

Accessing the Inaccessible.

The Use of Remote Programming Strategies in Highly Insecure Countries to Ensure the Provision of Humanitarian Assistance. Iraq: A Case Study

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Abstract

Humanitarian assistance is coming under increasing threat as a result of the change in the global security environment. Underdevelopment, and its associated problems, is seen as a potential security threat to the West and as a result Western Governments have attempted to co-opt aid as a component of foreign policy, leading to the blurring of the distinction between the provision of aid for purely humanitarian reasons and the provision of aid for a political objective.

Aid agencies are increasingly concerned that their staff are the targets of violence in the areas where they work. Injuries and deaths are reported on a regular basis which in many instances has led to the agencies withdrawing and the cessation of humanitarian assistance to populations in need

The 2003 invasion of Iraq resulted in the collapse of the regime led by President Saddam Hussein, followed by a major change in power dynamics within the country, with the majority Shiites assuming power. The change in power dynamics has been a key factor causing the subsequent high levels of violence seen throughout the country.

The levels of violence in Iraq have seriously affected the ability of Non Governmental Organisations (NGOs) to provide much needed assistance to the civilian population. Rather than stopping assistance NGOs are adapting their working practices so that they operate through a series of remote programming strategies with international staff based outside of Iraq, and the national staff maintaining a low profile or working *incognito* within the country. This dissertation will examine the use of such remote programming strategies.

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I. Introduction

I.1. Context

In 2003 the US and its allies invaded Iraq and toppled the regime of Saddam Hussein. One of the results of the invasion was a reversal in power between the Sunnis and Shiites. Prior to the fall of Saddam Hussein the minority Sunni population held the balance of power. The complete reversal of power structures in the country has resulted in widespread insecurity, predominantly as a result of the establishment of a number of Sunni insurgent groups. These groups target US forces and their allies, Iraqi Government personnel, Iraqi police and Security forces and Shiite civilians. For a significant period of time the majority Shiite population did not respond to the daily reports of incidents targeted against them, primarily due to the proclamations of the Grand Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani to avoid violence. However, over recent months there has been a shift, Shiite groups are now retaliating to these acts of violence by committing further acts of violence against the Sunni population. A number of Shiite militia have been formed, some of these are reported to be attached to specific Government ministries, and are reported to target Sunni communities.

The security situation in Iraq is reported to be deteriorating on a daily basis. The country is becoming split along sectarian lines and there are claims that Iraq is on the verge of civil war. The consequences of this violence on civilians have been severe; there is widespread displacement and a significant deterioration in the humanitarian situation.

Iraq is now one of the most dangerous locations for the provision of humanitarian aid. The world was shocked when the office of the United Nations in Iraq was bombed in 2003, resulting in the death of 22 aid workers, including the UN special envoy, Sergio Vieira de Mello, with many others injured. The office of the ICRC was also bombed in 2003, with two Iraqi employees being killed. A number of aid workers have been kidnapped, including the head of delegation for CARE International who was subsequently killed. Many other agencies have also faced severe security incidents and threats.

The deteriorating security situation in Iraq has resulted in most non governmental organisations (NGOs) withdrawing their international staff to a neighbouring country (Jordan or Kuwait). National staff have become responsible for the day-to-day implementation of activities. Other agencies continued to operate, but through implementing partners to whom they provide funds and support. To ensure a level of security for their employees agencies now work in a low profile manner with no mention of the agency's name and no markings or emblems on vehicles. Aid workers do not carry equipment or papers that may identify them as working for an NGO and do not tell anyone for whom they work for fear of the possible repercussions. Being an aid worker, providing humanitarian assistance, is no longer a guarantee of safety.

The situation faced by aid workers in Iraq mirrors a worldwide concern held by NGOs who believe that they are now increasingly targeted in many of the volatile areas of the world. To date limited literature exists to corroborate this perception, the data that does exist does not necessarily support such a view, but it does show that the seriousness of incidents faced by humanitarian agencies is increasing.

Despite the fact that agencies have been working to improve their security management capacities, they are still unable to work in many of the most insecure areas of the world without exposing their staff to high levels of risk. Consequently agencies have been exploring ways of ensuring the provision of humanitarian aid even when the security situation precludes access to an area by international and national staff. An example of such a working methodology is the increasing trend for agencies to resort to remote programming strategies.

These strategies are not a new concept. They have been utilised in a number of insecure environments prior to Iraq (for example Chechnya, Afghanistan, Somalia). Remote programming strategies are a pragmatic approach to ensuring that the humanitarian imperative, by which many NGOs work, is met. The research presented in this study will show how NGOs operating in Iraq have used such remote programming strategies, as well

as a review of how NGOs could improve these strategies to ensure increased security of their staff and an improved effectiveness of aid.

I.2. The Research Question

Defining strategies to ensure the continued supply of effective assistance to communities in need who are living in highly insecure environments is one of the most pressing needs for agencies working in conflict and insecure post-conflict contexts. To analyse this challenge this study has been guided by the following research question:

How can aid be provided to communities living in highly insecure environments when the threat to aid workers is high and their presence in the field is either extremely limited or no longer possible?

I.3. Aims and Objectives

This research aims to explore the security context in which NGOs operate, and to define how agencies have adapted their working practices through using remote programming strategies. Conclusions will be drawn through the use of a case study and recommendations for improving work through remote programming strategies will be presented.

To achieve this aim the following objectives were identified:

- To explore the changes in the global security context and the subsequent impact on the humanitarian principles and humanitarian action.
- To define the remote programming strategies currently used by NGOs.
- To discuss the current security situation, as well as the humanitarian needs, in Iraq.
- To review the strategies used by NGOs in Iraq to ensure the continuation of their activities.
- To analyse the findings of the case study in order to define criteria which will assist NGOs determine whether they are capable of operating through a remote programming strategy or not.

I.4. Methodology and Research Issues

A detailed overview of the methodology and the issues faced during the research for this dissertation will be provided in Chapter Three. To date limited research, academic discussion, or practitioner debate has taken place on the subject of remote programming strategies. This review is therefore a novel piece of research which it is hoped will help stimulate debate and a review of current working practices of NGOs using such strategies.

I.5. Structure of the Study

This study has been divided in to five chapters, as detailed below;

Chapter One: The New Security Environment and Humanitarianism

This chapter explores the change in the global security environment following the end of the Cold War. Under-development and its associated problems were all seen as potential security threats to the West, and as such Western Governments sought to use aid as a means of improving security. The repercussions of these foreign policy objectives on humanitarianism are discussed. The chapter ends with a review of security management by NGOs.

Chapter Two: Insecurity in Iraq and its Impact on the Humanitarian Situation

This chapter presents definitions for the various remote programming strategies employed by NGOs, together with secondary case studies of South East Afghanistan and Northern Uganda where remote programming has been used by NGOs. A review of the current security situation in Iraq, and the humanitarian situation faced by civilians is also provided.

Chapter Three: Iraq: Operating Strategies Utilised by NGOs

This chapter provides a review of the methodology used in conducting this study, together with the research issues faced. This is followed by three case studies on the working methods used by three different NGOs currently operating in Iraq.

Chapter Four: Remote Programming Strategies in Iraq: An Analysis of Operating Requirements

This chapter provided an analysis of issues that NGOs should consider when working in Iraq through remote programming strategies. These issues could improve their ability to provide assistance, whilst also improving the security situation of those aid workers currently working in Iraq.

Chapter Five: Conclusions and Recommendations

This chapter highlights the key issues identified from the research conducted on remote programming strategies as discussed in the previous chapters. Recommendations are provided for agencies when considering whether to work through a remote programming strategy or not.

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This research is a result of the time I have spent living and working in a number of conflict and post-conflict countries, where access to civilians in need was often extremely difficult. I would like to thank my national and international colleagues from these countries for their hard work and dedication despite the risks they faced. I would particularly like to thank my friend and colleague, Mr. Amanullah Hotak, for his support, advice and wisdom during my two years of working in South-east Afghanistan, a time when security deteriorated and aid workers were increasingly targeted.

Lastly, I would like to thank my parents for their continued support and understanding during my time overseas and for worrying on my behalf when I am posted to an insecure country. This study is dedicated to them.

Author's Declaration

I declare that this dissertation is my own unaided work. It is being submitted for the degree of Master of Arts at the University of York. It has not been submitted for any degree or examination in any other University.

Colin Rogers

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Chapter One: The New Security Environment and Humanitarianism

1.1. Introduction

Following the end of the Cold War there have been significant changes in the global security environment. Underdevelopment and the problems associated with it (poverty, ill health, intra-state conflicts and their resulting population movements) are all seen as possible security threats to the western world. Governments in the developed nations have focussed on how humanitarian assistance can be used to decrease these potential security threats. A number of foreign policy initiatives have eroded the perception of the humanitarian principles by which NGOs attempt to work, blurring the line between humanitarian action and political intervention. A debated consequence of this has been a perceived increase in the targeting of humanitarian aid personnel, together with an increase in seriousness of these acts of violence.

Discussions on the role of security management in the working practices of NGOs have taken place widely in the humanitarian literature, although it appears that the recommendations and conclusions from these works have yet to be fully implemented by humanitarian agencies, although steps are being taken to resolve this.

1.2. The Change in Global Security Environment

Since the 1980s there has been an immense change in the global geopolitical landscape (Macrae and Leader, 2000a) which has had profound impacts on humanitarian assistance, and how the provision of such assistance is viewed by donor Governments.

During the Cold War period wars were seen positively, that they were anti-colonial struggles of national liberation movements (Duffield *et al*, 2001). International intervention in the internal affairs of states was limited due to the fact that the “sovereignty” of a state received unconditional respect (Macrae and Leader, 2000b), which together with the ideal of non-interference in the internal affairs of another state, reduced

the risk of direct confrontation between the superpowers (Macrae and Leader, 2000a). The superpowers had often established strategic alliances with countries in the developing world, providing investment (both military and developmental) which shaped the political and economic conditions (together with the proxy wars being fought in these regions) in much of the developing world (Macrae and Leader, 2000a).

Development assistance by Western Governments was politicised in order to support the security strategy of establishing and maintaining pro-Western political allies in the developing world (Duffield, 2001b). Developing countries were dependent on assistance provided by the superpowers, and this therefore provided the superpowers with a degree of control over these developing countries and also over the conflicts occurring. As the Cold War period came to an end, the need to support such countries reduced, whereby finally the superpowers no longer had a political need to have such alliances. Those involved in conflicts in the developing world had to find alternative sources of finance, resulting in the establishment of war economies (Macrae and Leader, 2000a).

The lack of sponsorship by the superpowers led to a loss of control over the conflicts, and since then an escalation in conflicts, which are characterised by a blurring of the distinction between war, organized crime and large scale violations of human rights (Kaldor, 1999) as well as dissolving the distinctions between peoples, armies and governments (Duffield, 2001b), has been observed. In contrast to the wars of the Cold War period, the goals of the new wars are about identity politics¹ and the claim to power on the basis of identity, and not the geopolitical or ideological goals seen during the Cold War (Kaldor, 1999).

The end of the Cold War meant that development could re-establish its earlier concerns with poverty and conflict, but at the same time security policy changed, coming to share concerns of development and the impact on state security (Duffield, 2001b). The post-Cold War disengagement from the developing world resulted in the loss of political leverage and power by the West on these “borderland” countries (a metaphor used by Duffield (2001a) for an imagined geographical space where the characteristics of brutality, excess and

¹ Identity politics – the use of ethnic, racial or religious identity as a means of obtaining power.

breakdown predominate) created a potential threat to the developed nations in The West, who have increasingly come to view the fact that underdevelopment itself poses security threats. In order to ensure their own security the developed nations have had to look at the causes of underdevelopment, and find ways of reducing the impact on their own security.

1.3. Humanitarian Aid

The objective of humanitarian aid is to save lives, alleviate suffering and maintain human dignity (www.merlin.org.uk). Such assistance is normally provided by Non Governmental Organisations (NGOs). In recent years there has been widespread discussion regarding the role of humanitarian aid, together with a re-evaluation by the NGOs as to how aid is provided, which will be discussed in the following sections.

1.3.1. Humanitarian Aid as a Tool of Foreign Policy

The changing nature of conflict has resulted in a redefinition of security whereby underdevelopment and poverty are considered to be a threat to international security through for example drug trafficking, the spread of terrorism and increased refugee flows (Curtis, 2001; Duffield, cited in Leader 2000:12) leading to increased engagement by the West with areas seen as underdeveloped. As a consequence development has been seen as a tool of foreign policy which can be used to improve national security. This is the concept of securitisation of aid which is described by Duffield *et al* (2002:8) as;

“...the use of aid as a strategic tool for non-elite conflict resolution and social reconstruction and/or mollifying the behaviour of elites. Aid securitisation implies that aid itself can play a security role through programmes that attempt, for example, to ‘build peace from below’ or ‘encourage positive attitudes’...”.

Activities which focus on poverty reduction, meeting basic needs, strengthening economic sustainability, supporting civil representation, protecting vulnerable groups and the promotion of human rights are all parts of this development strategy aimed at ensuring stability and therefore security (Duffield, 2001a). The integration of humanitarian assistance into Western foreign policy assumes a consequentialist ethic, such that if humanitarianism, peace and stability are linked, then all actors involved in these activities

have a role to play in achieving a positive outcome (Duffield *et al*, 2001). Foreign policy which deals with these issues of underdevelopment would improve the security situation for the developed nations. Consequently the security establishment is shifting its priorities away from a state-centric model to one where conflict prevention, the protection of sub-state groups, and individual human security are core values (Picciotto, 2004; Smith, 2005).

The link between development and security is now a declared position within most aid policies (Duffield, 2001a). This change in the understanding of security by the international community was indicated by the UN Secretary General with the publication of “An Agenda For Peace” (Boutros-Ghali, 1992), where security was redefined to include threats to stability posed, by amongst others, poverty, population growth and inequality (Macrae and Leader, 2000a). The Security Council was envisioned with the responsibility for maintenance of this human security. The report also suggested the possibility of limiting sovereignty, in contrast to the widely held belief of the Cold War period;

“The foundation-stone of this work is and must remain the State. Respect for its fundamental sovereignty and integrity are crucial to any common international progress. The time of absolute and exclusive sovereignty, however, has passed; its theory was never matched by reality. It is the task of leaders of States today to understand this and to find a balance between the needs of good internal governance and the requirements of an ever more interdependent world. Commerce, communications and environmental matters transcend administrative borders; but inside those borders is where individuals carry out the first order of their economic, political and social lives. The United Nations has not closed its door. Yet if every ethnic, religious or linguistic group claimed statehood, there would be no limit to fragmentation, and peace, security and economic well-being for all would become ever more difficult to achieve.” (Boutros-Ghali, 1992: paragraph 17).

This, in the opinion of Macrae and Leader (2000a), meant that aid policy makers could decide whether they should engage with particular countries at all and on what terms, as defenders of human rights, peace and prosperity.

In order to provide the West with the leverage and power that it had lost over developing countries at the end of the cold war Western donors have added conditions to the aid it supplies or funds, adherence to which ensures funding, non-adherence resulting in a lack of

funding. Such policies mean that those civilians in most desperate need of assistance may not receive it as a consequence of their Governments failure to meet any conditions specified, which is in direct conflict with the ideals of humanitarian action. The position of The UK Government was clearly stated by Peter Hain, at that time junior Foreign Office Minister for Africa, when he said "...[w]here African leaders show a real commitment to their people, we show a real commitment to them. But the reverse is true as well..."(Hain, cited in Macrae and Leader, 2000a:20).

The use of aid (including humanitarian aid), alongside political interventions such as sanctions and armed action, has become a tool of conflict management and has increased in prominence in recent years (Uvin, as cited in Macrae and Leader 2001:294). This thinking has led to the concept of New Humanitarianism whereby humanitarian action is seen as part of a comprehensive political strategy (Curtis, 2001).

1.3.2. New Humanitarianism

New Humanitarianism reflects the consequentialist ethics mentioned earlier and the possibility that humanitarian inaction may be judged as the best decision (Duffield, 2002). New humanitarianism is characterised by the integration of human rights and peace building in to humanitarian action ending the distinction between development and humanitarian relief, the principle of neutrality being rejected (Fox, 2001). According to Duffield *et al* (2001) New Humanitarianism implies a drive for coherence between the various actions.

Donor Governments have placed increased emphasis on the coherence agenda as they have increased their tendency towards providing support through bilateral funding² rather than through multilateral funding³. This bilateralisation is marked by the increasing earmarking of funds that have been destined for multilateral agencies, monitoring of donor-partner contracts together with the development of the donors' own operational capacity (justified

² Bilateral funding - Donors fund directly to agencies, but in order to receive funding agencies are required to fulfil specific Donor Government objectives

³ Multilateral funding – Donor Governments provide funding to an agency, such as the United Nations, which pools all the contributed funds. Disbursement is at the discretion of the agency.

by the belief that operational agencies have failed to account for their impact) (Curtis, 2001) There is a conditionality imposed on the agencies accepting bilateral funds, in much the same way as there are conditions imposed on the Governments of the Developing World.

The problem with the approach of new humanitarianism, with the associated conditionality, securitisation and coherence, is that the overarching principles of humanitarian action are ignored, or are even undermined by such policies. According to Curtis (2001) the expansion of the roles of humanitarian agencies (out of strictly humanitarian activities in to conflict management, peacebuilding and civil society programmes) has negative implications for them, and that these often expose the agencies to security risks, as well as deliberate targeting.

1.3.3. Humanitarian Principles

The humanitarian imperative is the prime driving force of humanitarian action, that human suffering demands a response, and is derived from an absolute morality whereby people deserve assistance simply because they need it (Leader, 2000). Humanitarian action is guided by a set of principles;

- **Principle of Impartiality** - implies that humanitarian action is provided on the basis of need, regardless of who the victim is.
- **Principle of Neutrality** - implies that an agency will not take sides in a conflict, and this enables humanitarian agencies to gain access to civilians in need on both sides. This principle is widely contested in humanitarianism, with agencies such as Médecins Sans Frontières delivering aid while bearing witness to what they see through their work.
- **Principle of Independence** - implies that humanitarian agencies act independently from Governments, and do not implement any policy on behalf of any Government.

1.3.4. Humanitarian Principles Under Threat

The increased involvement of foreign Governments in conflict situations is part of an overall attempt by the UN and donor Governments to ensure coherence between political and humanitarian objectives (Langenkamp, 2002), to ensure a joined up government approach to resolving issues that are now believed will ultimately impact on developed nations.

Conditionality, securitisation of aid and coherence policies all place the principles of humanitarian action under threat. Political objectives of donor could, through the conditions attached to bilateral funding, result in aid being provided on the basis of political objectives, rather than on the basis of an impartially assessed need (Duffield *et al*, 2001). These Governmental policies are the antithesis of the humanitarian principles and as such are a direct threat to the operating strategies of humanitarian agencies with the potential for dire consequences (increased security threats, difficulty in accessing areas of need) should these agencies be perceived to be associated with these policies and Government, i.e. if they are perceived to be partial, dependent and not neutral by parties to the conflict.

1.4. Insecurity - The Threat to NGOs

NGOs are now under increasing pressure to work in conflict areas, possibly as a consequence of the “CNN effect”⁴ (ECHO, 2004). The contexts in which humanitarian agencies now find themselves working, such as asymmetrical warfare⁵, have increased the risk to NGOs working in such conflict environments. The irregular, unpredictable and undisciplined nature of such warfare has complicated the security environment for NGOs (Burkle, 2005), whose staff face a number of threats when working (death and injury, harassment, intimidation, kidnapping, extortion, and long term psychological trauma) (Muggah and Berman, 2001).

⁴ CNN effect – A theory which claims that global news media, such as CNN and BBC, have become major actors in the determination of Government policies and actions.

⁵ Asymmetric warfare – Unconventional warfare perpetrated on nation-states and civilians by paramilitaries, guerrillas, insurgents and terrorists

1.4.1. NGOs, Victims of Violence?

There is a common perception amongst the humanitarian community that the risks of working in the field have increased over the years, with humanitarian actors being seen as “soft targets” (Stoddard and Harmer, 2005; ECHO, 2004). Data on security incidents affecting NGOs and their employees is limited, but that which does exist shows an increasing trend of attacks on aid workers, although this does not reflect the increase in total number that are now working in such environments (Stoddard and Harmer, 2005; Sheik *et al*, 2000). According to Roberts (2005) although data shows the overall number of incidents is falling, there is an increase in the numbers of serious cases of direct targeting, ie there are fewer incidents, but the seriousness of these incidents is increasing. Data also shows that violent incidents kill more humanitarian personnel than accidents (King, 2002b). The trend in violence is shown in the following table;

| | TOTAL | UN | Red Cross | NGO | National | Expatriates |
|-------------|--------------|-----------|----------------------|------------|-----------------|--------------------|
| 1997 | 49 | 20 | 16 | 13 | 28 | 21 |
| 1998 | 54 | 24 | 18 | 12 | 42 | 12 |
| 1999 | 67 | 12 | 21 | 34 | 37 | 30 |
| 2000 | 80 | 31 | 5 | 44 | 62 | 18 |
| 2001 | 78 | 25 | 10 | 54 | 24 | 13 |
| 2002 | 62 | 15 | 7 | 40 | 53 | 9 |
| 2003 | 98 | 24 | 23 | 51 | 74 | 24 |
| 2004 | 88 | 15 | 6 | 67 | 61 | 27 |

Table 1. An Overview of Aid Workers Affected by Major Violent Incidents, 1997 - 2004 (Stoddard and Harmer, 2005:28)

Further to this Stoddard and Harmer (2005:28) show that in the 4 years prior to the Global War on Terror there were on average 66 aid workers per year who were the victims of major violence, but that in the 4 years since the start of the Global War on Terror this rose to an average of 83 aid workers per year.

According to Muggah and Berman (2001) the relief community has been expanding its role in conflict areas since the end of the cold war period. In line with the idea of the New Wars proposed by Kaldor (1999) these conflicts no longer respect civilians and vulnerable people. In such cases where belligerents do not respect humanitarian law, it is no longer a surprise that those agencies who try to work and live by such humanitarian principles are also no longer respected. This is substantiated by the ICRC (cited in Muggah and Berman 2001:4) who report that;

“...because [they] are undesirable witnesses, because their activities slow down or even thwart the objectives of combatants, because they are ‘rich’ in countries that are poor... for all these reasons [they] are considered perfectly legitimate targets by those who prey on humanitarian organisations.”

At present the threats to humanitarian staff in Iraq have been widely reported. But Iraq is not the only conflict where humanitarian staff are under threat, although it is one of the most extreme examples. July 2006 was reported to be the most dangerous month for aid workers in Darfur (www.irinnews.org d) and OCHA (<http://ochaonline.un.org> a) reported that operational risks for aid workers were increasing by the day. During the same week as these reports there were others from different countries concerning violence against humanitarian personnel. In Sri Lanka 15 national employees of a humanitarian agency were found dead in their office compound having been shot at close range, a further two employees who had attempted to flee the scene were later found dead (www.bbc.co.uk l). In Chad, UNHCR expressed concern over the safety of humanitarian aid workers following a deterioration in security and an attack against an aid agency (www.unhcr.org). Reports from Nepal indicated that NGOs had suspended operation in the west of the country due to insecurity and threats from Maoist rebels (www.irinnews.org c). These reports were collected over a short period of time, and provide an indication that it is not only the high profile conflicts where humanitarian workers face risks, but also in countries generally assumed to be less risky. This targeting of humanitarian personnel is not a new phenomenon as can be seen by reviewing the data compiled by King (2002a).

1.4.2. Protection of Aid Workers

Following the attack on the UN headquarters in Baghdad, Iraq in 2003, the UN Security Council adopted Resolution 1502 which emphasised that;

“...there are existing prohibitions under international law against attacks knowingly and intentionally directed against personnel involved in a humanitarian assistance or peacekeeping mission undertaken in accordance with the charter of the United Nations which in situations of armed conflicts constitute war crimes, and recalling the need for States to end impunity for such criminal acts” (UN Security Council, 2003: paragraph 5).

Stoddard and Harmer (2005:30) report that only 22 cases of violent deaths among UN workers have been solved out of a total of 214 (10.3%).

In an attempt to ensure their security NGOs look towards the use of security guidelines and security management policies.

1.5. NGOs and Security Management

In recent years humanitarian agencies have been going through a process of professionalisation with initiatives such as the SPHERE Project⁶, Humanitarian Accountability Partnership – International (HAP)⁷, Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) in Disaster Relief⁸ and ALNAP⁹. At the same time many agencies have invested to improve their internal procedures to facilitate their work in insecure environments. Security management, focussing on the protection of the agency and its personnel from acts of violence and crime (Martin, 1999), has now become an important activity in the

⁶ Sphere project provides information on minimum standards which agencies should work to attain in disaster assistance

⁷ The HAP initiative aims to make humanitarian action accountable to the beneficiaries of such action

⁸ The code of conduct provides a set of standards for the behaviour of agencies when working in disaster relief

⁹ ALNAP was established in 1997 following a multi agency evaluation of the Rwanda Genocide. It works to improve humanitarian performance through improved learning and accountability.

management of programmes. However, according to Van Brabant (2001a) improvements have been delayed by arguments within agencies against prioritising and investing in improved safety and security. Also, agencies have relied on the belief that relief workers are immune from attack (Van Brabant, 2000), this has been shown to be incorrect. Despite this reluctance on the part of some, there has been a general move to professionalizing the management of security risks in insecure contexts, although there is still a significant amount of work to be done to ensure that security can be managed competently by those working in such environments.

1.5.1. Security Management Strategies

There are 3 main strategies employed by agencies to ensure security management;

| Management Structure | Description | Problem with model |
|--|--|--|
| Management line model | Safety and security are located with other general management responsibilities within operational line management from headquarters to the field. | A problem encountered with this model is the time required for decision making as well as the ability of those responsible for managing safety and security as they may have no formal background in this. |
| Specialist security officer model | Security posts are created at headquarters as well as in the field, and are often not part of the line management. | Line managers are able to ignore or override advice of the security officer |
| Security advisor model | Responsibility for security management lies with line management, but the organisation has one or more security advisors at headquarters who are able to support the organisation as a whole as well as specific field offices | Line managers are able to override or ignore the advice of the security advisor(s). |

Table 2. Security Management Models Currently Used by NGOs (adapted from Van Brabant, 2001b:5)

In order for security to be managed effectively and in time, it is important that decisions are made at field level, with the support and advice of the line management and specialist security staff. This enables agencies to respond to a complex situation which is liable to change rapidly. But from the authors experience those at the field level often have limited experience in risk analysis and security management. This in itself can lead to the agency and its field staff being exposed to an increased security threat, and poor decision making. One way agencies have tried to overcome this is through the provision of security trainings for their managers once they have been in post for some time.

1.5.2. Security Training

Based on the author's experience there is an absence of security preparation and training for new employees in a large number of organisations. New employees, who may never have worked in a conflict or disaster situation, are sent out to insecure environments and expected to manage programmes, or projects, taking decisions which have direct bearings on the safety and security of the staff for whom they are responsible. In the author's experience many first time employees with humanitarian organisations are young and inexperienced, which is in itself a flaw in the security management strategies employed by humanitarian agencies. It is questionable as to whether any other profession would allow its employees to enter such situations without adequate pre-departure trainings and briefings.

Gassman (2005) reports that many security incidents faced by agencies are the result of mistakes made by ill prepared individuals. Van Brabant (1999) states that simulation exercises, which could be conducted in pre-departure trainings, enhances the quality and ability of the aid worker to respond in an appropriate manner in the field because the shock of total surprise is less.

It is of concern to note that approximately **one third of all deaths occur during the first 3 months of an employee's deployment, and 1 in 6 deaths occur within the first month of deployment** (Sheik *et al*, 2000:168). This time frame is a familiarisation phase for new employees when they are still not completely aware of the context and the associated threats. This further strengthens the need for humanitarian agencies to do more to prepare

their employees prior to deployment to a new country. Trainings for humanitarian employees only start once they have been deployed and have been in the situation for some time which will not help deal with the above situation, and even when trainings are provided by no means do all employees receive them.

Agencies appear to be increasingly willing to send their staff on short duration security training courses, or to organise trainings in the field which raise awareness of issues but do not train employees how to behave in ways that will improve their security (Van Brabant, 1999). Steps to provide skills which can be used in insecure environments are needed, to enable an agency's managers to adopt the correct security strategy for their context, and to enable them to adapt as situations change.

1.5.3. Security Strategies

Security strategies are best described through the security triangle;

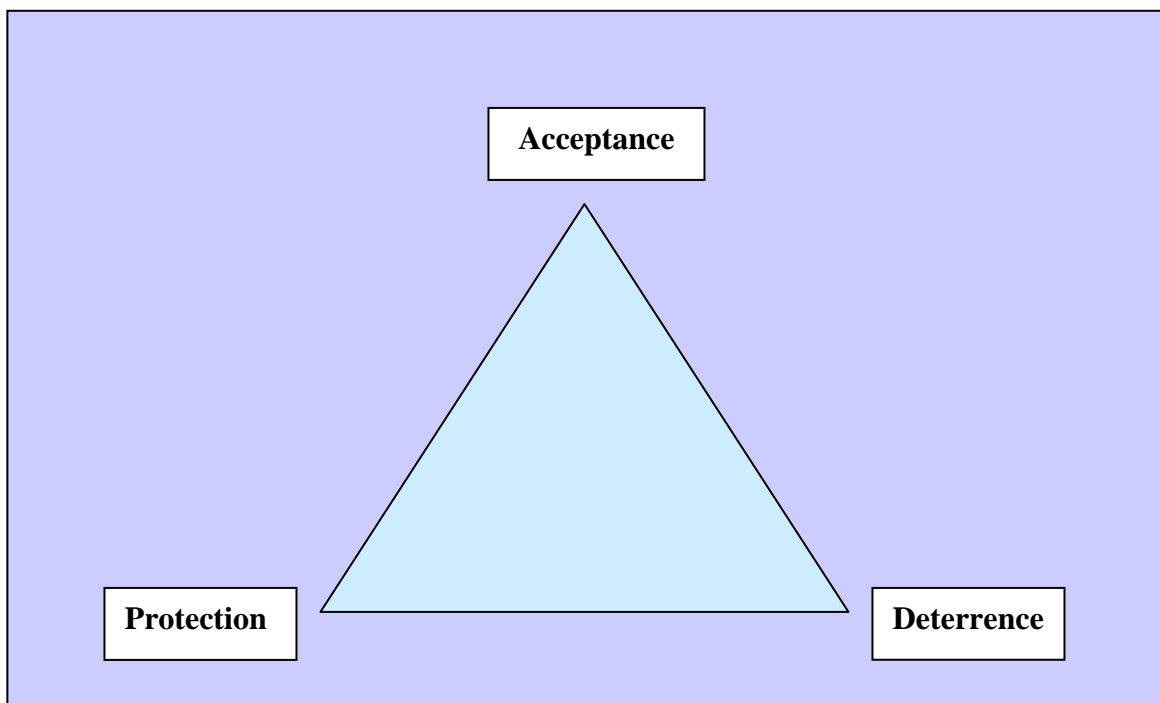


Figure 1. The Security Triangle Showing the Three Components of a Security Strategy (Van Brabant, 2001b).

Acceptance strategies facilitate the support and acceptance of the NGOs work by the community. Such strategies are often the main factor in an agencies security strategy, particularly those with a developmental approach (Martin, 1999). Acceptance is difficult to achieve without adequate time, and agencies with high community acceptance have often been present in a specific area for considerable periods of time. Acceptance is difficult to achieve in emergency work due to the limited timeframes. According to Van Brabant (2000), the key principles in acceptance strategies are to establish and maintain contacts, to try and retain balance in relationships with the various actors, management of the agencies image and mutual respect. These aspects could be referred to as soft security strategies and as such are difficult to measure.

Deterrence strategies seek to reduce the risk by deterring the threat with a counter-threat such as legal, economic and political sanctions and the use of armed protection. The use of unarmed guards is considered a deterrent strategy and is commonly used by NGOs.

Protection strategies reduce the risk by making the agency and its staff less vulnerable through the use of protective procedures and devices (Dwyer, 1999) and can be subdivided in to three main groups (see overleaf);

| Element of protection strategy | Example |
|--|---|
| Protection devices | Communication equipment Reliable vehicles Perimeter security (barbed wire, gates, walls, blast film for windows) Flak jackets and helmets Use of NGO emblem (or the non-use depending on the context) |
| Operational policies and procedures | Security guidelines Curfews and no-go areas Vehicle operations policy Communications policy Warden system with other agencies |
| Co-ordinated operations with other agencies | Membership of NGO coordinating bodies (ACBAR ¹⁰ in Afghanistan, NCCI ¹¹ in Iraq) Active relationships and coordination with the United Nations |

Table 3. The Different Elements of a Protection Strategy (adapted from Martin, 1999:4)

These strategies are used in the formation of an agencies security guidelines, for which a clear understanding of the local context is required, although many agencies admit that they have insufficient understanding and knowledge of the contexts in which they operate (Gassman, 2005). Security strategies must take in to account the changing security environment in which humanitarian agencies find themselves and the fact that humanitarian agencies are often no longer perceived as impartial, neutral or independent. According to Bruderlein (2004) many agencies fail to do acknowledge this. These changes in security environment have significant repercussions for the security of humanitarian personnel and agencies must take steps to reflect this change and to better equip their employees with the skills required to work in such insecure environments.

¹⁰ ACBAR – Agency Coordinating Body for Afghan Relief

¹¹ NCCI – NGO Coordination Committee in Iraq

1.5.4. Security Guidelines

Security guidelines are a tool used by humanitarian agencies in order to reduce the risk of an incident in the field (Van Brabant, 1997). Although such tools provide guidance they do not replace the need for training, experienced staff and a through understanding of the context. Security guidelines are often ineffective due to the fact that they are rigid and the environment in which agencies operate is complicated and unstable (Van Brabant, 1997), and liable to rapid changes. To be effective ECHO (2004) states that there are a number of factors to be borne in mind when devising a security framework, the most important ones being;

- **Flexibility** in application.
- **Appropriate** to the work being conducted.
- **Incorporation** of measurable elements.
- **Referral** to humanitarian principles.

It is also important that the guidelines are devised in consultation with the agencies employees, both national and international, who will need to follow and implement such guidelines.

As stated before, many humanitarian personnel are relatively inexperienced in security management, and yet managers are expected to write security guidelines and to then ensure their implementation in the field (Van Brabant, 1997). In the author's experience of working as a humanitarian manager these guidelines are often not checked by an agencies security officers or advisors. Again this exposes the agency and its personnel to unacceptable risks. A question arises as to the insurance implications of such practices should there be a security incident.

Security guidelines are only a component of a good security strategy. It is preferable for an agency to ensure that it follows a holistic approach to security management, working on acceptance strategies, with protection and deterrence components as appropriate to each context. Agency personnel need to be aware that the way they and their agency are perceived is as important for their security as following rules and regulations. The way they

interact with beneficiaries, community members, local authorities and national staff all contribute to their security.

Agencies need to ensure that security management is given more attention and that steps are taken to ensure that all employees are adequately prepared, that national staff also receive regular security trainings, and that security advisors and officers are more proactive in providing support to field staff.

An example of a positive step in improved security management was the establishment of the Afghanistan NGO Security Office (ANSO)¹², which provides security updates, advice and support to humanitarian agencies operating in Afghanistan. ANSO provides a significant shift in the emphasis agencies place on security, and is a model which could be replicated in other insecure contexts, particularly at a time when donors increasingly state that they are concerned for the welfare of humanitarian staff and will work together with them to ensure their safety (www.dfid.gov.uk; ECHO, 2006).

1.6. Conclusion

As has been shown there has been a change in the global security environment, and NGOs are now considered by many as legitimate targets of violence. The result of this has been an increasing number of serious incidents targeted at such agencies with the loss of life of aid workers. The principles by which humanitarian work is conducted are under direct threat from the foreign policy objectives of Western Donor Governments (conditionality and securitisation of aid together with the coherence agenda). Together with this the move to bilateral funding by such donors further impacts on the ability of NGOs to work independently, and to be seen as impartial.

In response to the increased security risks associated with humanitarian aid work NGOs have attempted to improve their security management policies. As has been shown this is still inadequate, and new, inexperienced personnel are often placed in to insecure environments without adequate training and support. The fact that a significant number of

¹² Based on the authors personal experience whilst working in Afghanistan from 2003 – 2005.

aid worker deaths occur within the first three months of deployment to a country further substantiates this. Changes need to be made as a matter of urgency.

In a number of contexts where the security situation is assessed to be too dangerous for international staff to be present, although an agency may possess a competence in security management, alternative working procedures have been identified to ensure the continued provision of humanitarian aid. Such strategies enable NGOs to adhere to the humanitarian imperative, whereby all possible steps are taken to prevent or alleviate human suffering due to conflict or disaster (SPHERE, 2004). Such alternative working procedures include the use of remote programming strategies which will be discussed in the next chapter.

Chapter Two: Insecurity in Iraq and Its Impact on the Humanitarian Situation



Figure 2. A Map of Iraq Showing the Location of Major Cities (www.globalsecurity.org b).

2.1. Introduction

Due to the perceived increase in threat discussed in the previous chapter, NGOs are operating through remote programming strategies in a number of contexts such as Iraq, Chechnya, Afghanistan, Somalia and Northern Uganda. Such strategies represent a pragmatic approach to ensuring the provision of humanitarian aid to individuals and communities in need while following the humanitarian imperative. A review of the various strategies will be presented together with two case studies, one from South East Afghanistan, based on the author's personal experience and a case study from Northern Uganda. The security situation in Iraq together with its impact on the humanitarian situation will then be used as a platform to discuss the use of remote programming strategies in Iraq in Chapters Three and Four.

2.2. Definitions of Remote Programming Strategies.

Agencies have increasingly been looking towards the use of remote programming strategies to ensure the provision of humanitarian aid continues in highly insecure areas where NGOs may have extremely limited, or no, access to those in need. The use of remote programming strategies is not a new concept. Agencies have been using such techniques for a number of years in, for example, Chechnya (Hansen, 1998), Afghanistan (author's personal experience), Somalia¹³, Northern Uganda (Montgomery, 2006) and more recently Iraq.

At present a number of terms are commonly used when discussing remote programming strategies. They are used interchangeably and it is often unclear what is meant. A definition of the various approaches is required. In this dissertation remote programming strategies refers to all forms of remote programming that agencies have used to facilitate their operationality in areas of extreme insecurity. This general grouping is subdivided, describing more specifically the ethos of each working practice.

¹³ Phone interview conducted with UN employee, June 2006

At a recent workshop¹⁴ attended by the author, four remote programming strategies were discussed;

- **Remote Control** – An immediate response to security threats whereby international staff are evacuated from the project site, project activities may be scaled down, and where national staff continue to implement the projects. International staff continue to manage the national staff, but from a safe location, which could either be in or out of country. Agencies anticipate that international staff will be able to return to the project at some point in the near future. National staff have limited decision making powers, all decisions are made by the international staff and implemented by the national staff. There is very little capacity building or skills transfer to national staff. (Hansen, 2004)
- **Remote Management** – A longer term option for agencies when security precludes the early return of international staff to the project sites. There is a delegation of some responsibilities and decision making abilities to national staff, although once international staff return to the project site these levels of decision making and responsibility return to their original levels. The agency provides limited capacity building and skills transfer opportunities. According to Hansen (2004) the use of remote management strategies assumes a certain degree of experience in the context and that the organisation already has systems in place to ensure the normal functioning of the operations. Hansen (2004) also states that remote management is not an option for agencies with little operational history in that particular context.
- **Remote Support** – described “as the most durable, shockproof, sustainable, developmental, effective and appropriate way of providing assistance, even in highly insecure environments” (Hansen, 2004:10). The approach assumes that there will be a hand over of decision making and responsibilities from international to national staff, with internationals providing support and advice, whilst the national staff decide what needs to be done. There is a high degree of investment in the capacity building of the national staff to ensure that they have the required skills to take on the management of the projects. Agencies working through such

¹⁴ Distance Programming Challenges, Workshop held in Amman on 4th June 2006. Held by NCCI and attended by a number of representatives from international NGOs and Local NGOs. Both internationals and Iraqis attended.

methodology normally have a more developmental approach to work. For agencies to consider working through such a methodology Hansen (2004) states that agencies require a high level of experience, sophistication and organisational infrastructure in that particular context. There is also a need for the organisation to be flexible in regards to how programmes will be run.

- **Remote Partnership** – defined as;

“when at least 2 organisations come together, each contributing particular resources to the relationship in order to tackle a problem or issue, and where one of the organisations does not have key staff in the country of operation, or when the key staff are unable to access all areas of operation” (Chkam, 2006:8).

Such strategies have been used in a number of contexts worldwide to ensure the continuation of humanitarian assistance whilst forming the basis for bridging the gap between relief and development. Two examples are detailed below;

2.3. South East Afghanistan Case Study - NGO A¹⁵

The South East of Afghanistan is a particularly insecure area, and there have been a number of incidents where NGOs, both international and national, have been deliberately targeted. NGO offices were bombed and shelled, convoys were ambushed, thefts occurred, death threats were issued, humanitarian personnel were shot at and threatened and a number were killed (both national and international). As a consequence of this insecurity there were very few NGOs operating in the area, despite the fact that there were significant humanitarian needs. Also donors were hesitant to finance projects in this area because of the insecurity.

NGO A had been working in South-east Afghanistan for approximately 20 years and during this period had developed strong relationships with the various communities and tribes living in the region. As a response to the deterioration in security the agency revised its’ risk analysis. It was decided that alternative programming options needed to be identified in

¹⁵ Based on the authors personal experience of running the remote management project. No supporting literature is available

an attempt to continue the provision of much needed humanitarian assistance to vulnerable families and to ensure the security of its personnel.

2.3.1. Move to remote programming

As an initial step community and religious leaders from all project sites, as well as communities where the organisation had worked in the past, were requested to attend a meeting to discuss the agency's work in the area. All invited representatives attended. The meeting was conducted by senior Afghan staff, focussing on the relationship the organisation had developed with the communities, and thanking them for their continued support. Security was then raised and the fact that there were increasing threats to agency personnel, making it difficult for the agency to operate safely and therefore the community and religious leaders were being requested for their help. All attending the meeting agreed to help with the security and safety of the agencies personnel. As representatives from different tribes and communities were present, some with loyalties towards the new Government, others with sympathies with the Taliban, it was hoped that a wide range of potential antagonists would be informed of this support. Leaders offered to travel with the agency's staff to the field to ensure their safety. Further to this all those at the meeting signed a declaration of their support for the organisation and its work.

The meeting also focussed on the teachings of Islam and how humanitarian action fitted with this. Discussions moved on to increasing the role of the communities in the projects, and that NGO A would support the communities to implement, rather than directly implementing itself. The community leaders agreed and stated that the community would provide free assistance in the spirit of charity.

2.3.2. Community involvement

The project focused on the construction of shelters for families returning to Afghanistan. Each family was provided with supplies and tools and received support in building their new shelter, normally from the agency's personnel.

A number of community members from throughout the project area were selected in collaboration with the leaders and the organisation which had knowledge of community members. The community participants would provide assistance to those returnee families that required special assistance (female headed households, households with disabled individuals etc), and conduct random monitoring on shelters selected by NGO A's staff. Participants worked in pairs, and each pair was provided with a digital camera for photographing the progress of work. Each member of the pair would visit the office once a week, at which time the agency provided a list of shelters to be visited over the coming days for monitoring. Digital photographs were required as proof, together with photographs of the beneficiary documents. All photos were programmed to include time and date.

The close relationships the organisation had developed with the communities facilitated the work. The regular meetings as well as the use of photographs to verify the work ensured that the projects were managed well by the communities. Work was also facilitated by the fact that at the onset of the project, prior to the deterioration in security, the agency's personnel had spent a substantial amount of time explaining the project to the communities including the assistance to which the beneficiaries would be entitled.

Once the security situation improved and access was once more possible to the project sites, the agency was able to conduct unannounced monitoring visits. No major problems were identified, and community members and beneficiaries did not report any major problems when interviewed individually.

The success of this project was primarily due to the operational history of the organisation in the area, which had led to a significant level of acceptance and trust by community leaders and their communities. Further to this the Afghan staff were all highly experienced, with many years of humanitarian and technical experience, without them the project would not have been possible, and activities would have been suspended.

2.4. Northern Uganda Case Study - NGO B¹⁶

Northern Uganda was typified by insecurity which prevented agencies from accessing a number of IDP camps where there were humanitarian needs. Movement was also dangerous for civilians due to the insecurity along the roads, although the Government provided escorts to facilitate civilian movements.

2.4.1. Implementation of activities

Open access to the project area had not been possible for NGO B for a number of years. In collaboration with the communities the organisation was working with, community structures were established for implementation as well as monitoring of the projects. The community were primarily responsible for the implementation of the project, although private contractors were used for more technical components. Regular meetings were held when community members visited the town where NGO B's office was located. These meetings enabled discussions on activities, and to develop future plans.

NGO B provided support to the community with trainings and the provision of supplies. Community representatives worked in collaboration with the agency to develop programme activities and timelines for implementation. Guidance on activities was provided through the use of a field journal by the community members implementing the work which detailed the various steps and activities that needed to be done together with a timeframe for their implementation. Digital cameras were used to record activities.

As security improved the humanitarian agency was able to visit the project sites once a week for a limited number of hours, at which time the agency was able to verify whether the work had been implemented as the monitoring reports had indicated. These trips proved invaluable as it was clear that the work had not been completed as expected, either by the community themselves or by the contractors (Montgomery, 2006).

¹⁶ Project implemented by NGO B. The case study is based on the agencies internal documents as well as an Interview conducted with an employee of NGO B who worked on this project, 25 April 2006.

2.4.2. Monitoring of activities

Independent monitors from the community, not just community leaders, were used in order to try and triangulate information to verify work. An important part of the monitoring process was ensuring that everyone was aware that the agency would monitor the activities.

A change in the security situation enabled the agency personnel to travel once per week in a United Nations armoured vehicle together with escorts provided by the Government. Once access to the IDP camps improved it was discovered that a number of the projects were of poor standard. Work conducted by contractors was also found either to have been of a low standard, or in some cases not to have been carried out, despite payment having been made following verification of the work by a member of the agency's national staff (Montgomery, 2006).

The monitoring systems used proved not to be reliable. Community members appeared to provide information that they thought the agency wanted to hear, rather than the real situation. At present the agency is working to improve the monitoring of its activities. One method being evaluated is the use of mobile phones with cameras to enable photos of activities to be sent in real time to the agency's project staff to verify activities.

These two case studies highlight a number of issues, both positive and negative, related to working through remote programming strategies. Such issues will be discussed further in Chapter Four.

Remote programming is now increasingly used by NGOs operating in Iraq. Prior to discussing how these agencies operate it is important to understand the current situation in Iraq and the reasons why agencies have reverted to remote programming strategies.

2.5. Iraq - Current Security Situation

On 19th March 2003 the coalition forces commenced military action against Iraq, entering Baghdad by 7th April 2003 with the Ba'ath regime, led by Saddam Hussein, collapsing by 9th April 2003 (www.fco.gov.uk). Upon defeat of Saddam Hussein a US Administration

was installed in Iraq to oversee the transition to a democratic state with elections being held in December 2005 (www.bbc.co.uk k).

The security situation since the conflict has not improved, with many reports claiming that the situation is deteriorating and that the country is on the verge of a civil war (www.bbc.co.uk i; Phelps, 2006; Badkhen, 2006). The level of insecurity has serious impact on the humanitarian situation in the country, as well as on the ability of humanitarian agencies to implement. It is this level of insecurity that has forced humanitarian agencies to resort to remote programming strategies in an attempt to continue their operations.

There are three major groups causing the high levels of violence and insecurity in Iraq (Haugh, 2005)

- **Sunni-led Insurgency** – targeting Coalition Forces, Iraqi Security Forces, Iraqi Government and Shiite civilians
- **Shiite Militias** – targeting Sunni communities
- **Foreign terrorists** – targeting Coalition and Iraqi Forces, Iraqi Government personnel and Shiite civilians.

To this list I would also add Coalition Forces who are fighting insurgent groups, but this fighting often results in civilian casualties.

The insurgency has become strongly sectarian in character for two main reasons;

- Alienation of the Sunni population
- The sectarian nature of the post-Saddam Hussein political process when Shiites assumed power (International Crisis Group, 2006a).

Following the end of the Saddam regime the political situation in Iraq was reversed. The minority Sunni no longer held on to power and the majority Shiites became the ruling class. Added to this Paul Bremer (Head of the Coalition Provisional Authority) began a process

of de-Ba'athification¹⁷ leaving more than 350,000 men unemployed (International Crisis Group, 2006c). These political changes resulted in a fear amongst the Sunni population as to what the future held for them, and whether the Shiite Government was going to hold all Sunni responsible for the excesses of the former regime and punish them (International Crisis Group, 2006c). This resulted in a disenfranchised community with no prospects for a future visible to them coupled with a widespread fear of reprisals, and a dramatic change in the economic status of the Sunni. Ultimately these were the reasons for the Sunni insurgency.

2.5.1. Sunni-led insurgency

Sunni led insurgency is the main cause of violence in Iraq today (www.bbc.co.uk h; International Crisis Group, 2006a). At present there are numerous Sunni insurgent groups operating in Iraq, each is distinctive but all have the same basis, which has concentrated on a blend of Salafism¹⁸ and patriotism, as well as focusing on Sunni grievances (International Crisis Group, 2006a) resulting in a greater degree of support amongst the Sunni community. The disbanding of the army resulted in a pool of unemployed, discontented young men who were ripe for absorption in to the insurgent groups (www.globalsecurity.org a).

2.5.2. Shiite militias

The Shiites have not diversified in to the large number of insurgent groups as seen with the Sunni. One of the main reasons for this is due to the Grand Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani, the prime spiritual reference for Shiites who is revered worldwide (Pan, 2004; www.bbc.co.uk c), and who has urged restraint by the Shiite community following attacks against them. These calls were followed from August 2003 to February 2005, although dissent is increasing (International Crisis Group, 2006c).

¹⁷ De-Ba'athification; the order given by the Coalition Provisional Authority, led by Paul Bremer, banning the Ba'ath Party and disbanding the security forces and the civil service in order to try and prevent Ba'athists from returning to power. The process was seen as essential to ensuring stabilisation of the country.

¹⁸ Salafism; a radical branch of Sunni Islam which believes that only Salafis follow the correct interpretation of the Holy Qur'an, and attempts to convert more moderate Muslims to Salafism.

Reports exist which indicate that specific militia groups are associated with political parties involved in the coalition Government (www.bbc.co.uk g; www.bbc.co.uk h; International Crisis Group, 2006c); these militia target Sunni communities.

2.5.3. Civilians, victims of violence

The bombing of the Samarra Mosque, one of the holiest Shiite shrines, in February 2006 (www.bbc.co.uk j) was a turning point in violence in Iraq (International Crisis Group, 2006b). Following the attack levels of insecurity have increased and violence has escalated (UNAMI, 2006b).

Civilians are exposed to violence on a daily basis. Each day there are numerous media reports detailing that day's incidents. One of the major threats faced by the civilian population is that of kidnapping which has become a major threat in Iraq. High profile kidnappings of foreigners have been reported in the international media on a regular basis. From May 2003 to September 2006 a total of 288 foreigners have been kidnapped, of which 53 were killed, 147 released three escaped six rescued and 79 unknown (O'Hanlon and Kamp, 2006:15). This number is dwarfed by the numbers of Iraqis kidnapped. According to O'Hanlon and Kamons (2006:16) in March 2006 there were 30 – 40 Iraqis kidnapped per day nationwide compared to January 2004 when there were two people kidnapped per day in Baghdad. The reasons for such kidnappings are for ransom and for political reasons (Grier and Bowers, 2006; Conley, 2006).

With unemployment at 70% (Jamail, 2005) crime as a means of earning money is rampant. Grier and Bowers (2006) report that many Iraqis are so afraid of being kidnapped that they do not take their children to school or go to work. Reports indicate that women who are kidnapped are often raped, or that they are then sold on in to prostitution rackets outside of Iraq (Jamail, 2005).

The violence in Iraq causes significant numbers of civilian deaths. A number of high profile beheadings took place in 2004. Such methods were condemned throughout Iraq. Sunni insurgent groups, very aware of the public perception of their activities, have modified their

modus operandi if required, and beheadings are no longer occur (International Crisis Group, 2006a; Malley and Harling, 2006).

The civilian population is exposed to a large number of insurgent attacks, as shown in the following table;

| Type of Attack | 2004 | 2005 |
|---------------------------|--------|--------|
| Insurgent attacks (total) | 26,496 | 34,131 |
| Car Bombs | 420 | 873 |
| Suicide car bombs | 133 | 411 |

Table 4. Number of Insurgent Attacks and Bombings in Iraq in 2004 and 2005 (O'Hanlon and Kamons, 2006:19).

There has been a steady increase in the number of daily attacks from 2003 till the present. In June 2003 there were on average eight daily attacks by insurgents. By May 2006 there were 90 daily attacks (O'Hanlon and Kamons, 2006:22).

As previously mentioned, attacks have a strong sectarian nature. They were originally directed primarily at the Coalition Forces stationed in Iraq (www.globalsecurity.org a), but with time civilians have increasingly become the target for such attacks, Appendix 1 provides an overview of the reported incidents over a three day period in September 2006. Sunni insurgent groups are associated with the suicide bombings in Iraq. The pattern of insurgency and the near daily suicide attacks suggest that there are many people who are sufficiently dedicated and willing to give up their own lives, indicating a good level of community support (Rogers, 2006).

Sunni civilians are also the victims of violence, with raids conducted by Shiite militias, often in uniforms driving vehicles with Government insignia, through Sunni neighbourhoods, arresting civilians who later often turn up dead showing signs of beatings and torture (International Crisis Group, 2006c).

The number of civilians who have died as a result of the 2003 conflict as well as the subsequent violence is a subject of heated debate. The table below gives an overview of some of the figures that have been provided;

| Source | Number of Reported Civilian Deaths |
|---|---|
| Iraq Body count (www.iraqbodycount.net) | 41,650 – 46,318 (as of 11 September 2006) |
| Roberts <i>et al</i> (2004) | 100,000 (as of September 2004) |
| Roberts (2006) | 200,000 or more (possibly up to 300,000) |
| Unknownnews (www.unknownnews.net) | 211,120 (June 2006) |
| Ministry of Health (UNAMI 2006a:3) | At least 50,000 |
| Ministry of Planning and Development Cooperation (2005) | 18,000 – 29,000 |

Table 5. Reported Numbers of Civilian Deaths in Iraq as a Result of Conflict and Violence Since 2003.

The number of civilian deaths continues to increase (www.bbc.co.uk e). According to the UN Assistance Mission to Iraq (UNAMI, 2006a:1) there were 5,818 civilians killed and 5,762 wounded in May and June 2006 with a total of 14,338 killed from January to June 2006.

Reports also exist indicating that civilians are being killed by Coalition Forces. A current investigation is being conducted in to the deaths of four members of an Iraqi family in a town south of Iraq (Finer and Partlow, 2006). The incident reportedly involved two US Soldiers raping a woman and one of the soldiers subsequently killed her, a child and two other adults. In another incident four US Soldiers are under investigation for the murder of three Iraqi detainees, and in a further incident seven marines and a sailor have been charged with the death of an Iraqi civilian in April 2006 (www.cnn.com).

NGO personnel, both Iraqi and foreign, have also faced targeted attacks. According to NCCI and Oxfam (2006:45) approximately 62 aid workers were killed (24 being foreign),

200 injured and 35 kidnapped (17 international staff of which two were killed; one Iraqi still held). Examples which have been widely reported include;

| |
|--|
| Bomb attack on UN Office in Baghdad. August 2003. A vehicle-borne explosive device exploded outside the UN's headquarters in Baghdad (www.bbc.co.uk a) killing 22 UN employees and wounding at least 80 (www.irinnews.org a). |
| Bomb attack on ICRC office in Baghdad on 27 October 2003. 2 Iraqi employees and 10 other civilians killed (www.icrc.org). |
| Margaret Hassan. Head of Mission, Care International. Seized by gunmen on 19 October 2004. Shown in numerous videos pleading for the British Government to save her life. In a later video she asks for British troops to be withdrawn from Iraq, for CARE International's office to be closed and for Iraqi women prisoners to be freed. 16 November 2004 after a video was provided Mrs Hassan's family said it believed that she had been killed (www.bbc.co.uk d). |
| Simona Pari and Simona Torretta. Italian aid workers working for "A Bridge for Baghdad" were kidnapped in September 2004 when armed men stormed their offices. The women were later released (www.bbc.co.uk b). |

Table 6. High Profile Attacks Against NGOs, UN Agencies and ICRC in Iraq

Attacks against humanitarian aid workers continue. Reports show Iraq aid workers are giving up their work due to the constant serious threats made against them (www.irinnews.org b) and that the killing of local aid workers is often not reported as many work anonymously (www.irinnews.org b), which is probably related to the fear of kidnapping or other forms of violence against them.

This has had a serious impact on the provision of aid, which is becoming increasingly difficult as many agencies have withdrawn their international staff, or closed their programmes in Iraq completely.

2.6. Iraq, Humanitarian Overview

The consequences of the three recent wars fought in Iraq have had a dramatic impact on the humanitarian situation in Iraq. The sanctions placed on Iraq after the first Gulf war had a catastrophic impact on the status of the civilian population and economy with an increase in disease, and malnutrition, not only in children but also in adults (Cortright, 1999).

2.6.1. Civilian Deaths

It is estimated of up to 1.5 million people having died as a direct result of the sanctions (Alnasrawi, 2001) as well as an increased infant and childhood mortality rate (Ali and Shah, 2000:1851) as shown below;

| Date | Infant mortality ¹⁹ | Under 5 years of age mortality |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1984 – 1989 (prior to sanctions) | 47 per 1000 live births | 56 per 1000 live births |
| 1994 – 1999 (during sanctions) | 108 per 1000 live births | 131 per 1000 live births |

Table 7. Mortality Rates in Infants and Children in Iraq Prior to the Imposition of Sanctions and During the Sanctions (Ali and Shah, 2000:1851).

The humanitarian situation faced by the civilian population was already poor prior to the onset of conflict in 2003, which could only have compounded the situation.

O’Hanlon and Kamons (2006:40) provide an alarming overview of the infant mortality rate the table overleaf. These figures are high and show that the situation for children in Iraq is extremely poor.

¹⁹ children less than 1 year of age

| Infant Mortality Rate | | |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Middle East | Iraq | Sub-Saharan Africa |
| 37 per 100,000 live births | 102 per 100,000 live births | 105 per 100,000 live births |
| Child Mortality Rate | | |
| Jordan | Iraq | Yemen |
| 33 per 1000 live births | 115 per 1000 live births | 107 per 1000 live births |

Table 8. Infant and Child Mortality Rates, Comparison of Iraq with Other Countries and Regions (O'Hanlon and Kamons, 2006:40).

2.6.2. Health

Malnutrition rates are also another indicator of the current poor humanitarian situation in Iraq. According to Dahl (2006) the number of acutely malnourished children has more than doubled from 4% in 2002 to 9% in 2005. Malnutrition amongst small children in Iraq is widespread, with almost a quarter of children between six months and five years suffering from chronic malnutrition, 12% suffering from general malnutrition, and 8% suffering from acute malnutrition²⁰ (Ministry of Planning and Development Cooperation, 2005:57). In some instances the prevalence of acute malnutrition was as high as 17% in infants aged between six months and 11 months (Ministry of Planning and Development Cooperation, 2005:59). NCCI and Oxfam (2006:10) reports a senior Health Ministry official as saying that 50% of Iraqi children suffer from some form of malnutrition, further NCCI (2006a) reports that malnutrition rates in Iraq are now similar to those in Africa;

| % children less than 5 years of age who are underweight in Sudan | % children less than 5 years of age who are underweight in Iraq (national average) | % children less than 5 years of age who are underweight in rural Iraq |
|--|--|---|
| 18% | 16% | 19% |

Table 9. The Percentage of Children in Iraq and Sudan who are Underweight (based on NCCI, 2006a).

²⁰ Malnutrition indicators Acute malnutrition = wasting; General malnutrition = underweight; Chronic malnutrition = stunting.

WFP (2004) reported that 25% of the population were highly dependent on food aid and an additional 3.6 million people were likely to become food insecure if they did not receive the Public Distribution Systems food rations.

In rural areas 25% of rural households get their drinking water from unsafe natural sources (lakes, streams, rivers) (Ministry of Planning and Development Cooperation, 2005:19). According to Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction (2006:33) pre-war access to potable water in Iraq in 2003 was 50%, as of November 2005 only 32% of people had access to potable water. Access to water is one indicator, but more importantly is the quality of the water that is drunk. The quality of the water remains questionable with 63% of children with diarrhoea having access to treated water that was piped in to their dwelling (Ministry of Planning and Development Cooperation, 2005:66), indicating that the piped water may have been contaminated, through for example damage to the pipe network or inadequate storage.

Exacerbating an already poor health situation is the fact that there has been a 42% decrease in the number of physicians in Iraq since the onset of conflict in 2003 (O'Hanlon and Kamp, 2006:43). This alone will have had direct impacts on the health of the population.

2.6.3. Internal displacement

Insecurity and violence is causing widespread displacement of the civilian population. In the four months following February 2006 (when the Samarra Mosque was bombed) there are reports of between 130,000 and 150,000 people being displaced, bringing the total number of Internally Displaced People (IDPs) to approximately 1.3 million (Moussa and Georgy, 2006; Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre, 2006). It is further stated by Moussa and Georgy (2006) that such displacement has resulted in demographic changes, whereby Shiites are moving to predominantly Shiite areas, and Sunnis are moving to predominantly Sunni areas in order to escape the ongoing sectarian violence. Military operations, generalised violence, direct threats to life, fear and sectarian tensions have been the major causes of displacement since 2003 (Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre

2006; IOM, 2006). UNAMI (2006:1b) states that these IDPs require long term support to ensure their basic needs are met and durable solutions offered.

Despite these indications of a poor humanitarian situation, the UN Emergency Humanitarian Coordinator, Jan Egeland, has said that there is no humanitarian crisis in Iraq (www.ochaonline.un.org b). NCCI disagrees with this assessment (NCCI, 2006b:2) stating that the "...UN strategy should be shaped and guided by the reports coming from the UNCT in Iraq. On the ground a crisis has been announced..."

2.7. Conclusion

Iraq is currently facing an extremely violent period with civilians bearing the brunt of the violence. The violence now seen in Iraq compounds the already poor humanitarian situation that Iraqis faced as a consequence of the sanctions imposed on their country by the UN in 1990. Humanitarian needs exist in Iraq. In such circumstances the humanitarian imperative requires NGOs to work to provide essential assistance to those civilians in need.

The levels of insecurity as well as the direct threats to international and national staff preclude agencies from working through normal methods. An operational presence in Iraq therefore requires them to reconsider their working practices and to find alternative methods. One option available is the use of remote programming strategies which provide a pragmatic approach to ensuring these needs are met, whilst at the same time minimising the risk to aid workers as much as is possible.

Prior to the use of remote programming strategies an analysis of the situation, the context, conflict, the humanitarian needs as well as the risks involved and whether the agency is willing to accept such risks, is required. Remote programming should not be considered a default strategy for when an agency can no longer deploy its international staff. Agencies do have a duty of care to their national staff as well as their local partners, and must be aware that such remote programming strategies can result in the transfer of risk from international staff to their national colleagues or partners.

In the next chapter the working practices of three humanitarian agencies will be presented as examples of how agencies have adapted their work practices to enable them to operate in Iraq.

Chapter Three: Iraq: Operating Strategies Utilised by NGOs

3.1. Introduction

Agencies operating in Iraq have faced severe security threats. Agencies have been directly targeted, and a number of staff (both national and international) have been killed, injured and kidnapped. Despite this agencies continue to operate in Iraq, albeit through remote programming strategies, which seek to reduce the risk associated with such work, whilst enabling activities to continue. Agencies have been working through such strategies since 2004. There has been an ongoing discussion on the importance of moving from remote control and remote management strategies to remote support working practices, but although three years have passed since agencies began working through such remote programming strategies, relatively few agencies have actually moved beyond remote management.

Research conducted for this dissertation focussed on the current practices of NGOs operating in Iraq. An overview of the research methodologies used, together with problems faced will be presented followed by an examination of the current practices of three agencies; NGO E works through a method of remote control, NGO F works through a method of remote management, and NGO G works through a strategy of remote partnership/ support.

Research on the current situation in Iraq is complicated due to the extreme levels of insecurity which prevents researchers from entering the country and makes respondents wary of providing information in case it may have a negative impact on the security of themselves, their colleagues or the recipients of their assistance. The research may therefore contain biases caused by these complexities.

3.2. Remote programming strategies – field research

Despite the fact that remote programming strategies are not new, and have been used in a number of different contexts there has been limited discussion about these strategies. At present there is an increasing interest in looking at remote programming strategies (Jones *et al*, 2006), but as of yet no official work has been published. This study is therefore a new area of research, and it is hoped that the study will stimulate greater discussion regarding the use of remote programming strategies.

3.2.1. Methodology

A comprehensive literature search was conducted. This revealed a paucity of literature on the subject of remote programming strategies. There has been no discussion in the aid literature regarding such methodologies of work. As a result of the lack of literature, reviews have been conducted on related fields which impact on an agency's ability to operate in areas of extreme instability and danger.

An extensive desk based literature review was conducted in order to develop an understanding of the situation in Iraq since the conflict in 2003 as well as the period prior to the conflict. There is a wealth of literature on the current security situation, but very limited information on the humanitarian situation or how humanitarian agencies are operating. Sources from journals were used, but the majority of information was found on the internet. A work placement was conducted with Oxfam GB which provided access to Oxfam GB documents on a number of different countries where remote programming strategies have been used, as well as access to employees who have implemented programmes through remote strategies and other actors who have worked on remote programming strategies.

A number of semi-structured interviews were conducted with humanitarian agency personnel, representing those based in Amman, Jordan (who work directly through remote programming strategies), humanitarian personnel at head offices who look at the wider policy implications, donors, and international organisations.

Interviews were facilitated by the fact that the author was able to attend two workshops in Jordan;

- Iraq Emergency Situation. Trends in Violence, Humanitarian Needs, Preparedness. A joint workshop held by NCCI and Oxfam GB, 28 – 30 March 2006.
- Distance Programming Challenges – held by NCCI, 4 June 2006.

The workshops provided an opportunity to introduce the research to the attendees, to listen to the current concerns and frustrations (by both international staff as well as Iraqi staff), and to arrange interviews. Interviews were held either face to face, or by telephone.

Two questionnaires were developed; one for international staff of humanitarian agencies, one for Iraqi humanitarian staff (Appendices 2 and 3). The questionnaires were distributed by NCCI to its membership through email.

3.2.2. Research issues

As stated by Pratt and Loizos (1992:13) “[r]esearch is never carried out under perfect conditions; there are always difficulties to overcome” which was the case in regards to this study.

The research was conducted in an area where English is not the primary language. The author does not speak Arabic. The issue of language therefore prevented access to a number of key respondents based in Iraq. The costs associated with using an Arabic translator were also prohibitive.

As mentioned previously, there is a lack of literature on the subject which prevents a thorough literature review on remote programming strategies. Also documents which exist are internal agency documents, which are very difficult for individuals who are not employees of that agency to obtain.

There was a very low response rate to the questionnaires. The author had to make a decision as to whether to keep the questionnaires short in order to ensure a higher response

rate, but with gaps in the information, or to use a longer questionnaire, which would hopefully provide more information, but which could deter people from responding due to the length. It was decided to use the longer questionnaire.

According to Craig *et al* (cited in Robson, 2002:68) there is a potential risk of physical threat of abuse from conducting research such as that in this study. Security concerns were a major issue for agencies which agreed to be interviewed or reply to questionnaires as attributable quotes in any form of report could have serious negative repercussions for themselves, their Iraqi colleagues or partner agencies. In order to overcome this, the author agreed to ensure that all information would be treated anonymously, ascribing it to an NGO. Agencies quoted in this study have been assigned pseudonyms, a common practice in such research (Bryman, 2001). All information provided was treated confidentially, which is defined by Berg (2004) as an active attempt to remove from the research records any elements that might indicate the subject's identity. This has been done in regards to this study. Only the author of this report is aware of which agencies were involved in discussions and hence there is no overview of interviews conducted for this study in the Appendices. The use of place names is also a potential security threat to those working there, and as such, is not used unless such literature is in the public domain. The issue of confidentiality and security was a further reason for not using a translation service.

Access to Iraqi humanitarian workers was also complicated primarily because of language difficulties but also because those who were contacted felt unable to provide information in case this would be deemed a breach of their code of conduct with their employing agency²¹.

Associated with the issue of confidentiality is trust. In order to gain access to information the researcher has to gain the trust of potential respondents. This requires time. Unfortunately the author was only able to spend a limited period of time in Jordan which would have had an impact on the trust agencies were able to place on the author. If more time had been available it is likely that more trust would have been earned, resulting in an increase in information provided. The fact that the author was associated with a particular

²¹ Interview conducted with an Iraqi aid worker, 16 June 2006.

NGO facilitated access to respondents, and also facilitated gaining trust to a certain extent. If the author had been working without the NGO's support it is unlikely that the author would have had the level of access that was achieved during this study.

The insecurity of Iraq prevents normal access to the research area. The University of York also placed restrictions on areas where research could be conducted. This precluded any access to Iraq.

It is difficult to conduct research on an area where the researcher has been unable to visit. A complete understanding of the context is not possible, and misunderstandings and research biases are more likely to occur. The constraints faced in the research may have an impact on the analysis of the situation faced by NGOs working on programmes in Iraq. It is hoped that by triangulating information and having established contacts with a number of individuals working on the Iraq context that these misunderstandings and biases were minimised.

3.3. Case Study: Remote Control, NGO C²²

NGO C did not have any experience of working in Iraq prior to the conflict in 2003. The organisation established itself in Iraq post conflict, and was able to have international staff working in Iraq for a period of one year before they were withdrawn because of the deterioration in security. It is not clear as to how long the agency plans to continue working in Iraq, or under what circumstances it would decide to close down its operations. NGO C currently has international staff based in Amman, Jordan, and a number of Iraqi staff working in Iraq (the number of Iraqi staff varies depending on the projects being undertaken at a particular time). The Iraqi staff did not have prior work experience with NGOs. Conversely the International Staff did not have prior work experience in Iraq, and had never visited the country.

Current project activities focus on working with civil society and local NGOs. The agency currently describes its strategy towards its operations as working through remote control,

²² Case study based on interview with NGO C employee, 5 June 2006.

whereby responsibility is maintained by the international staff based in Amman to ensure control over the programmes. It was felt that a working methodology based on remote support and partnership would, theoretically, be a better way of working, but that the reality of the situation prevented them from moving out of a method of remote control, and as such the agency plans to continue working through remote control. Attempts had been made to assist staff in establishing their own agency which could then be supported by NGO C, a point that was raised by several NGOs²³, but it was stated that the Iraqi staff were not in the position to do this for a number of factors (lack of previous humanitarian experience, lack of funding, lack of willingness, lack of managerial capacity).

3.3.1. Management of programmes

The management of the projects is by international staff based in Amman, Jordan. Final decisions are made by the international staff, after consultation with the Iraqi staff is conducted. Attempts to push decision making to the agency's Iraqi staff have been attempted, but the Iraqi staff are reported to have been unwilling to make these decisions and were in contact with the Amman office for assistance in this decision making. At present, day-to-day operational decisions are made in Iraq, but major programmatic and financial decisions are made in Jordan.

NGO C states that the responsibilities of staff are clear, and are described in each employee's job description. The agency currently has not developed any documentation detailing the methods of work, nor the responsibilities and decision making powers of staff, apart from the job description.

Security is a major constraint on the implementation of projects. It is possible for projects to be put on hold until the local security situation changes and allows the recommencement of activities. The agency believes that if the security situation remains as it is at present that it will be able to continue with activities, but that if there are serious changes it will review its presence. As the agency is not implementing emergency activities, but activities with a more developmental focus, which can be conducted more slowly and do not have a life

²³ Interview conducted with NGO F, NGO D and NGO G, Amman, Jordan, 2 April 2006.

saving component, NGO C feels that it is possible to wait and see how the situation changes.

The Iraqi staff only work in areas where their sect is predominant, providing a level of safety for them. Despite the fact that the Iraqi staff are working in their own areas, they maintain a very low profile and do not advertise who they work for.

3.3.2. Reporting and monitoring

As the international staff do not have access to Iraq they rely on reporting from their Iraqi colleagues in order to remain abreast of the local security situation, humanitarian situation and work progress. They communicate on a daily basis. The use of voice over internet programmes, such as Skype, or messengers such as MSN or Yahoo, are used as are landlines and mobile phones. NGO C reports that the lack of face-to-face contact can lead to misunderstandings and interpersonal relationships are difficult to maintain without visual cues. Communication through a messenger service is time consuming and it is easy to misinterpret the tone from a written text message. Precise instructions need to be used in order to prevent misunderstandings. Communications are also compounded by the fact that English is not the mother tongue of the Iraqi personnel nor the international staff (although the international staff are fluent in English), and the international staff do not speak Arabic. This can slow down communication significantly, although it is reported that the English language skills of the Iraqi employees have improved significantly over time. In order to overcome the communication difficulties, face-to-face meetings are held on a regular basis in Jordan, as this improves relationships and enables each side to learn how the other works. Ensuring a social side to interactions is also reported to help with communications.

Weekly written reports are required and NGO C is very strict with regards to deadlines for submission and quality of content. The reporting requirements are a means for the international staff to keep control of the situation, and they provide feedback and direction based on these reports. The agency believes that if it places high demands and expectations on its staff that the quality of work will be better.

Monitoring of the projects has been an issue. The organisation has strict requirements for monitoring. The projects are visited regularly by the senior project staff to monitor progress whilst other project staff spend most of their time at the project sites. The weekly reports detail activities, and the international staff ask their Iraqi colleagues a number of questions on the report to show they are reading them and to keep the staff alert. Donors have also been involved monitoring and have visited the projects, checked documents and pictures. The donors are reported to have been satisfied that the work is being conducted as had been agreed between them and the agency.

3.3.3. Training and capacity building

The Iraqi staff received training and mentoring by international staff posted in Iraq immediately post conflict. Since the withdrawal of internationals training has continued, often in Jordan. Sensitisation to the principles of humanitarian action and the organisational *modus operandi* takes place on a day-to-day basis through the routine communications. Material has been developed by the organisation to facilitate the work of the Iraqi employees, providing a reference tool that the staff can refer to and use to ensure they are covering the required aspects of the task to be done.

3.3.4. Organisation's successes

Although a number of problems have been faced by the agency in its work there have been a number of successes. The agency has seen an improvement in the quality of the work the Iraqi staff are producing. At the same time the level of trust between the remote team in Jordan and the Iraqi team has been built up over time. The agency reports that although the quality may be an issue at times, there can be no complaints on the commitment of their Iraqi colleagues.

3.4. Case study: Remote management, NGO D²⁴

NGO D has been present in Iraq since the late 1990's. During this period international staff were able to work in country and were only withdrawn relatively recently due to deteriorating security conditions. Although a number of the senior Iraqi staff have been

²⁴ Case study based on interview conducted with NGO D employee, 2 April 2006

with the organisation for more than five years, a number of others have only been with the organisation since 2003. At present international staff are located in Amman, Jordan and do not have experience of working in Iraq and have never visited the country.

NGO D implements emergency projects with a short term focus of five – six months. Activities are conducted in a number of geographical areas. The agency is currently making a transition from remote control activities to a more remote management strategy, where the office in Amman is seen as having a more supportive and facilitating role. At present it is felt by the agency that the Iraqi staff still need to have a more directive approach from Amman whilst the organisation works towards a less controlling managerial style.

The organisation plans to maintain a presence in Iraq.

3.4.1. Management of programmes

Due to communication problems Iraqi staff are often required to take a more active role in decision making. Areas such as logistics and local security are made independently by the Iraqi team and do not require approval from Amman. For other managerial decisions the “green light” is required prior to any action by the Iraq team. The agency has identified the need to ensure that more of the support departments are centralised in Iraq (for example administration and logistics) in order to make activities function more coherently as the current situation can lead to a lack of coordination.

The various projects conducted in Iraq are managed by an Iraqi, each of whom is supported by an operational coordinator based in Jordan. The agency reports that the current structure of the organisation enables the management of operations to be shared between Iraqi and International staff and programmatic decisions are taken following discussion between the relevant individuals. National staff see that the decision making power in the current structure as a shared responsibility, and that decisions are made on a joint consultative basis, and are happy with this system²⁵.

²⁵ Response to questionnaire by Iraqi staff member of NGO D

Communication is conducted through a variety of means (email, phone, msn messenger), but the lack of a continuous supply of electricity in Iraq complicates matters. The fact that communication primarily involves non-verbal means such as messenger services can result in miscommunication; also the level of clarity provided by such methods is often a problem. The miscommunications that are inherent in such methods of communication add time on to the process of work.

3.4.2. Reporting and monitoring

Reports are written by the Iraqi staff. Photographs are used to provide a visual overview of the activities.

When requested by the donors visits have been organised to the project sites for the donors Iraqi staff.

Monitoring is primarily by the Iraqi staff visiting the project sites, security permitting, followed by written reports and photographs of the activities. This information is crosschecked through specific contacts, with whom the organisation had built a relationship prior to the 2003 conflict, who provide feedback. The contact may travel to the project sites with the Iraqi staff to ensure the staff remain safe. This could result in the monitoring not being conducted in a completely impartial manner. Monitoring information is also received from groups that are assisted, through, for example phone conversations.

The fact that the organisation has an operational history in Iraq, and has contacts established from prior to the conflict in 2003 contributes to their ability to operate. These contacts are also able to facilitate the provision of assistance in highly insecure areas, or areas where there are ongoing problems and the Iraqi staff are not able to access the location themselves. By delegating the activity to the contact NGO D can ensure that its emergency programmes are able to provide the assistance needed in the areas most affected, with as little risk as possible.

3.4.3. Training and capacity building

A number of staff who have been with the organisation since before the 2003 conflict have received a number of trainings. Such trainings included security related courses, administration, project management, finance and conflict resolution. A number of staff therefore already had the skills and humanitarian experience required for implementing activities through remote programming. The presence of international staff in Iraq for a significant period of time also enabled mentoring of staff, who learnt skills from working closely with the international staff. Since withdrawal of internationals such mentoring is no longer possible.

The agency reports that donor agencies have been supportive of the need for increased budget lines in order to improve the capacity of the Iraqi staff, although the agency feels that more money is actually needed to ensure ongoing training.

3.5. Case Study: Remote Support/ Partnership, NGO E²⁶

The organisation did not have an operational history in Iraq prior to the conflict, except for 2 small interventions during the 1990s. The agency commenced operations in Iraq after the 2003 conflict. The organisation had a number of international staff based in Iraq, but these were withdrawn from the country as the security situation deteriorated. The organisation itself stopped direct implementation in Iraq as it did not want to expose its Iraqi staff to risks associated with working in such an environment. A number of these national staff joined other organisations or established their own NGO.

The staff based in Amman are from the Middle East and have an understanding of the operating context. They are also fluent Arabic speakers with English as their second language which facilitates their ability to communicate with both Iraqi agencies as well as with international NGOs. The staff are not permitted by the organisation to visit Iraq.

NGO E now provides financial support to other NGOs who are operational in Iraq.

²⁶ Case study based on interview conducted with NGO E employee, 2 April 2006.

3.5.1. Management of programmes

NGO E has an office in Jordan from where it provides support to a number of international and national NGOs.

Senior level discussions have taken place within the organisation regarding the transfer of risk involved in working in Iraq and whether it is ethical to provide support to other agencies to work in areas where NGO E is unwilling to work²⁷. In order to determine whether to support a potential partner NGO E looks for a risk analysis by the potential partner, in order to ensure that the organisation is capable of working in such an environment and is appreciative of all the risks associated with this, together with an operational history in the country.

The organisation has developed a supportive role with other agencies whereby it is involved in providing advice on specific components of the project under implementation when requested by the partner agency. This partnership is detailed in several of the project proposals that NGO E is supporting.

The organisation is working with a number of organisations within Iraq to assist them become independently operating organisations who are able to approach donors and obtain funds. Small grants have been provided to assist with this, and the Local NGO must also contribute some inputs. The organisation sees itself as a partner of the agencies that it supports, and does not become involved in the operations of the organisation unless requested for assistance and advice.

NGO E has not determined at what point it would discontinue support, and this is something that will be reviewed periodically as the situation develops.

3.5.2. Reporting and monitoring

Project proposals are submitted to the agency, if funded the partner agencies are required to provide mid-term and end of project reports detailing activities conducted. These are

²⁷ Interview with senior staff member based at NGO E's Head Office, 26 April 2006.

examined and discussed with the partner. As problems evolve these are discussed and strategies to resolve them are identified.

The agency does not become involved in the monitoring of the projects itself, but relies on its partners to ensure that projects are monitored and are of an adequate standard.

3.5.3. Training and Capacity Building

NGO E is not involved in the direct training and capacity building of its partners but provides the funds to enable them to organise this. The agency has conducted research in to the problems faced by agencies working in Iraq as a means of ensuring a wider level of capacity building rather than just at the level of the individual.

The agency has taken a very “hands off” approach from operations, providing support when needed, and trusting in the capabilities of its partners to ensure the work it is funding is completed.

3.6. Conclusion

The three case studies provide an overview of the different operating practices currently employed by NGOs working in Iraq. There has been an ongoing discussion, which started in 2004, that there needs to be a move away from remote control and remote management strategies to one of remote support (Hansen, 2004). Despite this a significant number of agencies are still operating under very directive methods of management, with little decision making devolved to the Iraqi staff. From the authors visits to Jordan, interviews conducted and attendance at workshops it does appear that very few agencies are willing to move to a strategy of remote support despite discussions on the importance of this in meetings. Most agencies appear unwilling, or unable, to transfer authority to their Iraqi colleagues. Agencies with a greater operational history within Iraq or with a more developmental outlook have, on the whole, found it easier to move from remote control to remote management practices. Very few agencies have at present been able to move to a situation of remote support.

From the review of remote programming strategies presented in chapters two and three, a number of common points on best practice in remote programming are observed. These are;

- The length of operational history in a country is important in enabling agencies to move from the more directive remote control strategy to a more supportive role. Agencies with a longer operational history appear to find this process easier.
- Acceptance by the local communities of agencies is extremely important in enabling agencies to work through remote programming strategies safely. The perception of the agency built up over time is also an important component of this.
- A strong understanding and awareness of local cultural and religious ways of life is required to work effectively through remote programming.
- Greater use of participatory management styles is required to facilitate a change from remote control to remote management and ultimately to remote support strategies. Participation of both national staff as well of local communities is required.

These factors will be discussed in more detail in Chapter Four, with an analysis of how agencies could be working through remote programming strategies.

Chapter Four: Remote Programming Strategies in Iraq: An Analysis of Operating Requirements

4.1. Introduction

The dilemma for aid agencies operating in Iraq is how to ensure that assistance reaches the civilians who are in need. The insecurity precludes normal access and operating strategies. If agencies are to ensure the continued provision of aid a pragmatic approach is required to ensure that aid accesses the inaccessible.

Agencies have turned to the use of remote programming strategies in Iraq, as well as other insecure environments, as a means of ensuring the continuation of assistance. It is important that the lessons learned from this work are utilised and improvements made to the provision of such assistance. At present it appears that agencies are often “re-inventing the wheel” and functioning as if remote programming strategies are a new concept.

From discussions with a number of agencies, as well as the author’s personal experiences and observations from two visits to Jordan, a number of areas which could impact on the ability of aid agencies to operate more effectively have been identified. Remote programming though is not without risks, not just in regards to security for those implementing, but also in terms of programme quality and in the ability for corrupt practices to occur.

In previous chapters the working practices of a number of agencies, in Iraq as well as in other insecure environments, were presented. In this chapter I will present my views on how agencies could operate in a more effective manner, which could potentially have positive repercussions on how humanitarian action is viewed and accepted by Iraqi civilians, and insurgent groups.

4.2. Improved Perceptions of Humanitarian Action and NGOs.

The dilemma for most NGOs operating in Iraq is that the distinction between political and humanitarian action has been totally blurred (Donini *et al* 2004). There is no understanding amongst civilian populations of the principles of impartiality, independence and neutrality which guide humanitarian action. This has negative consequences for NGOs and their employees.

During the period of Saddam Hussein's regime there were very few agencies operating in Iraq, at the same time there was propaganda against the West and with this against NGOs²⁸. NGOs were viewed with mistrust and suspicion. At the same time the UN sanctions were causing difficulties for many Iraqi civilians, resulting in a negative perception of the UN (The Feinstein International Famine Center, 2003).

Once the US and coalition forces entered Baghdad in 2003, the NGOs were quick to follow, reinforcing the perception that NGOs were therefore associated with the US and the coalition²⁹. Even before starting work NGOs were viewed negatively and seen as implementers of U.S. Government foreign policy.

Whilst in Jordan, the author noted limited work had been done on disseminating information on humanitarian principles and humanitarian action. A number of aid workers were asked whether they would consider disseminating such information, through for example the media, one respondent replied that "it's a matter of trust...how do you know which journalists you could trust...there is a potential for journalists to use the information negatively"³⁰.

According to Leader (2000) research shows that the dissemination of information on humanitarian principles and action is important in order to increase the acceptance of agencies by communities. In Iraq acceptance appears to be lacking. With the daily deterioration in security and the ongoing threats to humanitarian personnel it is more

²⁸ Interview conducted with humanitarian aid worker, Amman, Jordan, 2 April 2006.

²⁹ Interview conducted with humanitarian aid worker, Amman, Jordan, 2 April 2006.

³⁰ Interview conducted with humanitarian aid worker, Amman, Jordan, 28 March 2006.

important than ever to try to improve the operating space for those working on relief activities. Agencies need to ensure that there is an understanding amongst Iraqis on the difference between humanitarian action conducted by NGOs for the sake of assisting civilian populations, in contrast with the use of “humanitarian” by the military and western Governments for political objectives.

Public information campaigns need to be developed in an attempt to ensure the safety of Iraqi aid workers, and to try to ensure that humanitarian space is preserved for them. This is critical in a country where aid workers have to work *incognito* because of the threats and risks associated with such work. Information campaigns would need to be developed carefully, and contacts with reliable journalists fostered, particularly those working for Arab media outlets (both national Iraqi media, as well as international Arabic media such as *al-Jazeera*) as a step towards increasing awareness.

4.3. The Role of Islam and Humanitarian Action

One of the perceptions of the Iraqi population is that humanitarian action has a primarily Western agenda³¹. It is essential to show that there is also an Islamic basis for humanitarian aid. There are numerous quotations from the Holy Qur’an, as well as the Hadiths³², that show that human life, freedom of the individual and other humanitarian values are encouraged (Mirbagheri, 2002) and that humanitarianism is an obligation in Islam (Krafess, 2005).

Public information campaigns on humanitarian action should look towards religious writings and teachings as a justification for humanitarian action. I have used such work in South-eastern Afghanistan, an area of extremely conservative beliefs, where there were regular attacks and threats against humanitarian actors. The work proved to be extremely useful in ensuring the continued support of local communities. The agency concerned, it should be noted, had worked in the region for many years and had developed strong relationships with the local communities which facilitated such a strategy.

³¹ Interview conducted with Iraqi humanitarian aid worker, 1 April 2006.

³² Hadith - a report of the sayings of The Prophet Muhammad, or his companions

4.4. Management of Programme Activities

At present most managerial decisions concerning humanitarian assistance are made by international staff in Jordan, with only day to day issues being decided upon in Iraq. Agencies need a change in operational culture if they are to work effectively through a remote programming strategy. The commonly seen top-down management style needs to be changed. At present those providing managerial support have, in most cases, never been to Iraq and lack a thorough understanding of the context and realities of working in Iraq. Decision making can not reflect the situation on the ground, and decisions, made in the safety and comfort of a neighbouring country, do not necessarily reflect reality.

As a first step, Iraqi personnel should be more involved in decision making as a precursor to a more complete delegation of decision making. Agencies which have an operational history in Iraq appear more able to work in such a participatory way, with Iraqi colleagues playing a more active role in the management of activities. Agencies which have a relatively short operational history, since 2003, appear to have more difficulties in involving their Iraqi colleagues in decision making and management, and tend to work in a more directive manner.

A management model that has been used in business is called participatory management. It seeks to increase the participation of employees in decision making processes (Collins, 1997), in much the same way as NGOs try to use participatory practices with the communities with whom they work. Sheehan (1998) argues that participatory management for NGOs is an aspiration which can increase the impact on beneficiaries through the greater participation of the NGOs employees in decision making. In order to increase the effectiveness of projects in Iraq it is essential that Iraqi aid workers be involved as much as possible in decision making, and that with time decision making powers be increasingly devolved to Iraqi personnel, with the international staff acting as a sounding board, or as a means of ensuring all considerations have been taken in to account.

A decentralised, participatory decision making structure, combined with a problem solving, rather than predictive blue print approach to management, is required by NGOs to ensure

their flexibility and ability to adapt to changes in the context in which they work (Sheehan, 1998), which is particularly true for agencies operating in Iraq. The participatory approach (bottom up) rather than an authoritarian (top down) approach to management is required if remote programming strategies are to be effective. It is the Iraqi aid workers who are at most risk, as well as being closest to the beneficiaries of aid. They are most aware of the problems and are therefore in a better position to decide on appropriate action. Only a few agencies appear to be willing to devolve such decision making powers to their Iraqi colleagues. A number of NGOs prefer to retain a more directive, controlling approach to work³³, despite the fact that agencies have been discussing the importance of moving away from a remote control strategy to one of remote support since a workshop held in 2004 (Hansen, 2004).

A participatory approach requires a substantial level of trust between the international and the Iraqi staff. Without trust between the two groups a more inclusive and participatory approach will not work. Both participation and trust need to be developed, and this requires time.

4.5. Participation of Civilian Population

In a context such as Iraq, insecurity limits the ability of an agency to work through a participatory approach with communities; care needs to be taken so as not to expose community members, or NGO staff, to danger. Insecurity can result in limited time available for humanitarian staff to spend in the field, as well as leading to the perception that the agency only works with specific groups (ALNAP, 2003).

ALNAP (2003) recommends that the level of participation be adapted to what the population thinks is possible, and not what the agency wants. In areas where access is problematic and where the regular presence of agency staff is difficult, participation may be extremely important to ensure the implementation of activities (ALNAP, 2003). Agencies with an operational history in Iraq, who have worked with specific communities before,

³³ Authors observations based on discussions between NGO employees at the 2 workshops held in Amman, Jordan 28 – 30 March 2006 and 4 June 2006.

will probably find it easier, and less dangerous, to work through a more participatory approach. This is where the importance of operational history and community acceptance is extremely important to facilitate the continuation of assistance through remote programming strategies. Agencies with relatively short working histories and limited acceptance by communities will face increased difficulties. It is therefore extremely important to have experienced national colleagues who are able to develop and maintain strong relationships with communities.

4.6. Understand the Context

To develop effective projects, a complete understanding of the context is required. As Gassman (2005) reports, most agencies admit they have insufficient understanding of the contexts in which they work, and that they also lack local networks and information sources. This is compounded in Iraq due to the fact that many agencies only have a limited work history in the country as well as the fact that very few international staff have ever been or worked there. This highlights again the importance of Iraqi staff playing key roles in the management of aid activities when an agency is working through remote programming strategies; they provide a knowledge and understanding of the context, are able to provide invaluable information as to what would be the most appropriate action and contribute to the acceptance of the agency and its personnel by a community.

4.7. Role of International Staff

With an increased role of Iraqis in the management of projects that a move to remote management and remote support strategies implies, the role of the international staff will need to be redefined. At present they are very much involved in the day to day management of projects. With an increase in managerial responsibility based in Iraq, the role of internationals should change in order to provide technical support and back up to their colleagues whilst also ensuring that the agencies beliefs are considered in the work conducted, and to ensure respect of the humanitarian principles. This will require agencies to re-evaluate the type of personnel they employ for supporting Iraqi operations.

It is frequently commented that there is a regular and fast turnover of international staff working on Iraqi programmes, leading to lack of continuity³⁴. Another comment is that the internationals are relatively young and inexperienced³⁵. In order to provide appropriate support to their Iraqi colleagues NGOs need to ensure that they employ experienced expatriate staff whom the Iraqi personnel can have confidence in when asking for advice and support. The locations of remote offices provide good opportunities for agencies to deploy personnel looking for family postings, and for longer term contracts. International staff working on remote programming strategies also require a more developmental approach to emergency programmes due to the “hands-off” role of international staff associated with the increase in their supportive role.

If staff are committed to remaining in post for longer periods of time it would be possible for them to learn Arabic, thereby improving communication with their Iraqi colleagues and partners, alternatively international staff could be employed from the region or the wider Iraqi Diaspora.

4.8. Capacity Building of Iraqi Staff

The lack of international presence in Iraq prior to the conflict, as well as the scale of the conflict, meant that there was limited Iraqi capacity to meet the humanitarian needs in Iraq (Overseas Development Institute, 2003). There has been much discussion about the need for capacity building for Iraqi aid workers³⁶ and NGOs have provided numerous trainings in an attempt to resolve this. Trainings have focussed on specific issues such as writing of proposals and logical frameworks³⁷. Smillie (2001) says that, when in doubt, agencies conduct trainings as a means of resolving problems. A reason why agencies tend to focus on training, rather than longer term capacity building, is that the international staff are often young, overworked, and subject to rapid reassignments i.e. the capacity of these staff to build capacity is also low (Smillie, 2001). Training is seen as a panacea, but it is a short term solution and only contributes to long term capacity building in a very limited way.

³⁴ Discussions held with humanitarian aid workers (expatriate and Iraqi) during a workshop held in Amman, Jordan 28 – 30 March 2006

³⁵ Interview with Iraqi aid worker, Amman, Jordan 1 April 2006.

³⁶ Personal observations during workshops attended in Amman, Jordan 28 – 30 March 2006 and 4 June 2006.

³⁷ Interview conducted with aid worker, Amman, Jordan, 2 April 2006.

Potential activities which could contribute to capacity building would be to send specific staff/ partners to programmes in other regions of the world for short periods of time where they can shadow other humanitarian staff and learn through exposure to other contexts. This provides an opportunity to learn methods of working, for the principles of humanitarian action to be reinforced and for the organisation to invest in a meaningful way in their employees.

In order for Iraqi personnel to increase their capacity, and to increase their effectiveness, it is important that relevant information be readily available which could be used as a basis for helping to resolve specific issues, or to design project activities, themselves.

Web based trainings could be developed which provide on-going training on a number of subjects, whether it be specific sectoral issues (finance, logistics, administration, water & sanitation, livelihoods etc), or more generalised humanitarian practice. The employees would learn in much the same way as distance learning students. Upon completion of the course an employee would hopefully have learnt useful practices, and gained an understanding of humanitarian action. Such courses could be aimed at senior staff who speak English as it is unlikely that an agency could organise for the courses to be translated in to several languages. In areas where international access is at best limited and at worst impossible, this could provide a means for supporting national staff in developing skills and understanding of their job and the organisation. Such training would also be of use to staff working for the agency in other locations worldwide, and would provide an organisational training package tailored for the specific agency.

4.9. Monitoring of Activities

An issue faced by most NGOs is how to monitor activities. At present international staff, or donors, are unable to visit project locations to monitor the work, or verify what has taken place. Monitoring is an important activity, both to satisfy the donor as well as for the agency to ensure work is completed to the standard required. As seen in the case of Northern Uganda, without adequate monitoring systems problems can arise. Agencies with an operational history may be able to use their previous networks to assist with such

monitoring, as done by NGO D. Agencies with a shorter operational history will not be able to rely on this to the same degree of certainty that longer established agencies are able to.

Due to the complexities of the security situation the involvement of local communities in monitoring activities is complicated, partly due to the fact that agencies currently work *incognito*. As Iraqi staff rarely identify themselves as working for an NGO, due to the potential threats such a profession carries (for example kidnapping), it is not feasible to expect them to work with communities to monitor the activities. Agencies operating in Iraq are currently discussing ways to improve monitoring such as the use of separate monitoring units, peer monitoring by the Iraqi staff of other NGOs (both national and international), and external monitoring for example by donors and private contractors. This is encouraging, and is an area which requires greater development. The use of a number of different methods is preferable in order to triangulate information and to be increasingly sure that the work is being conducted to the standard required and in a manner representative of the humanitarian principles and NGO code of conduct.

4.10. Conclusion

Despite the fact that NGOs have been operating through remote programming strategies for two years in Iraq, there appears to have been little progress in improving the effectiveness of such projects. It is a concern that agencies continue to discuss the same issues they were discussing in 2004:

- The importance of moving to remote support.
- Capacity building.
- Devolve decision making powers to Iraqi staff.

Hansen (2004) maintains that remote programming strategies are not an option for agencies with little operational history in a particular context. As seen in Iraq, most agencies have a limited operational history, commencing activities in Iraq in 2003, and shortly after having to move to remote programming strategies. It can be questioned how many agencies operating in Iraq have the level of experience and infrastructure that Hansen (2004)

suggests is required in order to be able to work effectively through a system of remote management and remote support.

Remote programming strategies require agencies to “think outside the box” and to try novel working methodologies. With the concern expressed by several Iraqi aid workers³⁸ that many international NGO staff working are young and inexperienced it must be asked whether agencies have recruited the most appropriate personnel to work through remote programming strategies. Remote programming strategies requires international staff who are experienced, able to resolve problems and issues creatively, and whom Iraqi aid workers can have trust in their experience and abilities. It is debatable whether such a situation currently exists, shown by the lack of progress in addressing the issues raised in 2004.

A number of steps need to be taken by NGOs to work towards an improved situation for Iraqi aid workers. Agencies need to work more effectively at disseminating information on humanitarian action and the principles which guide it as a means of differentiating and distancing themselves from the political actors involved in Iraq. If Iraqi personnel were more involved in programme management, steps could be made to improve the effectiveness of activities through the use of the Iraqis understanding of the humanitarian needs, religious sensitivities and cultural understanding. Steps need to be taken to change the perception communities’ hold of NGOs. This can only be done through greater involvement and decision making of the Iraqi staff themselves.

³⁸ Interviews conducted with Iraqi aid workers, Amman, Jordan, 1 and 2 April 2006

Chapter 5: Conclusion and Recommendations

5.1. Accessing the Inaccessible

This dissertation has attempted to show that security threats are a daily problem facing humanitarian aid workers, both national and international throughout the world. The result of this insecurity has been a perception in the humanitarian aid community that they are increasingly deliberately targeted. As discussed earlier, the limited data available does not necessarily show an increased threat, but it does show an increasing severity of incidents faced by humanitarian personnel (Roberts, 2005).

In conflict and insecure environments it is important that agencies continue to work by the humanitarian principles, that they explain these principles in the contexts in which they are working and that they ensure the image of their organisation is in line with such principles. If an agency is perceived to be impartial, independent and neutral this has a positive impact on the security of the agency and its personnel. As argued by Curtis (2001), the expansion of humanitarian agencies out of strictly humanitarian activities in to, for example, conflict management, peacebuilding and civil society programming has negative consequences for them. These activities are political in nature, and as such are in conflict with the principles guiding humanitarian action. In a context such as Iraq, where agencies were perceived as components of U.S Government policy right from 2003, such programme activities reinforce these perceptions and endanger all humanitarian aid workers currently operating in Iraq.

Agencies working in extremely insecure environments have in the past suspended operations, or withdrawn completely from an area, when security threats were assessed to be too great and outweighing the benefits of remaining. Increasingly agencies have been looking at how to continue operations despite the insecurity. Remote programming strategies, whereby national colleagues or partners implement activities in the insecure areas with international staff providing management and support from a geographically distant location, have become increasingly popular. Such strategies enable agencies to

access the inaccessible, offering a pragmatic approach to ensuring the humanitarian imperative is met; that humanitarian assistance continues to reach those affected by conflict and insecurity, whilst at the same time minimising security risks to the implementing staff.

5.2. Criteria for the use of remote programming strategies

Remote programming strategies should not be seen as a fall back methodology to be used when security deteriorates to such an extent that normal activities are precluded. Not all situations are suitable for the use of such strategies, and agencies need to consider carefully prior to deciding whether to embark on this style of implementation.

5.2.1. Remote control

Remote control activities should only be used for short periods of time when agencies are reasonably sure that they will be able to return to a project site. Due to the controlling nature of the management style it is not sustainable in the long term. It requires international staff to be in constant communication with their national teams in order to make decisions as to what needs to be done. Such a strategy requires a very good communication network to ensure regular contact between the international staff in the remote location, and the national staff who remain at the project implementation site.

An agency should not consider such a style of work unless;

- A reliable communications network is in place and national staff are able to use such equipment effectively.
- National staff will not be exposed to a greater level of threat due to the continued implementation of activities.
- The likelihood of return to the project site is highly likely within a short time frame for example, within one month.

If these conditions cannot be met an agency should not consider this style of work and should either temporarily suspend operations until access improves, or look at the other styles of remote programming to determine whether it is feasible to continue working.

5.2.2. Remote management

When access to an area is determined to be unlikely for a longer period of time an option for agencies to consider is the use of remote management. In order for such a style of work to be considered, the following conditions should be met;

- An operational history in that particular context with a good network of contacts with local communities and actors.
- Senior national staff are experienced aid workers, with several years of experience with NGOs.
- Senior national staff must agree to take greater management responsibility.
- Continuation of activities does not expose national staff to an increased level of threat.
- Good communication systems are in place, and staff are able to use them effectively.
- National staff must be able to follow security regulations.
- Return to the project location by international staff is unlikely in the short term.
- Senior national staff must have the abilities be able to complete the activities conducted by international staff.
- International staff must be prepared to be less “hands on” in the day to management of activities and to delegate a number of their responsibilities to their national staff.
- The senior staff must be viewed as competent and capable by lower ranking national staff.
- International staff are able to trust their national colleagues, and national colleagues are able to trust their international colleagues.
- Written guidelines on the role of national and international staff is prepared, discussed and disseminated. This prevents misunderstandings on the role of each individual, and also helps to clarify the decision making process, and when to revert to the line manager.
- Revised monitoring procedures are devised in collaboration between international and national staff, and if possible the beneficiaries.

5.2.3. Remote support

In this form of management international staff play a supportive and guiding role, but decision making is made primarily by national staff at the project location. In order to work through such a methodology a number of criteria need to be met, and agencies are advised not to work in this way unless they can satisfy these criteria. It is also possible that with time an agency can move from remote management to remote support, as national staff prove their capability to run the projects effectively and according to the particular agency's objectives.

Criteria for deciding on using remote support strategies are;

- The agency has an operational history in the area of implementation.
- The organisation has a developmental rather than an emergency approach to work.
- National staff are not exposed to an increase in threat due to operating through such systems.
- National staff have experience, capacity and willingness to assume the roles of international staff.
- Communication systems are in place, and staff are able to use them effectively.
- International staff have the skills and experience to provide support and advice to national colleagues.
- International staff need to be willing to remain in post for extended periods of time to provide the necessary continuity to remote support operations
- Programmes had run effectively through a strategy of remote management and national staff had demonstrated an ability to implement projects effectively.
- Agencies are able to secure funding for provision of enhanced capacity building for national staff to facilitate the increased role they have assumed (e.g. visits to other country projects to learn from their experiences).
- The agency has specific criteria for assisting in determining which partner organisations to support.
- Revised monitoring procedures are devised in collaboration between national staff, partner organisations, and communities with advice and support from international staff.

If these criteria cannot be met, an agency should seriously consider its ability to operate through a strategy of remote support, and either considers remote control or management as an alternative, or a cessation of activities.

5.2.4. Remote partnership

The methodology involved in such a strategy is close to that used in a stable development context. Caution should be exercised before establishing partnership in insecure conflict areas;

- In a situation such as Iraq, there is the possibility that some agencies/ organisations could be fronts for specific political groups or even extremists. An agency's reputation and the security of its staff may be seriously compromised if partners are not chosen carefully. Appropriate checks on each partner agency are required.
- Local agencies might not adhere as closely to the humanitarian principles and activities may be carried out in a partial manner. Those civilians in the most dire need of assistance could be bypassed in favour of provision of aid to people from the local agency's own community/ tribe/ religious group, despite the fact that their needs are not as critical.
- Agencies opting to work through such a partnership strategy must have the organisational capacity to provide the necessary support together with experience of working with partners in conflict areas. Agencies which do not have such experience could potentially do more harm than good, contributing to an escalation of conflict and tensions, as *per* Anderson's concept of Do No Harm (1999).

5.3. Conclusion

Remote programming strategies in contexts such as Iraq, allow agencies to fulfil the humanitarian imperative, ensuring life saving assistance is provided to populations in need, whilst minimising the risk to their employees. Such strategies are highly appropriate in such circumstances. It must be questioned as to whether they are appropriate for non-life saving activities, such as civil society projects, which can be highly political and further complicate the perceptions of NGOs in a highly politicised environment.

NGOs have been working through remote programming strategies in Iraq for two years. Despite this there seems to have been limited progress in resolving the problems identified by them in 2004, with the same issues being identified in 2006 as problems requiring solutions. NGOs need to re-evaluate their working practices in Iraq, and ensure that more active steps are taken to ensure a move away from remote control and remote management to a strategy of remote support and partnership. Enough discussions have taken place; it is time for agencies to move forward and put in to action what is discussed in meetings and workshops, or to reconsider their ability to continue operations in Iraq.

5.4. Recommendations

Following the research conducted in the subject of remote programming strategies a number of recommendations can be made for agencies to consider. These are detailed below;

- Agencies should not consider remote programming strategies as a panacea for inaccessible and insecure project locations. Analysis of the capacities of an agency needs to be conducted to facilitate a decision. Only agencies which have an operational history in that particular context, together with a capable national staff, should consider the use of remote programming strategies.
- Agencies with a more developmental approach to relief work will find it easier to adapt to remote programming strategies. Agencies with a direct programming, or solidarity, mandate should consider withdrawal from a region if they are unable to operate directly as they are not operationally geared to such remote programming strategies.
- Agencies need to apply more stringent recruitment policies for international posts in areas where remote programming is being used. International staff ideally should have a development background and be prepared to work in an area for a significant period of time.
- Agencies need to document their working practices and to share lessons learnt more widely. Iraq is not the only context where remote programming strategies are utilised. Despite this, agencies have not learnt from the experiences of other operations they have run using similar strategies.

- An examination of project documents related to Iraq has shown limited discussion of quality of work. Agencies need to ensure that the work they are implementing actually has a beneficial impact. If this cannot be demonstrated agencies should reconsider whether their presence is actually beneficial or whether it could be doing more harm, potentially exacerbating the conflict.
- Agencies need to review their current capacity building activities and move away from training for trainings sake, to a more considered capacity building policy. Exposure visits for Iraqi personnel to an agency's operations in other countries may be useful in highlighting good practice in humanitarian action.
- Capacity building of national staff must be an essential component of all aid work, regardless of the security context. This should facilitate an agency to operate effectively should it have to work through a strategy of remote programming.
- The limited understanding of humanitarian action and NGOs by the Iraqi population needs to be addressed. Potential positive outcomes of this are the increased security of Iraqi aid workers, and improved access to project locations.
- Agencies must re-evaluate their pre-departure preparation for their employees. It is unacceptable that at present many agencies send new and inexperienced personnel to conflict and disaster areas without thorough preparation and training.

Appendices

Appendix 1. Security Incidents Reported from Iraq, 9 – 11 September

2006

An attempt has been made to identify whether the victim was a civilian or not, this is not always possible due to lack of data available

| Date | Location | Description | Number Killed | Number Injured |
|---|-----------------------------------|--|--------------------------|------------------------------|
| 9 September 2006 (www.alertnet.org a) | Mahmudiya, South of Baghdad | Bodies found. All were shot, bound and blindfolded | 16 | |
| 9 September 2006 (www.alertnet.org a) | Baghdad | Bodies found. All were shot and their hands were tied | 14 | |
| 9 September 2006 (www.alertnet.org a) | Baghdad | Suicide car bomb | 1 policeman | 10 civilians |
| 9 September 2006 (www.alertnet.org a) | Baghdad | Suicide car bomb targeting police patrols. | 1 policeman | 4 policemen, 2 civilians |
| 9 September 2006 (www.alertnet.org a) | Kirkuk | Roadside bomb | 2 policemen | 12 (including civilians) |
| 9 September 2006 (www.alertnet.org a) | Baghdad | Drive by shooting of a newspaper employee | 1 | 1 |
| 9 September 2006 (www.alertnet.org a) | Mosul | Gunmen broke in to home of an Iraqi soldier | 1 (10 year old child) | 1 (the child's mother) |
| 9 September 2006 (www.alertnet.org a) | Baghdad | Kidnapping | 1 (police brigadier) | |
| 9 September 2006 (www.alertnet.org a) | Baghdad | Car bomb | 1 | 4 civilians 3 US Soldiers |
| 9 September 2006 (www.alertnet.org a) | Baiji, North of Baghdad. | Bombing (4 bombs) | 3 | 3 |
| 9 September 2006 (www.alertnet.org a) | Balad, North of Baghdad | Mortar attack | | 3 women 1 child |
| 9 September 2006 (www.alertnet.org a) | Baghdad | Attack on police patrol | | 2 |

| Date | Location | Description | Number Killed | Number Injured |
|--|--------------------------|--|-----------------------------|-----------------------|
| 9 September 2006 (www.alertnet.org a) | Samarra | Clashes between insurgents and police | | 3 civilians |
| 9 September 2006 (www.alertnet.org a) | Baghdad | Mortar attack | | 7 |
| 9 September 2006 (www.alertnet.org a) | Baghdad | Roadside bomb | | 3 |
| 9 September 2006 (www.alertnet.org a) | Baghdad | Roadside bomb | | 2 Iraqi soldiers |
| 9 September 2006 (www.alertnet.org a) | Baghdad | Bomb | | 2 |
| 10 September 2006 (www.alertnet.org b) | Tuz Khurmato | Shooting oil refinery | 4 oil workers | 1 oil worker |
| 10 September 2006 (www.alertnet.org b) | Ishaqi, North of Baghdad | Roadside bomb | 1 Iraqi Soldier | 3 Iraq Soldiers |
| 10 September 2006 (www.alertnet.org b) | Baghdad | Car Bomb | 3 | 14 |
| 10 September 2006 (www.alertnet.org b) | Baghdad | Gunbattle at electronic company; more than 1 tonne explosives material found at site | 3 men guarding the premises | |
| 10 September 2006 (www.alertnet.org b) | Falluja | Ambush of chief of traffic police | 1 | |
| 10 September 2006 (www.bbc.co.uk f) | Baghdad | Car Bomb | 3 | 15 |
| 10 September 2006 (www.alertnet.org b) | Baquba, North of Baghdad | Clashes between Sunni and Shiite Districts in town of Baquba | 5 | 14 |
| 10 September 2006 (www.alertnet.org b) | Baquba | Armed attack on Police General | 3 | |

| Date | Location | Description | Number Killed | Number Injured |
|--|-------------------------------|---|----------------------|-----------------------|
| 10 September 2006 (www.alertnet.org b) | Fatha | Ambush on Iraqi soldiers | 4 insurgents | |
| 10 September 2006 (www.alertnet.org b) | Baghdad | Roadside bomb | | 2 Policemen |
| 10 September 2006 (www.alertnet.org b) | Mosul | Armed attack on a barber | 1 | |
| 10 September 2006 (www.alertnet.org b) | Falluja | Gunfight between insurgents and US military | 1 civilian | 1 civilian |
| 11 September 2006 (www.alertnet.org c) | Baghdad | Car bomb | | 5 |
| 11 September 2006 (www.alertnet.org c) | Baghdad | Suicide bomber attacked army recruits | 12 | 7 |
| 11 September 2006 (www.alertnet.org c) | Baghdad | Attack on US military | 1 | |
| 11 September 2006 (www.alertnet.org c) | Kut, South East of Baghdad | Attack on house of a policeman | 1 | |
| 11 September 2006 (www.alertnet.org c) | Hindiya, South of Baghdad | Police found the head of a man. | 1 | |
| 11 September 2006 (www.alertnet.org c) | Iskandariya, South of Baghdad | Gunmen attack civilian | 1 | |
| 11 September 2006 (www.alertnet.org c) | Hilla | Gunmen attacked a person (identity not known) | 1 | |
| 11 September 2006 (www.alertnet.org c) | Baghdad | Post office employee attacked by gunmen | 1 | |
| 11 September 2006 (www.alertnet.org c) | Baghdad | Car bomb | 4 civilians | |

| Date | Location | Description | Number Killed | Number Injured |
|--|-----------------|--|----------------------|-----------------------|
| 11 September 2006 (www.alertnet.org c) | Baghdad | Roadside bomb | | 2 civilians |
| 11 September 2006 (www.alertnet.org c) | Mosul | Roadside bomb, targeting police patrol | | 1 civilian |

Appendix 2. Questionnaire Used for Data Collection From International Staff

This questionnaire is part of research being conducted on the remote management and support of humanitarian projects in Iraq. It is being conducted as part of an MA I am doing at the Post-war Reconstruction and Development Unit, University of York, UK in collaboration with Oxfam GB.

All information provided will be dealt with confidentially.

No names, organisations or locations will be mentioned in any report written.

There are a number of check boxes for you to indicate your answer. Please place an x in the box to show your response.

A number of questions are open ended – please feel free to write what you want in answer to the question.

The last page is a space for your own thoughts and comments not covered in the questionnaire. Please feel free to add any further information which you feel is relevant to the subject of remote management and support.

Completed questionnaires can be emailed back to me at XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

I would appreciate it if completed forms could be emailed back to me by **25 May 2006**.

I hope you will be able to find some time to complete the form.

Your assistance is greatly appreciated.

Kind regards,

Colin Rogers

GENERAL INFORMATION

1. What is your name? (**OPTIONAL**)
2. What is your nationality?
3. Which organisation do you work for?
4. What is your current job title?
5. How long have you been in your current position?
6. How long have you worked with this organisation?
7. How long do you plan to stay in your current position?
8. How long in total have you been working in international humanitarian aid;
9. Could you provide a brief overview of your responsibilities in your current job?
10. Do you have previous experience in working by remote management? If yes where?
11. What is your contact email in case of follow up questions?

Overview of Current Operations

1. What was your organisations total budget for work in Iraq in 2005?

2. What % of these funds supported the remote management office (include all costs associated with the remote management office)?

3. How many staff are present in your office from where you run remote operations?
In Amman

In Kuwait city

Other (please specify)

4. What are the job titles of each of these staff

5. How many of your international staff in the remote management office have worked in Iraq?

6. How long has your organisation been operational in Iraq?

7. How many staff do you have in Iraq?

8. Which Governorates are you currently working in?

9. What sectors are you running projects in at present?

10. Was your organisation operational in Iraq prior to the conflict in 2003?

YES

NO

11. If your organisation was present in Iraq prior to 2003 how do you think that has contributed to your organisations image and acceptance within the local community?

DONORS

1. Who are your donors for operations in Iraq?

2. Are donors receptive to the use of remote management?

3. Have donors attempted to pressurise the organisation to send international staff to Iraq? If yes what was the outcome and which donor(s) were involved?

4. What is the donors response to the difficulties in access to areas for implementation and monitoring?

SECURITY

1. List the security concerns in order of priority that you think your implementing partners face (maximum of 5)

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

2. If your organisation is implementing directly please list your organisations major security concerns (maximum of 5)

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

3. Who is responsible for day-to-day security decisions for operations in Iraq?

4. Who decides on operational security arrangements for teams in Iraq?

5. What are the most common security incidents reported to you by your teams in Iraq and what steps are taken to minimise these?

6. Do you have designated security officer? If yes how many and where are they located?

COMMUNICATION

1. How often are you in contact with the Iraqi teams?

2. What is your main means of communication (list in order of priority and usage)

3. What are the major constraints in communication?

4. Who initiates contact - Iraqi team or remote office?

5. Do you have established communication protocols and procedures?

6. If yes – are these followed routinely?

7. What can be done to improve communications?

8. How often are face-to-face meetings held with the remote management office and the Iraqi teams?

9. Where are these meetings held?

10. What level of staff attend these meetings? (senior managers, managers, officers)

11. Would you like to see more meetings? Yes No

Please explain your answer

12. What are the major problems faced when holding meetings (top 5)?
 - 1.
 - 2.
 - 3.
 - 4.
 - 5.

MANAGEMENT RESPONSIBILITY

1. Who is responsible for the overall management of projects in Iraq?

2. Where is this person located?

3. Has this person ever been to, or worked in, Iraq?

4. What nationality is this person?

5. Do Iraqi staff have full management responsibilities and decision making. Please can you explain the management structure

CAPACITY BUILDING

1. What are the areas that require most urgent attention and capacity building in your national staff in Iraq (list up to 5 in order of priority)?
 - 1.
 - 2.
 - 3.
 - 4.
 - 5.

2. What are the areas that require most urgent attention and capacity building in your implementing partners in Iraq (list up to 5 in order of priority)?
 - 1.
 - 2.
 - 3.

4.

5.

3. What trainings have been provided to your Iraqi staff (please indicate length of time and frequency of follow up trainings)?

| Training provided | Location of training | Length of training | Frequency of follow up trainings |
|-------------------|----------------------|--------------------|----------------------------------|
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |

4. What trainings have been provided to your implementing partners (please indicate length of time and frequency of follow up trainings)?

| Training provided | Location of training | Length of training | Frequency of follow up trainings |
|-------------------|----------------------|--------------------|----------------------------------|
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |

5. How were Iraqi staff recruited?

MONITORING & EVALUATION

1. Please describe how you currently conduct monitoring and evaluation of your project activities.

2. Which of the following does your organisation currently use as tools to facilitate monitoring and evaluation?

| | YES | NO |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| GPS (Global Positioning System) coordinates | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| GIS (Geographic Information Systems) | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Satellite images | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Digital cameras | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Mobile phone with camera | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Other (please specify) | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

If any of the above are used please provide a description of how they are used, what have been the benefits, and what have been the difficulties for each method used.

3. Would your agency consider using any of the following as part of routine project monitoring?

| | YES | NO |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| GPS (Global Positioning System) coordinates | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| GIS (Geographic Information Systems) | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Satellite images | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Digital cameras | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Mobile phone with camera | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Other (please specify) | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS

1. Which of the following are current implementing partners for your organisation?

| Type of Implementing Partner | Please list each group you are working with in the appropriate box (partner name is optional) | Length of time your agency has worked with each partner | Governorate each implementing partner is working in | Sectors which implementing partner is working in |
|------------------------------|--|---|---|--|
| National NGO | | | | |
| Community Based Organisation | | | | |
| Religious Group | | | | |
| Community Leaders | | | | |
| Religious Leaders | | | | |
| Iraqi Government | | | | |
| District Council | | | | |
| Private contractor | | | | |

| Type of Implementing Partner | Please list each group you are working with in the appropriate box (partner name is optional) | Length of time your agency has worked with each partner | Governorate each implementing partner is working in | Sectors which implementing partner is working in |
|------------------------------|--|---|---|--|
| International NGO | | | | |
| Other (please specify) | | | | |

OPERATIONAL SUPPORT

1. Have you been able to use tools from other conflict areas to facilitate your work in Iraq?

Yes

No

If Yes, what tools have you used and from which country programmes did they come from?

If No, why not?

CONCLUSIONS

1. What are the most important areas that need improvement to ensure quality implementation

Thank you for your time in completing this questionnaire.

Please feel free to add any comments to this form that you feel are relevant to the subject of remote management and support.

Appendix 3. Questionnaire Used for Data Collection From Iraqi Staff

This questionnaire is part of research being conducted on the remote management and support of humanitarian projects in Iraq. It is being conducted as part of an MA I am doing at the Post-war Reconstruction and Development Unit, University of York, UK in collaboration with Oxfam GB.

All information provided will be dealt with confidentially.

No names, organisations or locations will be mentioned in any report written.

There are a number of check boxes for you to indicate your answer. Please place an x in the box to show your response.

A number of questions are open ended – please feel free to write what you want in answer to the question.

The last page is a space for your own thoughts and comments not covered in the questionnaire. Please feel free to add any further information which you feel is relevant to the subject of remote management and support.

Completed questionnaires can be emailed back to me at

I would appreciate it if you could send completed forms back to me by **25 May 2006**

I hope you will be able to find some time to complete the form.

Your assistance is greatly appreciated.

Kind regards,

Colin Rogers

GENERAL INFORMATION

1. What is your name? (**OPTIONAL**)
2. What is your nationality?
3. Which organisation do you work for? Is this an international NGO or an Iraqi group? (**OPTIONAL**)
4. What is your current job title?
5. How long have you been in your current position?
6. How long have you worked with this organisation?
7. How long do you plan to stay in your current position?
8. How long in total have you been working in humanitarian aid;
9. Could you provide a brief overview of your responsibilities in your current job?
10. What is your contact email in case of follow up questions?

Overview of Current Operations

1. What was your organisations total budget for work in Iraq in 2005?
2. What % of these funds supported the remote management office (include all costs associated with the remote management office)?

3. Who are your current donors?
4. How many staff does your organisation employ in Iraq? How many volunteers work with your agency?
5. What are the job titles of each of these staff
6. How many of your international staff in the remote management office have worked in Iraq?
7. How many of the international staff in the remote management office have been to Iraq?
8. How long has your organisation been operational in Iraq?
9. Which Governorates are you currently working in?
10. What sectors are you running projects in at present?
11. Do international staff visit Iraq? If yes – how often and for how long? When was the last visit? If No – why not?

SECURITY

1. List the security concerns in order of priority that you face in Iraq (maximum of 5)

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

2. What do you think are your agencies major security concerns (maximum of 5)

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

3. Who is responsible for day-to-day security decisions for operations in Iraq?

4. Who decides on operational security arrangements for teams in Iraq?

5. What are the most common security incidents reported to you by your colleagues in Iraq and what steps are taken to minimise these?

6. How are International NGOs perceived in Iraq?

7. How are Iraqi NGOs perceived in Iraq?

8. Was your organisation operational in Iraq prior to the conflict in 2003?
YES NO
9. If your organisation was operational in Iraq before 2003, how has that contributed to your organisations image and acceptance within the local community?
10. How many security officers does your organisation have? Where are they located?
11. What nationality are the security officers?

COMMUNICATION

1. How often are you in contact with the remote management office?
2. What are your main means of communication (list in order of priority and usage)
3. What are the major constraints in communication?
4. Who initiates contact - Iraqi team or remote office?
5. Do you have established communication protocols and procedures?
6. If yes – are these followed routinely?

7. What can be done to improve communications?
8. How often are face-to-face meetings held?
9. Where are these meetings held?
10. What level of staff attend these meetings? (senior managers, managers, officers)
11. Would you like to see more meetings? Yes No

Please explain your answer

12. What are the major problems faced when holding meetings (top 5)?
 - 1.
 - 2.
 - 3.
 - 4.
 - 5.

MANAGEMENT RESPONSIBILITY

1. Who is responsible for the overall management of projects in Iraq?
2. Where is this person located?
3. Has this person ever been to, or worked in, Iraq?

4. What nationality is this person?
5. Are Iraqi staff given enough decision making power? If the answer is No – what would you like done to improve this situation?
Yes No
6. What are the benefits of having international staff making decisions on operations in Iraq?
7. What are the negative aspects of having international staff making decisions on operations in Iraq?
8. In your opinion what is the current role of international staff?

| Activity | Yes | No |
|---|------------|-----------|
| Context Analysis | | |
| Risk/ Threat Analysis | | |
| Security Management | | |
| Provision of Security Rules | | |
| Decision Making | | |
| Preparing Work Plan | | |
| Determination of Work Priorities | | |
| Liaison with Donors | | |
| Oversight and Monitoring of Activities (Project, Logistics, Finance and Administration) | | |

| Activity | Yes | No |
|--|------------|-----------|
| Provision of Technical Advice and Support to Iraqi Staff and Implementing Partners | | |
| Capacity Building of Iraqi Staff and Implementing Partners | | |
| Ensuring Organisations Principles are followed? | | |
| Provision of Funds | | |
| Other (please specify) | | |

9. In your opinion **what should** be the role of international staff? Please indicate with a “Yes” or “No” in the appropriate column.

| Activity | Yes | No |
|---|------------|-----------|
| Context Analysis | | |
| Risk/ Threat Analysis | | |
| Security Management | | |
| Provision of Security Rules | | |
| Decision making | | |
| Preparing Work Plan | | |
| Determination of Work Priorities | | |
| Liaison with Donors | | |
| Oversight and Monitoring of Activities (Project, Logistics, Finance and Administration) | | |

| Activity | Yes | No |
|--|------------|-----------|
| Provision of Technical Advice and Support to Iraqi Staff and Implementing Partners | | |
| Capacity Building of Iraqi Staff and Implementing Partners | | |
| Ensuring Organisations Principles are followed? | | |
| Provision of Funds | | |
| Other (please specify) | | |

CAPACITY BUILDING

1. What are the areas that require most urgent attention and capacity building amongst Iraqi staff (list up to 5 in order of priority)?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

2. What are the areas that the remote management office thinks require the most urgent attention and capacity building amongst Iraqi staff (list up to 5 in order of priority)?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

3. What trainings have been provided to the staff in Iraq (please indicate length of time and frequency of follow up trainings)?

| Training provided | Location of training | Length of training | Frequency of follow up trainings |
|-------------------|----------------------|--------------------|----------------------------------|
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |

4. What trainings have been provided to your implementing partners (please indicate length of time and frequency of follow up trainings)?

| Training provided | Location of training | Length of training | Frequency of follow up trainings |
|-------------------|----------------------|--------------------|----------------------------------|
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |

5. How are staff recruited?

MONITORING & EVALUATION

1. Please describe how you currently conduct monitoring and evaluation of your project activities.

2. Which of the following does your agency currently use as tools to facilitate monitoring and evaluation?

| | YES | NO |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| GPS (Global Positioning System) coordinates | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| GIS (Geographic Information Systems) | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Satellite images | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Digital cameras | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Mobile phone with camera | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Other (please specify) | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

If any of the above are used please provide a description of how they are used, what have been the benefits, and what have been the difficulties for each method used.

3. Would your agency consider using any of the following as part of routine project monitoring?

| | YES | NO |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| GPS (Global Positioning System) coordinates | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| GIS (Geographic Information Systems) | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Satellite images | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Digital cameras | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Mobile phone with camera | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Other (please specify) | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS

1. Which of the following are current implementing partners for your agency?

| Type of Implementing Partner | Please list each group you are working with in the appropriate box (name of partner is not essential but would be helpful) | Length of time your agency has worked with each partner | Which Governorate is each implementing partner working in | Sectors which implementing partner is working in |
|------------------------------|--|---|---|--|
| National NGO | | | | |
| Community Based Organisation | | | | |
| Religious Group | | | | |
| Community Leaders | | | | |
| Religious Leaders | | | | |
| Iraqi Government | | | | |
| Iraqi District Council | | | | |

| Type of Implementing Partner | Please list each group you are working with in the appropriate box (name of partner is not essential but would be helpful) | Length of time your agency has worked with each partner | Which Governorate is each implementing partner working in | Sectors which implementing partner is working in |
|------------------------------|--|---|---|--|
| International NGO | | | | |
| Private contractor | | | | |
| Other (please specify) | | | | |

OPERATIONAL SUPPORT

1. Have you been able to use tools from other conflict areas to facilitate your work in Iraq?

Yes No

If Yes, what tools have you used and from which country programmes did they come from?

If No, why not?

CONCLUSIONS

1. Do you feel adequately supported by the remote management office? If not what would you like changed so you receive the support you want?
2. What are the most important areas that need improvement to ensure quality implementation

Thank you for your time in completing this questionnaire.

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