

2.1.8: Question 7

Describe your client liaison arrangements, including procedures for dealing with complaints or problems, plus local and Donor escalation procedures

We believe that regular liaison and open, clear communications are of vital importance, especially in a contract with the degree of complexity expected in a context as challenging as Syria. Our approach involves three elements: a clear **Contract Management Plan**; defined structures for **Operational Management**; and defined procedures for **Complaints** and problems.

Our Contract Management Plan will provide a systematic framework for client liaison

Central to our approach is clarity of roles and responsibilities, and complete transparency. We will draft **Contract Management Plan** for submission to the AJACS Secretariat **within five days** of contract notification i.e. before contract signature. The Contract Management Plan will clarify the management principles and authority parameters for AJACS and ensure active management of the relationship between our consortium and all relevant donors over the 1+1 year term of the contract.

We believe the Contract Management Plan should form part of the contract but remain a live document to be amended should the programme change, for example should the number of donors increase or reduce, or responsibilities or objectives change. The document will provide a framework to:

- Provide a formalised system of **performance monitoring** and feedback covering Key Performance Indicators. Donors will benefit from the AJACS management dashboard to enable them to track progress.
- Set out procedures for managing a **flexible delivery** approach
- Ensure there is **clarity** on the roles and responsibilities of all parties
- Identify and resolve as early as possible poor performance, providing early **resolution** steps with clear escalation points
- **Manage risk**
- Identify any additional **savings** possible in order to maximise value for money
- Drive continual **improvement**

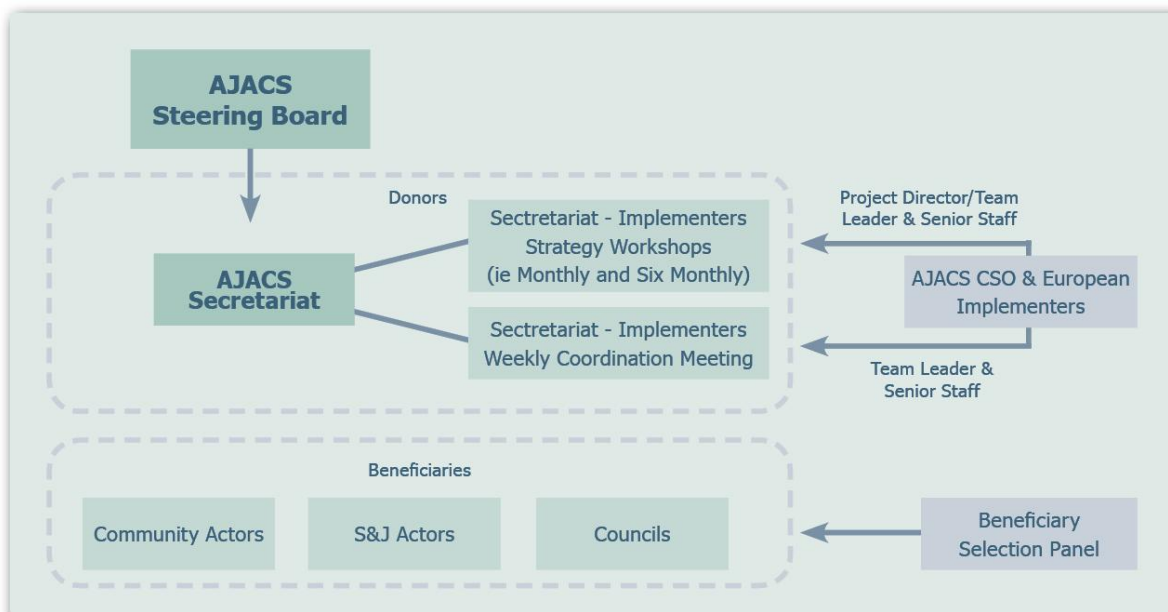
WYG manages big programmes. An in-house base manual for project management is adapted for specific programmes through the issuance of guidance notes. We currently run over £650 million of projects including:

- £76 million Defence Estates programme;
- US\$150 Combined Military base for UK forces in Bahrain
- Defence Equipment & Systems (DE&S) for Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (SANGCOM) (assisting with the project management of SAR 7 billion (£2bn) of projects.

Structured engagement with AJACS donors

Given the political nature and intensity of operations involved in delivering this contract, and in accordance with the established ToR for the Steering Board, donors will be substantially involved in contract and supplier management. To make the programme manageable the relationships will require a degree of formality. We recommend a contract management **framework** to be responsive of both the client and key stakeholders.

Figure 14: Our proposed Contract Management Framework clearly defines escalation procedures and engages all the required stakeholders



AJACS Secretariat manages the AJACS implementers on behalf of the AJACS Steering Board, as already occurs with the ICSP governance architecture. A regular series of strategy workshops with the secretariat and the implementers will guide the direction of the programme, will include senior Steering Board members and potentially can involve sessions on specific issues to be held in partnership with the Interim Government, AJACS beneficiaries and other national authorities (such as the Turkish authorities), as the secretariat sees fit. Our project director, team leader and senior AJACS team members will attend each of these sessions. The regular daily operational coordination of AJACS will be organised through regular calls, spot reports and weekly coordination meetings with the Secretariat, these will be attended by the team leader and senior members of AJACS team.

AJACS Project Director has overall responsibility for delivery of the Programme, and is the key client Liaison with the Client (FCO) and the AJACS Secretariat. The Project Director, supported by senior WYG and Aktis managers, will meet regularly with the Secretariat to oversee contract performance, progress against KPIs and continual performance improvement.

AJACS Team Leader has responsibility for day to day running of the programme and is the key client liaison with AJACS Secretariat. The Team Leader will be supported by the two AJACS deputy team leaders.

AJACS Beneficiary Selection Panel will assist in the building of relationships with beneficiary communities, help with the selection of community recipients of AJACS assistance and help to provide oversight and verification of impact. It will comprise Syrian and international NGOs with excellent networks inside Syria and will help to facilitate the work of AJACS at the grassroots level.

Defined procedures for dealing with complaints and an escalation process

The key to a successful programme is to anticipate problems and to deal with issues as soon as they arise. We propose a system whereby issues are dealt with rapidly at the lowest operational level possible but in the framework of a jointly understood escalation procedure. Our proposed escalation procedure:

- (a) The AJACS Team Leader will attempt in good faith to resolve the dispute with the Secretariat
- (b) If the AJACS Team Leader is unable to resolve the dispute within 10 working days, the matter will be referred to the Project Director who will attempt to resolve it with the Steering Board
- (c) If the Project Director is unable to resolve the dispute within 10 working days, the matter will be referred to the Managing Director of WYG who will attempt to resolve it with the Steering Board and the Authority
- (d) If the Managing Director of WYG is unable to resolve the dispute then Centre for Effective Dispute Resolution (CEDR) Model Mediation Procedure will be applied

Issues with Turks are dealt with first by the Team Leader, and if he is unable to resolve the dispute within ten days the matter is referred to Levent Erkan (Managing Director of WYG Türkiye) and the above steps from (b) take place with oversight from Mr Erkan.

Issues in Syria are dealt with first by the Project Officer in-country, who will then escalate to the Deputy Team Leader (Programmes), who in turn will escalate to the Team Leader and the above steps take place from (a).

Senior members of the consortium have demonstrated capability to respond rapidly to client complaints in very complex project environments.

In 2011 a project team in Helmand PRT faced accusations of sexual harassment against staff belonging to a subcontractor. An Aktis Director took control and worked with the FCO and DFID to prevent the emergence of tensions within the PRT, supported an investigation and oversaw support for vulnerable staff members. The situation was managed in London, enabling the project team to remain focused on delivery.

To ensure a smooth future handover or close-down, we propose an exit plan

An integral part of effective client liaison is an effective close-down or transfer to an alternate supplier of a programme. The consortium will prepare, in consultation with the AJACS Secretariat, a draft exit plan no later than three months before the expiry of Year 1 of the contract, or within twenty days of request for a draft Exit Checklist, whichever is the earlier. The purpose of the plan is to ensure an orderly disposition of personnel and assets, management of reputational issues and maintenance of key stakeholder relationships.