

2.1.4 [3] Managing other risks and contingencies

In addition to the risk mitigation strategies highlighted in 2.1.3 [2], which address a range of specific physical, security and programmatic risks, ARK's risk and conflict analysis has identified several additional threats:

Political change in Turkey results in a non-permissive implementation environment.

Turkish policy on Syria, compounded by stresses experienced in host country communities, has negatively affected Turkish popular support for the Syrian opposition, with a marked increase in Turkish attacks on Syrian refugees. Whilst ARK enjoys an extremely positive, open and supportive relationship with the government of Turkey, in the event of a change of government policy, operating from Turkey could become more problematic.

Mitigation. By operating discreetly from programme locations in both Istanbul and southern Turkey, as well as rotating training sites and workshop locations, ARK can help to lower the visibility of programme activities. In the event that the Turkish government is no longer supportive of the programme, ARK has a contingency plan, subject to donor agreement, to shift implementation to Jordan. Having implemented in the past in Jordan, the Kurdish region of Iraq and Lebanon, ARK has options to further diversify implementation modalities.

Increase in physical insecurity or targeted threats to project personnel and work locations.

Mitigation. In addition to options of working outside Turkey, ARK's programming team is sufficiently developed that in extremis implementation could shift to an entirely Turkish and Syrian implementation team if there are increased threats to international staff. ARK's secure and flexible IT platform is a key part of the company's business continuity plan which would enable remote working and a diffuse operating team if conditions require a reduction in programme profile.

Armed actors deny AJACS partners operating space inside Syria. The ability of AJACS stakeholders to undertake programmatic activity rests in large part on the license of armed groups.

Mitigation. In the event that such groups contest AJACS activities within Syria, ARK has developed a range of contingencies. These include direct engagement with armed groups through Syrian colleagues, programme beneficiaries and Syrian opposition political contacts, as well as working with other implementers already engaged in the provision of non-lethal assistance to the armed opposition in order to leverage support for the AJACS programme.

Equipment is unable to be delivered safely and beneficiaries are unable to leave Syria as a result of an increase in violence and/or extremist regime action in northern Syria.

Mitigation. ARK has been developing Syrian "train the trainer" capacity for several years, including with the progenitor of the AJACS programme, the Integrated Community Security Programme (ICSP). In the event Syrian beneficiaries can not leave Syria, ARK has developed a threefold mitigation strategy. The first is for trained trainers to take over the training and conduct it in Syria, with both remote and direct in-country support from ARK personnel. ARK has already taken such steps with both the ICSP and Civil Defence programmes it manages. The second is to provide on-line interactive training using modern adult distance learning techniques and capabilities. In 2012 ARK used its in-house media production team to produce such online training videos. The third is to deploy ARK Syrian trainers to work as mobile training teams inside Syria.

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Programme expansion outstrips ARK's ability to provide sufficient implementation capacity.

Mitigation. In addition to having a large implementation team in Turkey that is flexible enough to surge programmatic effort as required, ARK has ensured that the area most likely to see a significant surge - police training - has significant additional call down capacity. This explains the partnership choice of PAE, a global police and justice services provider for the US Government. PAE was also chosen because it implemented the US training programme for the Lebanese police. This, and the work of Siren Associates in Lebanon and Jordan, ensures that ARK has the capacity to meet any increased demand for policing and training services, and that trainers and training are appropriate to the operating context. Five implementation partners (PAE, Siren Associates, Alem and Associates, Tana Consulting and the Syria Evaluation and Research Organisation) mean that ARK has access to staffing augmentation as required. Uniquely ARK also has policing, justice, community engagement, research and analysis, and monitoring and evaluation expertise in-house and in Turkey, thus ensuring adequate personnel across all lines of effort at all times. In addition, by partnering with the global procurement specialist Crown Agents ARK is able to ensure procurement is also scalable.

Equipment falls into extremist hands.

Mitigation. ARK and its associated delivery partners have unrivalled expertise in understanding the threat posed by extremist actors. This experience has been derived by Countering Violent Extremism (CVE) research and programme activity conducted over the past two years for the UK and US governments and regularly briefed into the Dutch, Danish, Canadian, UK and US governments, as well as the EU. This ongoing activity will feed into ARK's AJACS implementation, help reduce programme risks, increase awareness and ensure the counter terrorist objectives of AJACS, principally creating a credible alternative, are mainstreamed and amplified. ARK has also developed procedures to ensure beneficiaries of training and equipment have been adequately vetted. Proper identification and vetting of beneficiaries is critical to minimising risk. Under AJACS, ARK will employ a multi-step process of beneficiary selection that ensures that programme participants are legitimate and representative beneficiaries:

- **Draw up of a set of specific criteria for selection** based on programme needs and donor requirements. ARK will consult with a range of stakeholders, including existing beneficiaries, Syrian partner organisations, donors, the National Coalition, the Interim Government and local communities.
- Information received will be **cross-checked with sources from within ARK's network.**
- Once collected and verified, information on **potential beneficiaries will be checked against open sources and the criteria for selection**, and then **screened**. The first step in screening potential beneficiaries will be to ensure that AJACS does not support donor-blacklisted or proscribed parties. The Grants and Compliance Officer will ensure that all necessary procedures for vetting beneficiaries are followed.