

## 1.2.1 Methodology and approach

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All five EaP countries are committed to alignment with European values and standards. However, their aspirations for greater integration with Europe are challenged by Russia's influence. Given the Soviet legacy across all countries, Russian language and media are widely accessible, with Russian news agencies being the main **foreign** source of information particularly in rural areas. As a result, peoples' views are largely shaped by one-sided, unbalanced information. In addition, long-lasting conflicts in the region create political, economic and social challenges. In remote communities, the challenges are significant leading to apathy, insecurity, the social and economic stagnation and unemployment. In the South Caucasus, young people are exposed to negative propaganda through media as well as in schools, through textbooks and their teachers. The level of pessimism concerning resolving existing conflicts peacefully is increasing. People do not realise or accept the **cost of conflict**, which is translated into instability and blocked opportunities for the prosperity of communities and missed economic and social opportunities for young people.<sup>1</sup>

### Approach

The project has been developed taking into consideration global initiatives and reports, and the lessons learned through our experience of similar projects:

- Acknowledging the importance of **critical thinking and debates** for addressing stereotypes, encountering propaganda and encouraging dialogue between groups across conflicting sides, we have incorporated "core skills"<sup>2</sup> in the overall offer for teachers' development and students' learning.
- Schools play a significant role in shaping future generation and contributing to social cohesion and reconciliation. Thus, we will co-operate with schools and teachers to develop their capacity to educate their students to analyse, think critically and independently and make their own decisions.
- To address gender stereotyping and engage girls and boys equally throughout the project, gender equality will be mainstreamed through the teaching practice and the resources provided within the project. Apart from equal participation of boys and girls, teachers will be taught to apply gender-sensitive teaching methods using the Gender Toolkit developed through 2018/19 CSSF programme.
- The project is designed in line with DFID's "leave no one behind" approach. We will ensure isolated communities with most limited access to opportunities are prioritised. We will undertake equality screening of the programme using the British Council's Equality Screening and Impact Assessment tool. This will ensure that we mainstream approaches that challenge social barriers denying opportunities for people based on different backgrounds, particularly age and gender.

The **Theory of Change** below demonstrates the **transformative impact** expected through the project:

**If** we build the capacity of isolated/remote communities through their schools to better serve the development needs of young people and teachers of the community; and

**If** we raise the professional capacity of teachers to deliver high-quality English language, critical thinking, problem solving and communication skills through integrated gender and conflict-sensitive approaches; and

**If** learners, boys and girls equally, actively engage through the Learning Hubs to develop their English language skills as well as debating, critical thinking, problem solving and communication skills; and

**If our assumptions** remain true that

- governments will support the projects and encourage schools to actively engage;
- schools will empower their teachers to lead on the management of Learning Hubs and the delivery of English language and core skills; and
- parents will support and encourage the active engagement and development of the skills of their children, both boys and girls, through the Learning Hubs;

then we will create

- improved chances for young people, men and women equally, particularly in isolated/remote communities to have better access to employment markets and high-paid jobs; and

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<sup>1</sup> The background information is based on the desk research, including context, conflict and gender analyses conducted through the 2018/19 CSSF-funded project. These analyses will be submitted with the final project report and can be provided if needed.

<sup>2</sup> Core skills offered through the suggested project include problem-solving, critical thinking, communication and collaboration and leadership

- an improved understanding of the need for reconciliation and dialogue, and for the acceptance of tolerance, equality and inclusion,

**leading to** resilient and empowered young people willing to engage in peacebuilding and contribute to more cohesive, safer and stable communities in the South Caucasus, Moldova and Belarus;

**thus providing the conditions necessary to meet the strategic objective** of supporting diplomatic efforts to reduce outbreaks of violence and build space for dialogue including by maintaining international engagement on regional security issues and by helping to prepare for long-term political resolutions.

### Sustainability

The following approaches and mechanisms are taken into consideration to ensure sustainability after the completion of the project:

- In the South Caucasus, British Council teams have signed different types of agreements to ensure governments' commitment to support the delivery and continuity of the project outcomes.
- Co-operation with relevant Ministries will ensure that the innovative methods introduced by the project, (e.g. Teacher Activity Groups, web-based class observations) serve as best practice for consideration through Governments' own teacher development programmes.
- Without our own presence in Belarus and Moldova, we will collaborate with local partners to ensure successful delivery and sustainability of the project.
- As in the last two years, we will sign agreements with schools to ensure their commitment for security of the donated resources and the successful operation of the Hubs.

The following **outputs and activities** are planned to be delivered through the project:

**Output 1:** Existing English Clubs are enhanced to Learning Hubs, and new Learning Hubs are established across five countries to support skills development of teachers and students in remote/isolated communities.

1. **Project launch**, including revision of Result and Evaluation Framework based on the study and the M&E results of 19/20, revision of stakeholder analysis, development of communication plan and selection of communities and schools in consultation with Ministries and British Embassy teams.
2. **Establishment of 31 new Learning Hubs** (*five in each of the SC countries, eight in Moldova and Belarus each*) in schools and universities to provide English and core skills for children in remote areas;
3. **Enhancing existing 30 English clubs** in the South Caucasus into **Learning Hubs** (providing additional resources and developing effective models of operation as Learning Hubs) to serve children and teachers across the community;
4. **Purchasing Web monitoring kit and platform** for the new Learning Hubs in Armenia and Georgia.
5. Previous Web monitoring platform functionality is extended through upgrade and annual licensing.
6. New Learning Hubs are officially **launched**.

**Output 2:** Teachers are supported through professional development opportunities, resources and Teacher activity groups.

1. **Training of 62 teachers of the new Learning Hubs** to deliver **English language** using British Council resources, and be able to mainstream gender through their teaching practice;
2. Five-day **training of trainer's courses for core skills** organised in Ukraine for 20 trainers from five countries.
3. Accreditation of 20 trainers carried out by the British Council to give them master trainers status.
4. 154 teachers from five countries trained through core skills trainings, delivered by master trainers;
5. 30 teachers of the new Learning Hubs from the SC trained to deliver debating, negotiation and dialogue (DND) sessions through the Learning Hubs;
6. Regular web mentoring is carried out by mentors to support the teachers in rural areas to delivery English and soft skills.

**Output 3:** Young people, boys and girls equally, engaged in Learning Hubs have improved skills of English language, collaboration, communication, critical thinking and problem solving, debating and gender equality.

1. Annually, 5,400 young people, boys and girls equally, are engage in **English language and core skills courses**. Through the sessions on gender equality, students understand the impact of gender roles and stereotypes on the opportunities and choices of girls and boys. 1,620 young people gtp, yjr DV are engaged through debating and negotiation courses.

2. **Debating Competitions** is organised in year 3 across the SC countries. Winners of the community competitions attend the national final.
3. **Community events** are organised in years two and three in each community (177 events in total) to showcase the skills and knowledge obtained through the Learning Hubs.
4. Each year, 1,938 teachers are engaged in teacher activity groups (TAGs) for knowledge exchange and peer support (overall 5,814 teachers over three years). In year three, two **TAG networking events** are held in each country in a PechaKucha format with the participation of UK experts.
5. Each year, based on the best attendance and performance of the TAG participants, teachers across all countries (overall, 675 teachers) are selected to complete **TKT Cambridge certificate**<sup>3</sup>. We will work with Ministries to get recognition for this qualification, where possible, to count it as a credit in local CPD systems.

**Other activities:** Overall project management

1. Staff regularly travels to the regions to monitor the successful functioning of the Learning Hubs.
2. Project publicity is managed according to the communication plan and the CSSF and British Council brand guidelines.
3. Year-end/closure events are organised with key stakeholders to present the project outcomes.
4. Inter M&E is carried out remotely in Years one and two, full evaluation is carried out by the end of the project
5. Internal audit is carried out in years 1 and 2, with full external audit in year 3.

### Beneficiaries

The direct beneficiaries of the project include:

- **16,200 students** from the EaP region (men and women equally) benefit from English language, core skills and gender equality training.
- **4,860 students** in the SC (50% men and 50% women) benefit from the DND sessions.
- **174 teachers** from five countries develop their professional skills in teaching English, core skills and debating and negotiating skills. Gender equality is integrated into teachers teaching practice.
- **5,814 teachers** benefit from TAG activities through learning and sharing best practices with colleagues. **675 teachers** across all five countries gain TKT Cambridge Certificate.

Indirect beneficiaries of the project include:

- **11,520 students** from Moldova and Belarus (men and women equally) benefit indirectly from the English and core skills (the Learning Hubs in Belarus and Moldova will be supported remotely from Ukraine, and students will be engaged and managed by the Hub facilitators directly).
- Students not directly involved through Learning Hubs benefit through their teachers' professional development applying the new skills in the classrooms.
- In the long-term, the community benefits from the project as young people start practicing the skills and undertaking active role in community development and peacebuilding.

### Added value

Learning Hubs will be provided access to wider British Council online resources. Teachers will join the teacher' network co-ordinated by the British Council and will benefit from language and skills development programmes delivered during and after the completion of the project.

TAGs platforms will be scaled up and digital TAG platforms will also be developed in future offering the prospect for cross border (including cross-contested-border) collaboration.

IRIS Connect web monitoring platform will help to reach out to remote areas and provide regular mentoring and support in distance in cost-effective way.

Through the British Council Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policy and programme we will provide additional resources and contribute to promoting inclusion and building of tolerance through Learning Hubs.