Independent Evaluation: NGO Coordination Committee in Iraq (NCCI)

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The comments contained herein reflect the opinions of the consultant only.
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A. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A.1. Background

1. The NGO Coordination Committee in Iraq (NCCI) is an autonomous body created by NGOs working in Iraq. It was initiated by a number of international NGOs immediately after the 2003 invasion with the aim of promoting information sharing and coordination. The purpose of NCCI is to provide a forum for collective NGO activity in order to enhance the effectiveness of humanitarian action in Iraq at a national level. At present, NCCI’s constituency comprises a wide spectrum of international NGOs present or operational in Iraq and a growing number of Iraqi NGOs. The NCCI Charter was ratified by a General Assembly in June, 2003 and reviewed with new ratification in 2005. NCCI has 3 objectives:

I. To act as an independent, neutral and impartial NGO forum for coordination and information exchange among the NGO community on general and sectoral issues, and activities related to Iraq and its population, irrespective of ethnicity, politics, gender and religion.

II. To advocate that Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law are respected and to ensure humanitarian needs are identified, well lobbied for and met.

III. To commit to work together to enhance the capacity of the NGO community to deliver humanitarian and development assistance to the population of Iraq.

2. Deepening insecurity for aid operations and personnel in Iraq led NCCI and most of its international members to decrease operations in central and southern Iraq and relocate the majority of international staff to safer locations in the north and to Amman, Jordan and Kuwait in 2004/5. NCCI has operated primarily from Amman since September 2004, although the Erbil office of NCCI in northern Iraq remained open until June 2005 with an expatriate presence. The Baghdad presence continues with national staff.

3. Prior to June, 2005, funding for NCCI primarily came from ECHO, the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), and the Mennonite Central Committee (for Support to Local NGOs), as well as from membership fees and in-kind contributions. Since 2005, funding has been sourced from various donors including Swiss Development Cooperation (SDC), Oxfam (GB), CIDA, UNDP, Irish Aid, Trocaire and others.

A.2. The Evaluation

4. The evaluation visit occurred over the period between early November and mid-December 2006. The main focus of the visit was on Amman, where the bulk of NCCI staff and international staff of members are presently situated. One week was spent in northern Iraq, including attendance at NCCI coordination meetings in Erbil and Suleimaniyah. Insecurity due to escalating inter-communal violence precluded a visit to Baghdad; however NCCI
staff from Baghdad were interviewed during trips to Amman. Discussion of context has been informed by previous visits to the region since 2004 and periodic exposure to NCCI activities.

5. The objective of the evaluation was to allow NCCI to establish whether it has achieved its objectives and to produce guidelines for improving the effectiveness of its future activities and designing its future structure and priorities. In accordance with the ToR (Annex B), the primary purpose was lessons learning and updating the 2004 evaluation. The secondary purpose was accountability and transparency to NCCI members and donors. In this framework, the evaluation focused on the quality of actions undertaken by NCCI as a membership organisation as well as a donor-funded project. Accordingly, the evaluation examined 1) the advocacy, representation and coordination activities undertaken by NCCI; 2) the degree to which these have been – and, by extension, will be – relevant to coordination needs in the evolving context in Iraq; and; 3) issues of governance and accountability that affect the quality of advocacy, representation and coordination facilitated by NCCI.

6. Some 35 interviews were conducted with NCCI staff, the Executive Board, members, donors, UN agencies and others. NCCI coordination meetings were observed in Erbil, Suleimaniyah and Amman. NCCI participation in other meetings was also observed, such as the UNAMI Emergency Working Group and Contingency Planning meetings, and numerous NCCI meetings with individual members. An evaluation questionnaire (Annex C) was sent to the heads of mission of all NCCI members and correspondents to ensure that all had an opportunity to contribute. These devices were supplemented by extensive review of NCCI documentation.

A.3. Main Conclusions

7. The evaluation comes at a critical moment for NCCI. The context is changing extremely quickly and NCCI is currently faced with the necessity of adapting once again to a new set of realities.

8. The effectiveness of NCCI has been high in spite of the fast pace of change in external events and persistent shortfalls in donor funding for NCCI’s core humanitarian coordination functions since mid-2005. The survival and successes of NCCI can be attributed primarily to a dedicated team of international and Iraqi staff in NCCI who have kept the heart of the organisation beating despite constrictions in humanitarian space, the challenges of remote management, a diffusion of focus among the membership since 2004 and the unpredictability of resources.

9. As the humanitarian crisis in Iraq grows in scale and scope, assistance and protection will be acutely needed from NGOs in and around the country for the foreseeable future. On present trends, needs for coordination, advocacy and information sharing will continue to increase dramatically into the medium term as the humanitarian situation in and around
Iraq becomes markedly worse. Although UNAMI and the UN’s humanitarian agencies (including UN OCHA) are currently planning to increase their level of activity in and around Iraq, the UN system lacks the ground-level access needed for assuming field coordination responsibilities in any sector on a national scale. NCCI is the sole organisation with sufficient depth of institutional memory and an established network of contacts at national and local levels to provide effective field coordination among NGOs inside Iraq. Currently, NCCI is strongly positioned to increase its role in emergency field coordination inside Iraq; however, its existing resources for doing so are severely limited.

10. Following a lull in activity after the re-location of the humanitarian community to Amman, the workload of NCCI increased steadily in the wake of the bombing of the Samarra mosque in February 2006, after which inter-communal violence and humanitarian needs escalated sharply. The resources available to the office have not kept pace with the growing complexity of the context in Iraq and the growing number and complexity of demands on NCCI. In light of the unfolding changes inside Iraq, there are two main, inter-related threats to NCCI’s continued and increased effectiveness as these various challenges grow:

- Continued funding shortfalls for core coordination functions;
- Continued reliance on a NCCI coordination architecture that is under-resourced inside Iraq and thus inappropriate to the emerging context in the country.

A.4. Recommendations

A.4.1. Continuation / Donor Funding

11. As a matter of urgency, NCCI should increase its efforts to secure stable core funding into the medium term in anticipation of a substantial increase in demand for its services from operational humanitarian NGOs and others. Donors with humanitarian responsibilities must recognize that coordination of NGO humanitarian operations is neither an add-on nor a luxury.

A.4.2. Re-focus on Coordination of Emergency Humanitarian Response

12. NCCI should re-focus on its core function of providing field coordination services inside Iraq as its first organisational priority.

A.4.3. Create a Dedicated Coordination Architecture for Emergency Response

13. Beginning immediately, NCCI should create and maintain a flexible network of Iraqi local field coordination officers or Liaisons overseen and managed by a senior international Field Coordinator based in Amman and travelling inside Iraq as conditions permit.
A.4.4. Strengthen Context Analysis

14. NCCI should strengthen localized context analysis in support of the humanitarian operations of its members and its own field coordination activities.

A.4.5. Facilitate Operational NGO Efforts to Adapt to the Changing Context

15. NCCI should focus its capacity-building efforts on measures meant to facilitate NGO adaptation to the evolving difficulties of the Iraqi context. These efforts should be undertaken primarily to support operational humanitarian NGOs and staff from inside Iraq.

A.4.6. Increase Accessibility and Transparency of Information

16. All routine NCCI documents now produced and distributed only in English for members, observers and the public should be professionally translated into Arabic.

A.4.7. Report Bi-Annually on Donor Responsiveness and Donor Accountability to Principles of Good Humanitarian Donorship

17. NCCI should monitor donor responsiveness to the humanitarian situation and their compliance with the Good Humanitarian Donorship initiative. With member support, NCCI should issue a public bi-annual report on donor performance.

A.4.8. Indicators for Progressive Handover and Phase-out

18. Indicators for future phase-out and handover of NCCI functions, contained later in this report, are generally the same as those identified during the 2004 evaluation. Modest changes reflect the added complexities of Iraq’s fragmentation on communal lines, the phenomenon of “brain drain”, and donor reticence in supporting humanitarian action commensurate with needs.

A.5. Lessons Learned

A.5.1. Implications for Coordination of Constricted Humanitarian Space

19. As humanitarian space has diminished inside Iraq, the quantity, quality and timeliness of information about needs, access, interlocutors and changes to context have impaired coordination simply because there is less reliable data to share and diminishing reliable information on which to base collective discussion and decisions.

A.5.2. Implications for Coordination of Low Profile Humanitarian Activity
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20. Coordination is both more difficult and less effective due to the low-profile approaches to programming. Low-profile modalities were adopted by virtually all humanitarian actors in Iraq in response to insecurity. Although the approach has proven necessary and helpful to programme continuation, it nonetheless inhibits effective coordination, for three reasons. First, information exchange was inhibited by the adoption of low profile modalities by NCCI members and others, meaning that the amount of information shared with other organisations regarding partners, projects, expenditures, access, and programming success was drastically reduced. Second, safety concerns inside Iraq dictated that aid agency staff curtailed movement and exposure: thus, coordination meetings became much less frequent, worked on an invitation-only basis and were not widely publicized. Third, the absence of the kind of open public fora that were possible inside Iraq (and outside the “Green Zone”) in 2003 undoubtedly meant the inadvertent exclusion of some newcomer local organisations: it was risky to extend trust to unknown organisations. There have been fewer opportunities for new organisations inside Iraq to become known to the established humanitarian actors simply because, except for meetings in Amman and the 3 northern governorates of Iraq, there were far fewer possibilities for physical interaction at meetings and discussions of the sort that were formerly possible in Baghdad and elsewhere in the country.

A.5.3. Implications for Coordination of Remote Management

21. Attacks on international staff of aid agencies increased to untenable levels by mid-2004: in response, most NGOs adopted remote programming modalities in efforts to keep operating. Coordinating both within and between organisations becomes more difficult when offices are physically isolated by distance and mobility constraints from sub-offices. Geographic and psychological distances are difficult to bridge: e-mail and telephone contact between staff is not sufficient for effective coordination over the long term and must be supplemented by face-to-face contact in order for effective information exchange, problem-solving, brainstorming and avoidance of situations where small misunderstandings get out of hand. Heads of Mission of international NGOs are usually not present at Baghdad meetings (or elsewhere in Iraq outside of the 3 northern governorates), and national staff are hampered in coordination meetings by a lack of decision-making authority. In Amman, however, NGO staffs are not operational. Accordingly, information exchange, discussion and decisions become more disassociated from realities on the ground. Also, additional expense accrues from the need to convene periodic face-to-face coordination meetings between the different locations.

22. Experience of the last several years also suggests that staff and organisations working remotely from safer locales often lose the sense of solidarity with affected populations that animates risk-taking and creativity. As early as 2004, aid workers in Iraq and Amman spoke of a “malaise” afflicting the Amman-based humanitarian community, but the problem has become more pronounced since then. In 2004, many NGOs were actively coordinating their activities through NCCI on emergency response and the health, education, displaced persons, water/sanitation and other sectors. In 2005, sectoral
coordination was largely turned over to UN clusters (based in Amman) and to Iraqi government bodies in the Green Zone. With the displacement of many NGO international staffs or management teams to Amman, the interests and energies of the population of NGOs in Iraq and Amman became more diffuse. In 2006, with funding for NGOs harder to come by, it often appeared that there was little remaining of the sense of NGO community and solidarity that prevailed in 2003 and 2004 in Iraq. However, as the growing humanitarian crisis in Iraq becomes more widely apparent and understood, that is beginning to change as shared concerns once again engender greater collegiality and focus.

A.5.4. Over-reliance on Foreign / National Staff and Hierarchical Organisational Structures in Insecure Settings

23. As noted in the 2004 evaluation, over-reliance on expatriate staff in key coordination roles adds to the vulnerability of coordination structures in highly insecure settings where foreign staff is being targeted. Since 2004, however, national staff are now also at acute risk when playing coordination roles inside Iraq. In a hostile environment, over-reliance on centralized decision-making or on any one individual to perform a coordination function leaves an organisation prone to problems of gaps in decision-making and staff burnout.
B. MAIN REPORT

B.1. Introduction

B.1.1. Evaluation Scope, Methodology and Constraints

1. This was the second evaluation of NCCI since its inception in 2003. The objective was to allow NCCI to establish whether it has achieved its objectives and to produce guidelines for improving the effectiveness of its future activities and designing its future structure and priorities. In accordance with the ToR (Annex B), the primary purpose was lesson learning and updating the 2004 evaluation; the secondary purpose was accountability and transparency with NCCI members and donors.

2. In this framework, the evaluation focused on analysis and appraisal of NCCI’s role and activities in Iraq in accordance with the objectives and results determined by the NCCI mandate agreed by NGOs in the reviewed Charter of February 2005 and during the NCCI-sponsored NGO Workshop and Conference of June 2005. Specifically, it was concerned with relevance in the context, efficiency and responses to NGO expectations, and the impacts and results of how these expectations have been achieved. On this basis, it draws conclusions and posits recommendations at strategic, structural and operational levels for NCCI’s immediate future plans and its evolution.

3. Analysis of the expected results of NCCI were stipulated to occur at two levels: 1) the relevance of NCCI in the Iraqi context and the viability of the approach in other contexts, and; 2) operational strategy including efficiency, effectiveness and impact. The evaluation methodology was adopted to reflect this approach.

4. The evaluation was conducted in three phases: the field visit; debriefing of NCCI officers and others in Amman, and; preparation of the report. The evaluation visit was conducted between early November and 15 December, 2006. However, during this period, unrelated research was conducted by the author on the Iraqi context which nevertheless helped to inform the NCCI evaluation. Some 35 interviews were conducted specifically for the evaluation with NCCI staff, members of the Executive Board, NCCI members and observers (e.g., the ICRC), donors and others with direct or indirect interests in NCCI activities including staff of UN agencies. While interviews were for the most part semi-structured according to the objectives of the evaluation, interviewees were given opportunities to contribute their impressions, observations and suggestions in whatever form they wished. Face-to-face interviews were supplemented by e-mail correspondence and telephone conversations. In addition, the heads of mission of all NCCI member organisations were sent a questionnaire (attached as Annex C) by e-mail to invite further comment and suggestions. Several NCCI and other meetings were observed during the evaluation, including general coordination meetings in Amman, Erbil and Suleimaniyah.

5. Travel by the author to Baghdad was ruled out due to concerns for his own safety, the safety of those who would have facilitated his visit, and those he would have met. However, several opportunities arose in northern Iraq and in Amman to have face-to-face conversations with Baghdad-based staff of NCCI and members based in Iraq.
B.1.2. Background and Context

6. **Creation and Growth of NCCI.** In anticipation of large-scale needs in Iraq resulting from the US-led invasion in March 2003, a large group of diverse NGOs established or re-established operations in the country. UN international staff had been evacuated from Iraq at the onset of hostilities, and were not allowed to return to the country to resume operations for some time. As such, the normal coordination-by-default that often falls to UN agencies in humanitarian emergencies – such as UNHCR on internally displaced persons, or UNICEF on education, etc. – as well as the coordination of UN and related activity by UN OCHA – was not yet occurring in Iraq.

7. During the war and its immediate aftermath, the only coordinating bodies were a small (and ultimately short-lived) structure formed by US-funded INGOs that had engaged in joint contingency planning prior to the war, and the Civil Affairs and CIMIC structures established by coalition forces to support their military objectives. Coalition forces began hosting meetings with INGOs inside Iraq with the stated aims of coordinating humanitarian assistance. In the very earliest stages, these meetings were well-attended because they were the only venues where any information about the general situation and about the intentions of the coalition could be obtained by humanitarian agencies.

8. In response to growing concerns about preserving humanitarian space and safeguarding the neutrality, impartiality and operational independence of humanitarian activity, a small group of NGOs, primarily working in the health sector -- some of whom had been running programmes in Iraq before the war -- formed an *ad hoc* forum for exchanging information and coordinating their activities. The NGO Coordination Committee in Iraq initially dealt with general issues of concern to NGOs, with a special working group for the health sector. NCCI’s role was increasingly accepted and appreciated by the NGO community and it continued to grow and become more formalized even after the UN agencies resumed programming and took on several sectoral coordination responsibilities. NCCI was recognised as the representative body of NGOs in Iraq through ratification of its Charter by a General Assembly in June, 2003. A permanent executive coordinator position was eventually formalized, replacing an earlier rotating chairmanship.

9. The bombing of the UNAMI headquarters in Baghdad led to the eventual evacuation of all foreign UN staff from Iraq to Amman, with satellite offices in Kuwait City and Larnaca. Many NGOs similarly evacuated their foreign staff, scaled back programmes, and initiated remote management of programmes. Others stayed and adopted a lower profile modality of presence and operations, with ensuing consequences for their accessibility, visibility, and perceived transparency.

10. Against these developments, NCCI was well-positioned to assume many of the coordination responsibilities that had been performed by UN agencies, and OCHA handed over some of its coordination activities to NCCI at that time. Demand for NCCI’s services rose rapidly as the NGO community looked to it as the only neutral, independent and impartial NGO forum in the country, and one that had demonstrated agility with the issues and a dedication to principled work.
11. NCCI’s constituency rose to over 50% of NGOs present or operational in Iraq and fluctuated around that level into 2005. The organisation held regular general coordination meetings in Baghdad, Basrah, Erbil, Kuwait and Amman and, from its main office in Baghdad, facilitated 5 regular working groups on health, education, water and sanitation (watsan), IDPs / vulnerable and support to national NGOs. Other working groups were established on an ad hoc basis, including forums for the discussion of humanitarian space, advocacy, child protection, etc. In this way, NCCI facilitated coordination between NGOs and acted as a conduit for the flow of information between NGOs and UN agencies, donors, the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA), Iraqi authorities and emerging Iraqi NGOs.

12. To this point, the main office was in Baghdad. Until August, 2003, NCCI was housed, staffed and hosted informally by Premiere Urgence, until NCCI was formalised as a distinct entity with administrative hosting first from Premiere Urgence then Un Ponte Per Baghdad. Two field offices, Basrah and Erbil, were opened in February / March 2004 with the intent of strengthening NCCI’s national perspective and coverage. An NCCI office in Amman provided for essential linkages between operational NGOs in Iraq and the Amman-based humanitarian community. An NCCI Security Office was established in Baghdad, with officers also in Basrah and Erbil, to help increase the capacities of NGOs to provide for their own security. Throughout this period, main funding for NCCI came from ECHO, the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), and the Mennonite Central Committee (for Support to Local NGOs), as well as from membership fees and in-kind contributions.

13. **Impact on NCCI of Deepening Insecurity & Donor Reticence.** A severe deterioration of the security environment for aid organisations and personnel led in late 2004 to the withdrawal of most international staff of operational NGOs and donors to safer locales in Amman, Kuwait and the 3 northern governorates of Iraq. Some sizeable international NGO members closed their programmes completely. As donor support fell off, NCCI’s presence was reduced from five offices (Baghdad, Erbil, Basrah, Kuwait and Amman) and some 80 staff including support personnel and a security office, to the current level (since July 2005) where there is one home-based Iraqi supported by 2 drivers, charged with coordination duties in Baghdad, and an additional 7 staff in Amman.

14. The downturn in security conditions coincided with the departure of NCCI’s first Executive Coordinator and the Field Coordinator. NCCI continued to maintain periodic presence with international staff in Baghdad into 2005, while augmenting and shifting the management of its activities to the Amman office. Turnover of international staff and recruitment challenges led to severe moral and organisational difficulties which were only eventually overcome with the hiring of the current Executive Coordinator in January, 2005.

15. The relocation of most of the humanitarian community from Iraq to Amman, the turnover of sectoral coordination to UN Cluster meetings in Amman and to government ministries in Baghdad, combined with donor reluctance to support continued NGO humanitarian operations inside Iraq, resulted in a diffusion of interests and growing malaise among many member NGOs as the community reacted to remote management modalities and being distant from the action.
16. As shortfalls in donor funding for humanitarian and coordination activity inside Iraq continued to crimp NCCI activities from June 2005 through 2006, capacity-building initiatives allowed NCCI to “…keep the lights on, the staff paid, and the office open”. Twice, in 2005 and 2006, key NCCI staff worked as unpaid volunteers for two months until bridging funding was made available. The NCCI office was also temporarily closed for two months in 2005 and two months in 2006.

17. While NCCI’s advocacy and capacity building efforts were (and as of early 2007, still are) well-appreciated by the majority of the NGOs consulted for this evaluation, there was also growing feeling among NGOs still operational inside the central and southern governorates that core coordination functions in support of activity inside Iraq were receiving relatively less attention than Amman-based activities. At the same time, NCCI’s capacity to coordinate humanitarian activity inside Iraq had been increasingly constrained since late 2004 by diminishing physical access and presence in Baghdad and Basrah, funding constraints and reductions in staff able to perform field coordination functions.

18. By late 2006, as conditions in the central and southern governorates worsened dramatically, operational NGOs in Baghdad made it clear in an NCCI-sponsored Emergency Working Group meeting that they wanted and needed more support for their work from NCCI and the Amman-based NGO community. These expressed needs were shared by NCCI with participants at a coordination meeting in Amman, and by this time the extremity of the humanitarian situation inside Iraq was becoming more apparent.

B.2. Main Findings

B.2.1. Overall Intervention Logic

19. NCCI has been a relevant and effective intervention for the context and has demonstrated an ability to adapt to changes in the context. Members and others were generally uniform in their assessment that NCCI has provided important leadership at pivotal moments for the health of the humanitarian apparatus and has given effective voice to commonly-shared concerns in the NGO population. NCCI’s efforts to convene NGOs for discussion of pressing issues, and its representation of NGOs at various gatherings was also generally seen as important, timely and relevant. NCCI has been a forceful and persistent advocate for humanitarian issues, and has provided a forum for NGOs to work collectively on issues of common concern such as threats to humanitarian space, the need for greater profile for the emerging humanitarian crisis, shortcomings in donor support for operational NGO activity, and excesses in the behaviour of combatants. Through a series of UNDP-sponsored National Dialogue workshops, NCCI is activistic and proactive in identifying and bringing together diverse members of Iraqi civil society in forums aimed at reducing the centrifugal forces that have been dividing Iraqi communities with increasing violence since February, 2006.

20. Advocacy and Representation. Most of those interviewed for the evaluation, as well as most respondents to the questionnaire, placed a high value on NCCI’s advocacy and
representation efforts, singling out its persistent work in 2006 to raise the profile of Iraq’s humanitarian situation with donors, and its ongoing efforts to clarify NGO registration formalities with Iraqi authorities. Many respondents also recalled the NGO Workshop and Conference organised by NCCI in June, 2005, as a timely forum for debate of contentious issues and a much-appreciated “reality check” and “focusing exercise” for an NGO community still struggling to recover from the shock of being displaced to Amman. A small number of NGO members of NCCI questioned whether NCCI’s representation of the NGO community were always legitimate, but also recognized that it had been historically difficult for NCCI to enjoy consensus from all members on most issues of concern. In general, the Executive Coordinator’s leadership role was highly regarded, especially in light of the difficult working environment of the past two years.

21. **Coordination Meetings.** Members and others were ambivalent about the value of recent NCCI coordination meetings. Indeed, recent meetings were vastly different from the vibrant, standing-room-only meetings observed during the 2004 evaluation when the locus of the humanitarian community was still inside Iraq. During the NCCI coordination meetings observed for the current evaluation, attendance was good but participation was poor. In Erbil and Suleimaniyah, the NGOs present represented a constituency active almost exclusively in the relatively peaceful northern governorates, and were primarily concerned with NGO registration formalities rather than discussion of emergency preparedness and the possible scenarios to come which, in addition to developments in the registration requirements of authorities in Baghdad, were the main issues brought to the table by NCCI.

22. At a coordination meeting observed in Amman in late 2006, (the first in several months), the malaise and the prevailing lack of focus of the NGO community was patently evident. Following a round-table update on agency activities, the only issue to engender any interest was a brief discussion of NGO registration requirements in Jordan, despite NCCI’s own efforts to provoke discussion on the request from operational NGOs inside Iraq for support from an emergency working group in Amman, and on the shared difficulties among operational NGOs emerging from inter-communal tensions within their staffs.

23. As the organiser of all of these meetings and as a repository of a vast quantity of information, NCCI might have taken the opportunity to distribute a written précis describing the current status of registration requirements, or some other helpful handout or publication – even from another agency -- to demonstrate to participants the value-added of NCCI as a coordinating body and information conduit. Particularly when such meetings are rare events, as they have been until recently, ensuring that meetings are productive for all participants, even in a small way, helps them to leave with a positive impression of the value of their investment in coordination efforts.

24. **Information and Communications.** Among those consulted, a high value was placed on NCCI’s information and communications services and its role as a conduit for information exchange. NCCI’s Weekly Highlight and the repository of documentation on the NCCI website were singled out by many heads of office as being their first source for information and analysis relevant to their work in Iraq. In this way, the Highlight in particular was seen as providing a common service to heads of office and others by collating timely news reports and documentation from agencies into a single, time-saving briefing note that could
be scanned relatively quickly. The Weekly Highlight was also regarded as the most visible face of NCCI for the NGO, UN, and donor communities. The “hectoring and hyper-critical tone” of some editorials in the Highlight had raised concerns among some respondents, who felt that a more collegial approach could have been taken to raising awareness of contentious issues. NCCI has made a point of inviting members and others to submit editorials to the Weekly Highlight, but response has been low. Security alerts and the Trend Analysis from NCCI were mentioned less often, but were highly valued by several respondents.

25. National Dialogue Workshops. NCCI’s role in convening the current series of National Dialogue Workshops underwritten by UNDP was not adequately assessed for this evaluation due to scheduling conflicts and the early stage of the Dialogue process. In theory, there is a substantial risk to NCCI’s credibility (and perhaps also to some individual participants) if the Workshops have an inadvertently negative effect on inter-communal relations in the current context of fragmentation. This bears close monitoring, and the managers of the workshops should not hesitate to postpone or reconfigure specific workshops if there are indications of trouble. However, NCCI makes the reasonable assumption that the workshops will raise public awareness of NGOs and provide a porte parole into civil society that will complement its efforts to identify potential interlocutors for humanitarian operations and their negotiations of humanitarian access.

26. Will There Be a Need for NCCI? The demand for NCCI’s services from members and others is almost certain to continue to increase as the humanitarian situation in Iraq becomes worse and operational responses increase. On present trends, it is highly doubtful that the political / security situation in Iraq will stabilize to any great degree over the coming year. On the contrary, threats to the safety and welfare of the Iraqi population are increasing as the abilities of the Iraqi state to assist and protect Iraqis are decreasing. There is strong potential for continued localized insurgency and counter-insurgency warfare in urban areas, with ensuing consequences for the civilian population including battle casualties, population displacement, damaged housing and public infrastructure, disruption of access to essential services including water supply and the food distribution system, and restricted access for local response mechanisms. There is also a serious possibility of larger-scale inter-communal warfare with widespread consequences for the civilian population, already requiring a correspondingly greater response from international and local providers of assistance and protection. As the state fails by increments, Iraqis are increasingly turning to local militias and parties for protection and assistance. Paradoxically, this may mean localised increases in humanitarian space as power relationships crystallize and local power structures become more discernible to humanitarian actors. This combination of factors is likely to mean a fundamental shift in the way assistance and protection is provided in Iraq, and a re-doubling of international and local assistance and protection efforts in some locations as conditions permit.

27. If Not NCCI, What? There has been no other independent, impartial and neutral coordinating body in Iraq that could have filled these roles described above. As observed in the 2004 evaluation, the absence or demise of NCCI would have in all likelihood meant attempts by other actors to fill (or perhaps exploit) the vacuum left behind. Politicized line ministries, civil affairs and CIMIC elements of coalition forces, coalition-sponsored
authorities, and sub-groups of NGOs aligned with donors from coalition countries, would probably have played more prominent -- and inevitably more politicized and partial -- coordination roles in NCCI’s absence. Affiliations with combatants and authorities can be toxic in Iraq. None of these actors would have had the legitimacy or perceived neutrality and independence of NCCI. Given the essential importance of neutrality, impartiality and independence to many Iraqi NGOs and aid workers, this would have meant their non-participation in partial or politicized coordination structures.

28. While it is too early to predict the degree of donor and UN agency mobilization inside Iraq in response to the escalating humanitarian crisis, it appears likely that their efforts may be disproportionately focused on meeting needs among the relatively more accessible caseloads of refugees and displaced persons who have fled the worst-affected areas of the country. Experienced NGOs, with the Red Cross / Red Crescent Movement, have a distinct comparative advantage to meet needs among Iraqis in hot spots who are unable or unwilling to move. A division of labour of sorts may ultimately emerge between UN OCHA and NCCI where coordination functions are loosely shared, with OCHA taking a relatively greater lead on supporting work occurring where access is relatively less problematic.

29. Meanwhile, the operating environment for aid operations and personnel in Iraq is likely to remain insecure into the long term, at least in the central and southern governorates. Presently, many INGOs continue to operate in low profile with reduced expatriate presence and seriously constricted movement. In sum, on present trends the demands placed on the coordination services of NCCI by NGOs and other aid actors are likely to increase exponentially into the medium term.

30. NCCI has generally adapted well to the many dramatic upheavals in the political and humanitarian situations in Iraq and to vast changes in the humanitarian operating environment in the central and southern governorates. These adaptations were not without difficulties and hardships however, and at times NCCI’s continued existence was tenuous when donor support and member participation was lacking. As the primary focus of the aid community shifts once again onto emergency assistance and protection activities, NCCI is well-positioned but under-resourced for resuming a traditional coordination role.

B.2.2. Recommendation – Aggressively Pursue Core Funding

31. The humanitarian effort in Iraq will continue to falter if donors do not recognize the vital role of flexible and adaptable operational NGOs, and NCCI’s role in providing operational NGOs with the coordination, advocacy, problem-solving and information sharing services that are needed for effective and accountable work. As a matter of urgency, NCCI should increase its efforts to secure stable core funding into the medium term in anticipation of a substantial increase in demand for its services from NGOs and others. Donors with humanitarian responsibilities must recognize that coordination of NGO humanitarian operations is neither an add-on nor a luxury, and that coordinated activity is especially important in difficult contexts. Funding at a level sufficient for NCCI’s growing core
needs and specific projects should be provided into the medium term and should be maintained for as long as needs among the population -- and potential needs resulting from renewed violence -- overwhelm local and national capacities, and thus merit a continued humanitarian presence.

B.2.3. Recommendation: Re-focus on Field Coordination Inside Iraq

32. Consistent with the hierarchy of emerging threats to the safety and welfare of Iraq’s population and the renewed focus of operational member NGOs and others on emergency response inside Iraq, NCCI should re-focus its efforts on providing ground-level coordination services in support of emergency humanitarian response inside Iraq. In the current situation of acute and increasing life-threatening needs inside Iraq, field coordination must be regarded as NCCI’s first organisational priority. Particular focus should be on the provision of coordination services in the central and southern governorates where protection and assistance needs are most acute, the challenges greatest, and where other potential coordinating bodies are at a comparative disadvantage.

33. This will entail a shift in mindset for some NCCI staff and members more toward field coordination. However, activities in Amman must take second-place to activity in support of humanitarian operations inside Iraq in order to conserve resources and to be certain that staff and members inside Iraq receive first-call on staff time and other NCCI resources.

B.2.4. Recommendation: Create a Dedicated Coordination Architecture Inside Iraq

34. NCCI should immediately begin creation and maintenance of a flexible network of Iraqi local Liaisons supported and managed by a senior international Field Coordinator based in Amman. This will entail a long-term effort to identify and build the capacities of an expanded field coordination team. In order for it to be sustained through potential shocks and to allow for the greatest possible latitude for Liaisons, the organisational structure of the network should be flat, rather than hierarchical.

35. The Field Coordinator and the coordination network of Liaisons should be a dedicated cell within NCCI that is not distracted by secondary activities taking place in Amman but, in the interest of redundancy, the work of the Field Coordinator and Executive Coordinator should be complementary and overlapping. The Executive Coordinator’s duties should include oversight of all other sectoral working groups (such as health, water/sanitation, education, displaced persons and others as they arise) which, in response to increasing NGO demand, are likely to be restored as the primary interface between the operational NGO community, authorities, and the relevant Clusters of the UN system.

36. The network should consist of local staff on NCCI payroll. NCCI’s earlier experience pursuing field coordination outside of Baghdad through geographical focal points seconded...
from member NGOs proved fragile. Although in some locations geographic focal points may provide a useful start-point, secondments should be avoided because, based on past experience, they are subject to the decisions (for example, on their relocation) of their employer and can only dedicate a limited amount of time to coordination functions that, in complex and dangerous environments, demand their full attention. Liaisons should be selected for their experience, access, spirit of cooperation, influence and respect in their community, political acuity and reliability. Over time, liaisons should be trained to serve, upon the request of NCCI members, as local coordination nodes in the event of outbreaks of violence and ensuing acute needs among the population.\(^1\)

37. Working in low-profile as necessary, the primary function of such liaisons should be to support and complement humanitarian assistance and protection activities of NCCI members and others through the following activities, as local circumstances permit:

- monitor and analyze the local situation on an ongoing basis
- establish and maintain contacts and working relationships with local actors
- identify fluctuations in localised humanitarian space & access
- feed and facilitate the three-way flow of information between affected local areas and NCCI staff in Amman and elsewhere inside Iraq
- facilitate joint needs assessment efforts when requested
- establish and maintain informal local emergency cells
- form linkages with local response mechanisms as these emerge
- promote the notions of neutral and impartial humanitarian work.

38. Resumed focus on field coordination inside Iraq will require additional donor resources and substantial investment of staff time and effort. The goal is not to further institutionalise NCCI for its own sake or to supplant pre-existing coordination mechanisms at the local level, but to ensure that members have the coordination support they will require in order to respond effectively to needs among the population in the difficult times to come.

39. Creation and cultivation of this core function and its resulting network should be overseen by a new senior international officer position in Amman, mentored by the Executive Coordinator. The Field Coordinator should be an Arabic speaker and be willing to travel inside Iraq as conditions permit.

**B.2.5. Recommendation: Strengthen Context Analysis**

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40. Building on existing capacities and its growing networks inside Iraq and internationally, NCCI should strengthen context analysis in support of the humanitarian operations of its members and its own field coordination activities inside Iraq. Emphasis should be placed on the following areas, which will a sharper focus on local dynamics well beyond media monitoring and national Trend Analysis:

- analysis of local power structures and identification of potential interlocutors for the humanitarian community;
- monitor localised trends in humanitarian space, security and access, and opportunities for increased or higher profile humanitarian action;
- compile monthly or bi-weekly Local Trend Analyses covering affected local areas (by governorate, town or neighbourhood, as appropriate);
- document and disseminate lessons-learned by operational actors regarding localised access, security, and increasing humanitarian space.

B.2.6. Recommendation: Facilitate Operational NGO Efforts to Adapt to the Changing Context

41. NCCI should focus its capacity-building efforts on measures meant to facilitate NGO adaptation to the evolving difficulties of the Iraqi context. These efforts should be undertaken primarily to support operational humanitarian NGOs and staff from inside Iraq, and should be aimed at helping them to work as effectively, accountably and safely as possible. In particular, NCCI should:

- facilitate the strengthening of peer review networks among members and others;
- actively solicit and document examples of innovation in member NGO operations regarding security, accountability, and expansion
- provide opportunities for NGOs to collectively address common difficulties, including working with local authorities and combatants, security, accountability to donors and beneficiaries, expansion of humanitarian space, transitioning from low to higher profile activity, and managing the effects of inter-communal tensions within staffs.

B.2.7. Accessibility and Transparency of Information in the Relevant Languages

42. Of necessity, NCCI has made some progress since 2004 in making its work and activities more accessible to Arabic speakers. The series of National Dialogue Workshops and other training workshops occur almost entirely in Arabic, as all participants are Iraqi. However, much less progress has been made making NCCI’s storehouse of written information more accessible in Arabic. This is a vital issue, for two reasons. First, given the key role played in coordination and networking by Iraqi staff, it is essential that they have access to the
information they need to make sound judgements and decisions. Most non-English speakers are still effectively excluded from participating in and taking advantage of the work of NCCI and its members because many key documents are only available on the NCCI website in English only. Second, NCCI is currently unable to absorb much Arabic documentation because translation duties are performed as secondary duties by staff drawn from other duties. Availability of essential information in Arabic (and ideally also in Kurdish), and an NCCI ability to absorb more information in local languages, would:

- ensure that emerging local staff, local authorities, national NGOs, line ministries, directorates and municipalities have unimpeded access to information that is vital to their assumption of genuine responsibility for the people in their care;
- promote greater understanding and acceptance among Iraqis of the methods and motives of NCCI members;
- increase the ease with which non-English speakers could share information with NCCI and its members in the local languages.

B.2.8. Recommendation – Increase Accessibility and Transparency of Information

43. Where the safety of members’ staff and programmes is not placed in jeopardy by greater transparency, all routine NCCI documents now produced only in English for members, observers and the public should be professionally translated into Arabic as a matter of routine, including the trend analysis, key reports, and minutes from coordination meetings. Although full translation of articles in the Weekly Highlight would represent an unrealistic workload, the Highlight should contain links to articles both in English and in local languages. Increased accessibility and transparency of information will require creation of dedicated posts for an Iraqi Arabic-speaking information officer and an Arabic translator in Amman.

44. Translation should not be regarded as a luxury but as a vital component of localising NCCI’s approach and a tool enabling greater opportunities for inculcating greater awareness of principled humanitarian work. As in 2004, some members may regard such a “Glasnost” policy as a threat to their low profile approach. Security of information is an eminently valid concern. However, this concern must be balanced against the benefits of promoting a better understanding of humanitarian work among Iraqis. In terms of sustainability, Iraqi actors and institutions will not be able to assume responsibility for the people in their care unless the information they need to make good decisions is readily accessible to them.

B.2.9. Recommendation: Report Bi-Anually on Donor Responsiveness and Donor Accountability to Principles of Good Humanitarian Donorship
45. Donor preoccupation with reconstruction efforts in Iraq, the highly politicized context of donor decisions, and lapses in donor accountability necessitate a higher degree of diligence to ensure that humanitarian programming does not continue to fall victim to shortcomings in donor behaviour in Iraq. NCCI and members are well-placed to do this. In order to help ensure greater donor accountability and sufficient levels of donor funding for NGO humanitarian operations inside Iraq, NCCI should monitor donor responsiveness to the humanitarian situation and their compliance with the Good Humanitarian Donorship initiative\(^2\). With member support, NCCI should issue a public bi-annual report on donor performance.

**B.2.10 Selected Quantitative Results**

46. Annex D contains one-year sampling of the number and diversity of functions performed by NCCI in an advocacy, liaison or representation role. The sampling is instructive and should be regarded as an integral part of this report. It has been drawn from NCCI’s own Activities Matrix.

**B.2.11. Indicators for Progressive Handover, Phase-down or Disengagement**

47. At a moment when Iraq’s humanitarian crisis is increasing dramatically in both scale and scope, and when there is a clear need for more, rather than less, international humanitarian engagement in Iraq, discussion of indicators for handover, phase-down or disengagement are may seem to be of dubious value. However, the indicators contained in the following matrix may help to provide benchmarks of improvement as well as of deterioration, even if only on a local level. NCCI may well discover that it will be possible, with time, to begin progressive handover, phase-down or disengagement in certain locales in Iraq if and when local conditions improve. Likewise, the matrix can be used as a tool at the local level to assess decisions about disengagement or phase-down in the event that conditions deteriorate sharply in some locations and make effective work impossible. Even as Iraq once again becomes the object of increased relief activity, there are two diverse challenges – working toward sustainability even when in relief mode, on one hand, and meeting needs in an environment which can be acutely hostile to a foreign presence, on the other hand.

48. Both of the above challenges point to the need to anticipate indicators that suggest appropriate times to begin handing over more responsibility for coordination to local actors or institutions, for phasing-down NCCI’s own activities, or for disengaging.

49. In the following table, “first echelon” indicators might generally be regarded as more legitimate or purposeful, and ‘second echelon’ indicators more punitive or reactionary, but questionably legitimate on humanitarian grounds. Many of these indicators remain

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\(^2\) See *Principles and Good Practice of Humanitarian Donorship*, www.goodhumanitariandonorship.org/.
unchanged since the 2004 evaluation. Minor modifications reflect the phenomenon of “brain drain”, the persistent unpredictability of donor engagement in humanitarian action in Iraq, and the growing management problem of inter-communal tensions among national staff in some areas.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>“First Echelon” Indicators for Progressive Handover / Phasing Down of NCCI</th>
<th>“Second Echelon” Indicators for Progressive Handover / Phasing Down of NCCI</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Absence of critical need for further assistance results in a reduction in the scale of assistance programmes and in the number of INGOs and other actors, reducing the added value of an external coordinating body.</td>
<td>Degree of tangible progress in political processes and normalisation is sufficiently high to merit handover and phase-down. Risk of large-scale outbreaks of violence, with the ensuing human consequences being met by INGOs rather than by local responders, is remote.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Degree of tangible progress in political processes and normalisation is sufficiently high to merit handover and phase-down. Risk of large-scale outbreaks of violence, with the ensuing human consequences being met by INGOs rather than by local responders, is remote.</td>
<td>Degree of tangible progress in political processes and normalisation is sufficiently low to merit disengagement or phase-down (i.e., due to ‘donor fatigue’ or a punitive approach).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The roles of humanitarian, development and human rights NGOs are generally understood and respected by authorities and among the population.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political leaders, ministries, directorates, local authorities take responsibility and are accountable for their decisions and actions. Sectoral (working group) coordination meetings are hosted and chaired by local authorities / directorates / line ministries in a proactive, effective and professional manner. Information is passed in a clear and timely fashion. The Ministry of Planning performs its intended role.</td>
<td>Political leaders, ministries, directorates, local authorities do not take responsibility, are not accountable for their decisions and actions, and are not proactive on coordination. Use disengagement, handover or phase-down as negative reinforcement to compel the state to take responsibility, even if coordination suffers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solutions to problems (e.g., social safety net, food distribution, displacement and resettlement, protection) are sustainable and morally acceptable. Aid is provided on the basis of need alone in an impartial manner, irrespective of community affiliation.</td>
<td>Solutions to problems are unsustainable and morally unacceptable.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level of interest, cooperation and competence among host authorities on coordination, humanitarian, development and human rights concerns is sufficiently high to merit handover and phase-down. (“Authorities demonstrate with their deeds that they are</td>
<td>Level of interest, cooperation and competence among host authorities on coordination, humanitarian, development and human rights concerns is sufficiently low to merit disengagement or phase-down. (“Authorities are not willing enough to help us help them”).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Greg Hansen, Independent Consultant – Canada March 2007 ghansen@islandnet.com
<table>
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<th><strong>willing to help us help them</strong>).</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Technical capacity of national and local coordination actors has reached a level sufficient to meet most of the needs of INGOs and national NGOs – NCCI’s further presence would be redundant or would foster dependency. “Brain-drain” is not an impediment to effective coordination.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Important reports, documents and meeting minutes are readily available in the local languages.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local coordination actors have sufficient technical and organisational capacity, independence and political space to take on increased responsibilities for delivering coordination services, holding authorities accountable, performing advocacy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local staff of coordination bodies will not be placed at undue risk when they lose the affiliation with NCCI.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Untenable security conditions and attacks on NCCI staff, programmes or premises merit disengagement, handover or phase-down on the grounds of staff safety. Risks taken are not justified by the impacts of coordination.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The degree to which NCCI’s continued presence allows host authorities to abrogate their own responsibilities to coordinate humanitarian, rehabilitation and development efforts, and to provide for the welfare of their population, merits handover, disengagement or phase-down.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Donors are sufficiently responsive to needs, rendering NCCI advocacy redundant.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Donors are insufficiently responsive to needs, rendering continued NCCI activity or presence untenable.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cost-ineffectiveness of NCCI due to the lack of viable local coordination actors is serious enough to merit disengagement or phase-down.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Untenable security conditions and attacks on NCCI staff, members, programmes or premises merit disengagement, handover or phase-down on punitive grounds. Withdrawal of NCCI will force authorities to undermine the impunity of attacks on NCCI and its members.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Annex A

About the Author

Greg Hansen is an independent consultant specialising in humanitarian action in armed conflict. A Canadian national, Hansen conducted the evaluation of NCCI for ECHO in 2004. Hansen has consulted widely for a broad spectrum of operational humanitarian NGOs, UN agencies, and donors, and has conducted research in and around Iraq since 2004 for the Humanitarianism and War Project and Humanitarian Agenda: 2015 project of the Feinstein International Center, Tufts University. Hansen recently led a research team in Iraq to investigate perceptions of humanitarian action in the country, and authored Coming to Terms with the Humanitarian Imperative in Iraq, available for download at http://fic.tufts.edu/downloads/HA2015IraqBriefingPaper.pdf.
Annex B

TERMS OF REFERENCE

FOR THE EVALUATION OF THE NGOs COORDINATION COMMITTEE IN IRAQ (NCCI)

MARCH 2006

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Context of Iraq:

In March 2003, the Coalition Forces, led by the US troops, attacked Iraq and took over the control of the country from the former Baath’ regime. After 16 months of official occupation, the CPA (Coalition Provisory Authorities) handed over the power to an Iraqi Interim Government on June 28th, 2004. Following, the political stabilisation is on constant process. In January 2005, Iraqis elected a constitutional assembly and a new government led by the mainly Shia United Iraqi Alliance (UIA which includes SCIRI and Dawa as well as various smaller factions) and the Kurdish Alliance (comprising Jalal Talabani’s Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) and Massoud Barzani’s Kurdish Democratic Party (KDP)). Sunnis parties are included in this government under the pressure of the International community. In October 2005, the new constitution was adopted. And on December 15th, 2005, the new election gave the lead to the same United Iraqi Alliance. 2 months later the prime minister was just confirm in his position and the government should be announced in the following weeks.

In Parallel, Violence is continually increasing. Military, insurgency and terrorists operations continue to occur in whole Iraq months after months, with a real predominance in the Central area. Civilians were between 30,000 and 100,000 to be killed since 2003. According to UNAMI, the average is around 30 bodies daily arriving in Baghdad medico-legal institute during last months.

Kidnappings of Iraqis are evaluated around 30 per day in December 2005. The high level of criminality is stabilizing and the foreigners targeting is a national sport. Since the political process is on going, sectarian tensions have been reported to increase too; people are killed on daily base for these reasons. Observers are more and more talking about civil war in the country, and some leaders are requesting autonomy for their provinces.

According to most of the available data, situation for Iraqi people is worst than during the Embargo. Prices are continually increasing since 2 years. Fuel prices were even increased by 4 in January 2006. In such context, Donors are more and more withdrawing; military troops are reviewing regularly their strategy and are now using the humanitarian purpose as concrete part of their intervention; and some International NGOs are still fighting to be present in the country through their local staff and some small program, although International staffs are mostly working from Amman since the kidnapping targeting humanitarian workers in autumn 2004. Civil Society is also in constant evolution, more than 4,000 Iraqi NGOs having been created and the new Iraqi government trying to control them.

3 Georges W. Bush – day 1000 of the war.
4 The Lancet – summer 2004
5 UNAMI Human Rights bi-monthly report – November-December 2005
7 Bowen report to congress – February 2006

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1.2. NCCI Presentation

The NGO Coordination Committee in Iraq – NCCI – is an independent initiative launched by a group of NGOs who were present in Baghdad in April 2003. At the time of its inception, the 14 members of NCCI intended to establish the basis of a neutral aid coordination highlighting the priorities for intervention and optimising the responses to the needs of the Iraqi population.

Three years later, NCCI has pursued its initial objectives and has developed into a wide forum where NGOs can exchange information regarding humanitarian activities and policy decisions in Iraq. The activities of NCCI have evolved with the changing situation inside Iraq. NCCI continues to act as a link for information sharing regarding humanitarian needs and assistance.

Third parties – UN agencies, Iraqi authorities, other NGO platforms, and donors - also participate in the exchange of information facilitated by NCCI on relevant humanitarian and development issues in Iraq.

During periods of crisis, the NGOs with staff in the area have accurate needs information which can be processed through NCCI to reach not only other NGOs with capacity to react to the crisis, but also the UN agencies and the donors. During the recent and ongoing military operation NCCI has facilitated the Emergency Working group in Baghdad, and has been active in the combined UN/NGO Emergency meetings in forwarding to UN agencies information from NGOs in the field. This role in Emergency coordination also requires NCCI to maintain coordination staff in both Baghdad and Amman, with communication facilities to ensure that urgent needs relating to emergency situations are met.

In constant adaptation to the context, NCCI is restructuring and continues to function with a focus on Baghdad. NCCI has also one office in Amman. In Kurdistan and the south (Basrah, Kuwait), the coordination is facilitated with the support of member NGOs as focal points.

The international NGOs registered with NCCI are those with activities in Iraq in all sectors of Humanitarian and development work. Current insecurity has necessitated the relocation of some international staff members to Amman. The main change since the first evaluation is the transfer of the main office from Baghdad to Amman.

Since June 2005, in an effort to focus on civil society process, NCCI has started the internal registration for national NGOs, linking them with the International Aid Community. In addition, NCCI is providing support material to NGOs involved in human rights and NGO legislation in Iraq.

According to the NCCI members’ wishes, NCCI is also advocating on behalf of NGOs in Iraq. This advocacy part has increased in the past months. NCCI is particularly voicing out with the objective to re-gain the Humanitarian Operational Space and call regularly for the respect of International Humanitarian Law, humanitarian space and Human Rights in Iraq.

NCCI Objectives

➢ To act as an independent, neutral and impartial NGO forum for coordination and information exchange among the NGO community on general and sectoral issues, and activities related to Iraq and its population, irrespective of ethnicity, politics, gender and religion.
➢ To advocate that Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law are respected
➢ To ensure humanitarian needs are identified, well lobbied for and met.
➢ To enhance the capacity of the NGO community in delivering humanitarian and development assistance to the population of Iraq.

NCCI Activities

Optimise general information sharing on humanitarian issues

- Collect, monitor and disseminate humanitarian data among members and third parties
- Maintain links with the wider humanitarian community, international and national institutions, Iraqi authorities, donors and third parties to ensure good information exchange.
- Identify focal points in the different regions to foster cooperation on a national level between NGOs working there.
• In collaboration with other key humanitarian information providers and networks in Iraq, maintain a database of NGOs and a matrix of contacts and activities by sector and location.
• Maintain and share updated information on new developments in Iraq

Improve general coordination amongst the humanitarian community to optimise provision of assistance and protection

• Lobby, advocate and represent members, when mandated by them to do so, to relevant stakeholders on issues of common concern, which affect the humanitarian situation in Iraq, and the operations of the humanitarian community. Advocate that human rights, International Humanitarian Law and Aid Workers Rights are respected.
• Maintain thematic working groups in cooperation with other key partners as appropriate such as civil society capacity building, advocacy and Emergency Preparedness and Response.
• Run sectoral meetings and working groups based on specific needs (health, water and sanitation, education, de-mining, etc.)
• Use information and assessment results from NCCI members to support NGOs in the identification of chronic and emerging humanitarian needs
• Provide a coordination forum where priorities are identified, and policies and relevant actions are decided on.
• Formally represent collective decisions of NCCI members before the Authorities on policies and procedures.

Security Coordination

• Facilitate and encourage cross-information sharing on security incidents and experiences among NGOs.
• Support NGOs in their security set up and procedure guidelines.
• Assist and support to member NGOs facing security problems.

Training and Capacity building of International NGO teams and National NGOs

• Enhance the national staffs’ abilities and experience through theoretical and practical trainings
• Capacity building will continue as part of the activities of the current Civil Society Working Group.

1.3. Justification of the evaluation:

The context in which NCCI has been operating has been changing swiftly, and as such, NCCI activities have had to be re-evaluated and re-designed at a fast pace. Since its inception, NCCI has changed substantially in terms of mandate, responsibilities, outreach and staff.
In June 2004, NCCI has contracted an independent evaluation in order to “obtain the necessary information to allow NCCI to establish whether it has achieved its objectives and to produce guidelines for improving the effectiveness of its future activities. The primary purpose is lesson learning, the secondary one is accountability to NCCI members and donors.”
Unfortunately, few months after the recommendations were published, the situation in Iraq became more instable and NCCI should review its objectives. The post of Executive coordinator was then vacant for 5 months, while the context was in constant evolution. The funding context is also fragile and, for the first time since one year, NCCI is working with a visibility of some months.

In June 2005, NCCI has conducted an NGO Workshop and Conference in order to update its structure. Although the objectives and activities remain largely unchanged, NGOs present rely on NCCI to lobby on their behalf for a neutral operating space in Iraq for NGOs to carry out humanitarian assistance and development programs. Those present confirmed that their objective was to meet the needs of the most vulnerable – to be able to access these communities, to assess and respond to acute needs and also for the population to have access to appropriate
services. Their priority in terms of NCCI advocacy would be enough security to enable a return of NGOs to work openly in Iraq.

According to this mandate, it’s time for NCCI to re-evaluate its action from an independent source to be more accurate and efficient for its beneficiaries.

2. PURPOSES OF THE EVALUATION

2.1. Global objective

Allow NCCI to establish whether it has achieved its objectives and to produce guidelines for improving the effectiveness of its future activities and designing its future structure and mandate. The primary purpose is lessons learning and update of the 2004 evaluation; the secondary one is accountability and transparency to NCCI members and donors.

2.2. Specific objectives

To have an objective external analysis and appraisal of NCCI’s role and activities in Iraq in accordance to the objectives and results determined by the NCCI mandate given by NGOs in the reviewed charter in February 2005 and during the June 2005 conference.

The focus of the exercise is to have an independent structured evaluation of the results of the NCCI intervention in terms of relevance in such context, efficiency & responses to NGOs expectations, and impact & results and of the way these results have been achieved (lessons learned since the 2004 evaluation). The evaluation should include conclusions and recommendations at strategic, structural and operational levels for its immediate future plans and its eventual progressive.

2.3. Expected results

1. This evaluation analysis should be done at two levels:

   Level 1 - Intervention strategy (relevance and viability in other contexts in term of model and comparisons)
   Level 2 - Operational strategy (efficiency & effectiveness as well as impact)

2. At level 1:

1) A brief overview analysis of the developments of the humanitarian situation and actors in the area (the evaluators will have to be aware of the difficult operating conditions affecting humanitarian actions) and an assessment of the extent to which NCCI has been able to adapt its strategy and structure (charter, conference, evolution during the 3 last years) to the changing circumstances.

2) An analysis, taking into account any other coordination mechanisms taking place worldwide (this refers mainly to the emerging coordination mechanisms with national authorities and UN agencies) and that reflects whether NCCI’s activities have achieved being complementary of these activities and has avoided duplication in its service provision. The analysis should include an evaluation of the potential of these coordination mechanisms to develop (in particular, those of the Iraqi Authorities) and how NCCI’s activities could be adapted accordingly, as well as viability of NCCI model in others contexts and areas.

The main aim will be to

(a) Draw conclusions and make recommendations for a future strategy.

(b) Develop indicators for a future phase out
(c) Draw conclusions as to the relevance of implementing a similar programme in other contexts.

3. At level 2 the desired results of the evaluation are:

To have an assessment of:

1) The results of the funded operations for each objective identified through the proposals (impact)

2) The management of the resources and means employed as compared to these objectives (accountability)

3) The results of the program according to the 2004 evaluation’s recommendations and the evolution of the Iraqi context.

4) The way these results have been achieved (lesson learning) in order to review, draw conclusions and make operational recommendations for improvement and strategy as mentioned in 2.1.

The main aim will be to

(d) Draw conclusions and make recommendations for a future mandate, strategy and operational structure.

(e) Provide operational guidance outlining how similar activities can be implemented effectively and efficiently in other contexts.

3. **WORK PLAN**

3.1. **Pre-departure briefing**:

NCCI will make available to the evaluator(s), all relevant background materials (those that can be sent electronically) in order to provide a background of the mission. These materials could be made available 1 to 2 weeks prior to their departure. NCCI does not have HQ; so all pre-departure briefing will have to be done through e-mail.

Some NGOs members being non-active in Iraq, this period might be used to conduct some Interviews with involved people in these NGOs or in HQs.

This period could also be used for the evaluator(s) to carry out an electronic survey of the INGOs and possibly 3rd parties. NCCI would facilitate the process in terms of contact information.

3.2. **Field Study**:

The field study will be carried out during the period of 3 weeks (21 days) from the date of arrival until the day of return in Europe.

The idea to have 2 evaluators might allow having more interviews. The travels to Erbil and Baghdad are subject of a security pre-assessment and might be delayed or cancelled for security reasons. One evaluator might go to Baghdad when the other is in Erbil.

A tentative schedule and plan of action is below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Time</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Travel to Amman</td>
<td>1 day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Assessment Main office Amman</td>
<td>10 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Interviews with NCCI staff</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• possibility to bring staffs</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• from Baghdad too</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Review of databases,</td>
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<tr>
<td>• information collected,</td>
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<tr>
<td>• communication tools, etc.</td>
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</table>
Evaluation of the NGO Coordination Committee in Iraq (NCCI)  -- Final --

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<table>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Interviews with INGOs (active members, non-active, with activities in various parts of Iraq) and NNGOs (if possible)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Interviews with Donors and 3rd parties</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Interviews with UNAMI and others UN agencies partners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Travel Amman – Iraq</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Assessment NCCI field office Baghdad:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Interview with NCCI staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Interview with NGOs members and not members (if possible)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Interviews with third parties (to be determined upon possibility and security – US civil-military commandment might be a possibility as well as NGOs Assistant office or Human Rights Center)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Assessment Kurdistan (Erbil / Sulaymaniyyah / Dohuk?):</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>Interview NCCI staff (if any)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>Interview INGOs and NNGOs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>Interview 3rd parties (if possible)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>Evaluator in Baghdad might come back earlier than the Kurdistan’s one or join him in North if needed. Wherever he would be, this might allow him to conduct missing interviews or to treat questionnaire that might have been sent to members present in others locations or non-active NGOs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.</td>
<td>Return to Amman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.</td>
<td>De-briefing with NCCI Executive Coordinator and NCCI Executive Board</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.</td>
<td>Miscellaneous (for security reasons, the evaluator(s)’s travels or movements may be postponed). If not needed, these days might be used to proceed with further interviews in Amman or to leave earlier.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17.</td>
<td>Back to home</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18.</td>
<td>Presentation of draft final report</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19.</td>
<td>Review and agreement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20.</td>
<td>Final report</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21.</td>
<td>Total days</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total days: 41 days

Requirements during the field mission:

- The evaluator(s) should ensure that a draft questionnaire and/or other evaluation tools could possibly be available to be sent in advance to those organizations/individuals to be interviewed. Some NCCI members being based out of the locations where the evaluators should go, this questionnaire might be sent to them.

- The evaluator(s) should also ensure that a summary record (‘aide mémoire’) is drawn up. It should cover the main findings, conclusions and recommendations of the mission.

- The evaluator(s) will be under the responsibility of NCCI (except for insurance. For technical reasons the evaluator(s) will need to have their own insurance) and will, thus, agree to abide to the security rules and considerations of the organization.
3.3. Debriefing and drafting of report:

A first debriefing will be carried out in Amman prior to the return of the evaluator(s) to home with the Executive Board (individually or collectively). A second debriefing will be with the Executive Coordinator.

The draft final report will be submitted to NCCI not later than 14 calendar days after the debriefing. NCCI should mark its agreement within 3 calendar days or request further amendments.

Submission of the final report with 2 calendar days.

4. REPORTS

The evaluation will result in the drawing up of a single report, written in a straightforward manner in English. This report should be of a maximum length of 40 pages, including the Executive Summary of between 5 to 7 pages that should appear at the beginning of the report. The report should be in the font Time Roman 12, have single line spacing and be fully justified (i.e. text should be fully aligned to the left and right margins). Paragraphs must be sequentially numbered. While correcting the report and the annexes, the consultants will always highlight changes and modifications introduced as resulting from the debriefing and the comments received by NCCI.

The evaluation report is the primary output of the evaluators and once finalized the document will be shared with NCCI members and donors. The report is to promote accountability and learning. The report will be made available to other similar initiatives in other countries that may want to use the example of NCCI.

The evaluation report should include the following:

- **Cover page**
  - Title of the evaluation report:
  - Date of the evaluation;
  - Names of the consultants;
  - Indication that “the report has been financed by and produced at the request of NCCI. The comments contained herein reflect the opinions of the consultants only”.

- **Table of contents**

- **Executive Summary:**
  A tightly-drafted, to-the-point and free-standing Executive Summary is an essential component. It should be short, **no more than five to seven pages**. It should focus on the key purpose or issues of the evaluation, outline the main points of the analysis, and clearly indicate the main conclusions, lessons learned and specific recommendations. Cross-references should be made to the corresponding page or paragraph numbers in the main text. The structure of the Executive Summary must be as follows:
    - SHORT INTRODUCTION
    - PURPOSE & METHODOLOGY
    - MAIN CONCLUSIONS:
    - RECOMMENDATIONS
    - LESSONS LEARNED

- **Main body of the report:**
  The report should treat NCCI as one body. The report could present the results of the evaluation of each of NCCI’s field offices individually but only on the basis of the main issues being evaluated. The main body of the report shall elaborate the points listed in the Executive Summary. It would include references to the methodology used for the evaluation and the context of the Intervention Plan. In particular, for each key conclusion there should be a corresponding recommendation. Conclusions should be fully substantiated with
findings from the evaluation. Recommendations should be prioritised, directed at specific users and where appropriate include an indicative timeframe. Recommendations should be as realistic, operational and pragmatic as possible; that is, they should take careful account of the circumstances currently prevailing in the context of the intervention, and of the resources available to implement it.

• **Annexes:**
  - Terms of Reference;
  - List of persons interviewed and sites visited;

All confidential information shall be presented in a separate annex. The consultants are to be particularly aware that any risk of libel is to be avoided.

The final report will be made available to NCCI electronically and in the hard copies and the CD.

### 5. **REQUIRED SKILLS FOR THE CONSULTANTS**

This evaluation will be carried out by 2 experts with experience both in the humanitarian field, with experience carrying out evaluations, working with NGOs and familiar with issues relevant to coordination. This expert must agree to work in a high-risk area.

The knowledge of NCCI intervention and Iraq would be a real advantage.

Proficiency in English is obligatory. Knowledge of local language(s) would be an advantage.

The consultants are required to carry out their work in accordance with international standards of good practice in approach and method. All conclusions must be substantiated with adequate data. The methodology section of the report should clearly outline the method being used.

In the conduct of their work the consultants should use a multi-method approach and triangulate between different sources of information. These information sources should include i.a. primary stakeholders (specifically NCCI members and observers), local government, Iraqi NGOs and third parties such as UN Agencies and donors.
Annex C

Evaluation Questionnaire Sent to NCCI Member Heads of Mission – December 2006

Questionnaire for NCCI Members / Observers

Dear Colleagues:

Please take a few minutes to complete the following questionnaire in your Word programme, then send it back to me completed by e-mail to ghansen@islandnet.com no later than December 20, 2006. There are 11 questions. The final evaluation report will be posted on the NCCI website in mid-January 2007.

Any and all comments welcome.

Thank-you, and best regards,

Greg Hansen

Questionnaire for NCCI Members / Observers

1) Is your organisation a member of NCCI? _____ Yes/No

2) What type of programming (by sector) does your organisation provide?
   ____________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________

3) Is your organisation involved in emergency humanitarian response in Iraq?
   ____________________________________________________________

4) On a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 being the lowest and 10 being the highest, how do you rate the overall effectiveness of NCCI since summer of 2004 until now? _____ (1—10)

5) Why? ________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________

Greg Hansen, Independent Consultant – Canada

March 2007

ghansen@islandnet.com
6) What NCCI areas of work (advocacy, civil society, sectoral coordination, trainings and workshops, information sharing, others…) have you valued most? Why? Please be as specific as possible, and provide examples if you can think of some.

______________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________

7) Which services have you valued least? Why?

______________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________

8) Specifically, how do you rate the usefulness of NCCI Coordination Meetings? Why?

______________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________

9) Does your organisation rely on the Weekly Highlight? For what?

______________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________

10) How do you rate the effectiveness of NCCI staff over the past two years? Please explain.

______________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________

Please add any additional comments on NCCI’s performance or suggestions for future changes.

______________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________

Greg Hansen, Independent Consultant – Canada

March 2007

ghansen@islandnet.com
# Annex D

## NCCI Activity Matrix from January 2006 to December 2006

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Consistency</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NCCI Members (NGOs)</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NCCI Observers (NGOs + Red Cross Movement)</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NCCI Network of NGOs</td>
<td>246</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Registration in Process (NGOs)</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Coordination</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NCCI Coordination meetings</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NCCI Working Group / Sectoral meetings</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One-to-one meetings with NGO</td>
<td>808</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meeting with UN (Cluster, Coordination, One-to-one Meetings)</td>
<td>199</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meeting with Authorities (General, One-to-one Meetings)</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meeting with Donors/Embassies (General, One-to-one Meetings)</td>
<td>106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meetings with MNFI</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meetings with Third Parties (Research Institutes, Universities, etc.)</td>
<td>157</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total Number of Meetings** 1416

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Data Base</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Media and Advocacy Data Base</td>
<td>1299</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third Parties Data Base - Total (UN, Donors, Authorities &amp; Others)</td>
<td>1256</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Communication / Publication</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Recipient of NCCI regular publications</td>
<td>565</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NCCI Weekly Highlight /Monthly Humanitarian Update</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NCCI Situation Reports</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NCCI Studies</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Visits to the NCCI website (<a href="http://www.ncciraq.org">http://www.ncciraq.org</a>)</td>
<td>59358 (195/day)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NCCI participation in External Articles</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NCCI participation in External Studies -</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interviews or Media request of information</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statements prepared by NCCI</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NCCI Security Trend Analysis</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NCCI Security Threat Warning /Alert / Advisory</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NCCI Ad hoc Security Brief</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total Number of Publications** 242

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Capacity Building</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NCCI Training / Workshop / Conference</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Greg Hansen, Independent Consultant – Canada  March 2007  ghansen@islandnet.com
Annex E

NCCI Charter

Mission Statement

*The NGO Coordination Committee in Iraq (NCCI) is an autonomous body created by NGOs working in Iraq, with the aim to promote information sharing and coordination. The purpose of the NCCI is to provide a forum for collective NGO activity to enhance the effectiveness of humanitarian action in Iraq at the national level.*

Objectives

*The NCCI will pursue three key objectives :*

**Objective One:** To act as an independent, neutral and impartial NGO forum for coordination and information exchange among the NGO community on general and sectoral issues, and activities related to Iraq and its population, irrespective of ethnicity, politics, gender and religion.

**Objective Two:** To advocate that Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law are respected and to ensure humanitarian needs are identified, well lobbied for and met.

**Objective Three:** To commit to work together to enhance the capacity of the NGO community to deliver humanitarian and development assistance to the population of Iraq.

Guiding Principles

*Our Conduct*

The NCCI members reaffirm their commitment to the Code of Conduct of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and NGOs in Disaster Relief and agree to abide by the ethical and professional standards set by the attached Codes, including the NCCI Code of Conduct.

- The NCCI is open to NGOs who fulfill the following criteria:
  Are legally registered in their country of origin and in Iraq (proof of a pending registration is required), or that this NGO is funding registered NGO’s programs in Iraq;
• Their NGO charter complies with the principles stated in the NCCI Charter, including the Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and NGOs in Disaster Relief;

• Demonstrate proven humanitarian activity to the NCCI and the Board;

• Are sponsored by two members of NCCI;

• Are approved by two thirds of the Executive Board;

• Are committed to the principles contained in this Charter.

The NCCI is the sum of all its members. All members are committed to actively contribute to the activities of the NCCI.

The NCCI aims to enhance coordination between NGOs operating in different regions of Iraq and accordingly will operate on a national level.

The NCCI will work in a manner which is independent yet complementary to other humanitarian agencies, and in liaison with relevant Iraqi ministries.

The effectiveness of the NCCI will be reviewed against its objectives quarterly to ensure that the organization continues to achieve its purpose.

Public Statements

The NCCI will speak out publicly on matters of humanitarian concern and seeking consensus through circulation to all members to ensure statements reflect the view of two thirds of the voters.

Any member may reserve the right to register dissent from a public statement issued. In this case the statement will specify that it does not reflect the view of all members.

Code of Conduct

The NCCI members are bound by the following principles:

1. The humanitarian imperative comes first free from religious and political agenda and economic gain

2. Our activities will be free from exploitation and abuse of our positions and the resources at our disposal and for the sole benefit of vulnerable population

3. We seek at all times to involve program beneficiaries in planning, implementation and monitoring of our humanitarian activities

4. We hold ourselves accountable in the provision of assistance to our beneficiaries
5. While recognizing the high-risk environment in which NGOs are currently operating in Iraq, NGOs carrying weapons risk placing the beneficiary population and their staff at unnecessary danger. Carrying weapons also sends a confused perception of our behavior and violates the basic humanitarian principles, which are providing assistance and not hurting people.

6. No armed belligerents in NGOs premises and vehicles.

7. No armed escorts in the provision of humanitarian assistance.

**Governance**

*The members*

Members are expected to:

- Accept and comply with the principles stated in the NCCI Charter, including the Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and NGOs in Disaster Relief and the NCCI Code of Conduct;
- Actively participate in relevant coordination meetings and other fora such as the General Assembly meetings, the sectoral meetings and ad hoc working groups;
- Provide regular updated information on their projects and activities as requested by the Executive Coordinator of NCCI;
- Pay fees quarterly in advance. The NGOs will be removed from the mailing list after a month of non-payment;
- A special observer status is granted to the Red Crescent and Red Cross movements.

*Other Participants*

In order to preserve the free space for debate, participants other than members will be allowed to attend NCCI meetings with prior permission of the General Assembly, and after a proper presentation.

*The General Assembly*

The General Assembly is composed of all NCCI members.

The General Assembly is the primary decision maker; it has to identify issues for the development of NCCI’s strategic plan. It votes on decisions, elects the Executive Board, approves the creation of working groups and endorses the appointment of the Executive Coordinator.
The General Assembly has the power to withdraw NCCI membership if the guiding principles and the Charter are not complied with. If non-compliance is brought to the attention of the Executive Board a Conduct Review Body, which investigates the non-compliance, has to be set up to investigate and make recommendations to the General Assembly. The Conduct Review Body is composed by two nominated Executive Board members and three General Assembly members randomly selected.

The General Assembly meeting is a Head of Mission meeting held quarterly and chaired by the Chairman of the Executive Board. The location of each General Assembly will be dictated by the circumstances at the due time. Extraordinary sessions can be called under special circumstances. In the event of this all means of communication will be used to provide adequate notice to all NCCI members.

Regular Coordination Meetings will be held for NCCI membership at the location of each of the field offices. These meetings will be chaired by the Executive Coordinator and Field Officers respectively.

A quorum of 25% of the members is required for votes to be valid. Decisions are taken by a 2/3 majority of the votes. Votes can be expressed during the General Assembly, coordination meetings or electronically. Deadlines will be defined at the time of the vote.

The Executive Board

The Executive Board is comprised of seven members for a term of six months, renewable two times making the longest term possible eighteen months. Nominees are elected to the Executive Board by a vote of the General Assembly in accordance with the voting procedures established above. An NCCI host is automatically a Board member. At least four of the NGOs on the Executive Board must have ten years of field experience to ensure the Board has the capacity and experience to provide effective oversight of NCCI.

The Executive Board should elect a chairman who chairs the Executive Board meetings, the General Assembly and holds the casting vote. The chairman should be elected from one of the four experienced NGOs as mentioned above. The Executive Board should elect a treasurer who overviews the accounts and compliance with donor grant conditions and submits quarterly reports on the state of the accounts and grant compliance to the General Assembly.

The Executive Board is responsible for:

- Supervision of the Executive Coordinator’s implementation of General Assembly decisions and NCCI’s strategic plan;
- Oversight of internal NCCI policy development;
- Approval of the agenda for General Assembly and coordination meetings submitted by the Executive Coordinator;
- Hiring, suspending and firing the Executive Coordinator in accordance with the Memorandum of Understanding signed with host NGO(s) and following the approval of the General Assembly;
• Ensure interim cover of the Executive Coordinator;
• Oversight of grants compliance and ensuring NCCI adheres to good financial management practices;
• Approving the membership;
• Approval of memberships applications;
• Oversight of compliance with the Charter by the members of NCCI.

Executive Coordinator

The role of the Executive Coordinator is to manage the NCCI.

The Executive Coordinator is appointed by the General Assembly according to an agreed selection process facilitated by the Executive Board. The position is a full time paid position, subject to funding.

The Executive Coordinator’s main responsibilities are as follows:

• Direct NCCI towards the achievement of the objectives set out in this Charter
• Promote coordination and debate on relevant humanitarian and development issues and priorities as identified by members
• Represent NCCI to relevant third parties.