

Q4 (1.2.2): Rapid Staff/Expert Identification. British Council has a commercial project portfolio of over 80 projects globally, operating in many CSSF/FCAS countries, with a turnover of over £180m p.a. (f/y 17/18) - for a variety of clients including FCO, DFID, EC and CSSF. These projects vary from small projects under £100k tackling a single issue in a single country, to large multi-country, multi-year donor funded projects of over £30m contract value. So that we can resource this portfolio and respond positively and quickly to client requirements, we use **multiple sources to swiftly recruit and deploy staff and experts** in CSSF thematic areas 1,2,3,4,6,7 and 8.

These sources are detailed in Q3 and include: (i) British Council **in-house technical and project management staff** already actively working on projects funded by HMG, CSSF, DFID, EC and other clients (ii) in-house experts in cross-cutting areas including **gender, conflict and evaluation** (iii) **local technical and project management personnel** (in-house and external) based in-country including in some of the most fragile/post conflict/conflict environments and in many existing CSSF environments (iv) **external trusted experts** managed through the British Council's global, formalised consultant relationship management approach and through a bespoke secure, web-portal where consultants access and update their experience and availability for missions to **facilitate rapid deployment** (v) experts sourced from our **already successful and existing CSSF framework partnership** comprising British Council (lead), Governance and Justice Group, International Civil Society Action Network (ICAN), Interpeace, INTRAC, Itad, Thomson Reuters Foundation and Westminster Foundation for Democracy (in CSSF thematic areas 1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8 and 9). These multiple sources of experts mean we can **quickly identify and deploy strong, high quality teams** of international and local experts for our proposals (often to quite short CSSF deadlines of 2-3 weeks). They also enable us to (i) respond quickly with multiple options and alternatives when projects flex and adapt (ii) respond quickly and positively to changes to client requirements or changes in the operating environment (iii) quickly seize opportunities that may arise for greater impact or address any issues that need rectifying - in FCAS environments, these are all important attributes of successful Programming.

Rapid Staff/Expert Procurement Contracting and Deployment: For in-house personnel (local AND international and including project managers, technical experts and support staff) **client-funded work is prioritised** through their annually set deliverables and job specifications. They are in-house and contracted requiring no recruitment, no negotiation, no new taxation or contracting issues to be resolved and can be deployed quickly and safely. International in-house staff engaged in the pursuit and delivery of commercial contracts are required to timelog (via SAP) and their utilisation rates are managed and tracked in real-time through our resources management tool, RETAIN. This enables us to immediately **prioritise and deploy** the right in-house expertise, with the right skills, knowledge and experience, globally, to the right projects, at the right time and to the kind of short timescales required for CSSF.

For external expert and equipment procurement, it is our established **in-house support function personnel and processes** that enable the next stages of **procurement, contracting and deployment to take place rapidly** – while still maintaining the rigour that ensures we do not risk reputational damage to ourselves or our clients - or jeopardise the safety of deployed personnel. Our **specialist Contracts and Procurement team** ensure compliant purchases based on our corporate procurement policy, which adheres to the principles of EU and UK procurement legislation. Contravention of the policy results in disciplinary proceedings. We have mandatory training and developed a series of procurement tools (model templates, guidance notes, contracts) that are used by project teams when procuring personnel or equipment. We also have Regional Procurement Hubs and local procurement teams whose scope is to support any project or office team running procurement exercises to policy and local legislation. These steps ensure **rapid and compliant procurement** by project teams. For expert deployment specifically, **in-house security and HR teams** ensure experts **rapidly undertake any required vetting or security processes** such as (i) organising "SAFE"/hostile environment training (or other) (ii) pre-departure and arrival security briefings (iii) full incorporation into in-country security systems, cascades, evacuation plans etc. (iv) security clearance or Disclosure and Barring Service checks etc. With regard to **administration and logistics**, experts are fully supported through the pre- and post-deployment process by experienced personnel in the UK and In-Country. This ensures that all **logistics**, transfers, personal belongings, insurances, accommodation, family arrangements, customs and other administrative issues are dealt with **quickly, smoothly and with minimum disruption**.

When it comes to **deploying CSSF Framework partner-sourced experts rapidly**, we have developed the following to ensure rapid responses for CSSF specifically (i) a specific, secure, password protected web-based portal and collaboration space - used as a **quick, efficient mechanism for sharing information with our partners** on call-down CSSF opportunities (ii) **time-bound, agreed standards** for decision making and information sharing on individual opportunities – particularly important where such call-downs have 2-3 week turnaround times, e.g. an agreed 24 hour turnaround to share call-downs with partners and country teams and a subsequent 48 hour deadline for partners to declare interest; (iii) quarterly formal partnership meetings to ensure longer-term lessons are learned from pursuit and delivery and can be **quickly built into future CSSF designs**, and (iv) pre-agreed **operating standards, fee rates and contracting terms** that have been included in tight, tried-and-tested pre-contract agreements, non-disclosure agreements and partnership contracts between British Council and partners, so when experts are identified there are **no delays due to negotiation of terms, contracts or rates**.

Co-ordination and management are also important in ensuring rapid responses. As such, at call-down each CSSF opportunity will be assigned to a specific team of thematic and in-country specialists who will design and, if successful, deliver the project. At the same time, a small team of experienced senior consultants from our **Governance and Civil Society practice** – experienced from working on CSSF responses for the first CSSF framework and DFID frameworks – will be immediately assigned to lead the design teams through the rapid CSSF process. They are also responsible for tracking opportunities and ensuring our network is aware of updated CSSF pipelines. In turn, they report to the Head of Governance and Civil Society (who has also successfully designed, written and is now delivering technical inputs for CSSF funded programmes) and who will be ultimately accountable for CSSF responses. This CSSF-experienced core group – working with specific thematic and local expert staff for each call-down – will ensure high quality, quick, efficient and fully CSSF-compliant responses.

Finally, whilst many organisations may be able to respond quickly, we can **respond quickly AND in a fully informed, credible, politically and culturally sensitive way** based on our long-term on-the-ground engagement. This is particularly relevant where opportunities for pre-bid scoping and research may be limited due to swift CSSF turnaround times for call-downs – we have less need for scoping – we can call on our **existing long-term in-country presence, contacts and networks**. To smooth the deployment and project set-up process, we also call on our global teams and their pre-existing networks in over 100 countries and utilise our strong relationships and networks with ministerial and other government officials, CSOs, education providers, justice sector bodies and programme and project alumni – as well as our network of local senior experts and other resources. Such relationships and trust, often long-held and built over time, are a vital component in our ability to **rapidly, efficiently and effectively deploy teams** to FCAS environments.