

1.3 Monitoring and Evaluation

BBC Media Action has strong contract and project supervisory systems and protocols. All contracts and other formal agreements, including with sub-contractors and consortium partners, undergo in-house legal scrutiny before signing to ensure programmatic commitments are lined up with the required legal provisions and any associated risks the organisation is able to take on. Consortium partners will ensure that any contract lay out clear terms of reference to ensure a common understanding with funders and to ensure expectations can be managed efficiently. Although the nature of this project will not require lengthy supply chains, the Consortium will sub-contract to service providers for technical input when necessary. The Consortium will conduct extensive due diligence on all sub-contractors including collection of legal and financial documents and ethical checks. When sub-contracting individual service providers we will conduct assessments for organisational tax compliance obligations. Defined collaboration objectives, roles and responsibilities will be formalised in clear TORs within contracts, MOUs or broadcast agreements. For quality control and financial integrity, agreements contain planned activities, timelines, budget where relevant and break clauses. Contracts include financial terms relating to rights, auditing, termination or non-payment. As the Consortium lead, BBC Media Action will employ a range of monitoring strategies to collect and analyse information systematically in order to supervise programming and to take remedial action as necessary. This improves the efficiency and effectiveness of the intervention and allows activities to be adapted to meet intended outcomes. In addition, various project controls and processes are put in place to monitor project management and ensure that any issues or problems are quickly identified and can be acted upon in a timely fashion. Project start-up meetings will take place with consortium partners to ensure shared understanding of the project objectives and strands of activity and to clarify roles and responsibilities. Project and activity plans feed into a final project workplan which sits alongside other project documents such as the theory of change, design of interventions, research plans including M&E strategies, procurement plans and the budget.

BBC Media Action's global Research and Learning (R&L) unit will oversee the management of the project monitoring and evaluation. BBC Media Action has an outstanding reputation for the impact, creativity, rigour, and measurement of its work, underpinned by a research team that has been described by a recent Department for International Development (DFID) assessment as "world class".

According to the Theory of Change (ToC) drawn up at the start of the project, the main objectives are to:

- Increase the audience share of the editorially independent online and traditional media partners trained by the project.
- Provide audiences in EaP countries with improved, sustainable access to objective, trustworthy and high quality media content.
- Create a more balanced and plural media space in the target countries, which is more resilient to misinformation and disinformation, propaganda and political or other interests.

Therefore the evaluation will be designed to assess this ToC. We recognise that change takes place at a systemic, organisation, practitioner and audience level, however in this instance we will not evaluate a system level change as the ToC is based on improving organisational capacity and in turn increasing audience share, thereby not directly affected by the systemic level. Recognising the importance of evaluating at different points in time during the lifecycle of the project, we will capture data at baseline and midline points, spanning the three-year project length. At the evaluation stage, the methodology from the baseline and midline stages will be repeated. Baseline data collection and analysis will be supplemented by the 2017 Eastern Partnership Target Audience Analysis commissioned by CSSF and implemented by consortium partner Aktis Strategy.

Our research will primarily adopt a qualitative methodology. At an organisational level, we will conduct the following activities;

- In-depth interviews (IDI's) to test the quality of station outputs with:
 - Management across the media outlets we are working with

- Practitioners at various levels of seniority
- Content analysis – to evidence the quality and change over time in the stations output, specifically how the output demonstrates improvements in editorial, production and technical quality.
- Supported media outlets’ assessments to understand:
 - Training needs and skills gaps
 - Reach and target audience
 - Current programming
 - Aspirations for future programming
 - Staff resources
 - Audience panels – the panels will be engaged through focus groups discussions (FGD’s)

At a practitioner level, we will conduct IDI’s to understand the changing levels in knowledge and skills as a result of training.

At an audience level, we will conduct the following activities;

- Focus group discussions (FGD’s) – these will be commissioned to an in-country market research agency to conduct. They will be split by gender, age and level of station consumption (i.e. regular/irregular). They will aim to ascertain the following, (but not limited to);
 - The quality of the station output
 - How well the station is performing within the current media environment
 - How well they have benefit from the content
 - Trust in the output
 - Resonance of the output
 - How well they can identify mis/disinformation, and the checking of secondary data.

We will aim to corroborate our findings with audience share data from other sources.

Ongoing monitoring and evaluation is vital to ensure that:

- The project remains on track to achieve its stated objectives;
- Training content is continuously modified, improved and optimised in line with participant feedback;
- Lessons learned are systematised, analysed and fed back to refine the project design during quarterly meetings of the Eastern Partnership Board.

As we have built capacity of media practitioners to deliver their own research, we will coordinate a collection of social media analytics, pre-testing, and focus group findings to understand how well organisations are achieving their objectives. To ensure continuous improvement throughout the project, we will do this every 6 months, and at each time point we will evaluate how each station is doing against key indicators, e.g. the number of females who have liked a Facebook page. This will highlight good performance and indicate where they are doing badly. These findings will be discussed with the trainers to determine which areas they need to focus on, to ensure improved performance, and supplement the development of supported media outlets. Additionally the indicators we will be measuring will be assessed on a yearly basis to ensure they are context appropriate.

BBC Media Action will work in conjunction with Aktis Strategy and Thomson Reuters Foundation to develop and implement a monitoring and evaluation framework for the project. Once a scoping mission in all three countries has taken place, the indicative KPI’s listed below will be refined based on training needs assessments. The consortium will then agree on the appropriate indicators against which to monitor project progress and measure impact. Indicative KPI’s for the consortium are outlined in the table below; all will be disaggregated by age and gender.

Indicative KPI's for the Consortium:

Indicator	Source of information
Number of media practitioners trained	Training lists / staff audits
% of trainees rating their skills (i.e. editorial, production) as having improved	Pre/post survey analysis
Increased ability of trainees to produce high quality content, which shows greater compliance with public service values and editorial principles	Content analysis / IDI's
Improved quality of existing news and non-news programmes in terms of quality, editorial and ethical standards	Change in programme schedules and format / programme reviews / trainers reports / audit of existing programmes
Increased supply of high quality media content	Number of new formats developed
Increased audience engagement with social media platforms	Social media analytics
Increased cross-platform integration	Social media analytics / supported outlet observation
Increased financial sustainability	Financial data
Increased audience share of trained media outlets	Audience data
Increased quality and supply of balanced and trusted information across supported media outlets	Content analysis / IDI's

The entire project has been designed to be sustainable; its outcomes specifically focus on creating lasting capacity within local partners and beneficiaries to continue post-project to produce objective, trustworthy and high quality media content. By working both at media practitioner level (building local partners' skills and organisational capacity) and at audience level (by producing compelling programming), the project is designed to ensure a lasting legacy. We seek to achieve the project's objectives relating to bringing balance and plurality to the media space in Eastern Partnership countries through a tailored package of mentoring and technical assistance activities aimed at equipping independent media with the adequate skills to be self-sustaining and fulfil their role to inform, educate and empower the countries' populations beyond the life of the project. Our integrated approach to capacity strengthening supports the development of practitioners and organisations, whilst retaining a clear focus on audience needs through supporting the development of media content and more sustainable and innovative business plans and approaches, which will enable them to operate more effectively and efficiently. To this end, the Consortium will seek to build on existing structures, thereby ensuring that key deliverables can be sustained at little or no extra cost. This will be particularly important in areas such as programme improvement/development.