Benefits of Coordination Between International and National NGOs in Humanitarian Response

Below are some of the reasons of coordinating with local NGOs cited by NGO coordination bodies in the nine cases studied in *Strength in Numbers: An Overview of NGO Coordination in the Field*:

- Local NGOs were there before the disaster, the first days of the disaster, and will be there after the disaster with clear implications for emergency preparedness and response.
- Local NGOs have insights, information, knowledge and know-how that is likely to contribute to a more appropriate, efficient, and effective emergency response.
- An emergency is an opportunity for trust building, networking and community-building that has immediate benefits for emergency response, as well as recovery and development.
- Through coordination mechanisms, by emphasising democratic representation, the link between local NGOs and their constituencies can have immediate and long-term advantages including more reliable information flows and feedback.
- Where appropriate, coordination forums can create neutral terms and grounds for engagement.
- Through engagement, local and international NGOs can debate and 'acculturate' common humanitarian principles, improving the accountability of the overall humanitarian response and increasing acceptance of international NGOs in complex crisis.
- Through shared mechanisms for information exchange, coordination, liaison, and representation, local organisations (and smaller NGOs) can maximise their limited human and financial resources.

Practical Examples of LNGO-NNGO-INGO Coordination

These examples are drawn from the nine case studies contained in *Strength in Numbers: An Overview of NGO Coordination in the Field*:

- Seconding national staff of INGOs to existing or start up initiatives (Myanmar)
- Collaborating with other civil society institutions, e.g. universities, institutes (Iraq)
- Strong representation of LNGO on governance bodies (Afghanistan, Iraq)
- Supporting ‘connectors’; choosing NGO networks that encourage unity or supporting new NGO networks that are non-political or sectarian (Myanmar, Iraq)
- Joint development of Codes of Conduct or facilitating the development of local NGO CoC (Afghanistan)
- Joint development of the Good Partnership Guidelines (Myanmar)
- Joint contingency planning (Myanmar)
- Joint evaluation of the *Principles of Partnership*