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NGO Security Collaboration Guide

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List of Acronyms

ANSO	Afghanistan NGO Safety Office
ASC	Area Security Coordinator
BINGO	Balochistan International NGO Consortium
CDC	Centre De Communication
CPA	Coalition Provisional Authority
DANIDA	Danish International Development Agency
DFID	Department for International Development
EC	European Commission
ECHO	European Commission Humanitarian Aid Department
FSO	Field Security Officer
GTZ	Gessellschaft fur Technische Zusammenarbeit
IASC	Inter-Agency Standing Committee
IED	Improvised Explosive Device
IGO	Inter-governmental Organisation
INGO	International Non-governmental Organisation
INSO	Iraq NGO Security Office
IOS	Initiative ONGs Sécurité
IRC	International Rescue Committee
ISAF	International Security Assistant Force
LiNSO	Liberia NGO Security Office
NCCI	NGO Coordination Committee in Iraq
NCCISO	NGO Coordination Committee in Iraq – Security Office
NGO	Non-governmental Organisation
NGO-SPAS	NGO Security Preparedness and Support
NGO-VOICE	Voluntary Organisation in Cooperation in Emergencies
OFDA	Office of US Foreign Disaster Assistance
PRT	Provincial Reconstruction Team
RCD	Congolese Rally for Democracy
RMO	Risk Management Office
SDC	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
UN	United Nations
UNAMA	United Nations Assistance Mission to Afghanistan
UNDSS	United Nations Department of Safety & Security
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNMIL	United Nations Mission in Liberia
UNSECOORD	Office of the United Nations Security Coordinator

1 Introduction

The security and safety of personnel is a significant concern for all humanitarian organisations. Within the humanitarian community there is a widespread perception of escalating threats to aid workers and their programmes. Increasingly, agencies appear to be deliberately targeted, with both national and international staff subjected to intimidation and violence which aims to manipulate an agency's presence or programmes to suit the agendas of different groups. This level of insecurity has forced agencies to withdraw, reduce their activities in certain regions, or change their operational approach. There is widespread agreement that to counter this increased risk to staff, greater NGO collaboration on security is required. Despite this, formal collaboration on security issues remains rare. Where mechanisms do exist, they tend to be ad hoc and reliant on personalities involved and, consequently, are rarely sustained.

As a result of operational insecurity, combined with a greater demand for reliable security information in the field, the sector has witnessed the appearance of a number of NGO-managed collaborative security arrangements. The most notable of these are ANSO in Afghanistan and NCCI Security Office in Iraq. In these instances, provision of specialised security management support and technical advice, coordinated sharing of security information, and staff security training, has allowed NGOs to improve staff security. This, in turn, has enabled the continuation of humanitarian assistance in complex and highly insecure environments. Elsewhere, NGO communities in the field have formed various, largely informal, collaborative networks or fora to exchange security information, discuss security issues and agree common operational strategies. In some contexts, groups of NGOs have joined together to hire or second a security advisor to provide security information, analysis and support. These different approaches have had varying success, with some being more effective than others.

The high profile given to recent security collaboration initiatives such as ANSO has led to an increasing demand from NGOs for similar structures in other insecure environments. However, adopting similar approaches may not be best suited to the security needs of NGOs in that context. NGOs are generally unaware of the range of security collaboration options available to them, how to determine the most appropriate mechanism to adopt, and the issues involved in establishing and maintaining these initiatives. Even where NGOs recognise the need for a security collaboration mechanism, it can prove extremely difficult and slow to get a structure established and maintained, due to a lack of agency commitment and agreement, problems with funding, and availability of experienced staff.

1.1 Purpose of this guide

The principle goal of this guide is to enhance NGO security collaboration in the field, by highlighting the various options available, and the issues involved in establishing and maintaining these different security collaboration mechanisms. The guide provides NGO staff with advice on how to launch or improve collaborative initiatives, while highlighting the pitfalls and challenges involved. It looks at recent NGO security collaboration initiatives in different contexts, and draws out ingredients for success – and failure. The guide is a useful reference for NGOs considering establishing a security collaboration mechanism, by describing the various approaches, and the key activities and services they can provide.

It is important to emphasise that there are no blueprints or off-the-shelf solutions to developing and maintaining NGO security collaboration. As each context is unique, this guide can only offer advice and raise awareness of the issues involved, rather than give step-by-step instructions. The different approaches raised here should be adapted to suit the needs and resources of NGOs, and the security situation in their particular context.

1.2 Who is this guide for?

This guide is principally intended as a source of information and inspiration for NGO field staff looking to improve security collaboration with other NGOs in their environment. As with any organisational process, however, collaboration initiatives will require support from staff at agency headquarters as well as in the field. As such, this guide is also an aide for decision-makers at headquarters. In addition, the guide is a reference for security consultants and advisors employed to establish and maintain a NGO security collaboration initiative, or those NGO staff involved in the governing body of an existing initiative.

1.3 Defining security collaboration

Terms like 'coordination' and 'collaboration' have been used in a wide range of security initiatives in different contexts. While it is important not to labour over these definitions, it should be recognised that 'coordination' is often a controversial concept in the humanitarian sector; some NGOs resist coordination for fear of being 'controlled' or swamped by bureaucracy and restrictions. Recently there has been a shift in favour of a 'collaborative' approach to security in the field, which is the emphasis of this guide. Security collaboration exists when two or more agencies are willing to act together to address a mutually identified security concern, in the belief that this will improve security information and support for their staff and, as a result, allow them to deliver assistance to beneficiaries more effectively.

2 Security Collaboration Overview

2.1 Changing operational environment

The security and safety of personnel is a growing concern for all humanitarian organisations. Over the past few decades, agencies have increasingly found themselves operating in more politically and socially complex environments, and staff face numerous risks in providing vital assistance to communities torn apart by conflict and civil unrest. The nature of today's emergencies makes unprecedented operational demands on aid agencies, which must balance considerable pressures to achieve and maintain access within insecure environments, with their responsibility to ensure staff safety and security.

In the past, agencies believed they would be afforded a degree of security simply because of who they were and the humanitarian assistance they provided. Today, however, there are major challenges to these traditional assumptions. Agencies operating in Afghanistan, Chechnya, Iraq, Somalia and Sudan now find themselves the target of attacks, having lost the tacit protection necessary for them to operate safely. Even away from these high profile contexts, agencies experience security challenges including high levels of violence directed at their staff, in particular national staff. The list of incidents is alarming: murder, rape, kidnapping, armed robbery, car jacking, assault, improper detention by authorities, and threats and harassment have become regular events that agencies and their staff have to cope with.

It is a widely held opinion that humanitarian work is getting increasingly dangerous, although data on the level of insecurity faced by the humanitarian community is limited[1]. According to recent studies, from 1997-2000 an average of 66 aid workers per year were victims of serious violence (killed, wounded or kidnapped). In the period 2001-2004, the average rose to 83 staff per year.[2]

In recent years the perception has been that the biggest killer of aid workers is vehicle accidents and illness. Now, however, studies show that 60% of all aid worker deaths are the result of intentional violence, and that two thirds of all incidents occur to national staff as opposed to their international colleagues.[3] While there is uncertainty as the to the accuracy of such statistics, due to a lack of effective reporting systems and also sensitivities surrounding such information, the data points to disturbing trends which highlight the security concerns and challenges faced by agencies in the field.

This degree of insecurity clearly influences the response agencies can provide. In some cases, security concerns result in agencies suspending their programmes or choosing to operate only in areas that they consider to be safe. In others, to ensure a continued presence, some organisations maintain a 'remote-control' operation through all-national staff teams, local partners or contractors. Whilst this approach may have the benefit of allowing programmes to continue, it could merely transfer the risk to national colleagues as it increases their exposure often without the necessary security support. Attempts to manage programmes and staff security effectively from a distance brings additional challenges, as limited access to security information sources can result in a lack of understanding of the situation on the ground, and can reduce the management team's ability to make informed decisions.

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[1] King D, *The Year of Living Dangerously: Attacks on Humanitarian Aid Workers in 2003*, March 2004.
[2] Stoddard A, & Harmer A, *Room to Manoeuvre: The Challenges of Linking Humanitarian Action and Post-conflict Recovery in the New Global Security Environment*, Human Development Report, UNDP, 2005.
[3] Gidley R, *Aid by numbers: Violence is top cause of aid workers deaths*, Reuters AlterNet, 8th February 2006.

Further challenges have emerged as a result of the so-called 'war on terror'. Globally, there appears to be a greater threat of violence and terrorist attacks against humanitarian personnel, or agency staff getting caught up in attacks against other international actors in the same environment. Where there have been recent military interventions by the international community, such as in Afghanistan and Iraq, these actions have had serious implications for 'humanitarian space' and how agencies are perceived. The perception of humanitarian agencies has often been severely compromised by the lack of clear separation between humanitarian and military activities, placing them at additional risk. This is especially the case where aid, reconstruction and development projects have been linked closely to political and military agendas.

In addition, the emergence of numerous private security and military companies operating in humanitarian and conflict settings has posed additional challenges for humanitarian agencies. The supply of protection and security services to governments, international organisations, and also NGOs is seen by many commercial companies as a potential growth business area. However, using these private security companies raises difficult ethical and operational questions for humanitarian agencies, due to how this may affect perceptions of an organisation and agencies in general, and the potential impact these security companies may have on a conflict. Although some agencies have striven to maintain their distance from military and commercial security actors on the ground, high levels of insecurity has often forced agencies to interact and collaborate more closely with military forces and other security providers than they were comfortable with, to ensure the security of their staff.

2.2 Strengthening NGO security collaboration

It is quite clear from the current high levels of insecurity, and the unprecedented operational demands this presents, that the security of aid operations and personnel can no longer solely depend on the actions and will of individual staff members. In recent years, some NGOs have invested significantly in the security and safety of their staff. Many now place greater emphasis on a systematic approach to security management through the development of security policies and guidelines, and the provision of staff security training, although this is often limited to international staff. In insecure contexts, it is now increasingly common for larger NGOs to have dedicated security officers as part of their team. This indicates a significant shift in NGOs' approach to managing insecurity as in previous years, security risks were seen as an occupational hazard which staff simply had to accept.

Despite these improvements in security management there remains a huge variation in levels of understanding and practice amongst NGOs in the field. In recent years, there has been a proliferation of newly-formed humanitarian NGOs, as well as an increase in smaller development-focused agencies, operating in violent and insecure contexts. These agencies often lack basic programme management capacity, let alone the security expertise and resources necessary to meet the serious challenges posed by these environments. Even to larger NGOs with effective security management systems in place, the lack of reliable security information and analysis poses significant threats both to staff security and programme activities. An agency's ability to collect, analyse, disseminate and act on key security information is fundamental to the effectiveness of its response.

Effective security management in the field takes significant time and investment. Essential components include: developing and maintaining an understanding of the context; determining the risks; building and maintaining security contacts and information sources; monitoring security incidents and trends; establishing security plans and procedures; and providing security training and inductions for staff. Despite these considerable demands, those responsible for security within NGOs often have to juggle a range of competing priorities, and cannot devote adequate time to security issues. The resulting gaps in security provision are exacerbated by the frequent staff turnover and, consequentially, loss of

institutional knowledge. For any newcomer to a programme, however experienced, understanding the political, security and cultural context takes time and effort. Their initial lack of awareness can result in inappropriate decisions or actions that place themselves and their colleagues at risk.

With the growing concern for the security and safety of NGO staff in increasingly complex operating environments, there is a vital need for collaborative mechanisms that strengthens NGO security management, and provides timely and accurate security information. There is often an expectation from NGOs that the UN will provide security assistance in the field, as it has the coordination mandate, as well as the resources and tools to establish a mechanism that will ensure a flow of security information, the provision of security support and advice, and assistance in the event of evacuation. However, there are uncertainties as to how NGOs fit into the UN security system. While the UN agencies play a significant role in the safety and security of NGO field operations, the UN security system's responsibility is ultimately the security of UN personnel. While in some contexts the UN Field Security Officer (FSO) or Area Security Coordinator (ASC) will act as a security focal point for NGOs and provide them with information on security incidents, the level of support available to NGOs can be limited and variable.

One effort to improve the level of security collaboration between the UN and NGOs was the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) Menu of Options for UN/NGO/IGO Security Collaboration, developed in 2002.[4] This non-binding ten-point menu outlined opportunities and mechanisms for closer collaboration between UN agencies and NGOs on security. However, this initiative has had limited success, due to both UN staff and NGOs being unfamiliar with the various options for collaboration. This suggests that where UN-NGO security collaboration has been achieved, this has been the result of necessity, due to extreme insecurity, rather than a deliberate implementation of the Menu of Options.[5] In light of these problems, the Menu of Options is currently being updated and relaunched under the title 'Saving Lives Together - A Framework for improving Security Arrangements among IGOs, NGOs and the UN in the Field' (see Annex 1).

While there are obvious failings in security collaboration between the UN and NGOs, collaboration between NGOs themselves also requires strengthening. Although security collaboration between NGOs does occur in the field, especially during periods of heightened insecurity, on the whole this is informal or confined to limited exchange of information during coordination meetings. Attempts to establish more formal mechanisms are often fraught with difficulties: some NGOs are not convinced of the need for a formal mechanism, or lack the commitment, time or resources to see it maintained. However, many NGOs recognise that collaboration can reap important benefits in strengthening their ability to manage security effectively. In some contexts, there is a significant collective value for agencies in developing an NGO-focused and -managed security collaboration mechanism that meets the needs of NGOs involved by addressing the particular security constraints and issues affecting them.

2.3 Recent NGO security collaboration initiatives

While it remains true that NGO security collaboration in the field is infrequent and mostly informal, high levels of insecurity and violent attacks on aid workers, and a greater demand for reliable security information in the field, has resulted in the growth of formal collaborative arrangements. There are recent examples of security collaboration and coordination initiatives fostered by NGOs. These have been established in a number of countries, with a variety of objectives, structures and capacity, and with varying degrees of success.

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[4] IASC, *Approved Menu of Options - Recommendations to the IASC-Working Group from the IASC-WG Staff Security Task Force*, January 2002.
[5] UNICEF, *Saving Lives Together - Conference Paper for Inter-Agency Security Management Network*, May 2006.

2.3.1 Afghanistan NGO Safety Office

Possibly the largest and best known security collaboration initiative is the Afghanistan NGO Safety Office (ANSO) project in Afghanistan. With the fall of the Taliban in late 2001 there was a rush of new agencies into Afghanistan, many of whom lacked the experience and security capacity to operate effectively in such an insecure environment. While initially the security situation in Afghanistan was relatively stable, with the exception of some areas in the south and east, the situation deteriorated significantly in 2003 with an increasing number of incidents and attacks specifically targeting aid workers.[6] This growing level of violence against humanitarian agencies and their staff forced many NGOs to suspend activities or operate in certain districts only. The security situation for NGOs was further complicated by a lack of accessible and reliable security information and incident reports that would enable agencies to react quickly to changes in the security situation and manage the security of their staff more effectively.

At that time, there was a widespread loss of confidence by many NGOs in UNSECOORD and also UNAMA's 'integrated' UN mission, particularly regarding the quality of security information disseminated to NGOs. The NGO community felt that important security information was not being shared by the UN and that their Security Phases were determined more by political considerations than by the security situation on the ground.[7] NGOs were also concerned that the security of aid workers was being severely compromised by the blurring of humanitarian and military lines due to the activities of ISAF, Coalition Forces, various Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs), and the numerous private security companies operating in Afghanistan for example Kroll Security International providing security for electoral staff and polling stations during the Presidential elections. While many agencies tried to distance themselves from these security actors, there was still a recognition of the need for some degree of interaction to access security information, and to clarify possible 'in extremis' support available to NGO staff in the event of crisis or a medical emergency.

Given the complex operating environment, the level of risk faced by NGOs and the limited security information and support, there was consensus between a small group of NGOs and some donors for the need to establish an effective security collaboration mechanism that addressed the security needs of NGOs and also act as an interface between NGOs and ISAF, Collation and national security forces on security issues.

ANSO was set up in late 2002, with initial support and guidance from InterAction's Security Advisory Group, and hosted by IRC with DG ECHO funding. As ANSO became more established a Steering Committee was formed with representatives of the NGO community. ANSO's aim was to deliver a wide range of services which addressed the security requirements of NGOs operating in Afghanistan.[8] ANSO's structure consisted of an international Security Advisor/Project Coordinator and support staff based in the main head office in Kabul, and five international Regional Security Advisors and national counterparts based in regional offices in Kabul, Jalalabad, Mazar-i-Sharif, Herat and Kandahar, to ensure country-wide coverage. Although ANSO's structure has changed little since its inception, the type of services and support that it provides to NGOs has developed over the years. ANSO's current activities are broadly listed as[9]:

❑ information, analysis and advice;

❑ coordination and liaison; and

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[6] ANSO's figures on aid worker fatalities in Afghanistan indicate that in 2003, 12 aid workers were killed. In 2004, that figure doubled to 24 deaths. During 2005 staff fatalities reached 31 and as of June, 24 staff have been killed in 2006.
[7] Various interviews held with NGOs during Afghanistan field trip, June 2006.
[8] *Afghanistan NGO Security Office – ECHO Funding Proposal*, November 2002, IRC.
[9] *Afghanistan NGO Safety Office – ECHO Funding Proposal*, November 2004, IRC.

❑ capacity development.

ANSO security staff currently provide regular security information and advice to NGOs via threat alerts and incident reports. Incident data is collated and summarised in weekly reports that are distributed to NGOs, other agencies, donors and embassies. ANSO also conducts weekly security briefings for NGOs and participates in various security meetings with UNDSS, Coalition Forces, ISAF and Afghan security authorities. ANSO maintains a number of regional emergency communication pyramids, or 'security trees', to alert NGOs to ongoing security incidents in the area. However, maintaining the Central Region Security Tree (which includes Kabul) has been particularly problematic given the number of agencies involved, high-turnover of staff and NGOs failing to update contact details of changing staff. ANSO also assists NGOs in developing security plans and procedures, and conducts site security assessments of NGO offices and residences. This support, however, has at times been limited due to high demand and lack of capacity.

A key objective of the ANSO project is to improve the security capacity of NGOs through training. A number of basic staff security, guard and driver training events and security management workshops have been conducted over the years, either by ANSO staff or in collaboration with RedR-IHE's Regional Security Learning Initiative (RSLI) established in October 2004. However, the recent closure of the RSLI project[10] and lack of time, capacity and training expertise within the ANSO team has meant that further training has not been provided, despite high demand from NGOs.

ANSO also provides support to NGOs in contingency planning, including establishing evacuation plans and liaising with UN, ISAF/Collation Forces, and the authorities to identify options available to NGOs during crisis situations. ANSO has at times provided *in-extremis* support, for example during the evacuation of NGOs from Jalalabad and Badakhshan in May 2005. [11] This precedent has led to a perception from a number of NGOs that ANSO is responsible for evacuating their staff in the event of a crisis. However, ANSO has neither the remit nor capacity to offer this level of service, and ANSO staff continually emphasise that responsibility for dealing with crisis situations remains with the NGO.

ANSO is primarily donor funded, and is currently co funded by DG ECHO and SDC. Additional contributions have at times been received from certain agencies and embassies. No membership fees or contributions have ever been requested from NGOs for the services they receive.

From its inception, ANSO has struggled with the issue of the project's governance. Until recently[12], IRC, as the host agency, has administered the grant, as well as providing supervision and financial, HR, administration and logistical support. Defining ANSO's strategies and activities, however, was envisioned as a role for the Steering Committee, but the committee failed to provide this level of support and guidance as membership changed and meetings became infrequent. The committee was later relegated to an advisory role and IRC took more control over the strategic direction of the project. Like the earlier Steering Committee, the new Advisory Board was not sustained, and ANSO staff and IRC received increasingly little input from the NGO community. In the absence of effective governance, ANSO's role and the services it provides has been determined by the priorities and commitments of key personalities.[13]

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[10] The RedR-IHE Regional Security Learning Initiative was suspended due to lack of further funding, although there are plans to re-establish the initiative if funding is made avaible.
[11] Halton P, *ANSO External Review*, June 2005.
[12] GAA are have recently taken over the host agency role with funding from ECHO and SDC.
[13] Halton P, *ANSO External Review*, June 2005.

Today, ANSO occupies a prominent position within the international community and is considered to be the primary source of security information and support by most NGOs in Afghanistan[14]. ANSO has grown significantly and as such has at times become a victim of its own success by creating a high level of expectation and some degree of dependency from NGOs. Although ANSO has been operational since 2002, there are still differing perceptions and expectations within the NGO community, regarding its role and the services it provides. The main challenge for ANSO has been meeting the needs and demands of the NGOs. Lack of overall capacity and problems with recruitment and retention of good security staff have limited the extent and quality of support ANSO can provide. ANSO has at times faced criticism from the NGO community for a high turnover of the staff and the fact that some field offices have stayed without international staff for months despite the desperate need for ANSO to be deployed in such locations. ANSO has also drawn some criticism and interference from the Afghan authorities due to misunderstandings of its role and the security information and reports it circulates.

Although ANSO was established to provide security support to both international and national NGOs, it has struggled to gain national NGO's participation. Only a few national NGOs report incidents to ANSO staff, seek advice or participate in meetings. While attempts were made to widen ANSO support to national NGOs, for example providing security briefings in Dari via the Afghan NGO Coordination Body (ANCB), these attempts have not been sustained.

Despite these many challenges, most agencies believe that the ANSO project has been successful and has contributed to increased staff security in Afghanistan, and has enabled the continuation of humanitarian assistance in a complex and highly insecure environment. While some agencies continue to be critical of some ANSO services and even individual staff, most NGOs believe that ANSO's continued presence is essential.[15] Even for those larger NGOs with their own security management mechanism in place, ANSO plays a vital role in providing regular and credible security information, and acting as a buffer between the various security actors and the NGO community. For many agencies, ANSO is more relevant now than it was at the time of its inception.

2.3.2　NGO Coordination Committee in Iraq - Security Office

NGO Coordination Committee in Iraq (NCCI) was formed by a small group of NGOs, led by Première Urgence, as an ad hoc forum for exchanging information and coordinating activities immediately after the war in Iraq in 2003. NCCI's initial focus was on general programme coordination issues. As its role became increasingly accepted by the NGO community, NCCI developed into an official representative body of most NGOs present or operational in Iraq in June 2003. Over the years, NCCI's funding for has come from DG ECHO, UNOCHA, and the Mennonite Central Committee. NCCI also charged a symbolic membership fee of 50 US$ a month and received in-kind contributions from different agencies. NCCI was hosted by Première Urgence until August 2004, and subsequently through Un Ponte Per.

At the time of NCCI's formation, NGOs were reliant on UNSECOORD for security information and coordination. However, UNSECOORD had no formal mandate to play this role and provided only limited information and support to the NGOs.[16] Following the withdrawal of the UN from Iraq in late 2003, after the August 19th bombing of UN headquarters, there was wide-spread demand for an NGO-focused security collaboration mechanism. NCCI increased its capacity and activities in order to facilitate a security structure and set up a Security Office (NCCISO) in October 2003. The principle aim of

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[14] Based on interviews with NGOs in Afghanistan, June 2006.
[15] Various interviews held with NGOs during Afghanistan field trip, June 2006.
[16] InterAction, *InterAction NGO Security Assessment Mission to Iraq*, August 2003.

NCCISO was to improve the capacity of NGOs (particularly smaller NGOs that did not have dedicated security officers) to manage their own security, through the provision of information and security support services. The main functions of the Security Office included[17]:

- ❑ information collection, analysis and dissemination;
- ❑ liaison with UNSECOORD, coalition forces, the CPA and local authorities;
- ❑ facilitating use of common communications networks; and
- ❑ development of staff training opportunities.

NCCISO originally consisted of one international Security Advisor and two national Security Assistants based in Baghdad, but as it expanded, additional security offices were established in Erbil and Basra. Priority was placed on providing reliable security information to the NGOs to allow them to make informed decisions as to the movements and activities of their staff. NCCISO in Baghdad became the hub for collecting and disseminating security-related information obtained through NCCI regional offices, or directly from agencies, other security actors and the media. NCCISO provided NGOs with weekly security reports and incident up-dates, and conducted bi-weekly security briefings.

Given the complex and controversial issues surrounding civil-military relations in Iraq, NCCISO also served as a buffer and liaison link between the NGO community and coalition forces, the CPA, private contractors and Iraqi Authorities for the purpose of information gathering and dissemination, and advocacy for NGO security issues. In addition, NCCISO provided communications support and assisted NGOs in sourcing and registering communications equipment with the Iraqi Ministry of Communications .NCCISO also provided security training to NGOs, for example basic communications, advanced driver, guard and first aid training. This training was provided either by NCCISO staff or external organisations brought in specifically. Additional security support services provided by NCCISO to NGOs included site security surveys, field security assessments, and crisis management planning and support with particular emphasis on kidnapping.

Although NGOs welcomed these services provided by NCCISO, continuing instability in Iraq placed considerable constraints on the security project, for example limiting movement and activities of NCCISO staff. Bi-weekly security meetings planned in Baghdad, Erbil and Basra, were often cancelled due to reluctance on the part of NGOs to move around or be seen to gather regularly, and much reliance was placed on reports and updates disseminated by email. While there was appreciation for the security information provided by NCCISO, some NGOs viewed it as lacking in analysis, too Baghdad focused, and heavily reliant on information from coalition forces and CPA. In addition, the warden system, which was hoped could provide an emergency communications network for NGOs in Baghdad, became inoperable following the relocation of many NGOs to Amman.

NCCISO was also affected by numerous difficulties and delays in the recruitment of staff. It often proved difficult to find appropriate and experienced security staff and, given the huge salaries paid by private security companies operating in Iraq, retention of staff was a major problem. With many positions unfilled additional responsibilities and pressures were placed on staff members, which ultimately affected the level of support that they could provide. NGOs also voiced concerns over the approach and language used by some NCCISO staff, which at times created additional barriers in the working relationships between the security office and NGOs.[18]

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[17] *NCCI Security Office – ECHO Funding Proposal*, September 2003, Premiere Urgence.
[18] *Iraq NGO Coordination and Security Office – ECHO Final Report*, November 2004, Premiere Urgence.

By mid 2004, the security situation in Iraq had deteriorated significantly. Following a wave of high profile NGO staff kidnappings in September 2004, many agencies chose to work remotely from Amman or close down completely. The main NCCI and Security Offices were also relocated from Baghdad to Amman in October 2004. NCCISO closed in late 2004, as by then many NGOs had left Iraq, funding was coming to an end, and there was a plethora of security information available from many different sources including a UN security team on the ground. This closure was supported by some NCCI board members who felt that the Security Office was overwhelming other NCCI activities.

Following the closure of NCCISO, former NCCI security officers and NGOs felt there was still some demand for a dedicated NGO security structure, and considered establishing a separate Iraq NGO Security Office. Initial proposals were submitted to NCCI members and potential donors[19], but there was little interest and the initiative did not progress.[20] At present, NCCI has one national Security Officer, responsible for NCCI staff security and providing limited security support to NGOs still present in Iraq.

2.3.3 NGO Security Preparedness and Support Project, Somalia

NGO Security Preparedness and Support Project (NGO-SPAS) was established by the Somalia NGO Consortium in late 2004. The Somalia NGO Consortium, a voluntary coordination body consisting of 160 international and national NGOs, had discussed the concept of an NGO-focused security advisor for a number of years[21]. However, following an escalation in serious security incidents and growing concerns that UNSECOORD, at the time, was not able to cater for NGO security needs, the Consortium agreed to establish a security advisory structure that would provide specialised, coordinated and focused security management support to NGOs operating in Somalia.

NGO-SPAS currently consists of one international security advisor and two national security officers based in Nairobi, and three regional field officers operating in Somalia[22]. NGO-SPAS staff provide a range of security support services to Consortium members including:

- ❑ information gathering, analysis and advice through regular reports, briefings and ad hoc security updates or alerts;
- ❑ liaison with relevant security actors;
- ❑ increasing NGO security preparedness through the provision of training and technical advice;
- ❑ undertaking security assessment of NGO project areas, offices and residences;
- ❑ providing security briefings and inductions for new NGO staff; and
- ❑ coordinating contingency plans and responses for NGOs in the event of crisis situations.

NGO-SPAS is currently 100% donor funded and all security support services and training are provided free to NGOs who request it.[23] As neither NGO-SPAS nor NGO Somalia Consortium are legal bodies, funding is channelled through a host agency, currently CARE US. CARE is responsible for administering grants, although the proposal, budget and donor reports are managed by NGO-SPAS staff.

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[19] INSO (Iraq NGO's Security Office) Concept Paper.
[20] Interview with NCCI member, July 2006.
[21] Initial proposal for NGO Security Liaison Officer was developed by the Somalia NGO Consortium in January 2001.
[22] Plans are now in place to expand this to five regional security officers.
[23] NGO-SPAS is co-funded, with EC contributing 95% and DANIDA the remaining 5%.

NGO-SPAS reports to a Security Steering Committee consisting of representatives of the Somalia NGO Consortium and a number of NGOs. The Steering Committee is responsible for the strategic direction of the project and is accountable to the NGO Somalia Consortium. However, despite the Steering Committee meeting regularly, the direction and support it provides has perhaps been limited, although it is felt by NGO-SPAS staff that the Steering Committee will respond to staff concerns if raised with them.

Despite numerous teething problems, NGOs appear to be generally positive about the information and level of support NGO-SPAS provides.[24] However, one of the key challenges NGO-SPAS faces is maintaining NGOs participation. Like other security collaboration initiatives, the usefulness and quality of information that NGO-SPAS provides is very dependent on the degree to which NGOs report and share information with the project. NGO-SPAS has also suffered due to a lack of NGO presence inside Somalia, as many agencies are currently operating remotely from Kenya. Despite its efforts, obtaining reliable security information and incidents details continues to present a number of challenges for NGO-SPAS.

2.3.4   Balochistan INGO Consortium - Security Management Support Project, Pakistan

In early 2004, a group of 10 international agencies[25] based in Quetta, Balochistan formed a consortium to act as a security network and meet periodically to exchange security information and analysis. An NGO security advisor was already established to support NGOs, based in Islamabad. However, INGOs raised concerns regarding the effectiveness of this initiative particularly as, at that time, most security incidents and concerns were focused in Balochistan Province. While the establishment of Balochistan INGO Consortium (BINGO) initially improved the level of security information available, it became evident to BINGO members that additional security support was needed due to the marked differences in security capacity and experience amongst INGOs operating out of Quetta.

In May 2004, the BINGO Security Management Support pilot project was established. This was funded by DG ECHO, with Concern as the host agency and focal point for the donor, and Mercy Corps providing additional support in terms of administration and accommodation. The BINGO Consortium convened a Security Management Committee, consisting of five members of the consortium,[26] to oversee the Security Management Support project and supervise and monitor the activities of the Security Management Advisory team. The Security Management Advisory team, made up of an international Security Management Advisor and two national Security Officers, were tasked with a wide range of security support activities including:[27]

❑ information gathering, analysis and reporting on incidents that could impact upon the security of the operating environment of the INGOs programmes in Balochistan;

❑ coordinating security advice, information and arrangements with other relevant actors such as UNSECOORD personnel, government authorities and international representations;

❑ assessing security in different sites within the areas of operation and potential programme areas of the INGOs in Balochistan; and

❑ upgrading security management through the provision of training and technical advice.

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[24] Based on feedback to questionnaires distributed by NGO-SPAS to participating NGOs.
[25] AMDA, ARC, Concern, ICMC/CRS, IRC, Islamic Relief, Mercy Corps, Oxfam, Save the Children and Tearfund.
[26] Concern and Mercy Corps were permanent members of the BINGO Security Management Committee, with three other member agencies rotating every 6 months.
[27] *Security Management Advisor Terms of Reference*, June 2005, BINGO.

Following the initial six months funding for the pilot project, the Security Management Support received funding for a further year. Despite a possibly over-ambitious terms of reference, and staff recruitment problems, the Security Management Support project was seen to be a success by NGOs. Although security advisories and incident updates were distributed to all agencies who requested them, only INGOs that were part of the consortium benefited from additional services such as security management support, site security assessments, field visits, security briefings, training etc. As such, BINGO members expressed a high level of satisfaction about the quality of information and support they received.[28] Many of the concerns and problems that did arise were focused on governance issues. The Security Management Committee was supposed to meet on a monthly basis, in order to assess the progress of the project and provide support and direction to the Security Management Advisor. However, members were often not available for these meetings and the level of support provided was limited.

It was initially intended that ownership of the Security Management Support project would be spread equally amongst all BINGO participating agencies, to ensure that each member had fair opportunity to provide input into the management and direction of the project. Despite this, the willingness of agencies to actively participate in the project's governance reduced over time. As such, an increasing management burden fell on Concern, to the extent that Concern staff believed, to a degree, that the project had become a security service that Concern was offering to other NGOs.

In August 2005 the Pakistani authorities ordered the BINGO consortium to close and terminate all activities. The reasons for this are still unclear, although it was felt by NGOs that the decision was motivated by personality clashes and the authorities' general opposition to consortium structures, rather than opposition in principle to a Security Management Support project and the services it provided.[29] It was suggested that the Security Advisory Management Team could be employed as security staff of one particular NGO, while providing additional support to other NGOs. However, this was considered impractical as the movements of security staff would be restricted to those areas where the employing NGO was authorised to operate, and would be unable to travel to visit other NGOs' programmes. Concern and other agencies tried to lobby the authorities, until the devastating earthquake in northern Pakistan in October redirected the priorities of all NGOs involved. Eventually, an official decision was taken to close BINGO and the Security Management Support project in December 2005.

2.3.5 Initiative ONGs Sécurité, Haiti

In September 2005, against a backdrop of increasing instability and a sharp rise in criminality and kidnapping incidents, a partnership of 11 INGOs[30] working in Haiti formed Initiative ONGs Sécurité (IOS) with the aim of improving security collaboration and information exchange among NGOs. While some of the larger INGOs have their own security personnel and mechanisms, smaller agencies face significant challenges in managing security due to limited resources and security capacity combined with the lack of reliable security information. Although security issues had been discussed in various forums, there was a lack of consistent information sharing between agencies and also limited guidance and information available from the UN. Recognising this need for reliable information and additional security support, a group of INGOs got together to contribute funds and in-kind support to enable the recruitment of a national Security Officer to provide these agencies with security information, analysis and advice.

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[28] Hanjra S, *BINGO Security Management System Assessment*, August 2004.
[29] Interview with member of BINGO consortium, July 2006.
[30] Acted, Action Aid, Christian Aid, Concern Worldwide, Diakonie, German Agro Action, Helvetas, Initiative Development, Lutheran World Federation, Oxfam GB and Protos.

The IOS office is hosted by Christian Aid in Port-Au-Prince. Each participating agency contributed 1,500 US$ to establish IOS, initially for six months, and Lutheran World Federation acted as treasurer to administer the funds. A Steering Committee was established comprising 5 NGOs and the Security Officer, with a MoU outlining roles and responsibilities of the Steering Committee. The IOS Security Officer is responsible for collating and disseminated security information, incident reports and analysis to members only, although some information and security alerts are also shared with other agencies. While it was recognised that the Security Officer has limited sector experience and capacity, and is in need of additional support and direction, many of the IOS members still found the information and analysis provided very useful.[31]

Keeping IOS up and running has been a challenge. At the end of the initial six months, some of the agencies involved were unsure of further funding availability. The initiative sought the involvement and financial support of larger INGOs, but many of these agencies with their own security mechanisms initially did not see the value in joining IOS. Although smaller NGOs were keen to join, many did not have provision in their budgets to support the initiative. Recently, however, security in Haiti has deteriorated yet again, and there have been renewed efforts to lobby for support and further funding for IOS.[32] Following these efforts, many of the large INGOs have now signed up and committed support to the initiative while efforts are being made to secure donor funding. It is hoped that with the added benefit of an international security consultant to support and develop the capacity of the national Security Officer, the initiative will strengthen NGO security in Haiti and establishing a base for greater inter-agency collaboration.

2.3.6 Centre De Communication, East DRC

Centre de Communication (CDC) is an INGO security network established in East DRC. In 1997 an informal network of NGOs, hosted by Save the Children UK, met regularly to discuss security as a result of RCD rebel activities in the region. This network became the CDC network which now consists of up to 28 INGOs operating in South Kivu Province, most of whom are based in Bukavu town and IRC currently acts as a focal point for the security network.

The CDC network collects and disseminates security information to its members and provides a forum for NGOs to discuss security issues and agree a common operational strategy. In addition, it has established a NGO communications network, and maintains HF radio contact with NGO staff travelling to and from the field and coordinates an emergency communications tree. CDC is funded through a small monthly membership fee, which is currently 190 US$ per member, and these fees are used to cover salaries, equipment maintenance and basic administration costs.[33]

CDC has also implemented specific security measures for the NGOs. For example, because of high crime levels and the chronic ineffectiveness of the Congolese police, CDC arranges for a small detachment of the local police to respond to security incidents affecting NGO staff and premises. The unit also conducts night patrols of NGO offices and expatriate staff residences and maintains frequent radio checks with NGO guards.

2.3.7 Other NGO security collaboration initiatives

There are a number of examples in insecure environments where attempts to establish NGO security collaboration mechanisms have proved difficult due to a lack of agency commitment

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[31] Interview with member of IOS Steering Committee, July 2006.
[32] *Increasing the capacity of NGO security in Haiti*, IOS Concept Note, July 2006.
[33] Micheni K, *NGO Security Mainstreaming: Why Aid Agencies operating in High Risk Countries must strengthen Security Cooperation*, 2005.

and agreement, problems with funding, availability of experienced staff, or problems with authorities.

In Liberia in 2004, an InterAction security assessment mission recommended the establishment of an NGO security support structure[34]. A security consultant was engaged by the NGO Monitoring and Steering Group (MSG), with support from a group of international NGOs[35], to assess the feasibility of setting up a dedicated NGO security support mechanism and prepare a funding proposal. Initially there was a four month delay due to difficulties in finding an agency to host the consultancy, and then a further three month delay until a suitable consultant became available. By the time the consultant finally arrived in the field, the situation had altered: many of the key NGO staff who had been involved in the initial discussions had left, the security situation had improved significantly, and UNMIL had deployed throughout the country. As a result, few agencies attended meetings to discuss the proposal for establishing the Liberia NGO Security Office (LINSO), based on the ANSO model. Most NGOs didn't see the value in establishing an NGO security office, despite its potential to offer better collaboration with UNMIL and improve security information on areas with limited access. The proposal was finally rejected by donors because of the lack of NGO interest as well as the high costs involved. The consultant put forward other possible security mechanisms, but the momentum had been lost and the initiative failed to get off the ground.

During the tsunami response In Aceh, Indonesia, security focal points within four of the larger INGOs set up the Aceh NGO Safety Forum in February 2005. At the time, coordination and information exchange was hindered considerably by the scale and complexity of the disaster, the number of agencies involved and the political/security environment pre-existing in Aceh. Although the security situation in Aceh was more stable than in many other contexts, there remained a number of security concerns and a high level of safety risks associated with operating in the area. The forum was a voluntary and collaborative network established as a means of sharing security and safety information. It quickly grew from the original four agencies to a network of 24 INGOs. Even with high level of commitment by key individuals, the scope and activities of the forum were limited and difficult to sustain due to other work priorities and commitments.[36] Recognising the limitations of the forum, some agencies discussed setting up a dedicated NGO security support structure, but these initial discussions failed to generate the interest of donors or the wider NGO community. Over time, as key individuals who had driven the initiative moved on, the forum broke down.

Currently, attempts are ongoing to establish NGO security collaboration mechanisms in Chad and Sudan. In Chad, an informal NGO security working group has been set up and meets regularly to share information, ideas and analysis. Agencies are now looking into options for additional security support, including a dedicated NGO security office or the recruitment of a full time security officer by one of the agencies who will then provide additional support to other agencies. Although the need for an NGO security collaboration mechanism in Chad was initially raised back in October 2004, in spite of numerous discussions in the field and at headquarters, and strong interest from donors, the initiative has only recently progressed to a proposal stage.

In Darfur, Sudan, the current security situation and lack of effective mechanisms to provide NGOs with information on which to make informed security decisions has prompted frequent discussions about forming a collective NGO security mechanism. The impetus for this came after the InterAction security assessment in Darfur in October 2004 and follow-up visit in May

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[34] InterAction, *InterAction NGO Security Assessment Mission to Liberia – Summary Report*, January 2004.
[35] Catholic Relief Services, German Agro Action, International Rescue Committee and Norwegian Refugee Council.
[36] Interview with member of Aceh NGO Safety Forum, June 2006.

2005[37], during which time a number of NGOs were keen to see such an initiative progress. However, since then it has been difficult to find NGOs willing to host the initiative for fear of reprisals from the Government of Sudan. In addition, many NGOs feel they lack the capacity and time to host the potentially large security structure required. There have been a number of discussions between INGOs in the field and at headquarters, and suggestions put forward of an NGO security office managed and hosted by a consortium of NGOs, which would help remove the burden and risk from one particular lead agency. As a result, in June 2006 a consultant was engaged to look into establishing an NGO-managed security office in Darfur which would provide support and information to the entire INGO community, and to develop a proposal for donor funding. However, problems arose early on in the consultancy as the authorities objected to the consultant's visit. The authorities accused the host NGO of a lack of transparency over the purpose of the consultants visit, and denied permission for the consultant to travel to Darfur, or for his visa to be extended forcing the development of the NGO security initiative to be put on hold.

In addition to these NGO-led security collaborations, there have also been a number of wider inter-agency initiatives to provide security information and support to NGOs. In Nepal in November 2002, DFID and GTZ established a joint Risk Management Office (RMO) to assess and manage risks posed by the current insecurity and to ensure that programmes are implemented safely and effectively without exacerbating the conflict. The RMO continues to monitor the security situation in different parts of the country and provides security information, advice and updates to partner agencies. It also provides training to NGO staff on conflict sensitive working.

In Guinea, a joint security project was undertaken between IRC and UNHCR to improve UN-NGO security collaboration. During 2001-02, a NGO Field Security Advisor (FSA), recruited and funded by IRC, was seconded to work alongside UNHCR's FSA in the N'Zérékoré field office. The NGO Field Security Advisor was responsible for providing security information, support and training to NGOs operating in the area. While this unique model offered the potential for closer UN-NGO cooperation in information sharing and security support, its success was limited. From the outset, the project suffered from perception problems and a lack of NGO buy-in. Some NGOs were suspicious of the initiative and were reluctant to engage with the NGO Field Security Advisor. This was possibly exacerbated by the limited consultation with NGOs during the set-up phase of the project, even though NGOs were the intended 'beneficiaries'. There were also problems from the UN side of the proposed partnership as it was felt that UNHCR field staff had little buy-in to this project which had been pushed by UN headquarters in New York and Geneva. Once on the ground, the NGO FSA discovered that the UNHCR field staff had little awareness of the project, limited resources to spare and no specific direction to support the initiative.[38] Although the project continued in 2003, and the NGO FSA began to develop the support of the NGO community, problems with funding finally forced the initiative to close.

In addition to these attempts to foster greater security collaboration in the field, in recent years there have been a number of global initiatives put forward to improve the security information exchange between NGOs. NGO-VOICE's Humanitarian Security and Protection Network (HSPN), launched in 2000, aimed to provide a means of information exchange between agencies, with the establishment of a software platform to report, collate and share incident information. However, this failed to get off the ground due to a lack of agency awareness and buy-in. More recently, Crisis Management Initiative in collaboration with United States Institute of Peace launched the Safety Information Reporting Service (SIRS) in 2005. Initiated as a result of a number of conferences stressing the need for improved security information exchange, SIRS offers a safety information sharing mechanism that

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[37] InterAction, *InterAction NGO Security Assessment Follow-up in Sudan – Summary Report*, May 2005.
[38] Interview with former NGO FSA, June 2006.

provides an incident mapping, reporting, and threat monitoring system for NGOs in the field. The project is currently in development, having yet to be piloted in the field, and is seeking funding. [39] Another security information system being piloted is the Operational Activity Security Information Service (OASIS) provided by Vietnam Veterans of America Foundation (VVAF), VVAF aims to provide information management and advisory services and tools to support the safety and security information requirements of NGOs in the field. Like other collaborative security initiatives, the success of these initiatives will depend on sustained agency buy-in, the development of a good governance structure, and the availability of accessible and effective technological solutions.

2.4 Barriers to security collaboration

Despite recent efforts and a number of successes, achieving effective NGO security collaboration remains a challenge for everyone involved. Few NGOs are against collaborating on security issues in principle. In practice, however, efforts to establish or maintain different collaborative mechanisms and structures to facilitate NGO security management and decision making often lead to frustration. Even where the need for NGO security collaboration has been widely recognised, and demanded by agencies on the ground, it often proves extremely difficult to get initiatives up and running. There are number of factors which act as barriers to effective security collaboration, and which can crucially limit the success of NGO initiatives in the field.

Lack of agency commitment & buy-in

The success of any security collaboration mechanism relies on the commitment and buy-in of the NGOs involved. However, due to limited security awareness or security management capacity, some agencies can be unaware of the need for collaboration and the collective security benefits it can offer. This lack of understanding can ultimately place their staff at increased risk. Even larger NGOs with security management capacity can fail to understand the added value of a

> *Box 1* **Barriers to security collaboration**
> ❑ *Lack of agency commitment & buy-in*
> ❑ *Diversity in security approach*
> ❑ *Limited governance*
> ❑ *Lack of transparency or trust*
> ❑ *Suspicion & interference by authorities*
> ❑ *Staff recruitment & retention problems*
> ❑ *Clash of personalities & styles*
> ❑ *Competing priorities & limited resources*

collaborative approach. Often NGOs will wait to see which other agencies get involved, or for an initiative to become firmly established before choosing to participate. Commitment by different agencies is also determined by their perception of the level of insecurity in a particular context; it is often only when serious incidents directly affecting NGO staff occur that agencies are compelled to collaborate with other NGOs on security. However, this commitment is often not sustained if incidents become less frequent or do not reoccur.

NGO security policies and job descriptions seldom highlight the need to actively pursue security collaboration efforts with other agencies. As a consequence, the attitude of an agency towards collaboration efforts is often influenced by the interest or awareness of individual managers. As such, an NGO's commitment to collaboration can alter as individuals change roles. Even when the need for a security collaboration mechanism is recognised and pursued by staff in the field, their efforts may be hampered by a lack of commitment and support from their respective headquarters. Headquarters staff may not be aware of the need for closer cooperation, the possible options available, and management

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[39] Crisis Management Initiative, *Launching SIRS: the Safety Information Reporting Service,* Crisis Management and Information Technology Conference Report, December 2005.

and financial implications, and this can result in additional pressures that impede security collaboration efforts by their colleagues in the field.

Agency commitment is also affected by the speed at which security mechanisms can be established. Setting up security collaboration can take months or even years from initial discussions to the point where a mechanism is in place. Delays often arise due to the availability of an appropriate security advisor, lengthy discussions between participating agencies on structure and objectives, time taken to solicit wider NGO interest in the initiative, and attempts to obtain funding. As a result, initiatives can lose momentum, and demand for a collaborative approach becomes diminished, as proponents of the initiative move on or the security situation changes.

Diversity in security approach

It is important to recognise that the advantages of security collaboration are not accepted by all agencies. Due to different mandates and approaches, some agencies may avoid participating in collaborative forums or sharing security information openly with others as a matter of principle.

There are also situations where strains in relations between NGOs, often caused by different approaches to security, mean that some agencies deliberately avoid joining security collaboration mechanisms. The use of private security companies or engagement with armed protection or military actors by some NGOs to secure staff movements, protect offices and residences or ensure provision of humanitarian assistance is a particularly contentious issue. The use of these security measures by some agencies can make collaboration or agreement on common security approaches very difficult. For example, certain NGOs may deliberately distance themselves from any forum in which agencies utilising these contentious security approaches are involved.

Limited governance

A number of recent security collaboration initiatives have struggled with the issue of governance. In an effort to ensure that the various security mechanisms remain accountable and relevant to participating NGOs, many initiatives have established a steering or executive committee or advisory board made up of NGO staff to provide overall support and direction to the security initiative. However, such governance structures often fail to provide the level of support and guidance needed; there can be a lack of clear terms of reference as to the role and function of the committee or board, meetings are often ad hoc or cancelled due to the availability of members, and participating NGO staff are often unable to devote adequate time to this endeavour. In the absence of effective governance and overview which a committee or board should provide, the strategic direction of the initiative, and the services and support it provides, will be determined by the priorities and commitment of individual staff or agencies involved.

Lack of transparency or trust

Agencies can be reluctant to share information with a security collaboration initiative because of how the initiative or its security staff are perceived. In some situations NGO security structures have been perceived, particularly by national NGOs, as linked to intelligence agencies, or to an international military presence. There may also be a perceived lack of transparency about what information is provided to whom, and concerns about how confidential information will be dealt with. For example, there have been a number of cases where information shared discretely in collaborative forums has turned up in the press. Concerns about indiscrete use of sensitive security information shared in collaborative mechanisms can be a substantial barrier to agencies sharing information.

Suspicion & interference by authorities

Lack of acceptance by authorities for an NGO security structure can significantly hamper the establishment and success of a collaborative mechanism. Suspicion by the authorities regarding information gathering and dissemination of incident reports and analysis can lead to an unwillingness of NGOs to take the lead or become involved for fear of government interference or reprisals. In some contexts, international and national staff from different security structures have received threats and been subject to intimidation by the authorities, in some cases forcing the staff involved to leave their positions.

Staff recruitment & retention problems

For the larger NGO security structures a key challenge has been the recruitment of both international and national security staff with the right security profile, humanitarian experience and competencies. Where suitable staff have been recruited, retaining them is often a problem due to competition from the larger agencies and the UN, and also the private sector which can offer five times the salary NGOs are able to pay. A number of recent security initiatives have suffered due to lack of capacity, with many positions remaining unfilled for long periods. High demand, against a backdrop of staff recruitment and retention problems, has meant that some initiatives have been unable to provide the level of security support and services they had envisaged.

Clash of personalities & styles

Successful collaboration depends on good formal and informal communication among key actors. Building personal relationships and developing an understanding of other NGOs' mandates, security concerns and constraints is essential in establishing the trust which is at the heart of security collaboration. In some contexts, poor inter-agency communications and personality clashes between staff from different agencies, or between NGOs and staff employed by security initiatives, have severely hindered cooperation and resulted in vital security information not being shared.

A frequent criticism by NGOs of recent security mechanisms is the 'militaristic' approach and language sometimes used by staff employed by the initiative, and a perceived lack of understanding of NGO 'culture' and security approaches.[40] Due to the shortage of specialised security staff within the humanitarian sector, NGO security structures are frequently forced to employ security staff with little or no NGO or humanitarian related experience. Although many individuals have adapted well and flourished in the NGO environment, some security staff recruitments have been less successful and have led to a breakdown in communication and a loss of creditability which ultimately undermined NGO security collaboration efforts.

Competing priorities & limited resources

Competing priorities and a general lack of human and financial resources for security often hampers NGOs from contributing to or fully participating in collaborative efforts. NGOs face a host of internal and external challenges and security is often only one of many priorities organisations have to deal with as they administer their programmes on the ground. Establishing and maintaining security collaboration mechanisms requires significant effort and a high degree of financial and resource commitment from the agencies involved. Although willing to participate, some smaller international and national NGOs lack the financial resources to contribute to the establishment of a dedicated NGO security support structure.

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[40] Based on feedback to Security Collaboration Questionnaire and individual interviews with NGO staff.

2.5 Ingredients for success

With a few notable exceptions, dedicated NGO-managed security structures and collaborative arrangements are relatively new additions to the humanitarian environment. As a result, NGOs have yet to develop an awareness of the various mechanisms available and their suitability in different contexts; an understanding of the aims and objectives of collaborative initiatives; and an appreciation of the commitment and resources required. There are significant challenges to be faced in establishing and maintaining NGO security collaboration initiatives. However, a review of recent successes and failures highlights important lessons, good practice and essential ingredients required to establish successful NGO security collaboration mechanisms in the field.

NGO driven & managed

Successful collaborations usually begin with a small group of NGO staff brought together by a catalyst of a particular security incident or by a common need to improve security information and support. While agency headquarters, inter-agency coordination bodies and donors have a role in promoting and supporting the development of collaboration initiatives, it is important that these are driven and managed by NGOs in the field, and based on an identified and agreed need to ensure widespread and sustained NGO commitment and buy-in.

> *Box 2*   **Ingredients for success**
> ❑ *NGO driven & managed*
> ❑ *The right mechanism*
> ❑ *Effective leadership & governance*
> ❑ *Shared aims & objectives*
> ❑ *Acceptance by different actors*
> ❑ *The right staff, capacities & resources*

The right mechanism

In light of high-profile and successful security collaborations such as ANSO, there is an increasing demand to establish ANSO models in other contexts. However, the ANSO model was developed specifically to deal with Afghan security issues, and so is unlikely to be suitable in many other contexts. It is vital to determine the most appropriate security collaboration mechanism based on an assessment of environmental variables such as the political climate, security situation, abundance and security capacity of NGOs present, availability and effectiveness of other coordination mechanisms and security support structures, and level of funding and resources available to support an initiative.

Effective leadership & governance

Security collaboration initiatives require more than willingness from the NGO community. An appropriate lead or host agency must be appointed to facilitate the identification and establishment of a security collaboration mechanism, while reporting to a working group of interested agencies. The host agency should, if needed, facilitate the recruitment of suitable security staff, and also coordinate logistics and administration support for the mechanism. If funding is required, the host agency should also administer the funds on behalf of the participating agencies.

Participating agencies must, however, take responsibility for the success of the initiative and have a stake in its direction and output, even if they choose not to take a leadership role. It is essential early on to establish an effective governance structure to provide overview and direction of the initiative. The governing body must also ensure that it remains relevant and accountable to participating agencies, and that individual NGOs are not overburdened by or perceived as controlling the initiative.

Shared aims & objectives

Misunderstandings surrounding the role and capacity of a security collaboration initiative can lead to unrealistic expectations from some agencies of the services it can provide. Some NGOs may feel that the initiative should not only provide information and advice, but should also make security-related decisions on their behalf. It is important to manage the expectations of participating agencies and avoid the temptation to set unrealistic objectives. Those agencies involved in establishing a NGO security mechanism should at the very outset agree clearly defined aims and objectives for the initiative, the services and support it will provide, and its limitations, and communicate this to the wider NGO community.

Acceptance by different actors

The success of different NGO security mechanisms is influenced by its profile and the degree of acceptance it has from different actors, for example government, local authorities, and armed groups. Negative perceptions of NGO security initiatives and the sensitive nature of security information can result in criticism, interference, and threats from these actors. Initiatives which lack acceptance and legitimacy are weakened and could face closure by authorities. Although there are risks associated with pursuing legitimacy or acceptance with authorities and other key actors, a carefully considered strategy should be undertaken at the outset to explain the role, aims and objectives of the initiative to obtain widespread acceptance for the initiative, and give individuals or NGOs involved some level of protection.

The right staff, capacities & resources

The right staff, with sufficient capacity and resources, are often the most cited ingredients for successful NGO security structures. Many successful initiatives have been largely dependent on the competencies and commitment of the individuals involved. A vital part of establishing an effective NGO security initiative is ensuring that the staff hired have the right profile, and that teams have sufficient capacity to meet the potentially high demand for security support and services. While there has been a tendency to select security staff on the basis of significant police or military experience, an understanding of humanitarian programming is essential if security staff are to interact effectively with NGOs. It is important that staff are selected on a range of competencies that balance security experience and humanitarian experience. Equally, it is important that any team includes a balance of international and national security advisors, to ensure access to different actors, and to increase participation by, and support to, national NGOs.

An additional factor in establishing successful security collaboration initiatives has been the availability of financial and material resources. NGO security mechanisms must obtain a broad funding base, as reliance on one source of funding may undermine its independence, and limit its flexibility to expand or provide additional support due to changes in the security situation. Over-reliance on donor funding may also limit the initiative's long-term sustainability, as donor funding priorities change in the future. Consideration should be given to a range of funding options in addition to donor funding, including financial and in-kind contributions, membership fees or service charges payable by NGOs. This will help underline the need for agencies to contribute to their own security provision and encourage the principle of 'buying in' to security, which will ensure greater degree of commitment to security collaboration mechanisms by NGOs.

3 Establishing NGO Security Collaboration Mechanisms

3.1 Various mechanisms

NGO security collaboration clearly poses significant challenges but, as highlighted in the previous section, there are compelling reasons why NGOs should strive to overcome these to increase the safety and security of their staff in the field. To strengthen NGO security collaboration it is vital that NGO-focused and -managed mechanisms are established which are appropriate for that particular security context and the needs of NGOs operating there. Key to the success of any collaboration is ensuring that the right mechanism is in place to provide the right security support and services. To deliver these, the mechanism must have: widespread agreement on its aims and objectives; effective governance in place; appropriate funding; and suitable staff.

There are various forms and structures of collaboration that can be considered by NGOs in the field. These different mechanisms can be grouped according to the degree of collaboration and formality involved, their governance and resource implications, and the level of services and support they provide to NGOs. The four key approaches are: NGO security networks or fora; inter-agency security measures; NGO consortium security initiatives; and NGO security & safety offices.

3.1.1 NGO security networks or fora

The most widely used security collaboration mechanism is NGO security networks or fora. These often arise in response to specific incidents, concerns regarding the overall security situation, or due to frustration with the limitations of existing coordination mechanisms (e.g. Aceh NGO Safety Forum). Interested NGOs, country managers and security focal points establish a NGO focused network or forum in order to facilitate closer security collaboration between NGOs and create an environment where security information and analysis can be exchanged and discussed more openly.

These networks and forums often start out as informal meetings between a small group of NGOs, but evolve over time as the network becomes better known and more agencies participate. In most cases, the network or forum is

> **Box 3** **NGO Security Forum Sri Lanka**
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> *After the tsunami in December 2004 there was a huge influx of agencies into Sri Lanka, many of which were new to the country or had little experience of operating in the conflict areas of the North and East of the country. As a result of continual coordination problems, a worsening security environment and a lack of reliable security information, in September 2005 a group of DEC agencies lead by Oxfam GB convened a NGO security forum. Oxfam facilitated a regular inter-agency security meeting during which participating NGOs would review and analyse latest developments and recent security incidents, discuss implications for NGOs, and look at possible future scenarios. In mid-2006, due to increasing insecurity, the forum expanded significantly with some 30 NGOs participating in the forum. As a result NGOs are looking at options to provide additional security support to the forum and improve its linkages with other coordination structures and agencies.*

established by one particular NGO or individual taking the lead in initiating and hosting meetings, although this responsibility can be shared with different NGOs hosting meetings on a revolving basis. How formal a NGO security network is can vary considerably over different stages of its life cycle. While networks often adopt more formal measures gradually over time, this formality is by no means necessary for the network to be effective. The structure that a network or forum adopts will be shaped by the motivation of the NGOs or individuals involved. More formal networks may develop terms of reference or operating

principles which outline its overall aims and objectives, qualifications for membership and associated management and communication structures.

In general, NGO security networks and forums are the most accessible security collaboration mechanism in the field, as they are relatively easy to establish and have limited resource implications. Once up and running, these networks can significantly improve the exchange of security information amongst participating NGOs, which can result in greater awareness and more informed decision making. They can also provide a successful alternative to the larger coordination forums where in-depth security discussions and detailed information regarding incidents are often limited. However, experience has shown that, however useful, such networks and forums often have a limited life span. While these are formed with a great deal of initial enthusiasm and commitment, there is a tendency for networks and forums to weaken when the security situation is perceived to have improved. In addition, high rates of staff rotation and participants missing meetings due to other commitments can undermine the relationships necessary to provide continuity and sustain such mechanisms. Unless a security network or forum can sustain enthusiasm by continuing to meets the needs of its members, participation will drop off and the mechanism will gradually fall apart.

3.1.2 Inter-agency security measures

Another approach that agencies can take to strengthen inter-agency linkages and security in the field is to collaborate with other NGOs on common security measures or specific security apparatus. These security collaboration mechanisms could involve two or more NGOs and may arise from existing NGO alliances or from discussions between agencies participating in a security network or forum. In some cases it may be prudent for NGOs to pool security resources due to joint programming needs, or because agencies are operating in the same geographical location. By working together on particular security issues NGOs can identify various measures that

> *Box 4*   ***Shared NGO guard services***
>
> *In 1998 a number of INGOs in Goma, concerned with the high levels of crime and increasing robberies targeting NGO offices and residences, collaborated on the establishment of a shared NGO guard service. 'MIKE 72' was created to provide additional security to NGO staff and property. A team of mobile guards patrol the area and regularly check on NGO compounds and their guards. If there is an issue they can intervene quickly, as although not armed they have direct communications with police who will respond in the event of an incident. 'MIKE 72' guards are recruited and managed by NGOs, with the responsibility changing between NGOs every 6 months. NGOs that subscribe to the service pay a quarterly fee which is used to cover salaries, fuel and maintenance of the patrol vehicle. In addition, some NGOs have contributed logistics support (car, cell phones, radios etc). 'Mike 72' provides a weekly security report of incidents to NGOs and can also provide security training to NGO guards.*

will not only share security resources and costs involved, but which can collectively reduce their vulnerabilities in high-risk environments.

There are numerous examples of inter-agency security measures implemented in different contexts. For example, in Tajikistan some NGOs have developed joint contingency and evacuation plans to ensure the safe and efficient relocation of staff from isolated areas in case of medical emergency or deteriorating security. NGOs have also collaborated on the establishment of common communication systems, for example previously in Kabul, Afghanistan, a number of agencies established a dedicated 24 hour radio network for NGO compound guards, so that they could share information and alert others to security incidents occurring in the city. One collaborative security apparatus frequently implemented by NGOs is the establishment of 'security trees' or warden systems to provide an emergency

communications network whereby security information and alerts can be rapidly transmitted between senior managers in the NGO community. Another practical area where agencies have worked together is security training. As part of a collaborative approach, NGOs offering security training have included staff from other agencies, or have collaborated with other agencies to organise joint security training events for their staff by sharing costs of bringing in specialised security training providers.

Despite a number of successful inter-agency security measures, and their increasing use by NGOs in their efforts to ensure the security of their staff and programmes, this 'strength in numbers' approach is still not easily established. Unfortunately, NGOs are not naturally inclined to collaborate on such measures, often preferring operational independence in terms of their security procedures. Effective inter-agency security measures often require a high degree of insecurity and a great deal of discussion and trust between the agencies and individuals involved before such measures are implemented.

3.1.3 NGO consortium security initiatives

A more formal collaborative security mechanism available to NGOs arises when a NGO consortium or body engages security staff to provide a coordinated security resource for its member agencies. Such initiatives are aimed at strengthening the existing security capacity of participating NGOs. Consortiums are often formed by a group of NGOs to strengthen general coordination in the field (e.g. the NGO Somalia Consortium), but in other contexts they can be set up specifically to address NGO security concerns (e.g. IOS in

Figure 1 **NGO consortium security initiative structure**

Haiti). As part of the NGO consortium, a Security Advisor or security team serves as a focal point to provide participating NGOs with a wide range of security support services which may include: information gathering, analysis and reporting; liaising with relevant security actors; security training and technical advice; and undertaking security assessments.
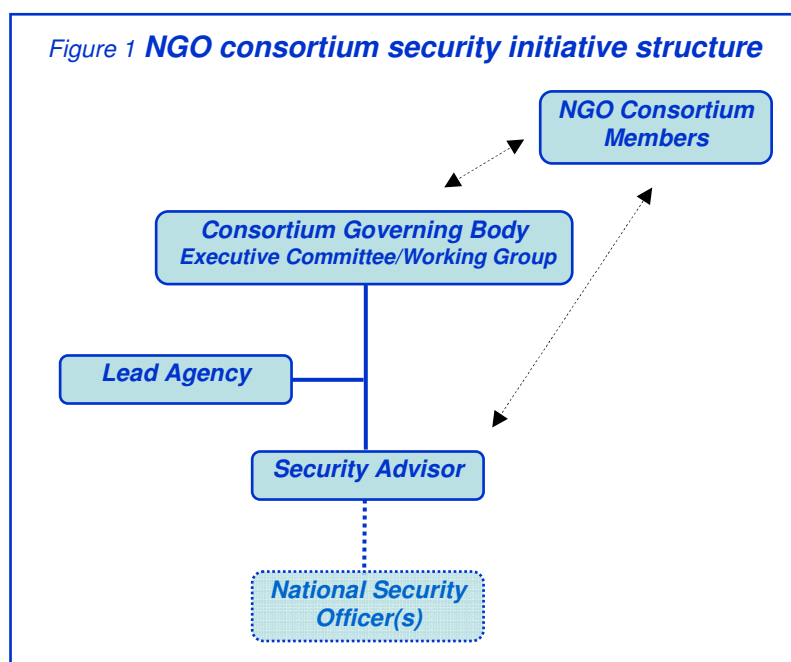
The structure of an NGO consortium security initiative could include either a single Security Advisor or a security team consisting of security advisors plus national Security Officers, depending on the size of the consortium and the level of demand for the services provided (Fig.1). The Security Advisor, or security team, should be accountable to the consortium's governing body - an Executive Committee or Board, or a delegated working group, composed of designated members of the NGO consortium. The consortium's governing body should be responsible for the initiative's overall governance and must define its aims and operational activities, develop the Security Advisor's terms of reference, and manage and monitor the initiative's performance on behalf of the wider NGO consortium. In addition, it is important that the NGO consortium has clear 'ground rules' for participating agencies and a mutual agreement of operating principles. Members should be required to sign a MoU or similar agreement to participate within the consortium and benefit from the additional security support.

One NGO should take the lead in facilitating the recruitment of the Security Advisor and additional security staff, and in coordinating logistics and administrative support for the initiative on behalf of the consortium. The lead agency should also take responsibility for managing the initiative's finances, including collecting funds from participating NGOs - in general, consortium members would be required to pay a regular fee or contribute a lump sum to cover the security initiative's costs and salaries for a set period. It may be necessary to solicit additional funding to sustain or expand the security initiative, in which case the lead agency would also seek interest from potential donors, submit funding proposals and administer the funds on behalf of the consortium.

Security mechanisms established through a consortium of NGOs are clearly very effective in strengthening security collaboration in the field. The increased flow of security information, dedicated support and training can enable participating NGOs to operate more effectively in difficult environments. Unfortunately, there are limits to these mechanisms. Their success is very dependent on the degree of NGO participation, and the level of funds agencies are willing to, or are able to, contribute. Most importantly, the benefits of such mechanisms are generally restricted to participating NGOs only, with only limited information and support made avaible to the wider NGO community operating in the same context.

3.1.4   NGO security & safety offices

The most extensive security collaboration mechanism available to NGOs is the existence of a dedicated security and safety office to provide support and information to the entire NGO community in a particular context, (e.g. ANSO in Afghanistan). An NGO security and safety office is founded to provide regular security information and advice, act as a liaison link between the NGO community and different security actors, and provide security management support and training.

The key distinction between this mechanism and the consortium based approach is that an NGO security and safety office is established to strengthen the security capacity of all NGOs operating in a particular context. Security information and management support is made accessible to all international and national NGOs, rather than only to consortium members. The impetus to set up an NGO security and safety office may stem from NGOs' frustration at the lack of collaborative security mechanisms available to them or, alternatively, may build on an existing initiative where due to high demand and availability of funds the decision is taken to extend support to the wider NGO community. NGO security and safety offices are often viewed as projects with NGOs as beneficiaries, rather than a service which individual NGOs pay for. As such, this mechanism is dependent on institutional grants and/or significant contributions from key agencies for its core funding, rather than membership fees.

The extent of the NGO security and safety office, and number of staff involved, will depend on the security context, geographical coverage of NGOs, and level of need for its services in different areas. Projects can vary from establishing a small mobile security team based in a country's capital, to a large regionalised structure with security staff based in different parts of the country.

A possible structure could include a Project Manager or Senior Security Advisor who would serve as the overall manager, representative and team leader of the project (Fig.2). Reporting to the Project Manager/Senior Security Advisor, the Regional Security Advisors would be responsible for the collection, analysis and dissemination of safety and security information and advice to NGOs in the field. Additional National Security Officers could be recruited to provide support to the Regional Security Advisors, and coordinate and liaise with national NGOs with respect to specific safety and security issues. This structure could also include an Administrator or Office Manager to assist with the project's administration, finance

and HR issues and the daily functioning of the office. In some contexts additional support from an Information Officer should be considered to manage an incident database and facilitate the dissemination of regular security reports to NGOs. It should be noted that the NGO security and safety office will also require general support staff including drivers, radio operator, guards etc.

Figure 2 **NGO security & safety office structure**
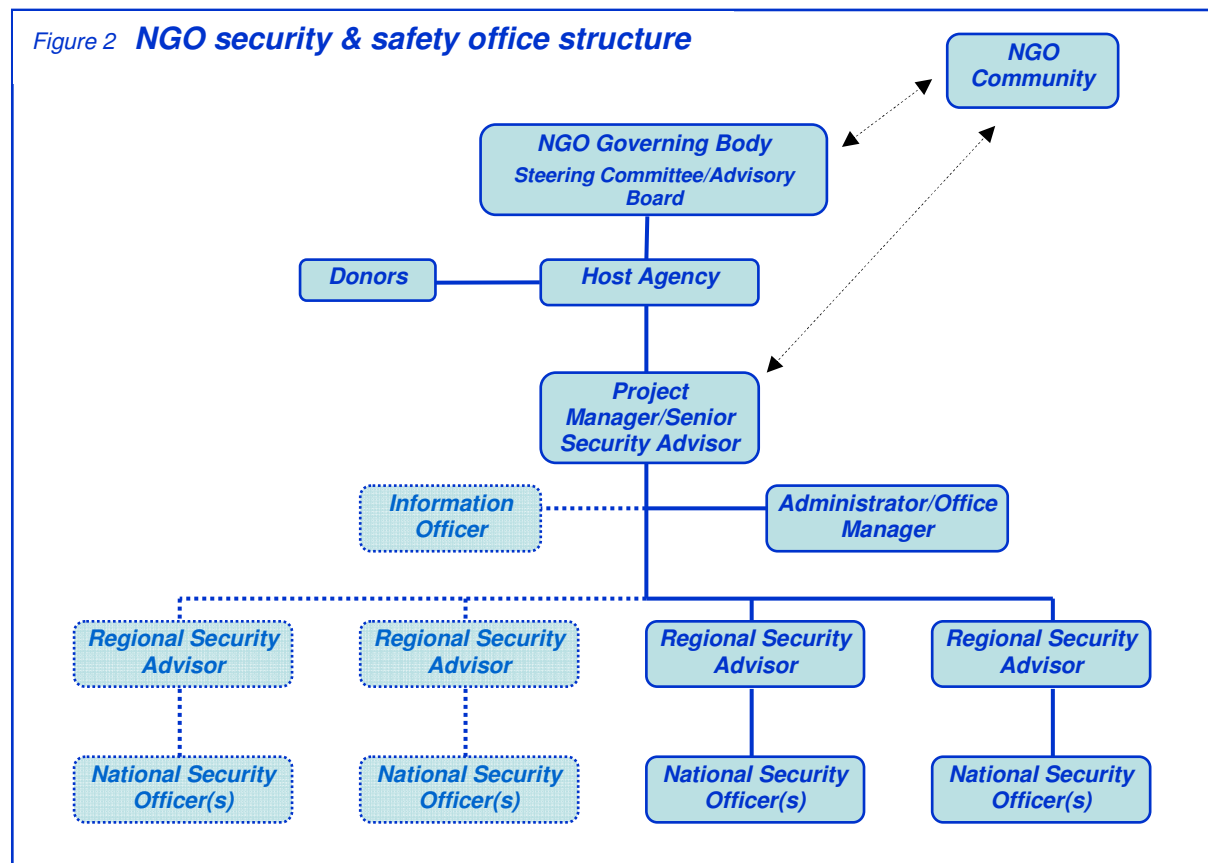
It is vital that this mechanism has an effective and flexible governing structure in place that ensures maximum transparency, control and accountability. The governing structure of this type of mechanism should be two-tiered, with the project being hosted and managed by a single agency, guided by an NGO governing body. The host agency, on behalf of the governing body, should be responsible for: the line management of the security and safety office and its staff; recruiting international security staff; submitting proposals and administering grants; managing contractual relations with donors, and providing logistics and administrative support for the initiative. The level of support the host agency may be able to offer or devote to the initiative may be constrained by its own operational needs and priorities. In larger structures, additional host agencies could be considered to alleviate the burden on one particular NGO. Other NGOs could agree to 'host' field offices in locations where the host agency is not present, and provide facilities and support to security staff in those locations.

The governing body should be composed of representatives of the NGO community it serves, both national and international NGOs, chaired by the host agency, and should take the form of either a steering committee or advisory board. Unlike the consortium based approach, the governing body has a limited management role, although a steering committee should be responsible for: defining the overall aims and objectives of the initiative; establishing the overarching policies to guide activities; and ensuring continual feedback from, and accountability to the NGO community.

Compared with other mechanisms, establishing and maintaining an NGO security and safety office almost certainly poses more challenges to agencies and individuals involved, given the level of resources, commitment and support it requires. In certain contexts, however, a dedicated NGO security and safety office, with effective governance and sufficient resources and capacity, is a most effective mechanism to strengthen security collaboration and address the operational security concerns of all NGOs in the field.
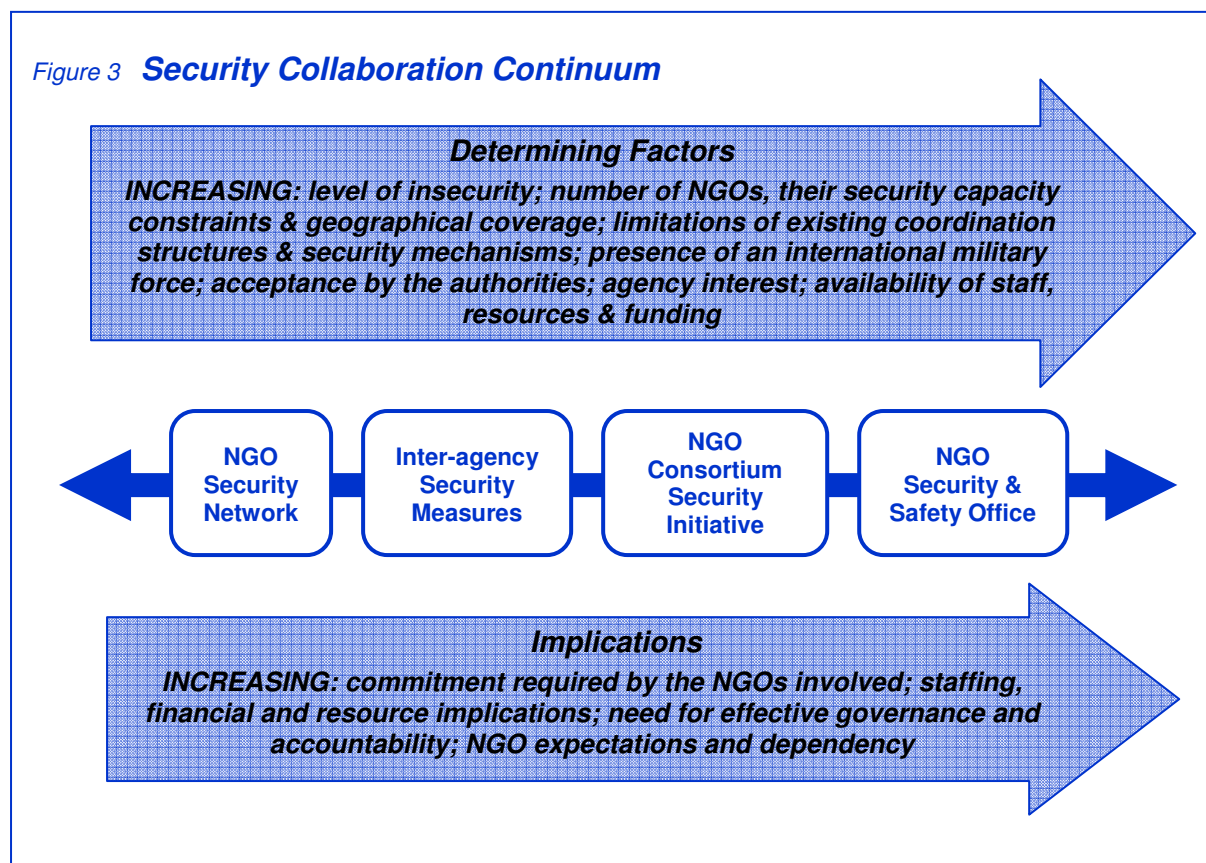
3.2 Determining appropriate mechanisms

In attempting to strengthen security collaboration, NGOs must give careful consideration to which of the four key approaches will be most appropriate and sustainable in their specific context, and will best meet the security needs of those NGOs involved. While some security collaboration mechanisms are successful in certain contexts, they may be less effective in others. NGOs must not expect 'off the shelf' models to meet their needs, but mechanisms tried and tested in other areas may be adapted and changed to suit a particular context. Which mechanism NGOs choose to pursue will be influenced by a number of factors, including:

❑ **level of insecurity** - in all contexts where security and safety of staff is an issue, NGOs should consider creating security networks or fora or adopting inter-agency security measures, to help reduce the risks. However, in environments with high levels of insecurity posed by conflict and/or violent crime, and where there is heightened risk of deliberate targeting of humanitarian agencies, the need for a more extensive and formalised security collaboration structure will increase;

❑ **number of NGOs, their security capacity and geographical coverage** - the greater the number of NGOs operating in a particular context the greater the level and variety of services and support a security mechanism must provide, and the capacity in terms of staffing and resources it will require to deliver them. If these NGOs have limited security capacity, then these requirements will increase further. If NGO operations are geographically widespread, then regional structures may be needed to provide security support to NGOs working in different areas of the country;

❑ **existing coordination structures and security mechanisms** - levels of frustration with, existing coordination structures, availability of reliable security information, and possibly limitations in support available from the UN security system will influence the decision to pursue a more dedicated and structured NGO security mechanism rather than a more informal network;

❑ **presence of an international military force** - the additional risks and complex civil-military issues that arise through the presence of an international force will increase the need for a mechanism which offers the capacity to liaise on security issues and facilitate security information exchange between NGOs and the different military actors;

❑ **agency interest** - the extent of interest and support from agencies in establishing a security collaboration mechanism is crucial in determining which mechanism to pursue. If the expressed support is limited to a small group of agencies then the establishment of security network or a consortium based approach is probably the most suitable solution, at least initially. However, if there is much wider support and demand from both international and national NGOs then the establishment of a NGO security & safety office should be considered;

❑ **acceptance by the authorities** - in some contexts, the type of mechanism adopted and the extent of services it provides will be determined by the authorities' acceptance of any formal NGO security collaboration initiative. High levels of suspicion and potentially serious interference by authorities in the initiative and the security staff involved may force NGOs to select a less formalised mechanism; and

❑ **availability of staff, resources & funding** - as larger, more formal mechanisms such as a consortium based approach requires significant resources, if donor interest in funding such mechanisms is limited and NGOs are unable to contribute sufficiently themselves, a less resource-intensive mechanism, such as a security network, should be considered.

Reviewing these issues will assist NGOs in determining what type of collaboration mechanism is desirable, as well as what is feasible and sustainable, in their particular context. While each of these factors has an influence over the collaborative options available to NGOs, collectively they will determine the type and scope of mechanism that should be considered. The diagram below illustrates a continuum along which the different security collaboration mechanisms can be placed (Fig.3). All points along the continuum reflect some form of collaboration, but the formality and extent of security collaboration increases moving from left to right. As a combination of these factors escalate, the need for a more extensive and formal mechanism increases, and vice versa. For example, in a context with increased targeting of humanitarian agencies, combined with an influx of NGOs with limited security capacity, and greater donor interest in funding formal structures, then an NGO security and safety office is most likely to be considered. Equally, as the level of insecurity, number of NGOs involved and funding availability decreases, an established NGO security and safety office may be down-scaled to a single security advisor managed by a consortium.

Figure 3 **Security Collaboration Continuum**

Determining Factors
INCREASING: level of insecurity; number of NGOs, their security capacity constraints & geographical coverage; limitations of existing coordination structures & security mechanisms; presence of an international military force; acceptance by the authorities; agency interest; availability of staff, resources & funding

| NGO Security Network | Inter-agency Security Measures | NGO Consortium Security Initiative | NGO Security & Safety Office |

Implications
INCREASING: commitment required by the NGOs involved; staffing, financial and resource implications; need for effective governance and accountability; NGO expectations and dependency

The diagram also illustrates how as the formality and scope of a security mechanism increases, so do the implications for NGOs involved. As there is progression from left to right along the continuum, the need for NGO commitment, adequate resources, effective governance, and expectation management increases accordingly.

The collaboration mechanism initially adopted by NGOs in a particular context may evolve over time, travelling left or right across the continuum. For example, what begins as a group

of NGOs forming a security network simply to exchange information may in time, due to strengthened working relationships between participating NGOs, result in the establishment of certain inter-agency security measures such as developing joint crisis management plans. Having recognised a need for further security support, that same network of NGOs may decide to form a consortium and employ a security advisor to provide the group with additional security information, advice and training. Over time, due to wider agency demand and the availability of donor funding, the consortium may choose to develop a NGO security and safety office to expand support to all NGOs. When identifying and developing a suitable collaborative initiative it is vital to ensure it has scope for expansion and growth, as well as down-scaling. This flexibility will enable the mechanism to continue to meet the adapting needs of the NGOs involved, and respond to changes in the security situation.

3.3 Defining aims & objectives

The ultimate aim of most security collaboration initiatives is to facilitate more effective humanitarian assistance by ensuring NGOs secure and safe access to beneficiaries. The initiatives achieve this by contributing to the security and safety of NGOs and their staff, by facilitating information exchange and/or by enhancing the security capacity of agencies through advice, support and training. While most agencies appreciate these broad principles, misunderstandings surrounding the specific aims and objectives of particular initiatives have led to unrealistic expectations from some NGOs. Confusion over the role of security staff linked to an initiative can breed a high degree of dependency amongst agencies. Some NGOs feel that these security advisors should not only provide information and advice, but should also make security-related decisions on their behalf and assume responsibility for agency staff, even to the extent of organising their evacuation in the event of a crisis.

Ensuring that the aims and objectives of a mechanism are understood by the NGO community is essential to the success of any collaborative mechanism. What the initiative aims to do, how it will achieve this, what services and support it provides and, importantly, what limitations it may have, should be clearly defined and these details widely disseminated to agencies to avoid misunderstanding and ensure that expectations are consistent and realistic. It is most important to clearly articulate to NGOs the advisory nature of the information and support such mechanisms provide. Collaborative security mechanisms should supplement and strengthen – not replace – existing internal security systems of the participating NGOs. Security management and the duty of care to staff must remain the sole responsibility of individual NGOs.

An initiative may lack credibility and buy-in if participating NGOs feel that they have not been sufficiently consulted when defining the aims and objectives of an initiative, or have little or no say in its development. From the outset, there should be open discussion with all NGOs to reach agreement on the aims and objectives, to ensure widespread participation and engender genuine collaboration.

3.4 Governance

Governance in the form of a clearly defined and accountable structure is the backbone of any collaborative initiative. An effective governance structure must be established to ensure that the initiative is run in such a way that it achieves its aims and objectives, while remaining transparent, relevant and accountable to participating agencies. The structure must also ensure that individual NGOs are not overburdened by the initiative, or perceived as having too much influence. However, experience has shown that establishing and maintaining effective governance can be problematic and as such requires particular attention to ensure that an effective governance structure is established from the outset.

While all security collaboration mechanisms need some form of governance, this is particularly important for larger and more formal structures. For NGO consortium initiatives

or the establishment of an NGO security and safety office, particular attention must be paid to the relationships between the mechanism's internal management, governing body, and host/lead agency(ies), and their respective roles and responsibilities. Terms of reference must be developed for the governing body which clearly state its aims and objectives, membership and associated responsibilities. For an example of a governing body's ToR, see Annex 2.

The degree to which NGOs participate in the governance of a particular initiative will be determined by the type of mechanism and the governance structure put in place. For example, a Steering Committee is responsible for defining the initiative's strategic direction and overall aims and objectives. This broad framework will guide the day-to-day management and activities of the initiative and enable security staff to operate within clear boundaries. Alternatively, an Advisory Board is a more informal group which has fewer responsibilities but which can be consulted on occasion to ensure that the mechanism continues to meet the needs of the NGOs. An Advisory Board does not have authority to determine how the mechanism should be run or what services it provides; due to the financial, programmatic and donor contractual implications of these decisions, that responsibility rests with the security mechanism's internal management and the host agency.

Careful consideration should also be given to the make-up of the governing body and which agencies are involved. While the governing body must be small and effective, ideally it should be large enough to comprise representatives of a cross-section of agencies, including non-western NGOs, large and small NGOs, international and national NGOs etc. Members should not be selected simply on the basis of who is interested and available at that time. In addition, it is important to select individuals who have particular skills and experience that will help to contribute to the running of the initiative.

3.5 Funding

According to agencies, funding is one of the main barriers to security collaboration. The availability of sufficient financial and material resources to establish and maintain a security collaboration mechanism is crucial to the success of many initiatives. While some mechanisms such as NGO security networks or forums have much fewer resource implications, others such as large NGO consortium initiatives or establishing an NGO security and safety office involve considerable costs, to cover salaries, office and vehicle rent, computers and communications equipment, to name just a few overheads.

Donors play a significant role in the establishment of mechanisms that facilitate greater security collaboration. Indeed, a number of major donors, including DG ECHO, have funded, and continue to support, NGO security collaboration initiatives in many different contexts. Most donors recognise the important contribution such collective mechanisms can have in enabling NGOs and their staff to respond to the security concerns and challenges they increasingly face in the field. While some initiatives will be dependent on donor interest for their establishment, other funding options should also be considered. Reliance on one source of funding may not only undermine an initiative's independence and result in a perceived alliance with a particular foreign policy, but could also limit its flexibility to respond to NGO demands for additional support as a result of changes in the security situation. Over-reliance on donor funding may also limit the initiative's long-term sustainability, as funding priorities inevitably change and, as a result, reduced funding may force the initiative to close, or to substantially shrink its structure and the services it provides.

Alternative sources of funding that should be explored include financial and in-kind contributions, membership fees or service charges payable by NGOs. Many successful collaborations have, at least at the outset, received most of their resources from interested NGOs. For example, NGOs have contributed towards the cost of engaging security

consultants to assess the need for a collective security mechanism and suitable options available, and to prepare proposals for possible donors. Elsewhere, NGOs have contributed towards the recruitment of a security advisor for a fixed period to establish a security collaboration mechanism and provide security information and support to participating agencies. In addition to this financial support, some NGOs provide in-kind contributions such as accommodation, office space, vehicles, IT and communication equipment.

In situations where NGOs have contributed resources, it is felt that their sense of ownership and commitment to the collaboration mechanism also increased. Moreover, such commitments help demonstrate the level of interest and need for a security collaboration initiative and form a basis upon which donors can judge whether to fund the mechanism or not. It is important, however, that there should be a balance in the relative level of contributions from various participants. NGOs which contribute a larger portion of resources should not accrue a disproportionate amount of decision-making power. While this is sometimes unavoidable, it can prevent other NGOs from feeling that they have an equal say in the direction and services the initiative provides.

Membership fees are normally associated with consortium security initiatives, where agencies contribute a regular fee to be part of the consortium and to benefit from the security services and support it provides. However, costs involved in providing a dedicated NGO security support structure are often greater than the revenue generated by membership fees, as these are often kept to a minimum to ensure that all agencies - large and small, national and international - can afford to participate. Although fee paying reflects an important principle of NGOs 'buying in' to security and will provide some funds for an initiative, it may be necessary to seek additional funding in order to provide the level of services needed.

In some situations it may be felt that a membership fee should not be charged as this may limit the number or type of agencies gaining access to the security support such a mechanism would offer. Where the aim of an initiative is to make security information and advice available to all agencies, both national and international, then this provision must be free to all NGOs. Such initiatives will require donor funding, although some cost recovery should also be considered, for example by associating subsidised fees with some of the services provided, e.g. site security assessments, reviews of security management plans and procedures, and security training.

3.6 Staffing

Staffing needs will be determined by the type of security collaboration mechanism established, and the range of services it aims to provide. However, regardless of the structure, an initiative must ensure it has enough experienced personnel to deliver its aims and objectives. At the outset, a security collaboration mechanism may only require the involvement of a small number of security staff. However, experience has demonstrated that, once established, the demand on these initiatives often outstrips the capacity of staff involved. In many cases, security advisors have been overwhelmed in trying to provide the level of information, support and services NGOs require; it is not unusual for advisors to work under extreme pressure for long hours or to be forced to limit the services available to cope with this demand. While there will always be financial pressures to keep overheads down and the number of staff involved to a minimum, it is important that realistic consideration is given to ensure that there is sufficient staff capacity to meet the security needs of NGOs.

In addition to sufficient staffing capacity, it is vital that initiatives employ the right security advisors. The appropriateness of security staff involved is probably the greatest single factor influencing the success of NGO security collaboration structures. Great care is needed when selecting security advisors to ensure that those hired have the capability to gain the

confidence and trust of the NGO community in order to develop and maintain effective working relationships. When agencies search for security staff for collaboration initiatives, or for their own security personnel, there is a tendency to select individuals on the basis of their experience in the police, military or private security companies. While some technical security knowledge is at times required, and having a military background can assist in liaising with military forces in the field and navigating complex military structures, such traditional security backgrounds should be seen as an asset, rather than a prerequisite, for a position. Communicating effectively with a diverse group of NGOs, developing an efficient security information network, and responding to the security needs of NGOs, requires a wide range of competencies that should encompass good communication, interpersonal, negotiating and analytical skills, combined with practical experience of security assessments, planning, management and training.

It could be argued that having a purely security background is less relevant for an NGO security advisor post than experience in managing humanitarian programmes in insecure environments, an understanding of NGO 'culture' and security approaches, and an ability to work in a wide variety of cultural contexts. Appropriate security personnel for collaboration initiatives should be selected on a range of competencies that balance security and humanitarian experience. Ideally, security advisors should have some experience in humanitarian aid and be familiar with its challenges and the requirements of NGOs. In certain contexts, language skills are also a significant factor that should be considered to facilitate the inclusion of a wide range of NGOs and communication with local authorities and security actors.

A further consideration is whether initiatives should be staffed by international or national security personnel. National security staff can offer greater contextual knowledge and understanding, and better access to local information sources than their international colleagues, which will certainly be an asset to the initiative. However, finding suitable national staff with sufficient security management capacity can be difficult. In addition, sensitivities surrounding security information in some contexts may mean that national security staff face significant difficulties in accessing information from certain international actors, and may be the target of interference and threats from local authorities or factions. Ideally, staff should include a balance of international and national security advisors, to ensure access to different actors, preserve the initiative's neutrality and independence, and to increase participation by, and support to, both international and national NGOs.

The lead or host agency will often be responsible for sourcing and managing the recruitment of a security consultant and security advisors for the initiative. However, finding suitably experienced security personnel is a significant challenge. In general, there is a major shortage of NGO- experienced security staff within the sector and, with increasing need for security staff in the field, positions within many collaborative initiatives have remained unfilled for long periods of time. In order to attract appropriate security advisors, the lead or host agency may need to widen its normal recruitment searches and consider advertising positions through various professional security networks or organisations like RedR-IHE, which maintains a register of personnel with security competencies. To attract applicants, clear terms of reference or job descriptions must be developed which clearly states a position's role, responsibilities, tasks and reporting lines. For examples of a security consultant's ToR and a security advisor's Job Description, see Annexes 3 and 4.

Even where suitable security advisors are identified, attracting and retaining them can be problematic as security staff working within NGO structures will receive salaries which are substantially less than those available from UN agencies or private security companies in the same context. While NGO salaries cannot compete with these high rates, to attract and retain experienced staff it may be necessary to review the remuneration packages available,

and budget accordingly. However, it is important that recruitment practices and the remunerations available are handled in a transparent and professional manner.

Security advisors working within a collaborative structure will need to be employed as members of staff of the host or lead agency. As such, that agency's existing staff polices and procedures apply to them. In some cases it may be necessary to develop specific security procedures or amend certain policies for those security advisors involved in the security initiative, for example allowing them to travel to areas out of bounds to agency staff. The host agency's staff insurance cover may not apply in the security environment or area in which the initiative's security advisors are expected to operate. To ensure that those security advisors employed specifically for collaborative initiatives have adequate insurance cover, the host agency must clarify the extent of its current staff insurance policy and what possible restrictions apply.

3.7 Scope of Activities & Services

The wide range of activities and services that a security collaboration mechanism might provide to NGOs will depend on the nature of the mechanism, the capacity and resources available, and NGOs' need in that particular context.

3.7.1 Security & safety information

Awareness and understanding of important security developments, potential threats, and incidents that occur in the wider operating environment is essential, if NGOs are to limit the risk to their staff and programmes. Improving the flow of such security and safety information is a core function of any security collaboration mechanism, and as such is the most widely used and valued service that these initiatives provide.

While establishing an NGO security network can facilitate the exchange of security and safety information between participating agencies, the quality and accessibility of this information can be increased by engaging security advisors through a consortium initiative or by establishing an NGO security and safety office. Dedicated security advisors can provide NGOs with a range of security and safety information services, including:

- ❑ **convening security meetings** - security meetings are an important tool in the exchange of information. Security advisors can convene regular security meetings to brief NGOs on recent incidents, possible threats and additional factors that may have an impact on the security of NGOs. These meetings can also provide a forum in which discussions can take place on the overall security situation, and any particular concerns regarding the security approaches adopted by different NGOs. Although meetings should be focused on NGOs, additional security personnel from the UN, international military forces etc can be invited to participate. How often these meetings occur will depend on the security situation, the level of incidents and the availability of NGO staff; although weekly meetings are most common, they can be convened daily during particularly tense periods. Ideally, meetings should be convened both in the capital and at the field level through Regional Security Advisors. Separate meetings in local languages should also be considered to increase participation of national NGOs;

- ❑ **providing incident reports** - access to reliable and timely security incident reports will assist NGOs in identifying, analysing and reacting to changes in the security situation. Security advisors can collate information on security incidents that effect NGOs or other humanitarian agencies, or other events that indicate a significant change in security. After some initial investigation and confirming information with different sources, security advisors can prepare an incident report for distribution to NGOs. Initial reports on serious incidents should be distributed quickly by phone, SMS texts or radio through an established security tree/warden system. More

detailed incident reports and some basic advice should be distributed to NGOs by email as they occur;

❑ **issuing threat alerts** - based on particular incidents, or information received through credible sources and contacts established by security advisors, potential threats may be identified pertaining to a particular NGO, agencies working in certain locations, or the NGO community as a whole. Security advisors can issue advisory warnings to the NGOs involved or to all agencies concerning these possible threats as information is received;

❑ **producing regular security reports** - security advisors can distribute a summary report of relevant security incidents to NGOs to assist in their analysis and monitoring of the security situation. The frequency of these reports will depend on the level of incidents; weekly or bi-monthly bulletins are most common. These reports should contain information on various incidents, some limited analysis and basic advice to NGOs. It is important that the reports contain a disclaimer which outlines the limitations of the information provided and stresses that although some advice is provided, security decisions and precautions to be taken are the responsibility of the each agency; and

❑ **developing resource material** - additional security and safety information and resource materials can be developed by security advisors to help NGOs manage the security and safety of their staff. For example, a 'Road Book' could be produced which includes essential contact information and relevant reference points (i.e. NGO project locations, checkpoints, hospitals, police stations, fuel stations etc) to assist NGOs in case of emergencies or problems on the road.

Security collaboration mechanisms should strive for openness and transparency in the information they provide to NGOs. However, in some contexts, security advisors may need to limit the information that is distributed or provided in a public forum, as it may compromise the neutral perception of the security mechanism and its staff, or lead to security advisors being accused of intelligence gathering. In other situations, it may be important to maintain the confidentiality of the source or NGO involved. While the exact details of an incident may need to remain confidential, or security advisors may need to limit the extent of the analysis that can be provided in reports distributed, some basic facts must still be shared amongst agencies to forewarn them of potential threats.

NGOs often complain that information shared in such fora lacks details and sufficient analysis. Equally, however, experience demonstrates that NGOs will ignore excessively detailed security reports if there is too much information to digest. To find a balance, security advisors should consult with NGOs about the type of information required, its format and the most appropriate method of distribution. Many initiatives distribute regular security and incident reports by email through mailing lists, although it is vital that the email distribution system is carefully managed to ensure that NGOs are in fact receiving the information. Distribution lists can quickly expand to become difficult to manage, and lose control over the information distributed. Agreed criteria should be established for NGO and other organisations' inclusion on the mailing list, and how many email addresses per agency are allowed. Individuals named on the list should be regularly reviewed, as agency staff will change regularly and may cause an organisation to miss out on important information.

3.7.2   Incident reporting, data collection & mapping

It is essential that individual agencies have systems in place to record security incidents in order to monitor patterns and trends and so to better understand the security situation in their context. While there have been some improvements in agencies' internal reporting systems, this level of analysis by NGOs is still rare as staff lack the information, capacity and time to undertake such examinations. In addition, few collective systems exist where

important information on trends and threat patterns can be distributed amongst agencies in the field. A security collaboration mechanism can provide a central point to which all incidents can be reported. Mechanisms with dedicated security advisors can facilitate analysis of security incidents and support NGOs in their decision making, including:

❑ **establishing a centralised incident data collection system** - security advisors can establish and manage an incident database where incidents reported by NGOs, as well as other organisations, are recorded and mapped. Various data collection and mapping software is available which can reduce the time taken to input data, and improve the presentation of information to NGOs. Such software can be expensive but Microsoft Excel or Access can be used as a basic alternative if funds are limited; and

❑ **providing information on security threats** - in addition to providing an accessible, up-to-date picture of the security situation in the field, such databases should enable security advisors to provide information on security threats. Security advisors can produce ad hoc reports highlighting trends in security threats over a certain period, for example the type of incidents occurring, and their frequency, severity, location, and timing, which will enable NGOs to develop a broader understanding of risks to their staff and programmes.

Of course, the quality of this data and analysis is dependent on NGOs keeping security advisors informed of incidents, and providing them with detailed incident reports. Security advisors must continually raise awareness of the importance of incident reporting, and actively encourage NGOs to do so. Some NGOs will remain reluctant to report incidents, or there may be confusion over what incidents to report, to whom, and in which format. Security advisors must develop incident reporting protocols to provide clear guidance on what incidents or 'near miss' incidents (an event that, either through luck or appropriate procedures, narrowly avoided becoming a incident) should be reported, to whom, in which format, and what key information that should be included. In some situations it may be useful to develop a standard format for incident reporting, in order to foster a common reporting language and enable security advisors to collate and distribute information more easily.

3.7.3   Security & safety management support

While larger NGOs generally have extensive measures in place to ensure safe and secure working conditions for their staff, many agencies lack even the most basic security procedures. Given the wide range of agencies now operating in insecure environments, some NGO managers lack the awareness, or the security management experience, necessary to deal with the evolving security challenges faced in some contexts. Where security plans and procedures do exist, they are often weak and ineffective because management staff have not undertaken the risk assessments necessary to ensure that plans and procedures are relevant to the context and the threats that exist.

Establishing a security collaboration mechanism with dedicated security advisors can assist NGOs in strengthening their own security and safety management capacity. Security advisors can draw on their experience and awareness of the security situation to help NGOs establish effective security plans and procedures. It must be made clear that the responsibility for implementing these security measures remains with the individual NGOs. Security advisors can provide a range of security and safety management support to NGOs, including:

❑ **providing security planning support** - security advisors can review existing security procedures and policies of NGOs, as requested, and make recommendations to further enhance staff security. In addition, security advisors may provide generic templates to assist NGOs in developing comprehensive security and safety plans specific to their agency;

❑ **undertaking field assessments** - NGOs looking to expand their operations into new areas may be unclear of the security situation, or concerned about security risks in locations in which they are already present. Security advisors may be able to provide additional support to these NGOs by undertaking security assessments of potential or existing programme areas as requested;

❑ **conducting site security & safety assessments** - at the request of NGOs, security advisors can visit the offices, residences, or programme sites of NGOs to assess and advise on the overall security and safety of the site, the choice of location, its physical structure and accessibility, and the security measures adopted. Alternatively, security staff can conduct awareness training or provide information and checklists on site security issues to enable NGO staff to assess the security of their own sites; and

❑ **organising staff security briefings** - security advisors can provide, on request, security briefings for new agencies looking to establish programmes or newly appointed NGO staff or visitors. If there is a high turnover of staff, or frequent agency visitors, briefings could be organised as regular events for a group of NGO staff or as part of a wider country orientation process with other agencies.

Providing this level of security management support to NGOs, however, can be a significant drain on an initiative's resources and staff time. This could affect other services and support it provides. Experience has shown that the more services an initiative offers to NGOs, the greater the demands and reliance NGOs place on this support, especially during periods of heightened insecurity or following a major incident. During these times, requests for security advisors to look at an NGO's security plan and procedures, assess the security of their office, or visit their project area, will undoubtedly increase. It is important to ensure that an initiative has sufficient staff capacity to provide this range of support or, if necessary, to limit some of these services in order to ensure that the security collaboration mechanism meets the expectations of NGOs.

3.7.4 Inter-agency telecommunications

Effective communications are vital for the safety and security of NGO staff in insecure environments. While NGOs must ensure they have effective internal communication systems in place to allow the flow of security information and enable staff movements to be monitored, there must also be systems set up to facilitate communication between agencies in the field. These allow NGOs to alert others, or be alerted in the event of potential insecurity. The importance of these inter-agency telecommunications systems is widely recognised, and networks are frequently demanded by NGOs in the field. However, establishing and maintaining these systems is challenging, and requires a particular agency or body to take the lead. An NGO security collaboration mechanism can play an important role in facilitating inter-agency communications, including:

❑ **establishing a security tree/warden systems** - such communication pyramids aim to make the dissemination of security information and alerts more effective. Security advisors can establish and manage a system whereby NGOs are alerted to security incidents or potential threats by voice or SMS texts. Such systems require constant management to ensure that they work effectively, that contact details are updated frequently, and that the system is tested regularly to identify potential problems. In contexts with a large number of NGOs present, the security tree should be divided in to sub-groups, with selected NGOs taking the lead in maintaining the security tree below them. This will minimise the number of calls to be fielded by security advisors, and ensure that all NGOs participating in the system receive the information;

❑ **facilitating NGO radio network** - security advisors can assist in establishing an NGO radio network for emergency communications, by liaising with NGOs and UN agencies to develop common HF and VHF security channels, distributing frequencies

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to NGOs, and developing protocols and procedures for the network to ensure disciplined radio use; and

❑ **providing telecommunications support** - on request, security advisors can review an NGO's existing telecommunication systems and procedures, and make recommendations for improvement. In addition, security advisors can advise NGO staff on appropriate communications equipment, the licensing process and possible restrictions that apply in that context, and guidance on developing suitable protocols and procedures.

3.7.5 Crisis management

Even with effective security plans and procedures in place, there is no guarantee that security incidents will not occur. In the event of an incident, NGOs and their staff must be prepared to react appropriately to ensure that the impact is minimised. NGOs must ensure that they have effective contingency plans in place which will assist staff in responding appropriately to an incident. Despite this need, in various contexts many NGOs do not have contingency plans in place. Amongst NGOs that have developed contingency plans, there is often confusion over the support that would be available to them during a crisis; some NGOs have unrealistic expectations of support from the UN or other actors concerning evacuation of their staff. A security collaboration mechanism with dedicated security advisors can support NGOs in preparing for and managing crisis situations, including:

❑ **providing contingency planning support** - security advisors can assist NGOs, as requested, in developing or reviewing their existing contingency plans to deal with specific risks that exist in that context. In addition, security advisors can provide generic templates, standard guidance, and emergency contact details and information on services and support available in that area to assist NGOs in developing comprehensive contingency plans and guidance to staff in responding to a serious incident, e.g. evacuating or relocating staff; medical emergencies; and staff abduction, or kidnapping; and

❑ **facilitating in-extremis support** - in critical situations where NGO staff are in need of emergency relocation/evacuation or medical support, security advisors can assist in liaising with, and coordinating responses with the UN, international military forces or air charter companies, depending on the extent of support available in that context.

The extent of crisis management support a security advisor can provide to NGOs will have limitations. It is important that these limitations are clearly explained to NGOs to avoid misunderstandings or unrealistic expectations. Crisis management support by security advisors should be limited to contingency planning and facilitating the response of those who are able to assist. Security advisors should not be expected to provide crisis response for NGOs for example entering insecure situations and evacuating NGO staff. Not only are there limits to the risks that security advisors should be exposed to, but expectations of this level of support may expose individuals or the host agency to possible liability in the event of a serious incident. NGOs have a duty of care and responsibility to their staff, and are therefore ultimately responsible for responding to crisis situations involving their personnel.

3.7.6 NGO liaison

Regular liaison with a wide range of different actors is vital for NGOs to gather information on the security situation, specific incidents and potential threats. While the exchange of security information between NGOs and the UN is often limited, access to information from other security actors can be even more challenging. For example, international military forces can be reluctant to liaise with individual NGOs, preferring to work with recognised focal points due to the sheer volume of requests for information. In other contexts, NGOs may be uncomfortable with developing relationships with certain security actors due to the

way in which the NGOs may be perceived by other actors or by their beneficiaries, and the risks such cooperation may generate. NGO security collaboration mechanisms can act as a focal point for wider security liaison and information sharing between NGOs, the UN and various security actors. Mechanisms with dedicated security advisors can strengthen NGO security liaison in a number of ways, including:

❑ **liaising with UNDSS** - security advisors can work with UNDSS and security staff from other UN agencies to foster a productive working relationship that facilitates the sharing of security information and reports, and discuss the security concerns of NGOs. Security advisors can also develop formal relationship with UNDSS in line with the ISAC document 'Saving Lives Together' whereby security advisors may participate within the UN Security Management Team meetings; and

❑ **liaising with security actors** - security advisors can assist NGOs in building links with respective national security forces, including police and military, international military forces, private security companies and other security actors present in their context. These relationships can be developed to support the gathering of security information and verification of reports of incidents and possible threats, and to convey the security concerns of NGOs. Security advisors can also liaise with international military forces regarding the availability of possible in-extremis support to NGOs in case of medical emergency or evacuation.

Despite the benefits of liaising with a range of security actors on security issues, there are also risks involved. Due to their political agendas, close cooperation with certain actors, could undermine the independence of an initiative in the eyes of NGOs and other actors. In addition, there may be misunderstandings as to the aims of such relationship building. Relationships between security advisors and international military forces or other security actors must be developed solely for the purpose of information exchange and facilitating possible in-extremis support. All relationships must be carefully managed to ensure they remain transparent and impartial, and that there is no real or perceived compromise to an initiative's independence.

While the security collaboration mechanism has a clear advocacy role in raising awareness of security issues within the NGO community, it should not act as a representative of the NGO community on political issues associated with access, security and protection. These issues should be raised through more appropriate structures and bodies. Whenever an initiative is conveying the security concerns of NGOs to authorities and other security actors, it must clearly state which particular NGOs it is representing.

Great care must also be taken in liaising with the media. It is important that security advisors develop relationships with international and national media as it can be a valuable source of security information. Equally, however, an initiative will be an excellent source of information for journalists. There have been a number of examples where information distributed by an initiative has ended up in the press, or security advisors have been quoted as a source. The future of an initiative can be seriously jeopardised if the authorities or other security actors are unhappy with such media reports.

3.7.7 Security & safety training

Security and safety training is a fundamental element in improving the awareness and management capacity of NGO staff. Some larger NGOs have developed comprehensive security and safety training programmes for their staff, and a number of agencies make use of the security and safety training provided by external training organisations such as RedR-IHE or Bioforce when these events are available. On the whole, however, access to security and safety training for the vast majority of NGO staff is still rare. NGO security collaboration

mechanisms can play an important role in enhancing the skills and awareness of NGO staff by facilitating security and safety training in the field, including:

❑ **providing personal security & safety training** - security advisors can organise periodic training sessions for NGO programme staff. This training could include context-specific sessions on issues such as: site security measures; vehicle safety and travel; fire safety; basic first aid; and communications. Training could also cover specific threat awareness such as mines, IEDs or kidnapping. Additional focussed training could be provided for specific groups of NGO staff such as drivers or guards. In providing training, security advisors can make use of existing security training resources available in the sector, for example the DG ECHO Security Training Manual, which provides generic security training modules including session plans, presentations, group exercises, and handouts that security advisors can modify to make specific to the risks that exist in the field; and

❑ **facilitating security management workshops** - those NGO staff with management responsibilities for security - Programme Managers, Country Representatives, senior field staff – should have access to more specialised training in order to enhance their overall security management capacity. The security collaboration mechanism can facilitate focused security management workshops, in conjunction with specialised security training providers, which would enable NGO staff to become familiar with overall security management approaches, and develop key skills associated with context analysis, risk assessment, security planning, crisis management, and incident analysis. These inter-agency workshops will also provide an opportunity for senior NGO managers to share concerns and discuss different approaches to more effectively manage the security of their personnel, programmes and assets.

Despite the high demand from NGOs for security and safety training, the level of training a security mechanism can provide will depend on the initiative's staffing structure and the training capacity of its security advisors. Providing this level of training support to NGOs – including undertaking a training needs assessment in consultation with NGOs, developing sessions and training materials, arranging suitable venues, and attracting participants - can be a significant drain on an initiative's resources and staff time. This could affect other services and support it provides. Providing effective security and safety training requires significant staff investment; in contexts with a large number of NGOs and a high demand for training, security collaboration mechanisms should consider having a dedicated training officer, or provide training in collaboration with training organisations, to alleviate the burden on security advisors.

3.8 Maintaining momentum

Unfortunately, recent experiences have demonstrated that NGO security collaboration mechanisms will not be sustained without continual maintenance. Even the best executed initiatives risk losing momentum, and over time will struggle to sustain the initial energy, enthusiasm and resource commitments of participating NGOs. Maintaining the initiative's governing body, and ensuring that it remains relevant by providing the level of support and direction required, is particularly challenging. As key individuals and proponents of the initiative move on, or perceptions of the level of insecurity changes, the governing body can lose its impetus. Meetings may gradually become more ad hoc, or be cancelled due to the availability of members, as other priorities take over and NGO staff become unable to devote the time and effort the initiative needs. To prevent the governing body from becoming ineffective, it is important that it is regularly review and evaluated, and that members discuss the efficiency of the current structure and its role in order to determine any changes needed. Over time, it is likely that adjustments will need to be made to the governing body, its membership and associated responsibilities, and its relationship with the host agency and the initiative's internal management, to ensure that it continues to function effectively.

The momentum of a security collaboration mechanism will also be affected by high turnover of security staff involved and the subsequent loss of institutional memory. Recruiting security advisors with appropriate skills takes time and often, due to poor recruitment planning, there is no time for a proper handover between outgoing staff and their replacements. This may be further complicated by a lack of standard protocols or procedures to guide new staff in their role and ensure consistency in the activities undertaken and services provided. As a result, a new security advisor will spend significant time developing an awareness of the context, security situation and different actors involved, rebuilding relationships with sources and NGOs, and understanding the responsibilities and procedures associated with their new role. An effective knowledge transfer process, including inductions, briefing documents and handovers, is critical to ensure new staff are adequately informed about the context and their role. If staff are new to the sector then additional orientation or training on humanitarian principles, the different agencies involved and their security approach should be provided. Operational protocols and procedures, and examples of good practice, and must be formally documented to retain institutional memory and ensure a consistent quality of service to NGOs

The NGO community's interest and engagement in the initiative will fluctuate with changes in their perceptions of the level of insecurity in a particular context; when the security situation deteriorates or there is a serious incident directly affecting NGOs, this will result in more agencies attending security meetings, more security incidents reported to security advisors, and an increased demand for security information. However, this level of interest is often not sustained as incidents become less frequent or agencies become desensitised to them. While these fluctuations in NGO interest and engagement are inevitable, to maintain agency buy-in it is vital that regular consultations are undertaken with NGOs in order to ensure that the initiative remains relevant to the security situation and the concerns of the NGOs it supports. An initiative's governing body and security advisors should organise regular consultation meetings or workshops with all NGOs, and commission external reviews, to examine how the mechanism is functioning and assess whether it is achieving its aims and objectives.

3.9 Exit planning

It is bad practice to embark on any initiative without a clear idea of when, and under what circumstances, it can be phased out or handed over to others. Determining a coherent exit strategy in the early stages of a security collaboration mechanism is difficult due to uncertainties in the security situation, and that there may be indications of continued or even increased need for the initiative into the foreseeable future. That said, it is obvious that an initiative cannot continue indefinitely. When an initiative is being established, consideration must be given to which circumstances would cause the initiative to close down, reduce its size and/or activities, or be handed over to other agencies or coordination structures.

A number of factors will determine whether a security collaboration initiative winds down, or whether changes are required to the mechanism's structure and/or the services it provides. If there is significant improvement in the security situation or a large reduction in the number of NGOs present, then it may be difficult to justify the continuation of an initiative in its present form. The lead or host agency may no longer be willing, or able, to provide support, therefore the initiative must either seek a new host, or be merged into an existing coordination structure, in order to carry on. Changes in donor funding priorities may result in a reduction in, or end to, funds available to the initiative, therefore it must either down-scale or seek alternative funding to continue. Ensuring that a mechanism can adapt to such changes in membership, leadership or funding requires planning in the early phases of an initiative. This planning process must consider how the possible closure, reduction in activities, or handover of the initiative would be conducted in consultation with all NGOs involved, and that the

process is transparent and accountable. Failing to plan and budget for changing or closing an initiative will create confusion which may undermine the achievements of the initiative. Good exit planning is essential not only for the success of an existing initiative, but to engender continued support for these vital security collaboration mechanisms in the future.

4 Information about this Guide

4.1 Acknowledgments

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4.2 About the author

This guide was developed by Shaun Bickley on behalf of The Evaluation Partnership (www.evaluationpartnership.com). Following many years managing humanitarian programmes in conflict areas, Shaun Bickley now works as an independent security consultant and trainer to humanitarian agencies, advising on staff security and safety issues, strengthening organisational security management provision, developing security guidance and training materials, and providing security training to staff.

4.3 List of organisations consulted

We are grateful to the following organisations for their co-operation and participation in the development of this guide. These organisations either responded to the questionnaire that was distributed, or were consulted during telephone or face-to-face interviews.

ACTED - Agence d'Aide à la Coopération Technique Et au Développement

ACF - Action Contre la Faim

ADRA International

Afghanistan NGO Safety Office

Agency Coordinating Body for Afghan Relief

African Humanitarian Action

AMI - Aide Medical Internationale

ACP - Assemblea de Cooperació per la Pau

AMI - Assistência Médica Internacional

AVSI - Associazione Voluntari

CARE International

Catholic Relief Services

Chemonics International

Christian Aid

CSIP - Comitato Internazionale per lo Sviluppo dei Popoli

CAM - Comité d'Aide Médicale

Concern Worldwide

Control Risks

COOPI - Cooperazione Internazionale

Cordaid

Danish Church Aid

Danish Refugee Council

DFID - Department for International Development

EC Delegation to Afghanistan

FAO - Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

German Agro Action

GVC - Gruppo di Volontariato Civile

Hammer FOrum e.V

Handicap International

Help Hilfe zur Selbsthilfe e.V.

Hilfswerk Austria

HPCR - Security Management Initiative

Initiative Développement

InterAction

International Committee of the Red Cross

ICVA - International Council of Voluntary Agencies

International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

IMC - International Medical Corps

IOM - International Organization for Migration

IRC - International Rescue Committee

Johanniter International

Malteser International

MDM - Médicins Du Monde (Greece)	Ockenden International	Tearfund
Medair	Overseas Development Institute	THW - Technisches Hilfswerk
Medico International	PACTEC - Partners in Technology International	UNDSS - United Nations Department of Safety & Security
Mercy Corps	Polish Humanitarian Organisation	UNHCR - United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
Merlin	Première Urgence	
MPDL - Movimiento por la Paz, el Desarme y la Libertad	RedR-IHE	UNOCHA - United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
MSF - Médecins Sans Frontières (Holland)	SIRS - Safety Information Reporting Service	WFP - United Nations World Food Programme
NGO Coordination Committee in Iraq	Save the Children Denmark	VSF - Vétérinaires Sans Frontières (Germany)
NGO Security Preparedness and Support - Somalia	Save the Children UK	World Vision International
	Save the Children USA	
NGO-VOICE	SDC - Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation	
Norwegian Refugee Council	TDH - Terre Des Hommes	

4.4 Funding

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4.5 Copyright

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4.6 Software & languages

This Guide is available in pdf and Word formats and in English, French, Spanish and Arabic.

4.7 Further copies

Further copies of this guide may be requested by e-mail from ECHO-NGO-Security@ec.europa.eu or downloaded from DG ECHO's website: http://ec.europa.eu/echo/evaluation/security_review_en.htm.

Annex 1 Inter-Agency Standing Committee 'Saving Lives Together - A Framework for improving Security Arrangements among IGOs, NGOs and the UN in the Field'[41]

1. Collaboration in the UN Security Management Team with Participation of NGOs/ and IGOs

a) That IGOs, NGOs, and the Red Cross Movement may participate in relevant meetings of the UN Security Management Team (SMT) on an ex-officio[42], representative basis.

b) That UN/NGO/IGO Security Collaboration be taken as a regular agenda item at UN Security Management Team meetings. As permitted within the framework of the UN Security Management System, consideration should be given to inviting Senior Managers of the NGO and IGO Communities to attend relevant portions of Security Management Team meetings.

c) That Protocols for sharing and dissemination of information discussed in Security Management Team meetings shall be agreed to in advance by all parties in attendance.

d) That where appropriate, the Designated Official (DO) should coordinate security decisions with non-UN humanitarian actors.

e) That IGO/NGO partners to UN organizations in specific humanitarian operations select among themselves one or a limited number of field security focal points.

2. Convening broad-based forums for field security collaboration and information sharing

a) That fora for practical security collaboration among all humanitarian actors at area, country and sub-office level be convened, at regular intervals, in order to address practical security issues of common concern.

b) That the fora may include the following regular participants:

- DO / FSO / Area Security Coordinator or other DO Designee;
- Members of the SMT as appropriate;
- NGO field security focal point(s);
- Representatives of IGOs;
- Representatives of the Red Cross Movement;
- The chairperson may be chosen on a rotating basis.

c) That the fora may include topics of discussion, such as:

- The exchange of security related information;
- Incident reports;
- Security and trend analysis;
- Joint operational planning, as appropriate;
- Protocols for the sharing and further dissemination of information and documents presented or discussed.

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[41] Developed by IASC Task Force on Collaborative Approaches to Security's Sub-Working Group chaired by InterAction and UNICEF in close liaison with the UNDSS, May 2006.
[42] Ex officio here refers to the fact that representatives of non-UN organizations are not bound by, nor participate formally in, SMT decisions on UN security policy.

3. Including Staff Security Concerns in the Consolidated Appeals

That structured efforts to include well conceived and developed UN / NGO / IGO security projects within CAPs to cover the additional resources potentially required for enhanced collaboration on staff security by UN Agencies and NGOs / IGOs, such as telecommunications and security training.

4. Meeting Common Security-Related Needs and Sharing Resources

That whilst recognizing that individual NGOs' financial resources are often more modest than those of the UN or IGOs, their contributions are nonetheless needed and that consideration should be given to what resources could be made available to help address common security related needs.

That UN organizations and their IGO/NGO partners, committed to security collaboration in each specific humanitarian operation, participate, to the extent feasible and based on the extent of their involvement, in meeting the uncovered, security-related needs of the humanitarian community.

5. Sharing Resources

That UN organizations and their IGO/NGO partners cooperating in humanitarian field operations, develop a local inventory for the sharing of their specialized, security-related human and material resources.

6. Facilitating Inter-Agency Security and Emergency Telecommunications.

That telecommunication among UN organizations and their IGO/NGO partners at field level be facilitated by:

a) The DO advocating with the relevant authorities for the use of telecommunication equipment within the framework of existing international agreements;

b) The relevant UN body negotiating with the authorities a common, inter-agency frequency to facilitate greater interoperability for security collaboration for UN organizations and IGO/NGO operating in the same area without denying the need for agencies to have their own internal and integral communications infrastructure;

c) Humanitarian actors committing to security collaboration using standard communication procedures and, to the extent possible, providing staff with compatible communication systems.

7. Collaborating and Consulting in Security Training

That all UN organizations and their IGO/NGO partners at HQ and at field level:

a) Carry out joint security training in collaboration and/or consultation with other agencies to the extent possible;

b) When feasible, pool necessary resources to conduct field security training;

c) Seek to increase their capacity for security training at all levels;

d) Give consideration to the development of training packages that focus specifically on improving security collaboration.

8. Sharing Information

That security-related information be shared among UN organizations and their IGO/NGO partners while respecting the humanitarian character of the participants as well as the confidentiality required when dealing with sensitive information.

9. Identifying Minimum Security Standards

That UN organizations and their IGO/NGO partners jointly identify and agree on how to apply minimum security standards, principles, and/or guidelines adapted to local circumstances. In so doing, humanitarian actors will take into consideration already existing standards, principles, and/or guidelines for example the UN MOSS (Minimum Operational Security Standards) that are binding for the members of the UN system and InterAction's Security Planning Guidelines.

10. Seeking Adherence to Common Humanitarian Ground-Rules

That the security collaboration of the UN organizations and their IGO/NGO partners in specific field operations, to the extent possible, rest on respect for common, locally developed ground-rules for humanitarian action.

Annex 2 Example Terms of Reference for NGO Security Collaboration Mechanism's Governing Body

Title of the governing body:

The [*initiative title*] governing body shall be called the [*governing body title*].

Role of the governing body:

The primary objective of the [*governing body title*] is to provide strategic guidance and coherence to [*initiative title*], and make suggestions to [*initiative title*] to help to improve the relevance and impact of the support it provides to NGOs. The [*governing body title*] will:

- Discuss and make recommendations on strategic direction and policy issues, including the aims and objectives of [*initiative title*] and the scope of activities and services it provides to NGOs;

- Discuss and make recommendations on other issues that its members consider to be of importance to [*initiative title*];

- Support and advise on the logistic requirements of the [*initiative title*], sources and means of financial support, and advocate with donors for funding, if required;

- Solicit feedback from participating NGOs and, where necessary, recommend actions to increase the effectiveness and impact of [*initiative title*];

- Initiate regular reviews of [*initiative title's*] progress towards objectives and implementation of activities, and where necessary recommend changes to the [*initiative title*] work plan;

- Review the need for specialised working groups on selected topics, and recommend the establishment of such groups, and their membership and terms of reference; and

- Discuss and make recommendations on any matter involving an alteration in the terms of reference, membership or structure of the [*governing body title*].

The [*governing body title*] cannot make binding decisions, either on behalf of the [*initiative title*], [*host agency*], or on behalf of other stakeholders.

Governing body membership:

- Membership of the [*governing body title*] is open to representatives of participating NGOs;

- The [*governing body title*] shall consist of no fewer than 5 and no more than 12 individuals;

- The [*governing body title*] shall consist of a minimum of a chair, deputy chair, secretary and two ordinary members;

- The [*governing body title*] shall elect its chair, deputy chair and secretary. The deputy chair takes the role of the chair when the chair is not present. If neither the chair nor deputy chair are present at a [*governing body title*] meeting, the members present shall elect one of their number to act as chair at that meeting; and

- Upon accepting appointment to the [*governing body title*], members commit themselves to ensuring the complete objectivity and transparency of the [*governing body title*]. The [*governing body title*] members must avoid the appearance of conflict of interest, or undue influence.

Governing body responsibilities:

- The chair is responsible for convening meetings and ensuring that they are properly

conducted. Meetings will normally take place [*monthly/quarterly*] in a place and at a time that is convenient for members;

- The chair may convene meetings at other times where it is the consensus opinion of the [*governing body title*] that it is necessary to do so;

- The secretary is responsible for ensuring that the agenda of the meeting is made available to the members in good time before the meeting, and preparing minutes and reporting recommendations to the [*initiative's title*];

- The [*governing body title*] members shall make every effort to be present at each [*governing body title*] meeting;

- The [*governing body title*] may decide (by consensus) to ask parties who are not members of the [*governing body title*] to participate in a meeting to provide relevant information, material or knowledge to the [*governing body title*];

- The [*governing body title*] chair, deputy chair and secretary shall act as focal points for contact between the [*governing body title*] and external organisations; and

- As a matter of principle, the [*governing body title*] must operate in a transparent manner. The [*governing body title*] shall maintain an official record of each [*governing body title*] meeting, which is made available to participating NGOs.

Annex 3   Example Terms of Reference for NGO Security Collaboration Initiative Consultancy

This consultancy is a feasibility and design study, where the consultant will:

- Design a collective NGO security & safety mechanism for [*country/area*];
- Draft and submit a concept note for consideration by NGOs; and
- Prepare a proposal for possible donor funding.

All activities are to be undertaken with guidance from the [*country/area*] NGO Working Group of participating NGOs. The consultant will provide intellectual and advisory services while using their professional skills to study, design and present a proposal on an NGO security collaboration mechanism. The consultant will advise [*lead agency*] and the NGO Working Group, and conduct awareness sessions with NGOs to inform them of the proposed initiative.

The consultant will:

- Research, create and write a proposal for a [*country/area*] security collaboration mechanism that is specifically relevant to NGOs and other humanitarian partners and stakeholders. This will be done in concert with [*lead agency*] and the NGO Working Group;
- Conduct background research on the [*country/area*] context and other NGO security collaboration initiatives worldwide;
- Within one week of arrival, provide [*lead agency*] and the NGO Working Group a draft work plan and schedule for performing the assignment;
- Quickly become familiar with [*country/area*] context, taking this into account when preparing the draft and final proposals for a collaborative security mechanism;
- Meet, discuss and listen to the perceived security management and security information needs of the NGOs, and consult with other stakeholders (UNDSS, OCHA, the [*country/area*] authorities, donors etc) as determined in close liaison with [*lead agency*] and the NGO Working Group;
- Define the real and perceived security threats to NGOs, their vulnerabilities, and gaps in NGO security management in [*country/area*] context, and define the main benefits/outputs sought from a potential NGO security collaboration initiative;
- Serve as a focal point for the NGO Working Group to advocate the establishment of a security initiative;
- Organise as required awareness sessions on the relative merits/benefits of collaborative security mechanisms to NGOs;
- Recommend to the NGO Working Group, and solicit feedback on, a potential security collaboration mechanism, outlining:
  - activities/services to be provided
  - staffing structure
  - suggested governance structure of the initiative
  - potential host NGO(s)
  - potential funding options & donor support
  - geographical coverage
  - administration, logistics & equipment requirements

- o potential obstacles and constraints
- o cost/budget & duration
- Determine, with the NGO Working Group, an appropriate concept note(s) for discussion with NGOs, potential donors, the [country/area] authorities, UNDSS etc.

[*lead agency*] will:

- Provide logistics and administrative support to the consultant for the duration of the contract, including accommodation, vehicle and air travel arrangements, office space, computer and internet access, printing and other services as identified and agreed; and
- Assist the consultant in setting up meetings with relevant stakeholders (donors, national and international NGOs, UN and IGOs, [*country/area*] local, regional and national authorities) to obtain information relevant to developing an NGO security collaboration mechanism proposal.

Outputs:

- The primary output of this consultancy is the delivery of a concept note for the proposed NGO security collaboration mechanism oriented to [*country/area*]'s unique context and the security needs of NGOs;
- The consultant will also prepare a proposal for possible donor funding of the NGO security collaboration mechanism; and
- Electronic copies of relevant documentation, reports, briefs, and background materials appropriate to the NGO security collaboration mechanism will be supplied to [*lead agency*] and the NGO Working Group.

Reporting:

- The consultant shall report directly to [*lead agency*] Country Representative, liaising closely with the NGO Working Group; and
- The consultant shall send timely, concise weekly reports to [*lead agency*] and the NGO Working Group for the duration of the contract. If such communication is impossible, the consultant will verbally inform the [*lead agency*] Country Representative or their delegate with updated information.

Annex 4 Example Job Description for NGO Security Advisor

The NGO Security Advisor is a full time position based in [*location*] with frequent travel throughout [*country/area*]. The primary goal of this position is to provide specialised, coordinated and focused security management support to NGOs to enable them to reduce the risks posed to their staff and programmes in [*country/area*].

Reporting:

The NGO Security Advisor will report and be accountable to the NGO Governing Body. S/he will directly supervise the Security Officer(s) and other support staff, who will report directly to the Security Advisor. The NGO Security Advisor is responsible for developing job descriptions for the Security Officer(s) and support staff.

Responsibilities:

- Gather, analyse and report upon information and incidents that could impact the security of NGO staff and programmes operating in [*country/area*];
- Establish and maintain a central incident reporting system and database, and ensure that up-to-date incident data and maps are available for NGOs on a regular basis;
- Develop and maintain an effective communications pyramid to ensure that reliable and accurate information on security incidents and threats are effectively disseminated to NGOs;
- Develop and maintain a routine weekly reporting format which includes a summary of security incidents as well as a synopsis of relevant political and military developments which have an impact on the security situation;
- Conduct a routine weekly security meeting to review developments and discuss common issues;
- Develop and maintain good working relationships with UNDSS Security Management Team, in line with the IASC document 'Saving Lives Together - A Framework for improving Security Arrangements among IGOs, NGOs and the UN in the Field';
- Liaise with [*country/area*] authorities and community leaders to gather and verify security information on a regular basis;
- Liaise with international military forces to exchange information and raise NGO security concerns;
- Support NGOs in contingency planning and liaise with UN and international forces to define the extent of support avaible to NGOs in case of emergency medical treatment and/or evacuation;
- Advise NGOs on appropriate telecommunications systems and equipment, and provide guidance on developing suitable protocols and procedures to ensure disciplined use;
- Undertake site security assessments of NGO offices, residences, or programme sites, as requested, and advise on the overall security and safety of the site and the security measures adopted;
- Undertake security assessments of the programme areas and potential programme areas of NGOs, as requested, and provide informed recommendations on the security situation and level of risk;
- Undertake reviews of existing security procedures and policies of NGOs, as requested, and make recommendations to further enhance staff security;

- Develop and distribute security reference materials to help NGOs manage the security and safety of their staff;
- Consult with NGOs to determine their security training needs, and conduct or facilitate security training events for NGO staff;
- Provide security orientation/briefings for incoming or newly appointed NGO staff and visitors;
- Produce written monthly reports on activities for the NGO Governing Body; and
- Carry out any other work with regards to security of NGOs as identified by the NGO Governing Body.

Requirements:

- Proven security management experience in the context of UN or NGO humanitarian operations, including conducting security assessment, developing security plans and implementing security procedures;
- Programme management experience managing a team of international and national staff, including financial, logistics, monitoring and reporting experience;
- Experience of liaising with a wide range of security actors, relevant stakeholders and maintain information networks;
- Strong organisational interpersonal and communications skills;
- Good communication skills, both oral and written;
- Ability to work independently and as part of a team;
- Ability to work under pressure in an unstable security environment;
- Willing to travel around the country as required; and
- Willing to live in group housing with limited facilities.

Desired:

- Experience of developing, presenting and facilitating training;
- Knowledge of radio communication systems and equipment;
- Working knowledge of one or more additional languages (especially [*language*]); and
- Knowledge of [*country/area*] history and culture.

Annex 5 Bibliography

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