

2.2.4 & 2.2.5 Experience of managing communications influence campaigns in or in relation to conflict affected states, engaging target audiences

1. **General.** InCoStrat members have managed communication projects in many conflict-affected states across the MENA region and Asia. We believe in a **grassroots approach to communication** whereby the indigenous population is involved at every level of the campaign: development, production and delivery to ensure messages resonate with the different target audiences. We have witnessed other institutions taking a ‘top-heavy’ approach to communicating with indigenous audiences with little effect. On the national level, we have developed traditional communication campaigns for **print media, FM radio and social media inside conflict-affected states**. We work closely with regional media outlets, producing video news and human interest stories that appear regularly on major Arab speaking networks including: **Al Arabiya, Al Jazeera and BBC Arabic**. We contribute to articles and have articles written about our campaigns on a weekly basis. We have produced **documentaries, talk shows, movies, public service announcements, and radio serials and have successfully placed these on Arab speaking media**. On the international level, we have an extensive network of journalists and regularly place products on prominent English speaking news networks¹ and newspapers².

MANAGING THE CONVERSATION
 In our relationships with political, military and civilian leaders as well as journalists, we take an innovative approach to influencing the contact and the wider community, by *managing the conversation*.

- Face-to-face interaction with the contact on a daily/weekly basis, less with a journalist.
- Day-to-day events and shifts in circumstances are discussed and talked through organically.
- Our local, regional and subject matter experts influence the contacts through their constant interaction.
- Such influence creates an event instead of creating the media first.
- Such an approach is extremely effective in conflict and/or VE contexts.
- By managing the conversation at all levels we are able to engage our specific target audiences and also understand what they are interested in so that influence is taking place through dialogue.

2. **Supporting Evidence.**

- a. **Syria.** We have supported communication programmes in **Syria for the last 2½ years**, assisting and working alongside many of the key opposition groups: the **National Coalition**, the **Supreme Military Council**, the **Free Syrian Army**, civil society groups, the **Syrian Tribal Council** and civil activists. Specifically, our directors have experience in delivering UK, US and Syrian funded projects as follows:
 - 1) **Basma.** Developed, project managed and delivered the Syrian media office from May 12 – Jul 13.
 - 2) **National Coalition media office.** Provided the senior media advisor from Apr 13 – Jun 14 who developed the press office, oversaw the writing of press statements and coordinated engagement with international media.
 - 3) **National Coalition media and communication strategy development.** Developed the National Coalition media and communication strategy and led the NC workshop in Jul 13. Provided media and communication support to the National Coalition mission in UK.
 - 4) **Communication support to the moderate armed opposition.** Developed, and currently project manage three Syrian media offices across Turkey and Jordan **from Oct 13 to date**. Campaigns from this office not only target domestic and international audiences via traditional and social media to promote the moderate armed opposition, but also focus on the placing of products to influence pro-regime audiences internally.
 - 5) **Syrian FM radio strategy.** Developed the strategy, trained staff, provided equipment and managed the delivery of eight FM radio stations in Syria between Jun 12 and Jul 13.
 - 6) **Amnesty International.** Developed the media and communication strategy for Syria.
 - 7) **Research to enable effective communication.** Supported FCO funded research projects across Syria to understand the communication network and narratives that resonate.
- a. **Libya.** Provided the senior international communication advisor to the National Transitional Government during the combat phase and transition. This required establishing a press office and managing international media. At the UK national level we have facilitated the **development of UK communication strategy for Libya** with the Number 10 Communications Team and managed the cross government communication steering group during the combat phase.
- b. **Pakistan.** Developed and project managed a **CVE campaign with civil society groups** and with indigenous and regional media.
- c. **Iraq.** Developed and supported the implementation of a **US DoD CVE STRATCOM programme** to undermine and provide credible alternatives to AQ in Iraq (2008-2011).
- d. **Afghanistan.** Currently working with Al Jazeera’s production office in Afghanistan to produce news reports and documentaries to highlight the on going situation across the country.

InCoStrat Director:
 Developed and managed a **CVE** programme to undermine and provide credible alternatives to AQAP (2010-11). He devised and delivered a communication campaign in Yemen to assist in the recovery of 13 international hostages held by a terrorist group using grassroots communication, this included SMS texting, radio broadcast, print media and word of mouth.

¹ BBC, BBC Radio 4, CNN, Al Jazeera America, Reuters, AP and others less frequently.

² The Times, Independent, Washington Post, New York Times, and others less frequently.