Understanding the Changing
Cultural Value
of the BBC World Service

Interim Report

The Open University
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The Cultural Value Project: Executive Summary

1. Cultural value refers to the ways in which BBC World Service (WS) offers communicative, creative and connective benefits to its audiences and other stakeholders via its radio, TV, online and social media outputs.

2. Given the new financial and governance arrangements as WS comes under licence fee funding on 1st April 2014, it is both urgent and necessary to explain the cultural value of WS in an appropriate register and manner to the UK public, as well as to the wider BBC.

3. Questions of economic value dominate public debate. It is, of course, important to ask why the licence fee payer should pay for WS. The answer lies in explaining its cultural value.

4. Understanding and explaining the changing cultural value of WS to different constituencies is important also due to technological changes and the transformations in working practices resulting from the move from Bush House to New Broadcasting House in 2012.

5. Value assessments differ depending on who is assessing value, why and in which context. What the licence fee payer might value about WS is likely to be very different to what elite audiences in Cairo or rural audiences in Baluchistan value. This simple point has profound implications for how WS communicates its purpose to publics at home and overseas. This is the starting point of our research.

6. We have created a tool, the *Cultural Value Framework* (CVF), based on our research over the last seven years, for assessing the value of WS to different groups. It does not intend to replace other measures, but to complement current modes of assessment. It can be used easily, flexibly and, most importantly, can be creatively adapted to meet a wide range of planning and assessment needs.

7. Our "Value Analytics" approach aims to assess value rather than measure "impact" with narrowly defined Key Performance Indicators. By broadening the scope of what is assessed and how, we aim to capture aspects of cultural value that are currently obscured or not sufficiently recognized.

8. The CVF enables us to visualize variations in cultural value. This report illustrates these visualizations with three case studies on WS programming: coverage of the Hungarian Uprising (1956); the Baluchistan Earthquake (2013); and the 100 Women Season (2013).

9. The visualizations are based on qualitative and quantitative data drawn from our own research as well as BBC in-house research. The evidence is used to score projects or coverage across a range of components.

10. The case studies and visualizations are indicative and illustrative - not definitive. They show how the process of working through the CVF can facilitate collaborative assessments of cultural value. We invite comments and criticisms in order to move to the next stage of refining and developing the CVF in partnership with the BBC. Contact: marie.gillespie@open.ac.uk and simon.bell@open.ac.uk

11.

The Project Team

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Acknowledgements

Needless to say the arguments and assessments presented here are those of the research team. We would like to stress the interim nature of this report. It offers insight into the principles underlying the Cultural Value Framework, and the processes involved in using it. The final report will be delivered in May 2014. We invite and welcome your feedback.

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Going Digital with Legacy

Since its inception as the Empire service in 1932, WS has always been valued by audiences and stakeholders as much more than an international news organisation. It has been a microcosm of global migrations and a contact zone for the world's languages and cultures. WS staff have developed and honed their skills not only as journalists but also as cultural intermediaries, fostering cultural exchange and intimate connections between diverse cultures and publics.

This long-term relationship of cultural attunement between multilingual WS journalists and their overseas audiences was the foundation of the BBC's global networks. WS journalists have enabled the WS to maintain its international reputation as a trusted and reliable broadcaster. As a result of these cross-cultural exchanges over time, WS has accrued legacy value as a widely trusted cosmopolitan organisation. Such value is earned very slowly but can be quickly lost. organisation.

Bush House, home of the WS since 1941, developed a distinctive cosmopolitan culture in the post war period – albeit a colonial style of cosmopolitanism which grew out of Britain's imperial past. If Bush House was a cosmopolitan contact zone, it was also a conflict zone where political and cultural battles were fought on a daily basis in the canteen, in the stairways and in the infamous club. Meanwhile management made strenuous efforts to nurture a convivial culture of broadcasting in which such political conflicts were kept off the airwaves.

Diasporic producers (refugee intellectuals, exilic artists, dissident writers) who flocked to Bush House were at first seen as 'mere translators' who voiced and creatively adapted centrally produced news material attuned to the local sensibilities of overseas audiences. Only slowly, during and after the Second World War, did they gain creative and editorial autonomy.

The cosmopolitan intelligence of diasporic broadcasters, many of whom led double lives as novelists, poets, artists and musicians, enabled them to mediate relations between the domestic BBC, senior management at WS, its funders the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, and its overseas audiences. The creative and cosmopolitan culture that blossomed at Bush House is a national resource of immense cultural value which needs to be cherished and protected today.

We need to understand cultural value as it is understood from different vantage points and over time by groups including journalists, politicians, diplomats, strategists, technicians, and audiences. We also need to analyse the various measures and metrics of value that have been used hitherto, in order to understand the enduring and evolving cultural value of the WS.

The Cultural Value Project

This document presents the interim findings of the Open University's Cultural Value project. This is a comparative research project on the changing cultural value of the BBC World Service (WS) and the British Council, funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) (October 2013-April 2014).

Cultural value (CV) has many components. We use the term to refer to the creative, communicative and connective benefits to audiences and other stakeholders of the WS's radio, and TV programmes, and its digital and social media outputs.

The research:

- Draws on an extensive archive of Open University interdisciplinary research carried out since 2006 on the history and culture of the BBCWS (1932-2014)

- Conducts new **archival/historic analyses** of WS corporate and policy documents in the post 1945 period

- Develops **digital case studies** to understand how WS engages with audiences via social media, Twitter specifically:

  (i) The London Olympics 2012

  (ii) Syria, August 2013

  (iii) 100 Women Project, October 2013

  (iv) Baluchistan earthquake, September, 2013.

- Organises **Workshops** with past and present employees and major stakeholders to glean diverse perspectives on CV

- Uses multiple sources of data and analyses to deliver a **Cultural Value Framework (CVF)** – a device that aims to provoke new and challenging ways of thinking about, assessing and possibly benchmarking the CV of the WS.

The Changing Cultural Value of the BBC World Service: Research Questions

Our project is part of a wider UK-based research programme on Cultural Value funded by the AHRC. Our over-arching research question connects to key research priorities in this programme: concerns about promoting international understanding and reflective citizenship:

> **To what extent does the BBC World Service succeed in providing overseas and UK audiences with news and information that contributes to deepening international understanding and fostering informed citizenship?**

Access to reliable and trusted international news is an essential public good that is unevenly distributed around the world. For 80 years WS has provided a valuable service, especially but not only in places where news is scarce and at times when it is unreliable. But the way we consume news is changing and so is the value of the WS for different people in different parts of world. Understanding the changing value of WS is a key task for academics and broadcasters alike.

The above question applies not only to WS but also, in modified form, to the Open University (OU). The OU has developed a fruitful research partnership with the World Service over the last seven years. Both OU and WS are key British public service institutions experiencing rapid transformation, and now entering commercial markets. We have much to benefit from this close partnership given our shared interests in informing and educating our audiences in creative, interactive ways, while retaining a public service ethos.

Which publics does and should the WS serve?

The ability to access and understand high quality international news is important for informed citizenship and in providing humanitarian assistance, fostering empathy and compassion. It can help reduce conflict, and build trust and empathy across national boundaries – but in a more competitive news environment we need to ask not *how* the WS will survive but:

> **Why should WS survive?**

What is distinctive about WS?

The relationship between international broadcasters and overseas audiences is also changing. The WS seeks to engage digital users in a 'global conversation' that embeds notions of intercultural dialogue and reflective citizenship. The unfettered ability to create, publish, share and debate news is a key aspect of reflective citizenship.

> **Is the WS encouraging active participation and contributing to a global public sphere of debate which supports democratic values?**

Why Now?

Far reaching technological and strategic shifts, the move from Bush House to New Broadcasting House, and the new financial and governance arrangements as it comes under licence fee funding on 1st April 2014, make the task of understanding the cultural value of WS an urgent one.

Questions that our research addresses include:

- **What virtues and values drive the work of WS?**

- **Is WS a public good? Who benefits, how much, where and when?**

- **Why should the licence fee payer fund the WS?**

- **What difference will new funding and governance arrangements make?**

- **What kind of direct or indirect influence will the FCO have in principle and in practice?**

- **What role do new technologies and platforms play in changing how the WS is valued?**

- **Will the WS be subsumed into the Global News Division and lose its distinctive cosmopolitan voice?**

- **Are commercial pressures eroding the public service foundations and ethos of WS? What does it mean to be an 'entrepreneurial public service'?**

- **How does WS respond to British national interests and mediate national-global relations?**

- **Do national and cosmopolitan virtues coincide or clash?**

- **What new criteria of cultural and public value are required as WS enters a new era?**

- **How does and should the WS assess its own cultural value?**

What is Cultural Value?

Cultural value cannot be simply defined. It is dependent upon the perspective of the valuer and the nature of the context in which value is ascribed and assessed. Cultural value is a slippery term with many overlapping dimensions. Our **Cultural Value Framework** is a device we have conceived in order to capture much if not all of this complexity.

Is international news 'culture'?

In the words of one former BBC staff member and WS user who was interviewed for the project: "International news is to culture what feeding the starving is to gastronomy". In this view, good quality, trustworthy international news is a necessity and a human right but not part of the cultural field. Culture would mean "the Arts". But for this project, cross-cultural communication lies at the heart of international news. Another WS user interviewed for the project said: "International news is the main artery of culture because it shapes how we understand and see the world. If consuming and sharing national news helps create national communities – talking about ourselves and our place in the world, then international news is vital to understand the wider world, otherwise we'd live in a national cocoon."

We see international news as part of the cultural field because it is storytelling based on facts. It involves creative uses of language and genre conventions to trigger imaginations and 'transport' audiences. News storytelling has myriad aesthetic dimensions. Radio orchestrates human voices and can produce powerful mind's eye images and emotional responses in audiences. All media play on our sensory apparatus, whether tv orTwitter. A cultural value approach pays attention to the aesthetic and creative dimensions of news storytelling.

This chimes very well with the WS's 'Live the Story' editorial strategy and with innovative work among WS audience researchers. Their 'Digital Wonderland' project seeks to track how audiences and users move across platforms when following a news story, and how WS editors can create and curate the best cultural experience for audiences.

International news must communicate in culturally sensitive ways to audiences across national and cultural boundaries. WS journalists have to mobilise all their creative powers to connect audiences and publics using digital media to foster what WS refers to as a 'global conversation'. As such, the work of the of the WS is creative, connective and **cross-cultural** in its production, reception and evaluation.

Why "Cultural Value"?

Measuring the **economic and instrumental** impact of cultural activities through KPIs risks:

- losing sight of the **cross-cultura**l dimensions of international news production and consumption

- adopting an overly strategic, managerialist and mechanistic understanding of value

- creating a vicious circle of perverse incentives, in which the prevalent impact agenda and performance indicators overly determine creative and corporate activities

- simplifying and reducing a rich concept to a crude mechanism of cost (as Oscar Wilde said: "Knowing the price of everything and the value of nothing")

Why are research methods important in understanding cultural value?

Our research agenda seeks to shift the narrative from impact (which dominates assessment in many organisations) to value. This entails a thought experiment underpinned by methodological concerns. We need to understand what kinds of evidence are and can be used, and in which ways, to justify different kinds of decision-making.

How we know defines **what** we know – not just in academia. A research approach whichwe call the "**social life of methods**" sees methods not as socially or culturally neutral tools, but as active agents in corporate life: agents which define value.

OU researchers have been working alongside WS audience researchers for seven years. There has been a mutual exchange of knowledge and skills as well as mutual critique. It has been a humbling experience for us to witness the speed and acuity with which audience research is carried out at WS. But audience research is changing rapidly. As new methods and forms of evidence are being mobilised in strategic and editorial decision making, new questions appear. For example, to what extent does or should **audience size** determine the value of the WS or of its sections? What are suitable indicators of engagement in digital communications? In this brave new digital world, where algorithms rule corporations, how will new forms of data analysis shape the WS and its output?

The Value Analytics approach: shifting the emphasis from impact to value

We refer to our approach to assessing cultural value as **Value Analytics** (VA). This approach shifts the emphasis from impact to value because:

- Impact analysis necessitates simplistic causal explanations which are difficult or impossible to evidence - as revealed by decades of audience reception studies

- VA avoids highly specific performance targets which often miss important components of value for audiences

- VA opens up opportunities for mixed and mobile, innovative methodologies, reducing dependency on methods such as representative sample survey and interview

- Digital media demand new kinds of questions, such as: does more engagement always mean more value? Simple algorithms of assessment need to be challenged.

- The platforms that WS is moving into are more competitive than those it is moving away from and the value ascribed is accordingly different

- What WS is trying to measure is fundamentally **changing**

In order to understand change, we take 'the long view'.

Perspectives on Cultural Value

There is a consensus across a wide range of groups and individuals that WS is 'a good thing' and worth preserving. But if you ask people to state the purpose and value of organisationWS, you get very different answers. The way people describe and assess WS depends on who they are. We can begin by understanding the different perspectives in terms of their different relationships with WS and one another.

Our **Cultural Value Framework (CVF)** begins by recognising three basic perspectives, those of:

> **Funders** – the **Organisation** – and **Users.**

Within each there are various groups.

Those who provide or control **funding** have various views of the benefits that are delivered, or can or should be delivered, by funding WS. The main funders of WS are the UK public, through taxation or through the licence fee; WS is answerable to them. WS is also of course answerable to the public organisations which administer public funding.

As an **organisation**, WS has its own sense of purpose; however, it is not a monolith and within the organisation there are competing and sometimes conflicting perspectives and priorities. In particular, the perspectives of management and production tend to differ.

The **users** of WS activities derive various benefits from the organisation's outputs, as audiences for radio or tv, or as users of online services. Diverse overseas audiences comprise the target public (users) that the funders aim to reach through the activities of WS. The UK public was, in the past, and largely still is unaware of the WS. Under the licence fee funding, these relationships will change.

Explaining the value of the WS to the UK public in an appropriate register and manner is an urgent task.

The diagrams on the next pages introduce the Cultural Value Framework (CVF).
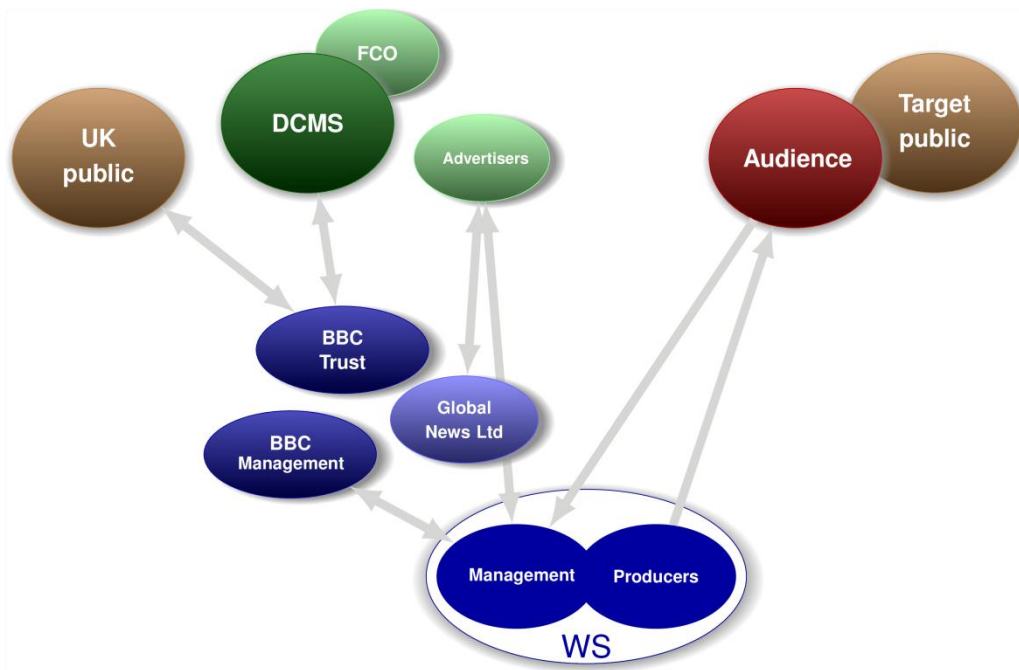
The **Cultural Value Framework** helps us think about the value of the WS from the different perspectives represented in the diagram above. The relationships can be summarised using four quadrants, representing **internal** and **external**, **strategic** and **audience-facing** communities (below).
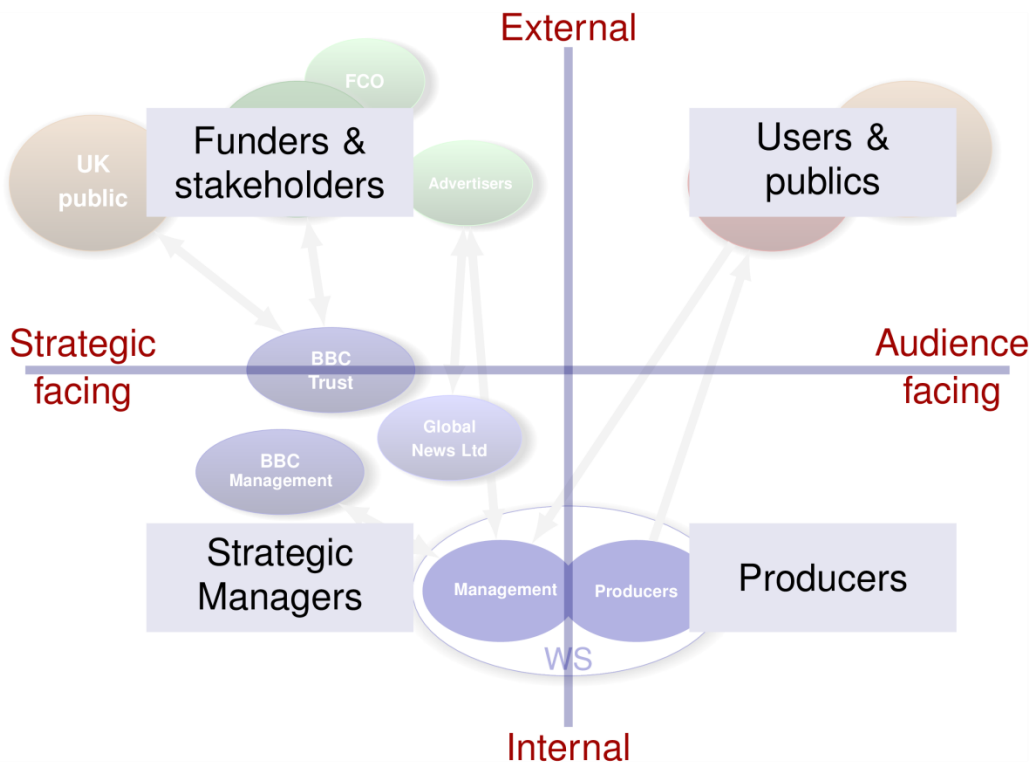
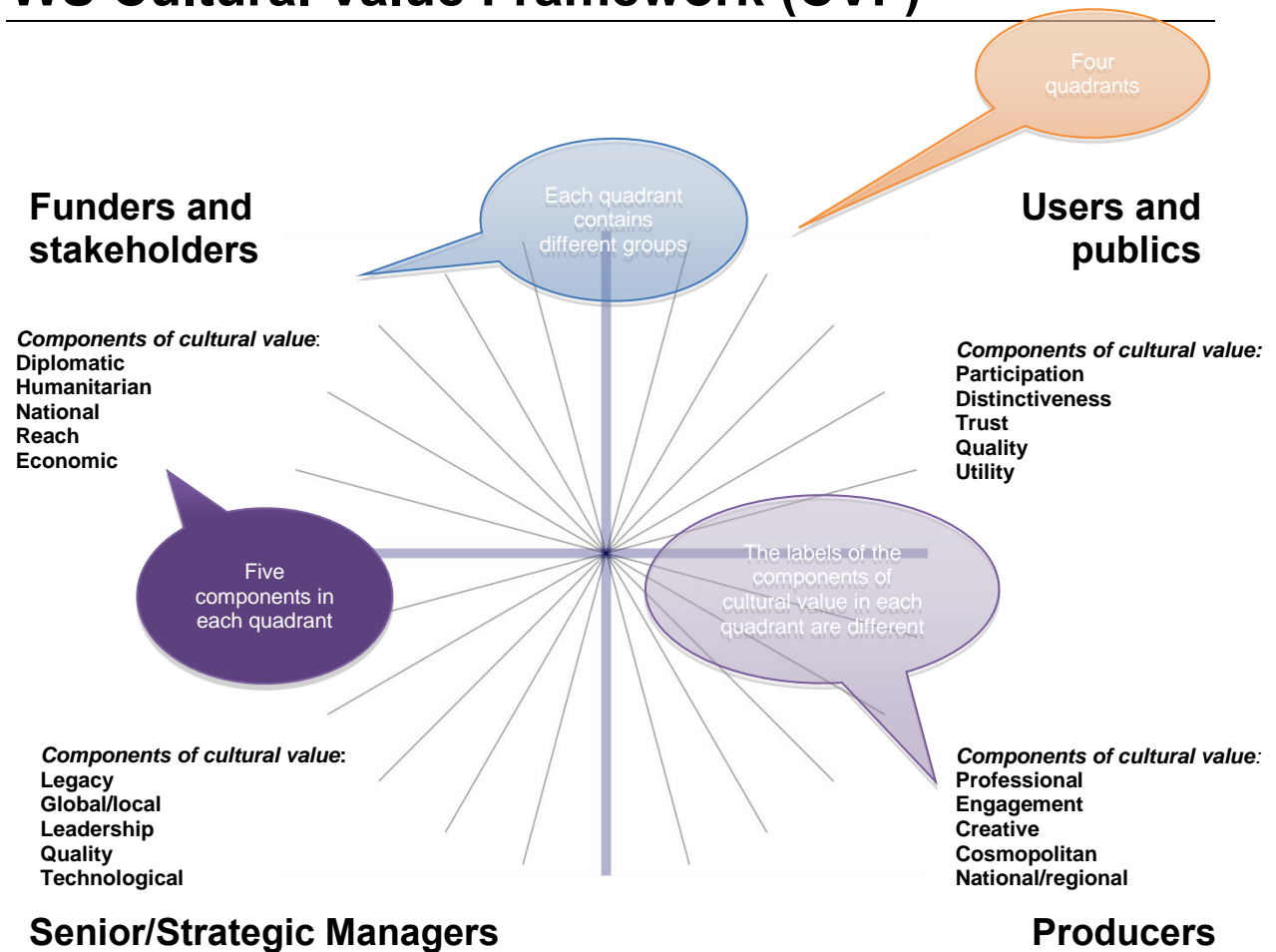Value is a singular concept but it has multiple dimensions that need to be understood comprehensively. So, within each quadrant we identify multiple **components** for understanding and assessing cultural value. These components have been arrived at by a collective process of decision-making among team members with diverse areas of expertise on WS. We draw on our previous research (both academic and BBC research) on WS in history, anthropology, sociology, translation studies, discourse analysis, audience research studies, computer science and mathematics. They are also derived from our many discussions with stakeholders and staff in our cultural value workshops.

WS Cultural Value Framework (CVF)

Four quadrants

Each quadrant contains different groups

Funders and stakeholders

Users and publics

Components of cultural value:
Diplomatic
Humanitarian
National
Reach
Economic

Components of cultural value:
Participation
Distinctiveness
Trust
Quality
Utility

Five components in each quadrant

The labels of the components of cultural value in each quadrant are different

Components of cultural value:
Legacy
Global/local
Leadership
Quality
Technological

Components of cultural value:
Professional
Engagement
Creative
Cosmopolitan
National/regional

Senior/Strategic Managers

Producers

In the current version of the CVF, each quadrant has five components: key criteria of value that we wished to research. With 20 components of value, the CVF offers a reasonably comprehensive model of value, representing the multiplex nature of cultural value in a way which is visually pleasing and not confusing.

The components are not fixed in number or nature. They can change to meet the specific perceptions of the people being engaged. This provides the CVF with the versatility and fluidity needed for cultural analytics.

The case studies carried out within this project are analysed and presented through the prism of this framework, in order to demonstrate how it can be used as a toolset.

The **Cultural Value Framework**

- provides a systematic way of thinking about and assessing the changing cultural value of World Service as an organisation

- is a thinking tool and a methodological device for assessing value

- enables researchers to collectively process complex data and visualize it

- offers a multi-perspectival vantage point on value

- is based on our Value Analytics approach and has been tested with our research

- is not a one-size-fits-all tool; it can and should be adapted and used flexibly to track changing value over time from multiple perspectives

- can be scaled for use to assess organisation-wide dynamics or specific projects or programmes or outputs and their interactions with diverse stakeholders

- is easy to use and can be used by anyone with greater or lesser precision

- can be applied using both quantitative and qualitative data

- can make sense of apparently incomparable factors and then help to create a narrative from that comparison.

- is not a finished product but a work in progress

The CVF as set out here is **specifically designed for the BBCWS**. We have designed another, comparable but distinct CVF for the British Council. (The comparative, cross-organisational dimension of our work has many benefits, especially given the relationship of both organisations to the FCO.)

The general model – of segments (here quadrants) and value components – can be adapted to the purposes of any organisation. Our field experience indicates that it can work with organisations ranging from grass-roots community groups to private corporations. Segments and components must be defined, on the basis of research, to be relevant to the organisation in question. Rather than quadrants, a CVF model might have a triangular structure (if, say, management and production were essentially united in their perspective) or a pentagram (if, say, two user groups had sharply divided perspectives). Similarly, the components represent criteria for assessing value for the specific context.

So this model is fluid. And the output of a CVF analysis is a visually intuitive 'shape' rather than a metric.

We will explain this shortly.

First, we will expand on the value components which we have identified for the four stakeholder perspectives.

CVF Components 1: Audiences, Users, Publics

Here and for the other quadrants each value component is described in terms of the positive qualities that contribute to an assessment that WS is performing well. In some cases, not all components may be relevant and in others there may be no evidence on which to base a score. The components constitute key criteria of assessment and are derived from our prior research on WS and workshops conducted with WS staff. The components can be adapted and used flexibly. We invite your comments and feedback.

Utility: Audiences use WS as a key reference point to inform themselves about events taking place around the world. It is a staple component, among others, in their news diet. It is used as a fact checker during breaking news. Audiences discuss and share WS content with others. Audiences can use WS news to help them understand complex issues and events, and make sense of self, others and one's place in the world.

Distinctiveness: WS reaches people and places and covers stories that other international news providers do not. Diverse audience groupings value its outputs for different reasons. It provides lifeline news services to audiences at times of crisis and in places where news is scarce or unreliable. Audiences recognize and respect its public service ethos and the way it fosters debate and discussion across national, ethnic and religious boundaries. They benefit from its cosmopolitan outlook. It fosters international understanding.

Quality: Audiences value the editorial quality of WS outputs. They are seen as well-researched and well-written. Audiences are attracted by news which is clear, comprehensible and relevant. They like the balance of breadth and depth. Content across platforms is aesthetically pleasing in terms of how it looks, sounds, and reads. Despite attempts at jamming, censorship and sabotage, the quality is high.

Trust: Audiences see WS as more trustworthy than its competitors. They regard it as a relatively independent and reliable source of international news. They are aware of its reputation and legacy even if it is not personally used. Regular use commands loyalty.

Participation: Audiences who use WS are able to participate in an international public sphere of debate about local and global events. They can engage in deliberative discussions with a diversity of people and plurality of views on an equal footing. They are actively encouraged to create, share and publish content on WS platforms. WS combats inequalities in access to and representation on news, fosters informed citizenship, and contributes to upholding democratic values.

CVF Components 2: Producers

Engagement: Producers create content that engages target audiences. They respond to diverse audiences in a variety of ways, including via social media. They make good use of in-house audience research to inform themselves about their audiences and improve the quality of content. They make best use of interactive opportunities to sustain engagement around important news stories and events. They receive appropriate training and resources to do so.

National/global: Producers negotiate national, regional and global news agendas and priorities even-handedly. They meet the news and informational needs of diverse target audiences. The can resolve disagreements and conflicts over competing news agendas and priorities. They can contribute to decisions about appropriate allocation of resources to different conflicts, regions and languages.

Cosmopolitan: Producers benefit from the cosmopolitan ethos of the WS. The Language Services are well integrated into the Global News Division. They are treated equally. The multi-lingual, multi-media hubs enable a rich cultural exchange to take place between WS and the wider BBC. They are able to use their cultural background and local knowledge, especially at times of crises to provide in-depth expertise and offer relevant experience.

Creativity: Journalists, editors and broadcasters are able to balance creative autonomy and organisational constraints. They can manage the tension between creative risk-taking and risk aversion productively. They encourage creativity among users in their responses to news and actively invite user generated content. They enable audiences to 'live the story' as well as provoke reflection.

Professional: Producers feel valued for their professional skills. They abide by the BBC's public service ethos and its editorial values. They set benchmarks for international journalistic standards and ethics. They benefit from an equal opportunities ethos, regular training, and good career prospects. They benefit from the prestige value of working at the BBC. They feel the management structures and processes enable them to fulfil their professional roles and responsibilities, and to contribute to the wider BBC.

CVF Components 3: Senior Managers

Quality: Managers oversee quality assurance effectively. They recognise that new value drivers and metrics are required to assess the changing nature of WS outputs. They manage the WS's legacy value and reputation as a pre-eminent international broadcaster with care. They recognize the importance of audience and market research in ensuring quality, and ensure that other staff also benefit from it. They are advocates for the WS, showcasing and bringing best practice to the wider BBC.

Technological opportunities: Managers embrace technological innovation while recognising the need to sustain established best practice. They manage the tension between legacy professional values (impartiality, balance and objectivity) and new emerging digital values (transparency, recognition of perspective and viewpoint). They help to empower users by providing opportunities to create, publish and share material and recognising and promoting user generated content.

National, regional and global: Managers work to meet the needs of audiences in places where news is scarce or unreliable. They recognise the need for news that is locally resonant and that may not conform to the news agendas of commercial news providers. They deploy Language Service staff effectively to fulfil their public service remit. National, global and regional news agendas are carefully calibrated and resourced. Senior managers avoid pressures to compete with commercial operators but also create new opportunities and sustainable local/regional partnerships.

Leadership: Managers demonstrate effective leadership - as perceived from within and outside the organisation. They project a vision of the organisation that can be shared and which is based on a measured assessment of the changing value of the organisation to different groups. They explain their decisions and effectively communicate the value and values of the WS to overseas and UK publics. They value career early as well as senior staff, recognising and promoting talent in creative uses of new media to widen participation.

Legacy: Managers protect the public service values associated with WS while developing new and sustainable commercial partnerships in rapidly changing international news markets. They balance brand value and reputation value with the need to be creatively innovative. They are able to communicate and/or demonstrate the most important aspects of WS legacy value to different audiences and stakeholders.

CVF Components 4: Funders & Stakeholders

Diplomatic: WS functions as an essential part of the UK's diplomatic infrastructure. It promotes an interest in Britain and the English language around the world. It brings benefits to the UK by producing international news from a politically independent but distinctively British cultural vantage point. It benefits, albeit indirectly, Britain's diplomatic, strategic and foreign policy interests. It does so by representing people, conflicts and events fairly. Language Service staff are valued as professionals. Their role as cultural bridge figures and diplomatic intermediaries is understood as a tangible benefit and consequence of their professional work. WS brings public and cultural diplomacy benefits to the UK.

Humanitarian: WS supports Millennium Development Goals. It actively fosters global partnerships with actors and agencies that enable it to report on Human Rights abuses, violence and conflicts fairly. It offers humanitarian information assistance, contributing to the alleviation of suffering and eliciting active compassion among audiences at times of environmental disaster and political conflict. Its diplomatic and development value are intertwined and are an outcome rather than a primary objective of its activities.

National/global: WS is a key national to global institution which represents Britain and the values it cherishes, promoting principles such as freedom of expression, the rule of law, human rights, gender equality, poverty alleviation and cultural diversity. It is a vital cultural bridge between UK and overseas publics. It projects an accurate picture of British multicultural society. WS contributes to the influence and attractiveness of the UK abroad, augmenting its soft power value.

Reach: The WS produces international news that reaches a large number of people in target areas who engage with its news. It engages a global network of users/audiences. WS provides benchmarks of journalistic quality and models of professional ethical standards for news organisations around the world which sustains its reach. It attracts and is increasing its reach among UK users, including UK and global diaspora audiences who could also, in principle, make good use of its.

Economic: The WS brings tangible, albeit indirect, economic and commercial benefits to the UK by promoting the influence and attractiveness of Britain abroad as a good place in which to invest, trade and to do business, as well as study and visit – the soft power of WS.

Populating the CVF

For each component we aim to have an assessment of the extent to which WS, or a particular activity within it, performs in relation to that component.

The process of populating the CVF involves four steps:

- identifying quantitative or qualitative indicators for each component

- setting the indicators as scores to be plotted

- scoring the components as low (deficient), middle (sustainable) or high (excess)

- producing the final 'shape', the *amoeba* of the CVF.

These four steps can be usefully undertaken by a group of concerned stakeholders in a workshop context. In this manner the CVF amoeba emerges as a result of collective understanding and has an impact as an emerging, composite indicator. That is to say, the emerging shape in the CVF is one shape, one composite, made up of twenty separate senses of value. This composite indicator provides one snapshot – very like similar composite indicators such as GDP in the economic sphere. But the CVF composite has the additional value of being transparent, witnessing all its components, and so being open to lay scrutiny.

Similarly, each component can be provided with a benchmark assessment of a sustainable value. If this is done then the CVF not only depicts value but depicts this as set against an agreed sustainable benchmark. This can be very revealing in terms of informing stakeholders of the significance of their CVF amoeba as a snapshot.

It may be that data or evidence is not available to provide score for every value component – this doesn't matter. The CVF can be used flexibly and still deliver a shape to discuss.

Crucially:

- The **process** of completing the CVF delivers useful insights – particularly if it is undertaken in a workshop environment

- The **outcome** and final shape informs us in a shorthand, but instantly recognisable and understandable manner, about the CVF of specific sets of organisational activities

For example …

Example CVF

Funders and stakeholders

Components of cultural value:
Diplomatic
Humanitarian
National
Reach
Economic
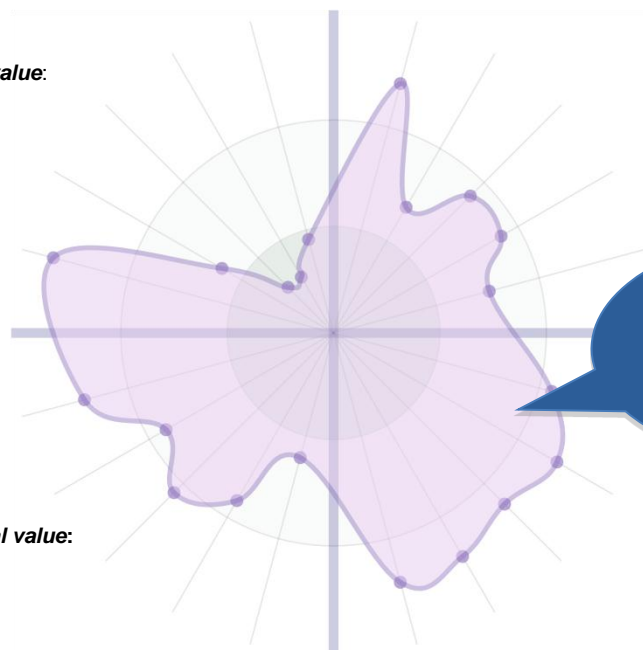
Users and publics

Components of cultural value:
Participation
Distinctiveness
Trust
Quality
Utility

In this example we might say that the organization is performing well in CV terms for the internal communities but is underperforming for Funders.

Components of cultural value:
Legacy
Global/local
Leadership
Quality
Technological

Components of cultural value:
Professional
Engagement
Creative
Cosmopolitan
National/regional

Senior Managers

Producers

The amoeba represents the 'shape' of cultural value in this fictitious context.

The benchmark for sustainability is represented by the medium-shaded circular band which lies between the dark central circle and the lighter exterior. Values within this band are 'sustainable': in this example, three values in the Senior Manager's quadrant. Values beyond the sustainable band (here, all the values in the Producer quadrant) are not sustainable due to 'excess'. Each value achieved is very good in itself but likely to be in excess of what can be efficiently reproduced. Values inside the band (here, three values in the Funders and Stakeholders quadrant) are not sustainable due to 'deficit'. The outcomes were not adequate in terms of the valuation made by the stakeholders concerned.
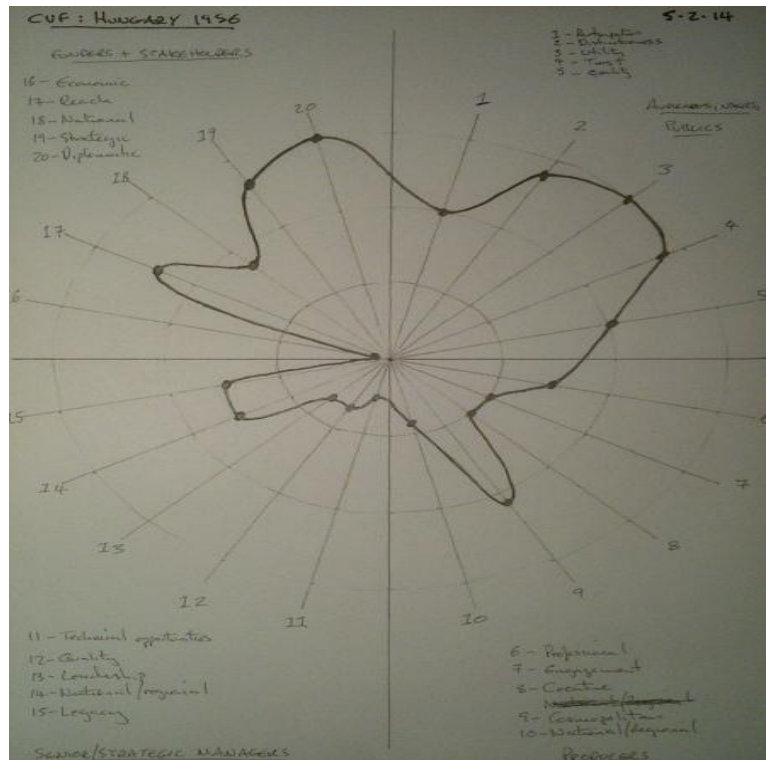
An amoeba which was a perfect circle with all value points within the middle band would indicate maximally sustainable cultural value.

Any irregular shape which varies from the circular reveals, at a glance, assessments of excessive or deficient value.

Case Study 1: Hungary 1956

On 24 October 1956 a student demonstration in Budapest escalated into a full-scale revolution against the Soviet-backed Hungarian authorities. As Soviet troops moved in to crush the rebellion, international broadcasting played a high-profile role in mapping and explaining the course of the conflict.

The data drawn on for this example consists of extensive primary research at the UK Public Record Office of The National Archives and the BBC Written Archive Centre. This includes policy and analysis documents of the BBC and from within the British government, Foreign Office telegrams and reports from the British Legation in Budapest as well as programme memoranda and scripts form the BBC External Services (World Service) and daily reports from the BBC Monitoring Service. Additional US, Hungarian, Polish and Soviet primary and secondary sources have been used to calibrate an international perspective on BBC overseas activities around the time of the Hungarian uprising. Our findings were used to construct this hand-drawn CVF of broadcasting at a geopolitically significant moment in Cold War history. It was then standardized in the subsequent diagram, below.

Commentary:

- **Users & Public**

  In the absence of reliable or comprehensive regime media, the utility of and trust placed in the BBC World Service was exceptionally high, especially when it was performing the function of a life-line service. Participation, in terms of active listening, was high, although there was no opportunity to interact with BBC output. Quality was also compromised in terms of what was achievable in jammed shortwave transmissions, regardless of the considerable programme ingenuity displayed by programme makers.

- **Producers**

  The ability of World Service staff to appeal to audiences behind the Iron Curtain, based on their distinctive cosmopolitan credentials and shared cultural and linguistic histories, was of considerable value to the BBC. So too was their editorial judgement – especially when compared with the partiality of other international broadcasters at the time. However, the means with which to creatively engage with audiences was very limited due to technical obstacles such as ageing transmitter stock, shortwave difficulties and Soviet

jamming, and editorial practices which saw most output produced centrally for retranslation by the language services.

- **Senior Managers**

  The template of broadcasting over the Iron Curtain had been established earlier in the decade. The refusal of the Treasury to release capital funds for technological advances, and a lack of innovative styles of leadership, reflect a 'steady-state' approach to the strategic management of services in this period. The impact and effectiveness of output before, during, and after the Hungarian uprising did not depend on re-making the broadcasting machine, rather on the continuance of an irrigating flow of independent news and comment to a region that lacked both from indigenous sources. Considerable legacy value was accrued through the maintenance of vital services.

- **Funders**

  There was no economic value relating to BBC broadcasts to Hungary in this period, but there were exceptionally high diplomatic and strategic dividends to be reaped by the British government from funding, at a comparatively low cost, services over the Iron Curtain. The ability of the BBC to communicate to a wider world the aspirations of Hungarians attempting to overthrow Soviet domination, and likewise to emphasis a sense of British political and cultural solidarity with their plight, had an inestimable value which reverberated through British relations with Hungary for several generations.
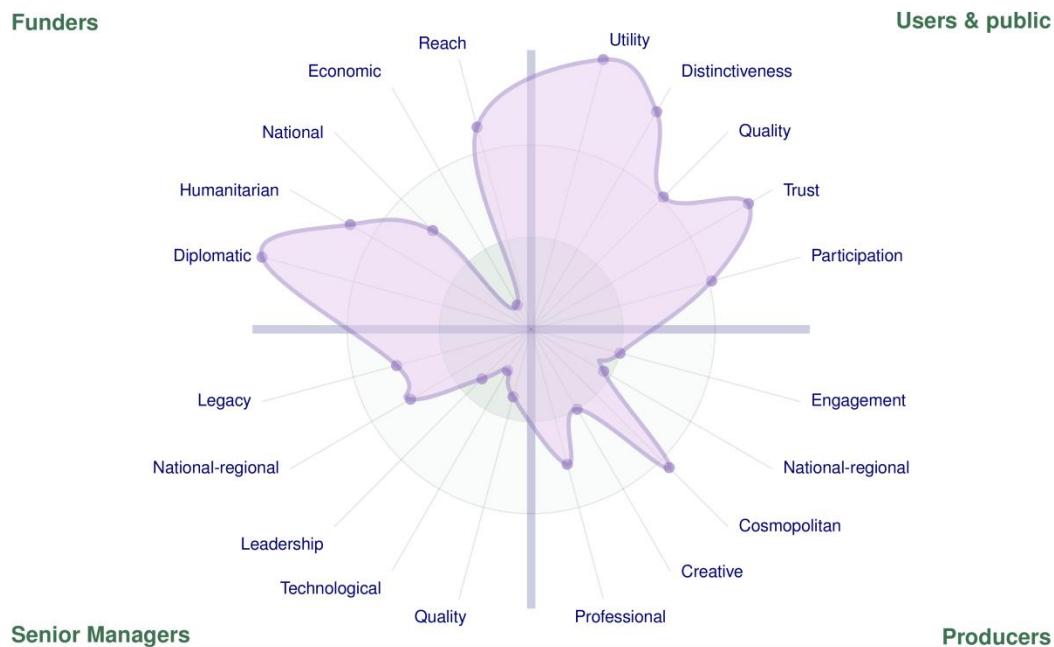
Case Study 2: The Baluchistan Earthquake

This case study focuses on a special broadcast about the Baluchistan earthquake, within BBC Urdu's flagship radio and TV daily news and current affairs programme, *Sair been*, three weeks after the event. (*Sair been* refers to a thaumatrope - an optical instrument or toy for showing the persistence of an impression upon the eyes after a luminous object is withdrawn.) On September 24th, 2013, a powerful earthquake shook Baluchistan, the remote and poverty-stricken south-west province of Pakistan. The 7.7-magnitude quake flattened houses and left at least 328 people dead, most of them in the district of Awaran but also in Kech, Gwadar, Panjgur, Chaghi and Khuzdar. Nearly 300,000 people lost their homes.

The case study evaluates the *Sair been* programme about relief efforts (at http://www.bbc.co.uk/urdu/multimedia/2013/10/131016_balochistan_awaraan_aw.shtml) in the wider context of the BBC's news coverage of the quake, including:

- A video report from amidst the destruction in Baluchistan by Saba Aitzaz of BBC Urdu, which was run both in Urdu and English: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jHOwbkGoDvc

- BBC News Online (English) report and video by BBC News reporter Shahzeb Jilani: http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-24222760

Other research material includes: informal interviews with production team members, content analysis of the *Sair been* programme, and audience research data on *Sair been*. The study also draws on the transcripts of a witness seminar conducted by the Open University on the occasion of the 70th anniversary of the BBC Urdu Service, and subsequent publications.

Funders

The programme examplifies lifeline broadcasting by the BBC Urdu Service. It had an exceptionally high humanitarian value. By focusing on an issue that received little attention from other news providers, it demonstrated values that are important to the UK and contributed to international understanding. Twitter traffic, though not high, was notably propelled by "influencers" and helped to build trust. Such programmes bridge UK and Pakistani publics, with high public diplomacy value. However, some aspects of the reporting will have displeased the Pakistan government, leading to a mixed impact from a state diplomacy perspective (it was made apparent that military operations were hampering relief efforts). There was no economic benefit to the UK.

Users and Publics

We have no evidence of specific audience responses. WS audience research suggests that 74% of BBC Urdu's radio audience live in rural areas: 36% in Sindh, nearly 17% in Baluchistan. Therefore coverage of the quake had high reach. We can assume high levels of local engagement, as it was a lifeline service. The programme allowed people in the zone of devastation to participate in a very dignified way. The reporting was so vivid and chilling that audiences both inside and outside the zone were morally, emotionally, and intellectually engaged by compelling evidence of the urgent need for relief and rescue that had not so far been forthcoming. In the words of a relief worker interviewee: "The distance between Awaran and us is only 300 kilometres but the journey takes us back by 300 years".

Producers

BBC Urdu Producers showed great professionalism in giving the story high priority, though it was low on the global news agenda, and in continuing to cover the story after the earthquake itself. They demonstrated creativity in producing a high quality programme in difficult circumstances, setting up a makeshift studio in the devastated area and making good use of the voices of ordinary people to create a powerful sense of presence. They enabled the people of Baluchistan to represent themselves and talk about coping with a natural disaster on top of extreme poverty and deprivation. This contributed to empathy and international understanding. There was a good transfer of knowledge and cultural exchange as news items and despatches from the team in Baluchistan appeared across BBC news networks. However, this interest was not sustained for as long as the Urdu Service would have wished.

Senior Managers

BBC Urdu were the first to report the quake and the only international broadcaster to produce an in depth follow-up programme raising awareness of the plight of the people. It was a lifeline service. Managers missed an opportunity to widen reach and engagement by not providing adequate resources to make the most of digital opportunities. BBC Urdu's Facebook page has one million likes and it is a shame that such compelling content is not made more widely available. To their credit, they chose the best people for covering the story, resulting in a very high quality programme.
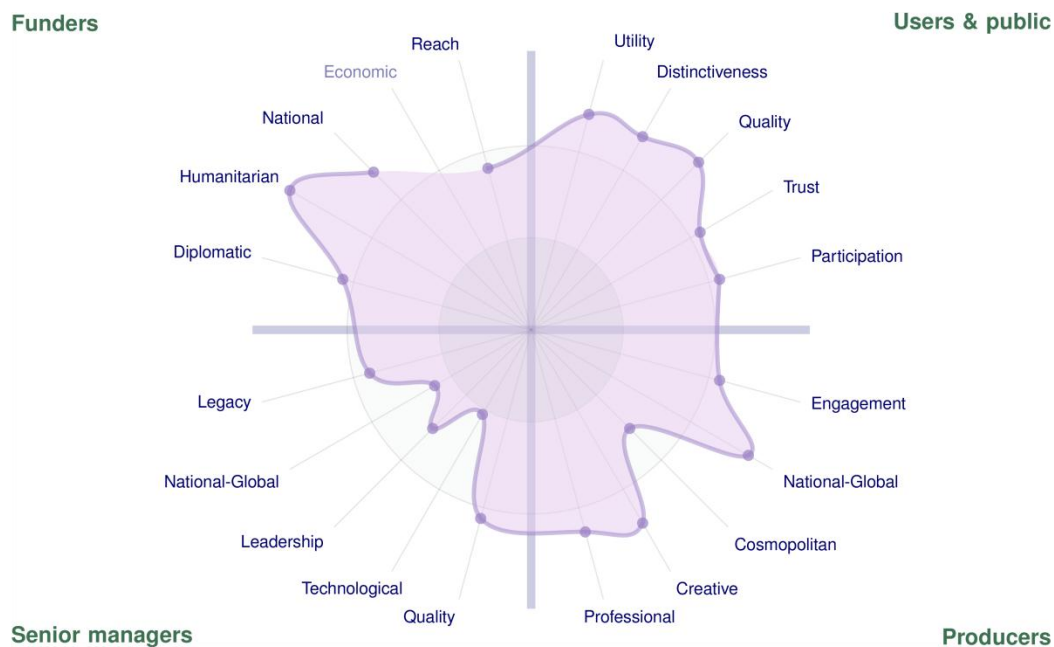
Case Study 3: 100 Women

The BBC's 100 Women season ran throughout October 2013. It aimed to provoke debate on gender inequality issues around the world, contributing to the World Service's stated aim of fostering a 'global conversation.'

The season began with Mishal Hussein interviewing Malala Yousafzai, the schoolgirl who was shot in the head by Taliban gunmen, and culminated when 100 remarkable women from around the world came together for a conference in London on 25th October which was broadcast on BBC TV, radio and online.

Evidence used to score the components of value included: BBC audience research; Open University social media analysis (analysing #100 Women on BBC and other Twitter accounts); interviews with producers, social media editor, language service staff; observational data derived from attendance at final conference.


Audiences, Users, Publics

The season covered stories about women that would not otherwise be represented. It fostered international understanding. Users participating in a Global Minds survey (BBC in-house research) found the content relevant, engaging and high quality. Yet participation among social media users was relatively low, despite some significant peaks in traffic and social media conversations at the start and especially on the final day of the conference. Interactions on Twitter did not sustain engagement. Some BBC accounts worked well individually, but they did less well collectively. Audience interest was not maintained at significant levels across digital platforms through the season.

Funders and Stakeholders

The 100 Women season reflected values which are cherished in the UK, such as gender equality, human rights and informed citizenship. Audience members overseas felt that it increased their awareness of women's lives around the world. Some digital content was also very well received by UK audiences. Yet overall the digital content performed only moderately well by BBC standards. The season showed Britain as a good place to be a woman. Some of the BBC's most prominent and respected female reporters were in the spotlight. The Malala interview captured the attention of global audiences, again demonstrating the value of BBC Urdu's original initiative to invite Malala to blog. The public diplomacy value of the 100 Women season was high. It connected audiences and 'strategic publics' around the world. In so doing, it brought, albeit indirectly, benefits to the UK via the BBC brand. However, opportunities were missed to hold political leaders to account in response to some revealing testimonies of women.

Senior Managers
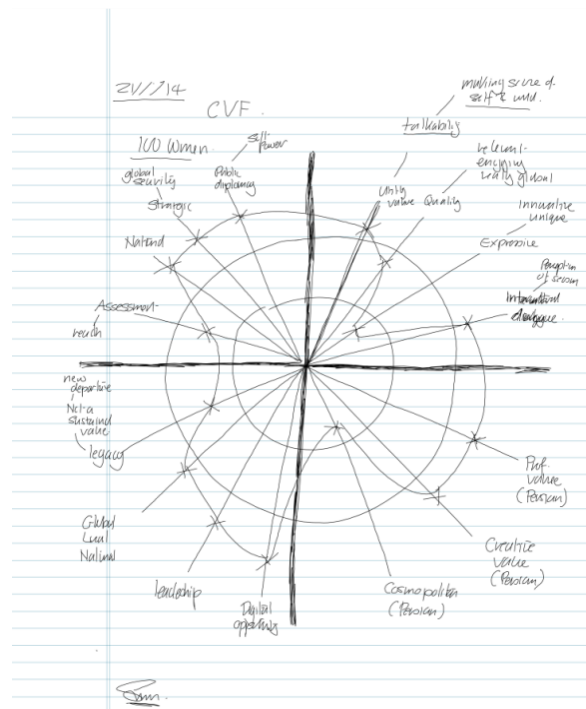
The 100 Women season was not well resourced when compared to similar seasons. It had only one dedicated person online and on social media; the Freedom season had eight times the funding, four times as many team members. Relative to resources, 100 Women performed well. It reflected strong leadership from the top and showed agile responsiveness to major global news events during 2013 involving women, violence and inequality. It mobilised a cross-platform strategy creatively and effectively; balanced legacy and new digital values; and sought to offer meaningful interactive experiences for users. Some very strong, creatively inspired content included stand-out performances from some language services. Senior managers delivered quality despite missing some opportunities to resource wider participation. Further content has been commissioned to ensure a lasting legacy.

Producers

Under pressure of resources and time, producers demonstrated their commitment to core WS public service, cosmopolitan and humanitarian values. They showcased their creativity in producing cutting edge interactive tools and content. For example, all language services ran the data visualisation "What Chance does a Girl Have?" The list of 100 women was compiled from suggestions by the language services; women came from more than 70 countries. All services commissioned their own material on this theme. For example, Hindi followed with their own 100 Women series; more than ten specially commissioned pieces ran in Arabic, including live discussions on the conference day. Several BBC Twitter accounts were important for the season, most of all BBCWorld. BBCRosAtkins (Ros Atkins, presenter of BBC Outside Source) was highly influential, reflecting the value users place on interacting directly with BBC journalists. Other influential accounts included those of Lyse Doucet and Mishal Hussein.
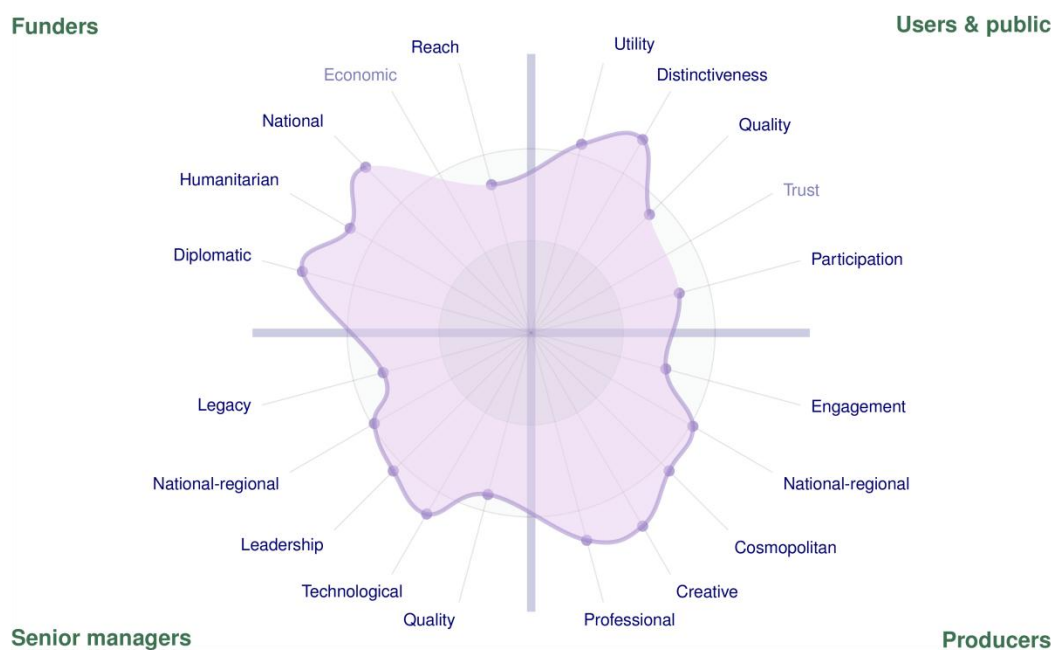
Assessing the Amoeba

As already noted, a sustainable amoeba would appear as a circle within the band of sustainability in the diagram. Why? Because each of the twenty components is represented by an indicator and assessed in terms of being deficient, sustainable or in excess. Whilst being in excess could be seen as being virtuous and praiseworthy, the way the calibration of the indicators has been designed means that 'excess' suggests a value which is unsustainable in the longer term. So, a sustainable amoeba would, possibly counter intuitively, not be a circle at the extremes of the quadrants.

The question this raises is: how is this band of sustainability defined? Or in other words, how is scoring calibrated?

This is done through the concerns and observations of the stakeholders who are involved in the construction of the CVF in each case. In ideal circumstances, a workshop team, including representatives from each of the quadrants, would convene to agree the components and the approximate values of each indicator. What would count as a sustainable value on each indicator? What would be regarded as being in excess or in deficit, in relation to this sustainable value or band of values? Rather as an economy can overheat by growing too quickly, excess can be as unwelcome as deficit. A CVF can indicate imbalances which need to be addressed if the value of the whole is not to be compromised.

The band of sustainability is an agreed set of values which represent a sustainable outcome. The amoeba is compared against this.

In all the case studies shown here, the amoeba shape is irregular. In places there is excess and in places deficit. The shape is obvious. The assessment is visual and intuitive.

Next Steps?

The progress made in developing the Value Analytics approach via the Cultural Value Framework (CVF) is, we believe, significant. But this is a preliminary report. Further research is required and currently planned which seeks to:

- Provide an easy to adopt procedure for CVF tuition and organisational adoption

- Locate test sites at the BBC World Service and the British Council where repeated use of the CVF process can be evaluated over a five-year period

- Extend the application and testing of the CVF to other UK and international cultural organisations

  Develop a CVF assessment procedure whereby the outcomes of CVF analysis can be compared and contrasted, validated and verified against alternative scenarios.

Selected outputs based on Open University research on BBC World Service (2007-2014)

A full list of publications and details of research projects can be found at:
http://www.open.ac.uk/researchprojects/diasporas/

Books

2012   *Diasporas and Diplomacy: Cosmopolitan Contact Zones at the BBC World Service 1932-2012*. Edited by Gillespie, M. and Webb, A. Abingdon and NY: Routledge (CRESC Series). http://www.routledge.com/books/details/9780415508803/

2012   *Tales from Bush House*. Edited by Ismailov, H., Gillespie, M., and Aslanyan, A. London: Hertfordshire Press. http://oro.open.ac.uk/36280/

2011   *Drama for Development: Cultural Translation and Social Change*. Edited by Skuse, A., Gillespie, M., and Power, G. New Delhi: Sage India.

Journal Special Issues

2011   Designs & Devices: Towards a Genealogy of Audience Research Methods at the BBC World Service 1932-2010. *Participations: International Journal of Audience Research* 8/1. Edited by Gillespie, M., Webb, A., and Mackay, H. http://www.participations.org/Volume%208/Issue%201/contents.htm

2011   Writers at Bush House. Special Issue. Guest editor, Gillespie, M. *Wasafiri: International Writing* 68

2010   Transcultural Journalism and the Politics of Translation: Interrogating the BBC World Service. *Journalism: Theory, Practice and Criticism* 12/2. Edited by Baumann, G., Gillespie, M., and Sreberny, A.

2010   The BBC World Service and the South Asian Diaspora. *South Asian Diaspora* 2/1. Edited by Gillespie, M., Pinkerton, A., Baumann, G., and Thiranagama, S.

2010   BBC World Services and the Greater Middle East: Comparisons, Contrasts, Conflicts. *Middle East Journal of Culture and Communication* 3/2. Special issue: Edited by Sreberny, A., Gillespie, M. and Baumann, G.,

2008   The BBC World Service, 1932-2007: Cultural Exchange and Public Diplomacy. *Historical Journal of Film, Radio and Television* 28/4. Edited by Gillespie, M., Baumann, G., and Webb, A.

Research Reports (Available on request from marie.gillespie@open.ac.uk)

2013   The BBC World Service, Twitter and the London Olympics: The Challenges of Social Media. Gillespie, M., Proctor, R., O Loughlin, B., Shreim, N. Aslanyan A., Targhi, M., Aslan, B., Dennis, J. and Voss, A.

2012   Social Media at BBC Arabic: A Case Study of Nuqtat Hewar. Abdel-Sattar, N., Gillespie, M., Lami, M., Sayed, N., Wissam, M.

2012   Understanding Impact. Mackay, H. The Open University

2012   Website and Social Media Analytics. Mackay, H. The Open University

2010   Managing Diversity: Career Trajectories at the BBC World Service. http://www.open.ac.uk/researchprojects/diasporas/publications/report/career-trajectories-at-the-bbc-world-service-managing-diversity-research-report-

2007   Pakistan Connection: Transnational Media and Communications Networks among British Pakistanis. http://www.open.ac.uk/researchprojects/diasporas/publications/other/pakistan-connection-audience-research-report