes (Short term posting policy is published on the Intranet)	

Action identified by Panel	Agreed by Policy Owner (Yes / No)	If not agreed, please provide justification	Has action been completed? (Yes / No)	If not, indicate planned date to complete
colleagues in relation to different protected characteristics.				
Follow up on the actions identified as opportunities to promote equality, diversity and inclusion and good relations between different groups against each protected characteristic.	Yes		Yes (specific requirements for each rapid deployment will be published in the relevant ToR; the entitlements for each rapid deployment under the short term postings package will be communicated to the assignee by the international mobility team).	

Sign-off by Policy owner

I confirm that the policy has been amended as identified in the **agreed actions** table above. Any actions planned but not yet completed will be implemented before the policy is introduced. If the policy has an impact on people or functions in Northern Ireland, I confirm **Annex A (below)** has also been completed.

Please ensure the majority of agreed identified actions have been taken before the policy owner signs and the tool is submitted for audit.

Actual policy implementation date (dd/mm/yy): 16 September 2024 (starting date of the formal Accelerating Leadership Programme)
(if different from planned implementation date)

Policy Owner (Name): Sam Harvey/ Savithri Vijayaratnam
Policy Owner (Role): Regional Head, South Asia and East Asia/ Senior HR Business Partner
Policy Owner (Signature): Sam Harvey, Savithri Vijayaratnam (A typed signature is sufficient)
Country / Business Area and Region: International Operations
Sign-off date (dd/mm/yy): 13 September 2024

Procedural Note

Once the majority of identified actions have been completed (or planned to be completed before the policy start date), the Policy Owner (or someone acting on their behalf) **must** send the completed ESIA form to the audit inbox for audit by the Diversity Unit.

Annex A: Policies with an impact in Northern Ireland

In accordance with the Guide for Public Authorities, policies which have a **major** impact on equality will share some of the following factors:

- they are deemed to be significant in terms of strategic importance;

- the potential equality impacts are unknown;

- the potential equality and/or good relations impacts are likely to be adverse or experienced disproportionately by groups who are marginalised or disadvantaged;

- the policy is likely to be challenged by a judicial review;

- the policy is significant in terms of expenditure.

Policies which have a **minor** impact on equality will share some of the following factors:

- they are not unlawfully discriminatory, and any residual potential differential impact is judged to be negligible;

- aspects of the policy are potentially unlawfully discriminatory, but this possibility can readily and easily be eliminated by making the changes identified in the action points at Section 4;

- any differential equality impact is intentional because the policy has been designed specifically to promote equality for particular groups of disadvantaged people;

- by amending the policy there are opportunities to better promote equality, inclusion and/or good relations.

Policies which have **no** impact on equality will share some of the following factors:

- they have no relevance to equality, inclusion or good relations;

- they are purely technical in nature and have no bearing in terms of the impact on equality, inclusion or good relations for people in different equality groups.

For policies impacting on people or functions in Northern Ireland, you must identify whether any of the issues identified by the EIA panel in the table at Section 2, Point 3 above are likely to have a **major**, **minor** or **no** impact on equality.

This consideration must be given to all the items listed in the table at section 2, Point 3 whether they have potential for negative impact or the opportunity to promote equality, inclusion and good relations.

Equality categories	Negative / Positive impact on equality, inclusion or good relations		
	No	**Minor**	**Major**
Age		x	
Dependants		x	
Disability		x	
Ethnicity		x	
Marital status		x	
Political views		x	
Religious belief		x	
Sex and gender		x	
Sexual orientation		x	

If the answer to the above questions is NO, no further action is needed.

If **minor** impact is identified and the actions listed at Section 4 will address this, no further action is needed. Where the actions listed at point 4 will not sufficiently address the impact, additional measures that might mitigate the policy impact as well as alternative policies that might better achieve the promotion of equality of opportunity and/or good relations should be considered.

If mitigating measures and/or an alternative approach cannot be taken then the policy should be subject to full Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) aligned to Northern Ireland's equality legislation.

If a **major** impact is identified in any of the answers above, then the policy should be subject to full Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) aligned to Northern Ireland's equality legislation.

For guidance on completing full EQIA aligned to Northern Ireland's equality legislation, see http://www.equalityni.org/archive/pdf/S75GuideforPublicAuthoritiesApril2010.pdf.

A member of the Diversity Unit should be involved in any EQIAs that take place.

Record of Decision and Sign-off by Policy Owner

Please delete two of the following statements (those that do not apply).

Statement 2

I confirm that a full EQIA is not needed, providing all the Agreed actions at Section 4 ('Agreed Actions') and/or other noted mitigating actions are carried out.

Note other mitigating actions that are not listed at Section 4 here:

The Rapid Deployment Approach may have a minor (positive) impact on Northern Ireland. All actions listed at point 4 mitigate against any risk, so no further action is necessary.

Signed by

Name:	**Sam Harvey/ Savithri Vijayaratnam**
Role:	Regional Head, South Asia and East Asia/ Senior HR Business Partner
Date: (dd/mm/yy)	13 September 2024

Procedural Note

Once the majority of identified actions have been completed (or planned to be completed before the policy start date), the Policy Owner (or someone acting on their behalf) **must** send the completed ESIA form to the audit inbox for audit by the Diversity Unit.

Prepared by the Diversity Unit
Version 3: November 2023