

Proven Project and Programme Management: Through managing large, complex strategic communication campaigns in fragile and conflict-affected states (FCAS) across the globe, Breakthrough (BTM) have developed a proven programme management approach that can be flexibly applied within a range of contexts. Our approach incorporates **eight key principles** of project management outlined in Figure 1 and discussed in more detail below, and these overlap with the CSSF Programme Management Cycle of Design, Implementation and Monitoring and Review. **These principles are underpinned by gender, conflict and political sensitivity** so that our campaigns reflect and take into account different stakeholders' interests and incentives for change, as well as the changing circumstances in FCAS. We will apply this programme management approach to any call-off contracts from the CSSF Framework to ensure project objectives are achieved and results are demonstrable.



Figure 1. BTM's Eight Key Principles of Programme Management

Strong Programme Management, Leadership Skills and Governance: At the highest level, BTM's programme management is governed by our board, made up of: ♦ the Chairman ♦ joint CEOs ♦ CFO ♦ Managing Director (MD) ♦ Director of Operations ♦ and Creative Director. Each member of the board, excluding the Chairman, is responsible for ensuring that work delivered in their respective department meets our rigorous performance standards, whilst the MD is ultimately responsible for the success of all projects delivered.

Integrated Approach to Ensure Maximum Value for Money (VfM), Accountability and Responsiveness: Our integrated model for projects, which brings together international and local staff, sub-contractors (SCs) and Civil Society Organisations (CSOs), is the responsibility of our Group Account Directors (GAD). The GAD is a senior management individual with 10yrs+ experience in project management, communications and an expert in at least one of our core competency areas (e.g. ♦ political inclusiveness and governance ♦ countering violent extremism (CVE) ♦ countering disinformation). The GAD is supported by a Senior Account Director (SAD), who is responsible for all technical delivery aspects of the project, as well as coordinating with an assigned Project Manager (PM), who is responsible for day-to-day budget management, liaising with partners and SCs, and ensuring that projects are run efficiently to maximise VfM. Our SADs are regional, linguistic and technical specialists on their respective projects with 8yrs+ relevant experience and will manage both the international and national staff/teams working on the project. SADs work with specific in-house Workstream Leads (e.g. Digital Lead) who oversee their own team of multilingual (e.g. Arabic, Bengali, Hindi, Russian, Somali, Urdu) technical experts to ensure quality control and project deliverables.

Local and International Client Engagement: The SAD is the primary point of contact (PoC) for the Authority, providing an escalation process (SAD → GAD → MD) as required. SADs provide the Authority with weekly reports on outputs and KPIs and in-depth monthly reports on strategic recommendations. Most projects are also assigned a project lead (PL), working in-country, and reporting to the SAD, who provide a PoC for Authority staff in-country. These local PLs ensure on-the-ground oversight of delivery and provide direct face-to-face engagement with all project stakeholders. We currently have PLs across East Africa, MENA, Eastern Europe and South Asia, providing us with a robust local and contextual understanding of these regions.

Programme Management through eight key principles

1. Strategic Planning and Theory of Change (ToC): BTM's strategic planning begins with a ToC. This involves a full contextual analysis of the political, gender, conflict and information environment, led by our Head of Research and Strategy (HoRS), using a range of research methods (e.g. primary qualitative research ♦ social listening ♦ network mapping) to establish a problem statement and identify which behavioural science approach will be most effective to influence our target audience. From this, we generate our communication objectives and strategies and capture this in a ToC, establishing our activities, outputs, outcomes and impact, and identifying all assumptions, risks and indicators in our change model. Through monitoring and evaluation (M&E) (discussed separately below), we are able to ascertain the effectiveness of our interventions, and revise our assumptions, change model and communication interventions to reflect our updated understanding of how change happens within the programme context.

Example: ToC for FCO CSSF Baltics Independent Media BTM delivered an innovative project aimed at instilling a greater affinity and sense of identification with Euro-Atlantic values in Russian-speaking minorities across the Baltic region. Our ToC is outlined below.



2. Implementation Planning: Implementation Planning starts during an active tender process. BTM gathers a core team of Technical and Operational Staff (TOS) to outline the planned delivery model and refine the ToC. A Project Implementation Document (PID) is then produced by the SAD (outlining Workstream Leads, key milestones, staffing requirements, risks and mitigating actions and contingency plans). This is tested and approved by the TOS and signed off by the MD. An assigned PM and the SAD will then work together to create a new entry on our CMAP project management system, allowing for fast and accurate project costing and resource scheduling. On contract award, the SAD and TOS review/update the PID to reflect project changes, with sign off from the GAD and MD, and the project entry on our CMAP system is subsequently updated.

3. M&E: Our ToC informs the development of evaluation frameworks that detail how key performance indicators (KPIs) are built into each stage of a programme, monitoring progress against inputs, outputs, outcomes and impact. Our M&E team, led by our HoRS, is proficient in multiple evaluation techniques. Our offline methodologies include: ♦ accompanied user journeys ♦ in-depth interviews ♦ focus groups ♦ and detailed quantitative polling. To collect our online data, we use social listening software such as Brandwatch and Audiense, as well as manual monitoring of Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and Google Analytics by our expert analysts. This allows us to establish baselines, monitor progress against the framework on a daily, weekly or monthly basis as required, and make recommendations for improving project impact. We use analytics, reports and data visualisation technologies to refine campaigns continually.

Example: BTM were contracted by the US State Department to advance mutual understanding between young online audiences in Russia and the West. Some participants were shown a BTM video and others no video, and were then asked to complete an attitudinal survey toward various countries, including the U.S. For this study, we had a sample size of $n = 1533$ (~500 in the control and each treatment group). Of those that viewed the BTM content, 52% found it to be trustworthy and 23% were more likely to agree with campaign message during post-exposure survey.

4. Quality Assurance (QA): BTM have all necessary processes to ensure that we deliver services on time and to budget and exceed client requirements. We are ISO 9001:2016 certified and ISO 27001:2013 certified. QA is tied to our ToC, outlining all inputs, outputs, outcomes and objectives. The SAD has responsibility for project momentum, using daily check-ins with key staff and reviews of progress against ToC and risks. Depending on budget, SADs typically travel to the project country to ensure high-quality supervision and project delivery.

Senior management maintains oversight, with weekly one-to-one meetings between each SAD and GAD, as well as monthly reviews with all Workstream Leads, using the ToC as the basis for monitoring performance. Where project outputs are not on track to meet targets, the GAD and/or MD takes a proactive daily involvement in the project to deal with poor performance. This includes understanding pinch points and requirements to overcome them (such as the provision of additional resources, or performance support for partners).

5. Partnership Management: BTM maintains healthy supply chains with 70+ SCs on 10 projects in 12 countries (including FCAS) across the world managed by our SADs. We work with a mix of SCs, including creative/production and research agencies, NGOs, academic institutions and online influencers. Our partnership management involves creating a project plan to outline clear, measurable objectives for SCs. We issue briefs to clearly describe required deliverables and set out strategic objectives. SADs review each deliverable to ensure standards are met. We use an iterative approach so that products can be adjusted post-review. Where possible we adopt a 'one-team approach' with SCs, co-locating staff and transferring skills and knowledge, and adding value to our projects by ensuring the upskilling and sustainability of local suppliers.

All subcontracts incorporate well-defined procedures for dealing with poor performance. We create a transparent environment with our SCs where disputes are proactively resolved in a respectful manner. As best practice, we hold meetings with SCs on a weekly basis and daily meetings with key individuals such as online influencers. We send SCs weekly emails to provide them with project updates and any performance messages.

6. Risk Management: BTM's Risk Manager (RM), works with our Commercial Lead (CL) to ensure reputational, legal, financial, operational and political risks and contingencies are identified, assessed, and prioritised through the process outlined in Figure 2. For operational risk (e.g. duty of care), we use the services of a third-party provider *Assaye Risk* to undertake risk analysis and also receive security notifications and daily brief alerts from *AIG Travel*. Project risks are outlined prior to contract award and then reviewed and refined within five days post

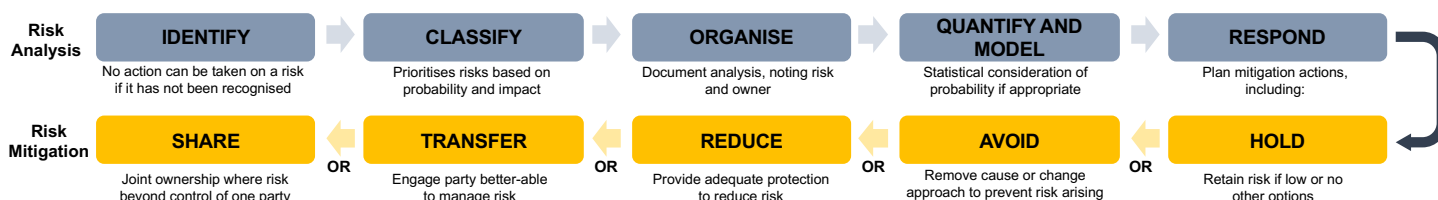


Figure 2. Risk Analysis and Mitigation Flow

contract award. At the outset of every project we establish comprehensive risk registers which are produced with guidance from the RM. These registers are reviewed on a weekly basis throughout a project's lifespan and mitigation measures are adjusted as necessary to respond to the changing project environment.

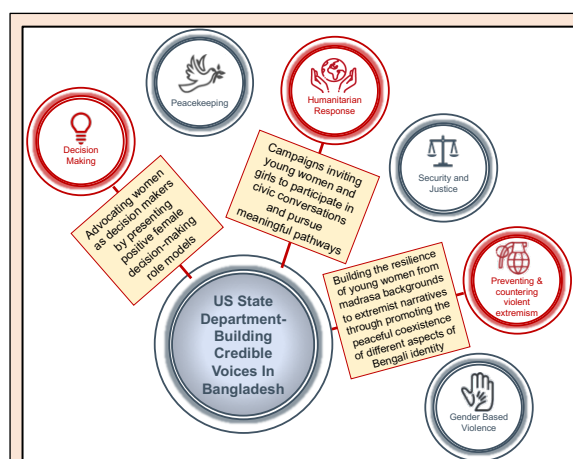
7. Financial Accountability and Reporting: Reporting. The Finance Team produce accounts on a monthly basis, applying rigorous checks and controls in order to detect errors in a timely manner. Cost Managers (CMs) track and report at the project level using a combination of CMAP and regular reconciliation to the finance system (Sage Accounting). On project contract signature, the PMs move the CMAP project entry from prospective to live and generate a unique project number with identified cost coding/categorisation to facilitate reporting, supplier invoice approval and client invoice generation according to approval levels and contract billing cycles respectively. **Accountability.** For fraud prevention, all PMs are required to answer four questions on cost expenditure to identify whether costs are 'allowable', 'allocable', 'reasonable' and 'necessary'. CMs test costs against PM justification and audit expenditure monthly. We also maintain role-based access to all systems and data and have independent auditors for annual inspection of costs and systems. **Forecasting.** CMAP provides us with the ability to accurately forecast revenue and project costs, with client payment forecasts distributed smoothly across the duration of the project or at set milestone points as contractually agreed. A live performance tracking function highlights poorly performing contracts and scope-creep to manage project costs for maximum VfM and to refine forecast estimates. On a daily basis, the Business Development Manager updates a pipeline of opportunities on CMAP, maintaining a 12-month forecast of business worth between £20-50 million at any given time, with contract revenue forecast distributed evenly across the project duration.

8. Embedding Best Practice: BTM adds value to our programme management by feeding lessons learned from current projects into all future delivery. We execute all our projects in an iterative fashion to reduce project risk and enhance project delivery by carrying out either weekly, monthly or quarterly reviews. The MD, GADs and SADs meet weekly to discuss all project feedback and how this knowledge can be applied across other live projects. The SADs are then responsible for ensuring this feedback and best practice is incorporated into identified projects and where appropriate updating the ToC. On project completion, we collect and document lessons learned in a knowledge database and embed process improvement activities in future implementation planning. Our knowledge database includes information on issues, risks, effective techniques and successful activities, allowing us to deliver better outcomes for the communities and audiences we serve on future projects.

Improving our FCO Iraq Government Digital Service (GDS) project using lessons learned from our Tunisia Haya campaign BTM developed an enhanced method of targeting audiences on social media for our Tunisia Haya project through improved audience segmentation. We transferred and embedded this practice into our GDS project, specifically for the Iraqi Women campaign. This led to enhanced targeting, improved reporting and more tailored media content, as we had greater insight into how responsive Iraqi women were to certain narratives.

Mainstreaming gender and conflict sensitivity into our Programme Management

We continuously face sensitive and culturally specific issues through our use of communications to influence attitudes and behaviour among specific audiences in local communities across the globe. To ensure we successfully achieve our objectives, our HoRS and in-house gender and conflict specialist conduct conflict and gender analysis at the start of the programme to identify risks and opportunities including possible unintended consequences. This analysis includes an assessment of potential SCs and local staff, to understand how they might impact on conflict dynamics and gender inclusion for women, men, boys, girls and sexual/gender minorities. We track risks and identified unintended consequences through an M&E risk register, which is reviewed regularly to keep up with the often-fast pace of change in contexts in many FCAS operating environments. Our M&E has specific KPIs for gender equality and conflict sensitivity. We also disaggregate gender data and have a beneficiary feedback loop to adapt to changing contexts and the needs of those benefitting from the interventions. We are currently in the process of enhancing the way we mainstream gender issues into projects using the UK National Action Plan on Women, Peace & Security 2018 - 2022 (UK NAP) as a guide, ensuring our interventions (e.g. violence reduction) support poverty reduction as per the International Development (Gender Equality) Act 2014.



Achieving UK NAP Strategic Outcomes on our Bangladesh Project: Our US-funded programme on *Building Credible Voices* in Bangladesh (see Figure 3) is gender sensitive through enhanced decision making, humanitarianism and CVE, and conflict sensitive through our robust due diligence checks on civil society organisation affiliations.