

ARK has mainstreamed capacity building (CB) into all of its programming, developing a stakeholder-driven methodology that engages beneficiaries as the primary agents in their own capacity development. All ARK programmes are designed to build local capacity through beneficiary participation in all steps of the programme cycle, from assessment and analysis, to the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of projects. ARK’s methodology views training as *one* of many CB tools that can be utilised in *targeted* and tailored capacity building programmes, or as an enabling activity to contribute to specific programme objectives. This approach ensures effective participation and capacitation, with support to partners and beneficiaries addressing their unique organisational challenges, while also providing opportunities for experience sharing and growth through joint CB and project activities.

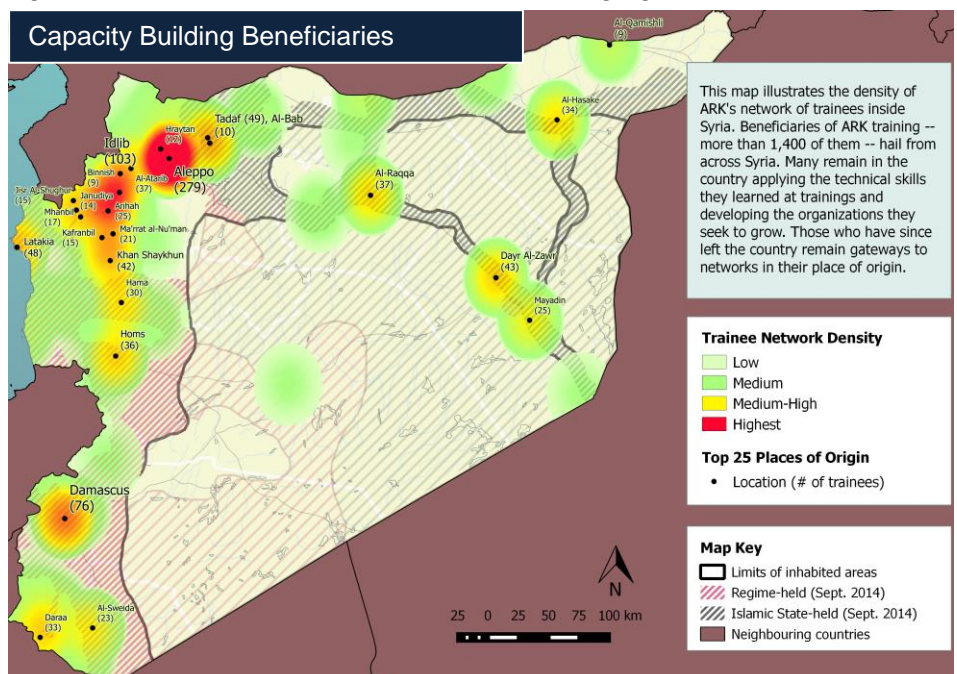
In line with this approach, ARK has organised, convened and facilitated hundreds of CB activities, with over 130 workshops and trainings for Syrian beneficiaries, in which over 1,400 individuals and organisations have participated. These have ranged from facilitated strategic planning workshops for local councils or police, to skills training for media activists. All are designed according to adult learning principles and facilitation best practice, primarily through the application of the **experiential learning cycle** (ELC).

Planning for Civilian Administration and Transition (PCAT)

Between July 2012 and September 2013, ARK designed, piloted and facilitated more than 16 PCAT workshops for hundreds of Syrian local governance and civil society actors from all 14 governorates. These workshops were a key tool in one of the first support programmes for local administrators and mobilisers, and aimed to fill a governance vacuum in liberated areas, and increase effective coordination between nascent Local Councils (LCs) and revolutionary groups. ARK’s native Arabic-speaking facilitation team worked closely with Syrian colleagues and clients to identify beneficiaries and design a six-day curriculum that engaged participants on key local governance issues in conflict and post-conflict areas such as organisational structuring for local administration bodies; managing local service

provision; managing local security; community engagement and strategic communication. Sessions were carefully designed using the ELC to introduce participants to new concepts, best practice and lessons learned from other conflicts, while furnishing them with the necessary tools, processes and guidance to constructively interact with the material and plan for its application in their context. The various local groups developed strategic plans for addressing priority issues

identified for their area, including project proposals to mobilise donor funding. Participants repeatedly stated that these workshops afforded a rare opportunity for Syrian stakeholders to meet, network and build trust, at a time when it was extremely difficult and risky to do so in Syria. These workshops became gateways for government representatives to engage with



Syrian stakeholders, and workshop outputs were shared with Friends of Syria donors to inform their support for emerging local councils. The workshops also offered invaluable insight into local conditions and dynamics in different governorates, when access to information was restricted. ARK's Research and Analysis team was present throughout to document context analysis discussions and conduct in-depth interviews and focus groups with participants, producing situation assessment reports for each governorate.

Civil Defence. Partnering with the Turkish search and rescue NGO AKUT, ARK has conducted 37 trainings for over 740 members of Civil Defence teams in Aleppo, Idlib, Raqqa and Dayr al-Zawr. These trainings have covered basic search and rescue, firefighting, advanced search and rescue for collapsed structures, first aid, and command and control. These workshops are held mostly in Ceyhan, Turkey, at specialised training facilities that use simulations of bombed Aleppan buildings, designed in collaboration with beneficiaries, to enhance training realism.

Integrated Community Security Programme. Throughout the implementation of this multi-government funded programme to enhance public safety and access to justice, ARK has used Planning for Public Order workshops to bring together police, provincial councils, local councils and other community stakeholders, to agree on frameworks for managing security and justice provision in their areas, and highlight areas for programme support. ARK has also provided two Training of Trainers courses and six Crime Scene Investigation and Management courses for police officers from Aleppo and Idlib, and three facilitated workshops for justice sector actors and stakeholders.

ARK facilitated a joint planning workshop for female stakeholders and local police and governance leaders to ensure that women's security concerns were taken into consideration in police planning, and women were encouraged to participate more in community policing efforts.

Civil Society Development, Media and Human Rights. Along with its affiliated organisations in Lebanon and Yemen, ARK has undertaken scores of capacity development workshops for civil society partners, community-based organisations, youth groups, civic mobilisers, and media activists. These have ranged from specialised topics such as Systems Conflict Analysis and conflict programme design, to project management, financial management, and monitoring and evaluation. From 2011 to 2013, ARK also ran training courses for Syrian human rights activists and lawyers on documentation of human rights violations and interview techniques.

Managing CB activities for Syrian beneficiaries in Turkey. From beneficiary selection, to travel and accommodation arrangements, ARK has the capacity to deliver workshops and trainings in Turkey, Jordan, Iraq and Lebanon.

Beneficiary Selection. This is determined by the project team and clients according to objective criteria, and coordinated closely with Syrian colleagues to safely communicate with stakeholders, identify individuals and agree their participation.

Pre-activity Preparations. After selecting and vetting beneficiaries, ARK has set procedures for preparing beneficiaries for travel, including a Participant Transit Security Brief, covering everything from border crossing to personal and information security.

Travel and Border Crossing. ARK has a dedicated travel officer to arrange travel on behalf of beneficiaries, staff and SMEs. Where possible, ARK facilitates beneficiary border crossings in coordination with government embassies. Where directed by clients, ARK also coordinates beneficiary entry to Turkey from Syria's northern borders with the Interim Government, who have agreed mechanisms with the Turkish border authorities.

Accommodation and Facilities. Internal procedures guide the selection of accommodation and facilities according to three main criteria: cost, security and suitability for purpose.

Facilitators, SMEs, and other specialised services. ARK has an established competitive recruitment process for SMEs and specialised service providers such as interpreters and media production specialists. During the last five years of operations in the region, ARK has developed a wide-ranging roster of SMEs and service-providers that can be rapidly mobilised.