CO-ORDINATED APPROACH ACROSS PROJECT'S COMPONENTS AND LINKS TO OTHER DONOR ACTIVITY: The consortium has designed this project to ensure there is a highly-coordinated approach: ARK and TGSN are already sharing training capabilities inside Syria and the teams have previously coordinated on campaigns inside Syria for ongoing strategic communications projects. This project shares resources to provide value for money, entrench coordination and maximise impact. ARK and TGSN will have neighbouring project offices in Istanbul, and CMC will have a project manager permanently located in Istanbul. This will facilitate immediate contact where urgent action is required, along with weekly project and monthly management meetings with all three consortium partners. While ARK and TGSN will continue to run separate, well-established media brands, they will coordinate the civilian and military strands of the project to run mutually reinforcing campaigns on shared themes (such as *Back to School*). Other CSSF-supported groups and civilian governance institutions will be included in these coordinated campaigns, building on ARK's existing work with other CSSF projects, to amplify impact and instil a perception of unity across moderate opposition organisations. Coordination will draw on ARK's existing, close relationships with other CSSF programmes that enable the current Grassroots media project to provide both regular and special coverage of CSSF projects including the Free Syrian Police, Civil Defence, Livelihoods and SRM's initiatives. ARK has previously provided communications training to the Free Syria Police and Syria Civil Defence and has developed humanitarian messaging in support of HMG stabilisation efforts. Both ARK and TGSN also have close links to the US-funded communications capacity-building project and use its platforms to distribute their content.

SHIFTING POLITICAL LANDSCAPE IN SYRIA: The consortium project staff have considerable experience of both slow burning and dramatic alterations to the Syrian operating environment and have designed the project to respond accordingly, with the ability to flex resources and focus to different geographic or thematic areas as required. ARK's research team has been tracking and predicting the evolution of the conflict for the past five years, and TGSN's outreach networks are intricately linked with the opposition decision-making process, leaving the consortium well-placed to anticipate and react quickly to changes. For example, as fighting has died down in recent months, the MAO project has refocused on values-based content rather than events-based news and this will be the focus of the new project.

CREDIBILITY OF MESSAGING: Both ARK and the TGSN team have been producing Syrian-designed and delivered messaging through their Syrian production teams for five and four years respectively. The credibility of their products has enabled both companies to build significant and engaged audiences (1.3 million followers for the platforms included in this proposal). Messaging concepts and key products continue to be focus-grouped to ensure ongoing resonance and the provenance of content has always been assumed to be Syrian activists. In addition, all contact with in-country networks is carried out by trusted Syrian members of the ARK/TGSN teams, who use brand email addresses that do not link to ARK/TGSN or HMG, and allow them to maintain their 'activist' status, helping to build trust and credibility with actors inside Syria.

MITIGATE RISK OF ACTIVISTS/ BRANDS PUTTING OUT MESSAGES NOT IN LINE WITH PROJECT OUTCOMES: All project beneficiaries are required to sign up to a charter when receiving training to ensure they are committed to creating messaging in line with project outcomes and HMG values. All training will also be accompanied by ongoing mentoring, with regular quality assurance checks on outputs. Most of the consortium's Syrian team members have been working on these projects for many years and are deeply committed to their success. The Syrian-led approach and the strong relationships of trust that exist with the international mentors/project managers have to date ensured that messaging has remained in line with project outcomes, and it is anticipated that this would continue. The addition of a dedicated production manager to oversee both the civilian and military strands of the project, along with regular editorial meetings and close editorial supervision of all project content by senior managers who are experienced journalists, will mitigate the risk of damaging content or messages being released. It will also ensure that core, impactful messages serving project outcomes are maximised in all content generated and distributed under the MOR project.

Initial Risk Description	Initial Likelihood	Initial Impact	Initial Risk Rating	Risk Owner	Mitigation Action	Residual Rating
Loss of operating space in Syria due to expanded extremist, regime or foreign actor areas of control, or deterioration in security/operating environment	High	High	High	Consortium	ARK and TGSN have been tracking the evolution of the conflict for years and will continue to do so, identifying trends to anticipate project shifts, working closely with HMG. Project design is highly flexible to allow focus on other geographic areas or project phases. The project will operate in a low-profile manner and conform to local operating conditions. The consortium will coordinate closely with HMG to understand its tolerances for working in areas held by VE groups.	Med
Loss of border access in North and/or South	High	Med	High	Consortium	Existing consortium networks in Syria are well-trained and largely self-sufficient with satellite internet devices to enable ongoing communications. Virtual training and local procurement reduce dependency on supply lines to Turkey and Jordan.	Low
Targeted physical attack by extremist or regime elements against staff, activities or networks in Syria	Med	High	High	Consortium	Stringers and field officers receive physical safety and IT security training. Partner networks are cellular, redundant, and can adapt to the loss/disruption of individual elements. Project has been designed to be flexible so new areas or phases can replace those experiencing challenges.	Low
Restricted movement of cash/Hawala or reduced ability to pay networks/field officers inside Syria	Med	High	High	Consortium	ARK now largely works with Syrian entities that have offices or representatives external to Syria, and payments are made through these Turkey/Jordan/Lebanon-based entities. TGSN is moving to adopt this method. Hawala payments are being reduced to a minimum.	Low
Deterioration in Turkish government attitude towards implementation makes operating from Turkey unsustainable	High	Med	High	Consortium	The consortium will ensure all work from Turkey is fully compliant with local legislation. Additionally, ARK has legal, established offices in Beirut and Amman, with adequate space for the project team to relocate in the event that working from Turkey is no longer possible. Significant project implementation is already carried out remotely and teams are based in Istanbul for access to UK project management.	Low
Cyber threats - hacking, human error or systems failure leading to interference and/or reputational damage	High	Med	High	Consortium	To date, the consortium partners have demonstrated low vulnerability to repeated attempts to penetrate their systems. ARK uses state-of-the-art dark-cloud technology including automated audit log monitoring, intrusion detection and prevention, and vulnerability scanning. TGSN's platforms are hosted across dedicated but separate servers with capacity to cross-host. A backup system is in place with a 5-second delay and is held on a separate secure server. All personnel across the project will be compliant with project Security Operating Instructions; this includes laptop encryption, adoption of VPN software, the use of secure hard drives, and responsible stewardship of passwords and computer systems – overseen by the project director. Regular briefings are provided to project staff (in English and Arabic) on computer and online security. CMC employs strict security protocols for IT security, monitoring and assessing threat levels on an ongoing basis and assigning adequate measures, including encryption of hardware and communication. The team is trained and experienced in handling sensitive, confidential and personal information obtained through field work.	Low

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Rating	Owner	Mitigation	Residual
MAO brigades are disbanded/ transform into fractured sectarian/ethnic militias	Low	High	Med	Consortium/ HMG	Close monitoring of MAO activity enables forewarning and the pre-emptive withdrawal of support if necessary. IHL training supports continued MAO compliance and resists the breakdown of order.	Med
Degraded internet access in Syria	Low	High	Med	Consortium	ARK and TGSN's team have previously provided satellite internet devices to teams inside Syria, increasing availability of internet coverage. Additional air time can be bought if existing internet coverage through Turkish, Syrian and Jordanian providers is reduced.	Med
Beneficiaries are co-opted to misuse their new skills	Med	Med	Med	Consortium	Engagement with beneficiaries is iterative, with capacity building and mentoring opportunities used to reinforce moderate, tolerant values. Independent monitoring in Syria will also enable oversight of beneficiary activity.	Low
Partner failure to implement, fiduciary risk and associated damage to project results, reputation of UK or consortium.	Low	High	Med	Consortium	Consortium members have been working with their selected partners for a number of years, have a strong implementation track record and will continue to identify and solve any problems as they arise. Payments will be made once deliverables have demonstrably been met, confirmed by robust compliance and M&E systems and third-party monitoring to ensure quality and quantity.	Low
Concerted reputational attacks against the project or its implementer	Med	Med	Med	Consortium/ HMG	Consortium partners have been programming in Syria for several years and have been able to navigate any reputational attacks on projects or the companies. Project teams will continue to operate discreetly and the two communications strands will continue to operate separate platforms to reduce bleed across in the event of reputational attacks. The consortium and HMG will agree public lines to describe the project if needed.	Low
Situational physical security risk to staff in Jordan and Turkey	Low	High	Med	Consortium	All staff are kept aware of potential security risks, and SOPs in the event of an incident. A geographical based cascade system is in place to account for project staff using GSM, mobile and fixed internet networks. In-country assessments are regularly conducted, taking into account FCO travel guidance in order to inform out-of-bounds areas.	Med
Project activities are not gender sensitive	Med	Med	Med	Consortium	The project team has identified a gender champion to ensure that gender is considered in all aspects of the project, and all activities will be reviewed for gender sensitivity during weekly project meetings. All capacity building will include a gender component to ensure the needs of target audiences are addressed in campaign development.	Med
Project activities are not conflict sensitive	Med	Med	Med	Consortium	All activities will be assessed for conflict sensitivity during weekly project meetings, drawing on information from the consortium's in-country networks and ongoing research activities, including, for example, ARK's current conflict analysis in Idlib, the results of which will be used as a basis for programming decisions.	Med
Seizure/loss of programme equipment to armed actors	Med	Low	Low	Consortium	The consortium expects to provide minimal equipment to partners and beneficiaries as part of this project and uses software that wipes phones, computers, or hard drives in the event of theft.	Low