

ORGANISATIONAL APPROACH: ARK and TGSN have been implementing the existing project components of the MOR project in Syria for the past 4+ years, and CMC has been carrying out M&E work in Syria for the past two years. The consortium has a detailed and well-developed understanding of Syrian conflict dynamics, and the strategic communications messaging and outputs of ARK and TGSN are based on ongoing research carried out by the companies' networks on the ground. To date, both projects have demonstrated their ability to create effective, conflict-sensitive content and platforms, and to respond effectively when issues arise. Conflict sensitivity has been a key part of the design of the proposed project, and if awarded, all activities will be reviewed for conflict sensitivity at weekly coordination and monthly management meetings.

TRACK RECORD: ARK and the TGSN team have been providing regular reporting, conflict monitoring, and analysis since these projects first began. ARK's in-house Arabic-fluent research and analysis team conducted a Conflict Analysis for Syria in 2015/16, working with specialists from [CDA Collaborative Learning Projects](#) to understand key drivers of the conflict from a systems perspective. The detailed understanding of the conflict both parties bring is critical to operating in any area of Syria, including in those controlled by armed actors. On a small number of occasions, TGSN has had to cease working with particular FSA units as a result of abuses, while ARK has had to cancel proposed products where attempts to send positive messaging to regime areas resulted in strongly sectarian responses from the members of the public interviewed. The consortium's research and analytical work will continue throughout this project, contributing to a clear view of conflict dynamics and resulting appropriate messaging opportunities. ARK's research team is currently undertaking grassroots conflict analyses in seven CSSF priority towns in Idlib and is slated to undertake similar work in Southern Syria, the outputs of which will support this project, if awarded.

PROJECT CONTEXT: The consortium's review of the SoR from a conflict sensitivity standpoint was a key contributor to its proposed design, and has resulted in an approach which focuses on developing a coordinated, strong, positive narrative around moderate opposition governance activities, one which moves the MAO component from events-based messaging to values-based messaging, linking all components through shared campaign themes, including an international humanitarian law campaign. The consortium proposes focusing initially on locations receiving support through CSSF or other donors, as HTS and other extremist armed groups are significantly less likely to attack opposition entities that are receiving support, and can demonstrably provide key services. The project will not directly criticise HTS (or linked groups), given that this may be a polarising topic for many who view it as a legitimate resistance force, though not a desirable governance actor (as was demonstrated in the Target Audience Analysis). Given that the TAA demonstrated that there is a lower tolerance for minorities and women's participation in the south, ARK and TGSN will ensure their approach is tailored to promote inclusivity without raising the profile of these groups in a way that might promote backlash. The consortium has also designed campaign activities to be flexible enough to pivot if programming becomes impossible in particular areas for different project components, or to enable the project to support a nascent peace process.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION/RISK REGISTER: The consortium has identified a number of conflict sensitivity-related issues in its risk register and these will be re-visited at weekly project team meetings to understand how risks are evolving and how the project is responding (bringing in production, research and analysis, and monitoring and evaluation teams) to ensure that outputs do not increase risk to beneficiaries or become rallying points for sectarianism. Overall project conflict sensitivity will be reviewed with CMC at monthly project management meetings. The results of these project reviews will be shared with HMG through the consortium's reporting and at monthly board meetings. Where issues around conflict sensitivity arise as a result of shifts in conflict context or as a result of activities, the consortium will immediately revert to the HMG project team.