Q8 (1.4.1): The British Council has extensive capacity and capability to establish presence in fragile and conflict affected countries through:

- Our already established fully functioning network of offices in fragile and conflict affected countries.
- Existing staff complement in CSSF countries and effective processes for recruitment and deployment including a strong commitment to equality, diversity an inclusion in our corporate processes, including gender equality.
- Knowledge and approaches for understanding the context, including the political economy (PEA), conflict and gender analysis. This includes in-house as well as external networks of trusted national and international experts proficient in building these into project designs in FCAS.
- Well established principles, policies, systems and standards for security, duty of care, procurement and financial management.

The British Council and our partners have **established presence** in the many of the fragile and conflict affected countries and regions therefore has a significant pre-existing platform, which provides a strong basis for delivery of programmes in CSSF regions and countries:

Model	Regions and countries
Examples of established British Council presence by CSSF regions	**Africa:** Botswana, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, Sierra Leone, South Africa, South Sudan, Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe **Americas:** Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Cuba, Jamaica, Peru, Trinidad & Tobago, Uruguay and Venezuela. **Europe and Central Asia:** Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Estonia, Georgia, Israel, Kazakhstan, Latvia, Lithuania, Kosovo, FYROM, Montenegro, Serbia, Turkey, Ukraine and Uzbekistan. **Middle East**: Algeria, Bahrain, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Oman, Occupied Palestinian Territories, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Tunisia, UAE and Yemen. **South Asia:** Afghanistan, Bangladesh, India, Iran, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka. **South East Asia:** Burma/Myanmar, China, , Indonesia, Korea, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, Taiwan, Thailand, Vietnam
Managed from 3rd country	Belarus, Burundi, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Syria, Solomon Islands, Somalia, Tajikistan.

For the examples outlined above, many of which overlap with the CSSF priority countries (as provided in the ITT) the British Council has **been** present long term, for example we have been working in **Egypt, Pakistan and Sierra Leone for more than 70 years**. We have also established new operations in response to changing national and political developments, for example we launched a Directorate in South Sudan in 2011, shortly after the establishment of the world's newest country. Most of our existing offices are located in the capitals and major cities of the countries listed above, but we also have the capability to set up project specific offices wherever necessary – for example in Nigeria we have established 3 offices in the conflict affected northern states - Maiduguri (Borno State), Damaturu (Yobe State) and Yola (Adamawa State) – in order to facilitate the delivery of a portfolio of programmes focused on conflict, governance and justice (including a CSSF-funded project). This was done through our established processes for establishing offices which focus on risk assessment from a conflict and security perspective. Given the security environment in Northern Nigeria, our strategy in establishing these operations has included:

- Carrying out extensive risk assessments, with support and to standards set by the Global Risk and Security Team.
- Compliance with global standards of health and safety.
- Offices established in a residential building on a sole-occupancy basis in order to maintain a low-profile and to more easily manage security, access and control. However, we have co-located with other contractors (i.e. with Coffey in Maiduguri) to reduce costs, where appropriate – and where our security control requirements can be fully met.
- Reduced visibility – for example ensuring no external signage, restricted access and/or addresses are not publically available.
- Risk assessment processes and procedures carried out on all project activities involving travel and events. This is critical to ensure that the safety of our staff, partners, stakeholders and beneficiaries is put at the forefront. This is clearly agreed with clients and staff in order to reduce risks and also manage expectations.

We also have experience in *managing presence from a third country*, where the security landscape means that a physical operation is not viable. For example in Syria, we are delivering the **Aswat Faeela (Active Voices)** programme (**EU, €3.3m, 2015-2018**), among others, which are building the resilience and voice of young men and women by building their capacity to contribute to their communities. This programme is managed from our office in Lebanon, by mainly Syrian staff, working in Syria through civil society partners. Where the British Council does not have a presence, we have clear protocols and processes which assess the costs and risks of setting up the partnerships and/or presence to be able to operate. This includes sign off by the British Council's Executive Board. As an example of this in practice, the British Council has recently completed an assignment in **Somalia** to scope a programme to build young men and women's resilience to violent extremism. This was managed and resourced from our **Regional Hub in Kenya** – and implemented through a team of international staff and local experts.

The extensive existing and flexible platform that the British Council has globally means that we can draw on the following assets:

- **Understanding of the context and building consensus:** the majority of our staff and contractors are locally appointed, supported and complemented by international advisers and experts, and with the deep local knowledge, networks and relationships needed to operate safely and effectively in fragile contexts. A core principal of this approach is the way we **build trust and engage** in open dialogue with relevant project stakeholders - by building on established credibility and trust that has been developed over a long-period and which is not based on more transient donor/contractor/beneficiary relationships. In **Nigeria** for example, our teams have been working in the conflict, justice and security sectors for over 15 years, meaning that we have an in-depth understanding of the multiple contexts and potential drivers for change at federal and state level as well as extensive understanding of - and relationships with - key actors and organisations that affect change including government, civil society and donor communities. Combined with robust research and evidence practice, this helps shape project interventions and direction. For example, **Gender and Conflict Analysis** carried out as part of the **Justice for All Programme (J4A) (DFID, £51m, 2010-2017)**, identified the need for targeting specific gender issues including addressing sexual and gender based violence requiring an adaptation to the programme approach and plans. This was

achieved by negotiating with multiple donors and building the support of relevant stakeholders in the design and piloting of a sexual assault referral centre (SARC) to support women survivors of SGBV and enhance the potential for prosecution. By building evidence of the value and impact of SARCs and involving stakeholders from multiple agencies (including police, health services, civil society, courts) at national and state level, J4A was able to build support for the approach and replicate this in 3 cities.

- **Leveraging long term relationships with government, civil society, donors and international organisations**. Given our long term presence in countries, we have extensive existing relationships -e.g. In **Pakistan**, through offices in Islamabad (KPK, GB), Karachi (Sindh and Balochistan), Lahore (Punjab) we manage relationships with government and parliamentary stakeholders at both federal and provincial level as well as national civil society partners, universities, schools and youth groups. We have partnerships with over 650 civil society organisations across Pakistan including those that have expertise in conflict, gender and other sectors relevant to CSSF including education and justice. This means we have the capacity and trust to mobilise these relationships to support the design, start up and delivery of interventions funded by CSSF and test our proposals in terms of addressing gender and conflict issues. Where we do not have a presence, we have the advantage of being able to draw on our legacy, global brand and reputation – for example in **Syria** the **Aswat Faeela** programme is building on relationships with multiple government and civil society actors developed before the British Council's physical operation was closed in 2012. This includes the Mobadaroon, a women-led civil society network that emerged from the British Council funded Active Citizens programme and which remains active on the ground as well as in international peace efforts. We also have experience of working with multiple donors and of facilitating coordination on specific areas of work for example on civil society capacity building in Afghanistan, as well as ensuring synergies between different donors that build on previous results. For example in Nigeria we are managing the rollout of a network of SARCs (see above) through EU and USAID funding, building on DFID's investment through J4A.

- **Existing staff complement and effective processes for recruitment:** We have existing staff in all the countries outlined above, with programme and project management skills, as well as specific expertise in a range of requirements and themes covered by the CSSF frameworks. This provides a strong foundation for the deployment of existing staff into CSSF projects as well as providing the support staff to carry out necessary recruitment and deployment of new members of staff. We have regional Human Resource functions that can support this process and ensure that recruitment is in line with key corporate policies including equality, diversity and inclusion. Across the British Council and at a country and project level, we build balanced and diverse teams of staff. In Nigeria, for example, the team of staff for our portfolio of justice and conflict programmes in Northern Nigeria have been recruited according to global standards – which includes open and transparent processes, evidence of competences and behaviours as set out in the Role Profiles and have proactively encouraged diversity in terms of gender, religion and language - which is particularly relevant in Northern Nigeria. The recruitment panels included HR professionals as well as technical expertise and were gender-balanced. Despite the prevailing gender norms and challenging environment for women, we have appointed a woman in the role of State Team Leader in Borno State.

- We have developed **strong security, crisis management and strict protocols that are fully tried and tested** to ensure the safety, security and well-being of all our globally deployed and locally appointed staff, both in-house and external contractors and suppliers operating in conflict affected environments. This is a fully integrated part of our **overall global risk management framework** and operates at 2 levels: [*Corporate*] – which relates to our **existing global and country-specific security and duty of care requirements**; [*Project/contract*] where duty of care, security and environmental issues are analysed **for each specific project and contract opportunity** supported by comprehensive tried-and-tested systems, processes, contingency plans and trained personnel to identify, manage and mitigate risks associated with operating in conflict affected and fragile locations. This includes a **Contract Approval Process (CAP),** which focusses on identifying and assessing any potential risks associated with security, environment and duty of care ensuring they are an integral and important element of our overall risk assessment. During the design phase, an assessment in collaboration with our Global Security Team, takes place to establish the exact measures that need to be taken to ensure the safety and security of the programme and team. At the pre-contract stage, this includes: (i) the operational and logistical plans for the programme's delivery; (ii) the formalised pre-departure and in-country arrangements for team members that are required to be put in place (for example, use of close protection, armoured vehicles, hostile environment training, use of specific hotels, secure accommodation rental costs etc.); (iii) a detailed, accurate budget to identify the itemised cost of putting measures in place along with a value for money analysis on potential cost sharing; (iv) the draft programme risk management strategy; and (v) draft security and duty of care protocols (vi) identifying what formal security related training will be required (e.g. SAFE or SAFE+) and any screening requirements such as SC or CTC. This is then integrated into the project's risk management and mitigation strategy and into project planning. Projects and project teams are added to our country office cascade lists, security arrangements, evacuation plans and embedded into our country operational business continuity plans. This detailed approach to planning for security and emergencies was put into action most recently in **South Sudan** in 2017, when two international consultants were extracted from the country, within seven hours of the escalation of fighting in Juba. Both consultants were non-British citizens so outside the FCO duty of care, which was addressed through the British Council's security manifest system and agreements with private security contractors.

- **Extensive operational and financial capability**: Given the British Council's extensive current platform, any projects delivered under CSSF will have access to legal, contractual, payroll, financial, risk, human resources, training and development, child protection, duty of care, procurement and other services. This provides value for money benefits and avoids experts undertaking the costly and time-consuming set-up of unique project specific processes and practice – ensuring that deployed teams can focus on project outcomes. For example, in each country we have procurement leads, who manage an Approved Supplier List, enabling us to purchase equipment and services in line with VFM principles e.g. interpreters and translators, IT, accommodation, hotel rooms, design and printing etc. We also have robust global financial management system and specific policies including the cash handling policy, which is relevant to managing fiduciary risks, particularly in conflict affected environments. Our internal audit processes work to NAO standards

In addition to the British Council's extensive infrastructure, systems, staff and capabilities, our partners also have on-the-ground operational capabilities which we can draw on for CSSF including in priority countries where there is no British Council presence e.g. Westminster Foundation for Democracy has work in both **Kyrgyzstan** and **Democratic Republic of Congo**. Our partners also work in countries through partner relationships such as Interpeace in **Central African Republic**, **Somalia**, **Somaliland** and ICAN in **Tajikistan.**