

### 1.2.2 Thematic capability

The British Council has offices in three of the Eastern Partnership countries (Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia) and covers Moldova and Belarus from its office in Ukraine. We have a team of professional and competent project managers and sector leads, as well as finance and marketing experts, that ensure the delivery of our programmes to high standards.

We have an established and positive reputation as a leader in the international education and cultural sectors. During many years of presence in the region, we have built trusted relationships with education institutions, government ministries and have worked on the ground alongside a diverse network of stakeholders and partners to deliver impact through our own programmes and donor-funded projects.

Since 2017, we have been delivering English and skills programmes in isolated communities with CSSF funding in order to provide young people with alternative pathways for better jobs and economic independence as well as for their engagement in peace-building and community work. Over these two years, we have further strengthened our knowledge of the wide-ranging sensitive challenges in isolated communities and have enhanced our experience in working in remote and conflict-sensitive regions.

Below is a summary of our organisation’s experience and expertise in the related areas:

Area of expertise	Experience
<b>Managing conflict-sensitive projects</b>	<p>The British Council has significant experience in delivering CSSF-funded projects globally. In the EaP region, we have delivered two directly-relevant programmes since 2017, whose details are provided below:</p> <p><b>1 - Enhancing stability &amp; prosperity in the EECA countries, 2017/18, £1.9M</b>                      Countries: Ukraine, Central Asia, and EaP</p> <p>The project delivered a range of interventions in different EECA geographies with widely-distributed delivery in a very short timescale. In the EaP countries (£688k), the focus was on improving the quality of English language teaching and learning to enhance employability, and on improving the ability to make international connections, through the development of English Clubs in schools in Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, in universities in Moldova, and through a Teacher Development Programme in Belarus. We achieved the following through this project:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 29 English Clubs were established in schools, universities, and community centres in remote locations, or in communities with limited access to international opportunities</li> <li>• 2,020 teachers completed a Teacher Educator Programme</li> <li>• 69 teachers took part in UK-based teacher training</li> <li>• In total 11,223+ participants benefited, 69+% women and girls</li> </ul> <p><b>2 - Towards stability and prosperity: improving English language skills for isolated communities in the South Caucasus, Belarus and Moldova 18/19, £393, 959.</b> Countries: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Belarus, Moldova</p> <p>Planned project outcomes include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 4,000 young people have access to English programme activities improving their ability to take up opportunities, building their confidence in accessing different resources and increasing their employment prospects.</li> <li>• 400 teachers have access to professional development, building their confidence, knowledge and skills, and improving the quality of teaching and learning of English and skills for their students.</li> <li>• M&amp;E is currently measuring the change of understanding and acceptance of tolerance, mutuality, dialogue and gender equality among the beneficiaries in the target communities as a result of the programme.</li> <li>• Teacher Activity Group (TAG) models have been piloted across the five countries encouraging community working and sharing among teachers to identify challenges and build mutual solutions.</li> </ul>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The IRIS Connect web monitoring platform has been successfully piloted in Armenia and Georgia offering remote mentoring and support to the teachers in remote communities.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Strong knowledge and track record of working in remote areas</b></p>	<p>As part of the CSSF programme, we have conducted <b>extensive desk research</b> to gain a better understanding of the challenges of education systems particularly in isolated and conflict-affected communities, and to understand the learning behaviours of young people in those communities, particularly the different learning patterns of girls and boys across different educational levels. Through the analysis of reports on conflicts in the SC countries, we have developed our understanding of the specific challenges in border regions and among marginalised groups and have identified opportunities and pathways that English and skills language can provide to young people in these communities.</p> <p>We undertook an <b>in-depth study</b> to look at the impact of English and skills on the prosperity of individuals and stability of communities. The report will be ready in May 2019 and will further inform our planning and delivery of similar programmes to ensure greater impact and change going forward.</p> <p>To ensure further development of our teams’ competences and confidence in managing conflict-sensitive programmes, we have arranged <b>Conflict Sensitivity and Social Cohesion training for managers</b> who will be involved in this new programme, to take place in May 2019.</p>
<p><b>Track record of delivering gender-sensitive programmes</b></p>	<p>The British Council has an established <b>Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) policy</b> which vigorously monitors the development of EDI competencies amongst delivery teams and the EDI compliance of office functions.</p> <p>We have professional <b>EDI screening tools</b> that we use to review our programmes to identify any needs and gaps and suggest interventions for mainstreaming EDI during delivery. Under the previous CSSF programmes, EDI screening had a particular focus on <u>gender equality and mainstreaming</u>.</p> <p>Through the 2098/19 programme, a <b>Gender Toolkit</b> has been developed which helps to train teachers to encourage gender-sensitive classroom environments and to use language and materials that break stereotypes and promote gender equality.</p>
<p><b>Capacity and staff</b></p>	<p>We have professional English Language programme managers who have also led the delivery of the CSSF programmes during the last two years. The programme team also received support from country and regional finance and marketing colleagues who have ensured professional promotion and financial management of the programme in compliance with British Council Procurement policy.</p> <p>We already deliver programmes in an unstable region with a high risk of political and government changes, conflict escalation, etc. Our teams are experienced in managing associated risks and in deploying flexible and adaptive programming to respond to any local changes and amend interventions accordingly to ensure successful outcomes.</p> <p>We have legal status in the three South Caucasus countries. Our centralised financial processes allow us to deliver all programmes fully in line with acceptable international standards and in line with local legislation. Our defined status in international cultural cooperation treaties in most countries gives us ready access to necessary governmental stakeholders.</p>