2.1.7 [6] Coordination and Complementarity with Other Implementers and Initiatives

Since 2012, ARK has actively and regularly engaged with donor representatives, implementing partners, and national and local stakeholders with a view to increasing coordination across all stabilisation programming on Syria, building synergies, ensuring conflict sensitivity, reducing duplication or potentially contradictory lines of effort, and enhancing programme impact and funding efficiency. During that period, ARK has mainstreamed the practice of opening programme events and activities, such as training workshops with Syrian beneficiaries, to multiple donor representatives to increase beneficiary interaction and coordination across programmes. During the delivery of the Planning for Civil Administration and Transition (PCAT) workshops for local councils and civic mobilisers between September 2012 and March 2013, ARK initiated donor-beneficiary introductory sessions, in which various donors and their implementing partners were invited to present their objectives and programmes to participants and engage in Q&A sessions.

ARK has considerable experience delivering multi-donor programming alongside other implementers, including in the context of the Integrated Community Security Programme (ICSP), for which ARK has been the lead implementer since its inception in the spring of 2013, including a bridging period (January 2014 to present) alongside a co-implementer (Aktis Strategy) contracted by the UK to deliver one of six ICSP lines of effort. In its Civil Defence programming, ARK has worked closely with US implementer Chemonics to ensure synergies between equipment provision and training. ARK's PCAT beneficiary selection procedure, security protocols, vetting and stipends policy were discussed on a regular basis with other US implementers, including Creative Associates, DAI, Chemonics, Democracy Council, IWPR and PILPG. That the PCAT programme has continued as the US's preferred local governance delivery vehicle but under a non-ARK implementer is a testament to ARK's primary focus, which is the beneficiaries, not parochial concerns grounded in commercial competition.

Based on this experience, ARK proposes to manage any future co-implementer relationships under AJACS according to the following principles:

1. **Geographic/thematic clarity**: donors must clearly identify the lead programmatic responsibilities within the scope of work, either on a thematic basis (e.g., one implementer focusing on Security and Justice sector support and the other on community engagement) or on a geographic basis (with implementers delivering a similar scope of work in distinct provinces).

2. **Agreed framework of responsibilities:** based on donor direction as to geographic/thematic division of the scope of work, implementers should agree on parameters of their working relationship through a memorandum of understanding, co-signed or otherwise endorsed by the AJACS Secretariat, which identifies clearly those areas where information is to be shared equitably, where joint products/reporting are expected, how joint events are to be proposed, approved, and managed, as well as issues of branding/visibility of the programmatic activity.

3. **Joint Programme Logic and Monitoring and Evaluation frameworks**: programme coherence requires that implementers and other organisations engaged on behalf of donors share a common, agreed programme logic, whose design offers a further opportunity to ensure clarity on the responsibility for individual outputs. Implementers (with the endorsement of donors) should also agree to triangulate their Monitoring and Evaluation efforts through common M&E frameworks and share, as appropriate, agreed data sets and other atmospheric information relevant to results measurement.

4. **Joint work plan**: the key means of ensuring coherence between implementer efforts is the joint work plan, a matrix of activities over the period of work of the programme which identifies planned activities including reporting schedules with a view to ensuring maximum donor visibility of possible conflicts and synergies. Maintaining the joint work plan in 'evergreen' form

2.1.7 [6] Coordination and Complementarity with Other Implementers and Initiatives

is a shared responsibility of the two (or more) implementers, and should be reflected in the implementer memorandum of understanding.

5. **Co-location**: as in the case of the ICSP, where ARK offered its co-implementer Aktis a workspace in the main project office (where representatives of the beneficiaries, including Free Syrian Police liaison officers, also worked), ARK would propose that all implementers of the AJACS programme use physical co-location as an added means of ensuring real-time information sharing and programme coherence.

6. **Cross-community synergies**: given the relevant work of other implementing partners in the Syrian support sphere, including some who will not be contracted to deliver AJACS, it is important that AJACS donors and implementers not limit their coordination to AJACS contractors/contractees but rather brief outward as well, to other donors and implementers who may be delivering parallel support activities in the same geographical or thematic space as AJACS. Under the ICSP, ARK has offered donors its readiness to brief (alongside its co-implementer Aktis) the broader family of implementers active in supporting Syrian local governance actors, in order to identify possible synergies, mitigate risks of 'double-dipping' by recipient groups, and create an additional mechanism through which to share environmental threat analyses of concern to all donors, implementers, and recipients.

More broadly, and at donor direction, implementers should engage in joint collection of atmospheric information and sharing of analytical reporting on conflict and key actor dynamics to inform iterative design, support efficient and effective implementation, and ensure the security of staff, beneficiaries, and AJACS-provided assets. ARK also support the use of third party evaluators to help promote common indicators and baselines across different programmes to allow objective measurement of impact.

Where communications campaigns are produced in support of AJACS, all implementers should agree to pool their reach and grassroots networks to amplify dissemination of campaign products to beneficiary communities, in order to increase awareness of justice and security services provided by AJACS beneficiaries, encourage communities to take advantage of services provided, and enhance the legitimacy of AJACS-supported security and justice providers in the eyes of their local communities.