**Target Audience Analysis.** In conjunction with other tools of target audience analysis (TAA), ARK relies heavily on the conduct of large sample surveys to identify groups or categories as potential target audiences (PTAs); to assess social, economic, psychological and other conditions in the general population and within specific groups and categories; to identify motives and vulnerabilities; to distinguish media and formats for effective communication; and to measure impact.

Due to the challenge of implementing large sample surveys that are representative and robust in an active conflict environment such as Syria, ARK utilises innovative survey methodologies carefully tailored to fit the purpose. Past national surveys, for example, have utilised dual-frame random digit dialling (RDD) designs, with corrections to control for damaged communications infrastructure (e.g., destroyed cell towers, use of mobile phones rather than landlines by internally displaced families) and demographics. Other surveys have been implemented in specific provinces with a customised variant of respondent driven sampling (RDS), a link referral method far more robust than the conventional ‘snowball sample’ and adapted for use with general populations. Other survey work has involved the use of satellite imagery to achieve a representative sample. These are methods that have been designed to work in environments such as Syria where more standard approaches to surveying are not feasible.

Previous TAA surveys conducted by ARK have assessed such features as police visibility in Idlib (Figure 1, top-left), differential perceptions of safety-by-gender at checkpoints (Figure 1, top-right), support for democratic elections in areas controlled by different governance actors (Figure 1, bottom-left), and radio listening by time of day of stations with pro-/anti-/neutral programming (Figure 1, bottom-right).

**Figure 1: Example Graphics**

High quality TAA enables effective messaging. For example, one recent finding was that, in areas controlled by Islamist groups in north-eastern Syria, support for democratic elections was uncorrelated with support for religious courts, even controlling for other factors in a
regression model. This revealed a vulnerability: a point of cognitive dissonance in a large segment of the population living in areas under Islamist control. Citizens were supportive of two seemingly conflicting visions of governance: one secular-nationalist vision of governance in which official representatives were elected and one non-democratic vision of governance in which justice was administered by religious clerics.

**Event Based Digital Impact Assessment.** In addition to the routine monitoring of social media in Syria, ARK utilises a variety of social network analysis tools to monitor events and to assess impact. For example, in one exercise, Twitter feeds in Arabic and English were scraped, mined for location and incident data, translated into English, and geocoded. In Figure 2, the report of one Twitter user in Khan Shaykhun, Idlib reporting “continuous bombardment since the early morning hours” is highlighted. ARK also has experience with various methods of social network analysis with Facebook, Twitter, and other social media feeds, for example, to assess social media reach and to analyse the flow of messages between distinct social groups.

![Figure 2: Geocoding of Twitter Incident Reports](image)

**Other Research & Analysis and Monitoring & Evaluation Methods.** Periodic focus groups and regular contact with a network of reporters (“stringers”) in Syria also provide valuable data for TAA and impact assessment. Focus groups are also used to test the resonance of media and messages with specific social or demographic categories.