

## 6. RISK MANAGEMENT & QUALITY ASSURANCE

We have completed an initial assessment of potential risks with corresponding monitoring and mitigation mechanisms.

### Risk Mitigation Matrix

Likelihood of the risk occurring = L on the chart below with a rating of 1 to 5. 1 equating to unlikely and 5 to almost certain.

Consequence of the risk occurring = C with a rating of 1 to 5. 1 equating to negligible and 5 to severe.

	Risk	Mitigation Strategy	L	C
Operational	Inability to sustain programme activities beyond project lifespan.	We have situated sustainability at the centre of programme design. The programme will leave a legacy of a weekly event that is replicable and familiar to local people. Capacity-building activities including training toolkits and sessions and the upskilling of local communications providers which will support the long-term delivery of the project. Positive effects on community relations, health and wellbeing will sustain existing activities and aid the development of future cross-cutting activities. In addition, we will keep potential donors informed of the programme throughout its duration so they are primed to take it on if need be in March 2021.	2	4
	Inability to recruit local participants as both recipients and suppliers of programme activities.	To deliver the programme, we have identified a team of 'gatekeepers' from our existing networks, who are very locally connected and have experience in community-building activities. We will leverage our experience as global communications practitioners to build the capacity of local agents to best communicate and amplify the project in the target communities.	2	4
	Derailment of programme due to targeted attack on website, key communications or information systems.	To enhance resilience to system penetration and attack, MCS use Egnyte, a cloud-based file sharing service with built-in prevention and vulnerability scanning, intrusion detection, password and server-stored data encryption. All programme staff receive encrypted laptops with the latest anti-virus and anti-malware software and mobile phones with password protection. We use an email service and file system with a two-factor authentication requirement and secure messaging apps such as Signal and Wickr.	2	3
	Media campaigns fail to reach or mobilise hard to reach target audiences.	With extensive experience operating programmes with young people in challenging communities across Lebanon, MCS and partners are uniquely situated to direct salient media campaigns for this audience. We can and have accessed all areas in Lebanon and are therefore ideally placed to gather formative and in-programme insights to develop the most relevant and effective communications products. Once designed, we will look to our local networks and AI to identify key target influencers to champion the programme in their communities, extending programme reach and enhancing the reputation of the campaign. ORB will conduct product pre-tests to inform adjustment of products prior to dissemination. FGDs and triads during implementation will provide a continuous feedback loop inform the strategic planning of future activities and other modification.	2	4
	Business continuity is affected by a medical emergency involving key staff.	Medevac contingency services are provided by International SOS (see the Duty of Care statement for additional detail). MCS will ensure that all staff have the requisite level of medical first aid training. All UK staff already have or will have to undergo HEFAT before deployment while a pre-deployment security audit will include identification of local medical facilities. MCS' insurance needs are met by Lockton Companies LLP (detailed in pass/fail section).	2	4
	Inability to find suitable locations for activities and/or obtain permissions for use.	By employing an HCD approach, MCS and partners will identify activity locations which are the most salient, accessible and appealing to the TA. Through the strength of our local connections, coupled with the access and existing relationships of our sub-contractors, we are best placed to identify the optimum locations for activities and any associated potential risks. Once locations have been selected, we will identify any potential access requirements and will engage early with the relevant authorities to secure permissions.	1	4
Political	Derailment of programme due to interference from/on the instruction of local authorities.	MCS will work with consortium partners to ensure that programming is discreetly socialised with <i>de facto</i> authorities, as needed to provide 'top cover' for local partners. We have nurtured strong relationships with local and national government and officials and will engage these relationships to listen to and incorporate stakeholder views and preferences from the offset.	3	3
	There is a rise in negative attitudes towards foreign intervention and towards HMG, in particular.	The partners will closely monitor local media reporting on UK and international organisations working in Lebanon. Staff and contractors will be properly briefed on HMG strategy in Lebanon, thereby ensuring they are aware of potential friction points. Attribution is a key point decision point in the inception phase after formative research. Our current recommendation is to keep this project locally attributed creating an air-gap between the programme and HMG.	1	3
	Local partners and suppliers are subject to politically motivated interference.	MCS will work with HMG and consortium partners to ensure that programming is discreetly socialised with <i>de facto</i> authorities and appropriate National Government personnel as required in order to provide 'top cover' to local partners.	2	4
Security	Derailment of programme due to unexpected refugee	Through the strength of our local, national and regional networks, MCS and partners will be privy to ongoing threat assessments and security information, enhancing programme resilience and preparedness in terms of programme adjustment and, if required, relocation. Further monitoring	2	4

Risk		Mitigation Strategy	L	C
	influx from neighbouring states.	will be provided through horizon scans, conducted at regular intervals. We have robust protocols for evacuation and security measures in the event of emergency which will be communicated and supported by local law enforcement and security providers, with whom we have longstanding relationships.		
	Derailment of programme due to civil unrest or violence in areas of implementation or wider Lebanon.	With longstanding and ongoing programming across the MENA region, security and threat monitoring will be provided by MCS staff, programme partners and in-country networks in these countries of operation. Further monitoring will be provided through horizon scans, conducted at regular intervals. We will conduct a geographical risk mapping exercise and will station staff according to risk. The presence of international staff will be kept to a minimum in locations of highest risk, reflecting contextual sensitivities. We have robust protocols for evacuation and security measures in the event of emergency which will be communicated and supported by local law enforcement and security providers, with whom we have longstanding relationships.	3	4
Economic	Derailment of programme due to increase in cost beyond the control of programme operators.	MCS conducts regular fiduciary risk assessments in all operating environments and regularly updates its assessments in countries where it already has a track record e.g. Lebanon. This approach ensures that financial and accounting systems are fit for purpose and that, where necessary, measures can be taken to align processes with extant or impending financial laws in the target country. Monthly financial reporting to the Authority will ensure any issues can be raised early and resolved effectively.	2	4
Reputational	Reputational attack against the programme or its implementers.	MCS has regional experience of sensitive unattributable programming. To mitigate risk, it is our current recommendations that the client would be unknown to all but management. MCS and HMG to agree public lines and a robust narrative to describe the programme if needed. MCS would also recruit local staff and utilise in-house and downrange cultural advisors.	3	3

We are **ISO 9001 qualified** and all our partner and supply chain management processes are subject to continual review and improvement. We actively seek international and local partnerships and apply SKATE criteria – Skills, Knowledge, Aptitude, Training and Experience – to assess suitability. We seek partners who share our ethical standards (e.g. on gender equality) within the framework set out by MCS' Diversity and Inclusion Network. This, together with a balance of international and local expertise in project teams, increases the quality and sensitivity of service delivery.

All potential partners are subject to a due diligence process. This includes a review of company literature, procedures and audited accounts, follow-ups on testimonials and official references, evidence of quality management systems and governance structures. We may carry out passport checks on individuals to provide reassurances from an HR and a legal perspective. Data is then validated through public records, specialised databases, accounts, news checks and legal databases. Potential suppliers are also screened against watch-lists, including those related to Politically Exposed Persons (PEP). In line with our OHSAS 18001 certification we also assess a partner's environmental impact. We then seek formal undertakings to abide by our quality control (QC) processes, our safety protocols and our code of ethics (particularly when working with vulnerable people). We sign separate agreements with partners on a project-by-project basis to reflect the needs and timescales of the contract, roles and responsibilities and clear operating guidelines.

Our due diligence process is documented and audited and provides a framework for monitoring partner performance during a programme. The Implementation Team will maintain oversight over the supply chain and responsibility for its strategic direction decisions, including the selection of suppliers with a focus on talent, technology, and sourcing aimed at reducing the total cost of ownership or consumption. The team will use technology to improve and streamline processes (e.g. software solutions, reporting parameters). They will set goals for continuing improvement and performance management as well as establishing a platform or forum for conflict resolution. Documented follow-through on contract compliance ensures that opportunities for improvement are captured and communicated. This process is complemented by regular reviews to ensure efficiency and mitigate risk.

We have excellent relationships with local and national government, municipalities and key institutions. As a result, we have the assurance of prior buy-in to the programme from key stakeholders, mitigating potential risks associated with obtaining permissions to conduct activities. From day one, we will coordinate with the relevant officials, law enforcement, religious and community leaders and security institutions to ensure representation and incorporation of voices and requirements at all levels. We will cooperate with these stakeholders to devise systems for communication and coordination that are inclusive and accessible in accordance with HMG and MCS policies for Diversity and Inclusion, with reporting and anonymised-feedback mechanisms. These measures will reduce the risk of programme derailment due to interference on the instruction of local, municipal and national authorities.

### ORB Quality Assurance

ORB has 15 years of experience operating on projects dealing with security and violent extremism in highly challenging environments across the Middle East and have operated in Lebanon since 2009. The team comprises both male and female enumerators, who are deployed contextually to conduct field work to overcome any cultural constraints or participant biases that might otherwise affect the reliability of findings. The team has access to all areas in Lebanon, including the Palestinian camps and further securitized zones, supporting gender and conflict-sensitive data collection, incorporating the views of people in hard-to-reach areas. ORB uses a face-to-face methodology for data collection, with local Lebanese interviewers and moderators (and other nationalities for refugee populations where appropriate). According to recent studies, the average rate of fraud in international survey research is around 25-30%. To provide total assurance, ORB has developed an **Integrated Quality Control System (IQCS)**, applied to all research. Fieldwork will be conducted using tablets or smartphones, enabling the use of multiple QC measures to ensure that the interviews took place as required (correct location, at an appropriate time, in an appropriate manner). These measures include silent audio recording, GPS coordinates, and multiple timestamps in each interview, supporting us to detect fraudulent responses swiftly, take immediate remedial action, and not incur time-consuming repeated research.