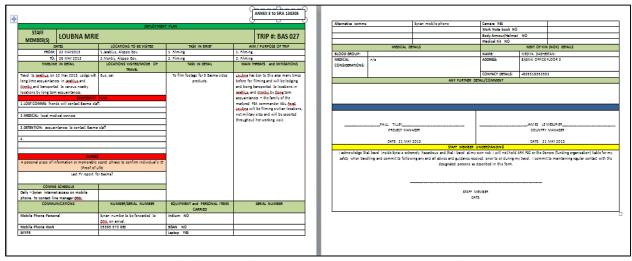## 2.1.2 [1] Staff Risk and Security Emergency Management

Operational Security

ARK places the utmost emphasis on the security of its staff, beneficiaries and programme-related information. As part of its commitment to this, and commensurate with the scale and nature of the AJACS programme, ARK will recruit a dedicated security officer who will lead the Security Risk Management (SRM) process. This person will support ongoing mitigation of risks to staff and operations, informed by the in-house research and analysis team, ARK's extensive network inside Syria and well-placed contacts in Turkey, and by routine visits to key locations. All ARK personnel and programme beneficiaries are vetted. ARK's close relationships with beneficiaries and local communities will continue to provide an additional source of threat information. As part of the SRM process, ARK's operational security risk register is updated at weekly team meetings, and in response to changes to the programming or operating environment. The AJACS team will maintain the existing ICSP team's detailed security plan, based on extant security standard operating procedures (SOPs):

- SOP 010: ARK Security Risk Assessment (including matrix of significant incidents and risk register)
- SOP 011: Pre-Deployment Brief
- SOP 012: Deployment Plan
- SOP 013: Office and Personnel Security
- SOP 014: Participant Transit Security
- SOP 015: Event Security

Sample pre-deployment plan for travel of a Syrian staff member into Syria

These core physical security protocols, which involve a combination of behavioural and physical measures, reduce the programme's risk profile. ARK will ensure that the AJACS team employs the same discretion, cultural diplomacy, cooperation with host-nation policy and legislation, and situational awareness as the existing ICSP team. ARK is currently undergoing a routine annual security review led by the former ICSP Programme Manager, to ensure security SOPs remain relevant to all AJACS programming. ARK will revise its extant Security Plan in the start-up phase, in collaboration with the AJACS Secretariat.

Data Information Management: Given the sensitivity of some programme information, ARK has stringent information security controls in place which are regularly monitored. These include

vulnerability scanning, automated audit log monitoring, intrusion detection and prevention measures, and periodic control auditing. Access to ARK systems can only be gained through a secure connection to ARK's dark-cloud internet system.

Offices: ARK is currently operating in three provinces of Syria: Aleppo, Idlib and Latakia, with senior leadership located in Istanbul, Turkey. ARK will establish an AJACS Project Implementation Office in Gaziantep and a Project Oversight Office in Istanbul. These offices will be located in low-profile buildings in Turkey with security measures in place that are appropriate to the specific location and building. Finance staff and programme funds are securely placed in unexposed rooms.

Travel into Syria: Syrian liaison staff traveling regularly between Turkey and project sites in Syria continue to do so under clearly defined security protocols. ARK's programme team provides participants with a Transit Security Brief outlining how to prepare for travel from Syria to Turkey, including information on the security conditions in areas they will travel through inside Syria, planning for method of travel and border crossing, and personal security instructions (such as not carrying sensitive personal or programme-related information while in transit and agreeing designated contact persons in cases of emergency such as arrest, detention or kidnap).

ARK's Syrian Network. Members of ARK's extensive networks in Syria carry out opposition activities in hostile conditions, with or without external funding or support. Part of ARK's ongoing SRM process is to gauge to what extent external support encourages or enables activists to engage in potentially dangerous opposition activity, the extent of any liability, whether the resulting risk levels are acceptable, and proposed risk avoidance, tolerance and mitigation measures.

ARK's International Contacts. From working with the US Consulate's Regional Security Office on physical security enhancements, to specialist engagement with the FBI, Diplomatic Security and Scotland Yard on kidnap-related issues and liaising with other implementers to share information, ARK proactively seeks to mitigate risk by collaborating and sharing information with appropriate partners.

Systems and plans to manage an emergency/incident and appropriate security arrangements

Each ARK office has a security officer duty roster and incident muster point. Routine security issues are communicated to staff by SMS, and in the event of a significant incident, ARK has a CASCADE emergency call tree structure in place to ensure that all staff can be accounted for, and provided with instructions on how to respond to the incident. Media handling and lines to take are pre-prepared in the event of public interest in response to an event. All human resources files are updated with Next of Kin, blood group/medical and proof of life details. Following an incident, ARK's senior management team meets to assess the situation and reviews existing security protocols, updating these where required and communicating them to all relevant employees, beneficiaries and donors. An incident report is provided to donors, including initial response and subsequent mitigating actions. Into its fourth year of Syria programming and operating within an active conflict characterised by a proliferation of asymmetrical threats, ARK has experience of handling a range of risks, from beneficiary injury (e.g. land mine strike) en route to training, to medical emergency in situ, detention of beneficiaries by Syrian government, opposition/extremist or Turkish government actors, kidnap, and physical targeting (e.g. by barrel bombing). ARK staff, many of whom are Syrian, have also had to deal with the psychological costs of war, from refugeehood, displacement and personal security threats, to dealing with the consequences of seeing family and friends imprisoned, tortured and killed inside Syria. ARK's ability to maintain a functioning, capable staff and delivery of over $60m of assistance to thousands of Syrian beneficiaries is a testament to a resilient risk management strategy that balances the imperatives of delivery with the inevitable risks and threats to ensure risks are avoided, managed or mitigated appropriately.

2.1.2 [1] Staff Risk and Security Emergency Management

Case Study 1- The Impact of Armed Actors on the ICSP

Having highlighted the potential programme risks and opportunities from armed actors for the Integrated Community Security Programme, ARK produced an analytical report and risk matrix:

Beneficiary	Current level of beneficiary engagement	Benefits of beneficiary engagement	Benefits of direct ICSP engagement	Risks of direct ICSP engagement	Direct ICSP engagement guidelines
Police	High	High	Medium	Medium	Possible with police coordination
Administrative bodies	Medium	Medium	Medium	Medium	Possible with council coordination
Justice actors (ICSP beneficiaries)	Low	Low	Low	High	Engagement not recommended

Case Study 2 – The Threat from the Islamic State to Programme Support

At 1859hrs on 15 August ARK was asked by the ICSP Secretariat to provide the content and value of all ICSP material assistance present at stations or warehouses in Akhtarin, Marea, and Tel Rifaat in response to the risk of capture by the Islamic State (IS). Within three hours ARK was able to provide details of all the police staff working in Aleppo police stations and the quantity and value of all donated equipment. Working with the Secretariat and beneficiaries ARK then drafted guidelines for the Aleppo Free Police on actions to take to prevent the misappropriation of equipment and develop police contingency planning in response to the IS threat.

Case Study 3 – Provision of Update Threat Reporting and Mitigation Responses

ARK regularly provides analytical spot reports on programme risks and suggested mitigation:

Spot Report: Threat Analysis of Border Crossings with Turkey – The Islamic State and Jabhat al-Nusra

> The advance of the Islamic State (IS) in northern Aleppo province and an aggressive posture by Jabhat al-Nusra (JAN) in Idlib province increase the risk that either group would take over Bab al-Salama and/or Bab al-Hawa border crossings linking northern Syria to Turkey. The IS threat to the Bab al-Salama crossing is the most pressing; IS made progress toward the crossing when they overran Akhtarin in mid-August 2014 and an IS takeover of Bab al-Salama becomes more probable if opposition fighters lose either Sawran or Mari'. The threat of a takeover by IS will decrease if brigades leading the fight against it in the northern countryside can hold these two front-line towns, a prospect that may be more likely if they receive rapid external support. In the event of border closures, alternate routes for the transit of ICSP material supplies will have to be sought and workshop participants will need to rely to a greater extent on irregular border crossings.