

RISK AND MITIGATION MATRIX

A key risk ARK/Accadian has identified for this project is SMC and FSA inability or unwillingness (as a result of domestic or political pressure) to work with Western advisors given the West's inaction over both the steady state conflict and inactivity following the August 2013 chemical weapons attack. ARK/Accadian is aware that the Syrian opposition leadership was 'shocked' by the UK's recent 'no' vote on the principle of intervention. Their potential refusal to cooperate with a Western-led team would obviously result in complete project failure. In order to mitigate this, ARK has selected an Arab majority bid, with a highly experienced Arabic media and communications expert as lead consultant and a plurality of trained Syrian staff, supported by regional Arabic-speaking expertise. Once ARK's core team members have gained the trust and respect of the SMC and FSA media leads, Muhamad Mustafa and Louay Mokdad respectively, their receptiveness to Western trainers leading workshops will be explored. If this is rejected or politically sensitive (FSA commanders being 'told what to do' by foreigners), ARK/Accadian is able to fully staff its proposed training workshops with highly experienced Arab facilitators and trainers, supported discretely by ARK's team in Turkey.

Risk	Likelihood (H/M/L)	Impact (H/M/L)	Mitigation
SMC/FSA refusal to work with UK/US/Western core team on principle.	M	H	ARK/Accadian has selected an Arab-led and Arab majority core team and is able to carry out training in this eventuality.
Limited attendance at training course due to security issues exiting Syria.	M/H	H	Carry out training in locations most convenient for attendees to attend (Gazientep over Istanbul). Amend project to include a Train-the-Trainer element.
SMC inability to provide adequately motivated/experienced staff for the Press Office and FSA Front Command posts	M	H	Provide clear job descriptions for SMC to staff against and additional training if required.
Resistance to change/new approach by members of SMC/FSA.	M	H	Active engagement with SMC/FSA to ensure project is driven by them to maximise uptake of strategies and training y. Use of examples previous success elsewhere.

HMG suffers reputational damage due to human rights abuses from within the FSA	L/M	H	All mention of FCO involvement will be avoided unless stated otherwise.
Difficulties receiving video footage from inside Syria due to inadequate power supply.	L/M	H	Ensure adequate funding in budget to buy additional satellite time and fuel for generators. Provide basic editing training to Front Commands to reduce quantity of material being transmitted.
Continued power cuts within Syria limit time spent watching TV and internet use.	H	L/M	Radio and print media will be targeted within Syria to ensure that messages are spread as effectively as possible.
The threat from extremist actors towards members of the FSA (e.g. the recent killing of the FSA commander and SMC member Kamal Hamami in Latakia by ISIS).	H	M	ARK is currently carrying out an FCO-funded research project to collect and analyse information on extremist networks.
Continued hacking/cyber attacks of websites	H	M/H	Ensure appropriate cyber-security measures in place and the ability to return sites to normal operations as quickly as possible.