

PFRC Guidelines: Social Value

ASI does not mandate or enforce employment practices or inclusion policies. Suppliers are solely responsible for ensuring compliance with local employment and anti-discrimination laws, including any reasonable adjustments for staff. ASI accepts no liability for employment practices, internal personnel decisions, or related claims by subcontractors, partners, or affiliates.

Purpose

Social Value is central to PFRC delivery and how we collaborate with our suppliers. Within the revenue and public financial management sectors, there remains a notable under-representation of women and persons with disabilities across multiple geographies. This imbalance can lead to inconsistent consideration of gender and disability-related factors, ultimately limiting the equity and inclusiveness of public finance system outcomes. Our approach seeks to ensure that qualified women and individuals with disabilities have equitable opportunities to participate in PFRC intervention design and delivery.

We also recognise the role that niche suppliers, suppliers based in the countries where we deliver, and women- and disability-led suppliers can play in supporting inclusive outcomes. Actively engaging and providing fair access to such suppliers, particularly those with proximity to the communities we serve, can strengthen local ownership, build capacity, and enhance the relevance and responsiveness of interventions. Suppliers from these groups who would benefit from guidance on approaching PFRC bidding opportunities are invited to contact the PFRC team directly at commercial@pfr.com.

This guide sets out how Social Value will be integrated throughout the delivery cycle for PFRC interventions – from early market engagement through to delivery and final reporting. It aims to establish clear expectations, promote inclusive and equitable practices and ensure that supplier relationships actively contribute to the PFRC's Social Value objectives.

The PFRC's performance on Social Value is measured against key indicators, structured around two core [policy outcomes](#):

- **Policy Outcome: Supply chain resilience and capacity:**
 - Inclusion of local suppliers in the supplier network
 - Inclusion of SMEs in the supplier network
 - Inclusion of suppliers owned or led by individuals with protected characteristics (especially women-led and persons with disabilities-led)
- **Policy Outcome: Tackle workforce inequality:**
 - Inclusion and monitoring of workers with protected characteristics, especially gender and [disability](#)¹, in the supplier network (measured through their participation in technical and non-technical roles across PFRC interventions)

In line with this agenda, the PFRC expects suppliers to demonstrate commitment to Social Value through:

- **Procurement:** embedding Social Value considerations from the outset in team recruitment, structure, and supply chain decisions

¹ The Equality Act 2010 defines a disabled person as a person with a disability. A person has a disability for the purposes of the Act if they/he or she has a physical or mental impairment, and the impairment has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities (S6(1)).

This means that, in general:

- the person must have an impairment that is either physical or mental (see paragraphs A3 to A8)
- the impairment must have adverse effects which are substantial (see Section B)
- the substantial adverse effects must be long-term (see Section C)
- the long-term substantial adverse effects must be effects on normal day-to-day activities (see Section D)

All of the factors above must be considered when determining whether a person is disabled.

- **Key Performance Indicators (KPIs):** defining and tracking measurable targets, including Social Value indicators as part of the intervention Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and within programme logical frameworks (logframes)
- **Reporting:** delivering both data and qualitative evidence that demonstrates progress and impact throughout the project lifecycle.

Social Value in PFRC procurements

This section outlines how Social Value is embedded during each stage of PFRC procurement, including setting out the responsibilities of suppliers.

Market engagement. PFRC will proactively engage with potential suppliers early in the procurement process to communicate our Social Value priorities, including to:

- Clearly outline Social Value intervention requirements
- Set out the Social Value weightings that will apply
- Allow suppliers to share challenges or limitations that could impact the intervention's Social Value outcomes and explore practical ways to address them.

This is intended to:

- Shape suppliers' understanding of PFRC's expectations around inclusive employment, workforce equality, diverse supply chains and innovation, enabling suppliers to tailor their proposals accordingly
- Foster a more competitive and informed market while embedding social value into the supply chain from the outset
- Drive better outcomes - stronger programmes, sustainable impact, improved performance and greater opportunities for women and persons with disabilities - as a direct result of increased inclusiveness and enhanced equality across our supplier network.

Specification & Tender Design. Based on insights gathered during market engagement, PFRC will finalise Social Value criteria and ensure these are clearly articulated in bidding documents so that all suppliers understand our priorities and can align their technical and commercial proposals accordingly.

Bid Development. All bids must demonstrate their approach to delivering Social Value by including the following (more detail in Annex 1, sections 2 and 3):

- **A comprehensive Social Value Plan** outlining strategies for inclusive recruitment, diverse team composition, supplier inclusion, and accessibility. This plan should explain how these measures will contribute to improved delivery and overall performance.
- **Measurable supplier-set commitment** for inclusion, such as the percentage of person-days or fees allocated to women, persons with disabilities (PwD), and national professionals, to ensure supplier accountability.
- **Dedicated budget allocations** as required to support inclusive delivery—for example, funding for accessible transport, assistive technologies.
- **A clear breakdown of Standard vs. Non-Standard Costs** associated with inclusive delivery.

Commitments made at the bidding stage will be carried forward into contractual obligations and monitored through key performance indicators (KPIs).

Tender evaluation. Social Value will be assessed by the PFRC Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) and Social Value Lead (or a trained alternative where required) as part of the technical evaluation, considering:

- Diversity and inclusivity of team structures
- Diversity of the supply chain

Social Value scoring favours suppliers who embed inclusive practices into their delivery models in ways that lead to meaningful, measurable impact. This includes:

- The quality and ambition of their Social Value commitments.
- Workforce and delivery team composition plans that proactively promote the inclusion of qualified women and persons with disabilities.
- The inclusion of subcontracts or partnerships with SMEs, niche suppliers, women-led businesses and disability-inclusive firms, and suppliers based in ODA-eligible countries (which are not subsidiaries or branches of international firms).
- A demonstrable track record in delivering Social Value outcomes, especially those related to gender and disability inclusion.

Failure to engage meaningfully with Social Value will negatively impact bid scoring.

KPIs linked to Social Value will form part of the Contract and performance will be monitored and evaluated throughout implementation.

Commercial Approach. PFRC recognises that building inclusive, accessible and equitable delivery teams often requires additional resources or adaptations. While overall value for money remains an important consideration, the inclusion of diverse team members will not be viewed as a cost disadvantage in evaluation. Bidders will be asked to set out such costs in the non-standard cost information of their bid.

To support this process, suppliers will ensure their pricing proposal clearly identifies standard and non-standard costs, including a brief rationale for why each adjustment is essential to enable inclusive participation or delivery. Justifications will be validated during implementation on case-by-case basis. Additionally, they must supply supporting rationale and evidence for all standard cost equivalents, demonstrating that these proposed amounts are fair and reasonable in the absence of any adjustment.

When the pricing section of the bids are evaluated, non-standard costs will be replaced with the standard-cost equivalent for evaluation purposes.

This commercial approach enables:

- Transparency and comparability: separating standard and non-standard costs allows for clearer comparisons across bids whilst recognising reasonable variations across delivery models and helps us understand where additional costs are justified by context or delivery needs.
- Encourages realistic bidding: bidders can confidently price the true cost of inclusive and effective delivery.
- Enables adaptive programming: highlighting non-standard costs helps us identify delivery risks, constraints or opportunities that may require flexibility or ongoing collaboration

- Non-standard costs incurred during the implementation phase will be considered and approved on a case-by-case basis, subject to justification and alignment with delivery needs. Where non-standard costs relate to reasonable adjustments required to support team members with disabilities or to meet inclusion, safeguarding or accessibility obligations, we will take particular care to ensure such costs are treated fairly and in line with our duty to promote equitable and inclusive delivery.

Social Value during intervention implementation

Contracting. All commitments to Social Value, made at the bidding stage, including budget allocations for inclusive actions, will be built into the contract as **Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)** and monitored throughout delivery.

Reporting. Throughout intervention implementation, suppliers will be expected to:

- Deliver on their Social Value plans
- Monitor and report on inclusion metrics—including the percentage of team members disaggregated by gender, disability status, nationality (national/international balance), and job family—using the standard template provided by PFRC MS. Reporting must also include the percentage and/or value of contract spend allocated to local and niche suppliers, suppliers based in ODA-eligible countries, and women- and disability-led suppliers.
- Include narrative and quantitative evidence against Key Performance Indicator targets in each quarterly progress report and the Intervention Completion Report
- Work collaboratively with PFRC to ensure continuous improvement on inclusion and social impact.

Failure to meet these commitments without a valid reason may result in contractual penalties or affect future eligibility for PFRC tenders.

Logframe. Finally, alongside the technical evaluation and pricing proposals, it is essential to recognise the importance of integrating Social Value indicators in logframes at both the PFRC programme and intervention levels. Social Value will be integrated as an output indicator within the logframe of each intervention, ensuring that all interventions are closely aligned with achieving measurable social impact.

Annex 1 Supplier Social Value Checklist

The following checklist is organised by procurement stages with key actions for suppliers:

1. Pre-Bid Preparation

- Understand PFRC's Social Value priorities
[Inclusive recruitment, diverse teams, supplier diversity, accessibility, reporting]
- Review ITB/ToR for Social Value expectations
[Themes, Outcomes, Measures - specific to the bid]
- Engage with PFRC during market engagement sessions
[Clarify Social Value goals and expectations]
- Identify lead organisation and delivery partners within the consortium or subcontracting arrangement [including local niche suppliers, suppliers based in ODA-eligible countries, and women- and disability-led suppliers]
- Plan for accessible and inclusive work environments
[Especially in fragile or complex settings]

2. Proposal / Bidding Stage

- Existence of Social Value policies
- Develop a Social Value Plan covering:
 - Inclusive recruitment (gender, PwD, nationality, seniority)
 - Team diversity and structure
 - Sub/contracting to diverse suppliers (niche suppliers, suppliers based in ODA-eligible countries, and women- and disability-led suppliers)
 - Accessibility and safety measures
- Set measurable Social Value targets:
 - % of fees/person-days allocated to women, PwD, local professionals
 - % of spend on local niche suppliers, suppliers based in ODA-eligible countries, and women- and disability-led suppliers
- Provide a clear rationale explaining how diversity in team structure benefits delivery and stakeholder engagement
- Provide a clear rationale explaining how inclusion of diverse suppliers will help better ground the interventions in the local context and improve overall project outcome
- Differentiate between Standard and Non-Standard costs, providing a clear rationale
[Identify inclusive delivery adjustments, e.g., assistive tech, additional travel adjustments for PwD and Women]
- Ensure legal compliance with data protection and non-discrimination laws
[Avoid unjustified preference for protected groups]
- Fully respond to evaluation questions on:
 - Team diversity impact on delivery
 - Supply chain inclusion
 - Workforce equity
 - Track record of delivering similar inclusion and Social Value outcomes.

3. Bid Submission

- Complete all required Social Value sections in ITB/RFP documents thoroughly
- Provide evidence/examples of previous inclusion achievements (track record)
- Ensure Social Value commitments are realistic, credible, and proportionate to the contract

- Submit two pricing proposals, clearly identifying and separating Standard and Non-Standard Costs, replacing all Non-Standard Costs with an equivalent Standard Cost, providing a clear explanation and justification for Non-Standard Costs and providing supporting rationale or evidence for all Standard Cost equivalents

4. Post-Award / Delivery Phase

- Implement all Social Value commitments made in the bid
- Monitor and report on Social Value KPIs, including:
 - Inclusion metrics (gender, PwD status, nationality, seniority, % and or value allocated to niche suppliers, suppliers based in ODA-eligible countries, and women- and disability-led suppliers)
- Keep detailed records to support contract management reviews
- Submit Social Value reports with quantitative data and narrative assessment, following PFRC template
- Collaborate with PFRC and local/underrepresented suppliers to improve Social Value delivery

5. End of Contract

- Submit a final Social Value report as part of the Intervention Completion Report
- Provide evidence of actual Social Value impact versus initial commitments
- Participate in lessons learned or feedback sessions, if requested

Annex 2a: Technical assessment

While the specific evaluation criteria used to assess these two dimensions of Social Value may vary between procurements, in general, we anticipate that it will reflect the example provided in the boxes below:

Table 1 Example: Social Value Criteria and Weighting

<p>Social Value – diverse supply chains The proposal must set out how you will achieve the benefits of MAC 3.1 (diverse supply chains) in line with the requirements in the ToR.</p> <p>Question: Please provide clear and specific evidence of how your supply chain incorporates diversity — including women-owned businesses, enterprises led by persons with disabilities, niche suppliers and suppliers based in ODA-eligible countries.</p> <p>The proposal must illustrate how this diverse composition: (i) enhances contextual relevance of the proposed interventions and (ii) facilitates the integration of gender equality and social inclusion (GESI) within public financial management (PFM) and revenue advisory services. The proposal should provide a clear rational that demonstrate how this approach will strengthen project outcomes and delivery through inclusive and equitable supplier engagement.</p>	5
<p>Social Value – tackling workforce inequality The proposal must set out how you will achieve the benefits of MAC 6.1 (tackling inequality in the contract workforce) in line with the requirements in the ToR.</p> <p>Question: Please provide evidence of how your proposed team reflects diversity across women and persons with disabilities, including in relation to senior/leadership positions, and explain how this composition will enhance project delivery and outcomes. In addition, outline how inclusive practices will be captured, recognised and embedded throughout project delivery and contribute to improved outcomes.</p> <p>The proposal must evidence how your proposed team reflects diversity within the team across seniority levels and provide rationale on how this will enhance project delivery and stakeholder engagement. We are interested not just in representation, but in how inclusion is integrated into the team's functioning and roles.</p>	5

Social Value will usually be scored on a six-point scale, rewarding proposals that demonstrate how inclusion strengthens delivery outcomes.

Annex 2b: Commercial Approach Summary

To ensure fairness, transparency, and value for money, Social Value proposals must follow a consistent commercial approach. Bidders will be asked to provide the following information as part of their bid:

- **Standard Costs:** these are the agreed baseline rates and expenses (e.g. daily rates, IT equipment, travel and subsistence, routine delivery items). Standard costs are expected to cover the majority of delivery.
- **Non-Standard Costs:** these may be proposed where necessary to ensure inclusive and accessible delivery by PwD, women and other protected characteristics groups (for example, accessibility-related adaptations or context-specific requirements). Such costs must be credible and supported by justification. These might include, but are not limited to, the following:
 - Travel
 - Business-class or premium economy tickets if medically justified (e.g., space for prosthetics, mobility issues), and/or
 - Additional baggage allowances for medical devices or assistive technology.
 - Accessible taxis or specialised transport when public transport is not viable.
 - Accommodation
 - Accessible (first-floor or more spacious) hotel rooms or hotels near meeting venues.
 - Assistive technology and equipment
 - Ramps, etc.
 - Specialised software (e.g., screen readers, magnification, translation apps).
 - Extended time
 - Additional travel days (e.g., slower mobility requiring early departure or extended layovers).
 - Health and safety costs
 - Disability-inclusive health or travel insurance.
 - Storage or refrigeration for medications.
- Emergency evacuation arrangements accessible to persons with disabilities.

Note for suppliers:

- Non-standard costs may not always be approved. Proposals should remain viable at standard cost levels.
- Accessibility-related costs are encouraged where they enable inclusive participation, provided they are reasonable and proportionate.
- All non-standard costs will be reviewed and verified on case-by-case basis during the implementation.