Mobile Network Operators

Partnership Guidelines: Building effective partnerships between MNOs and NGOs in complex environments and crises

CONTENTS

Introduction

Mobile Network Operators (MNOs) are increasingly sought as partners to deliver services developed by the humanitarian sector and Non Governmental Organisations (NGOs) in the wake of natural disasters or other humanitarian emergencies. A shift towards the digitisation of aid has led to mobile technology becoming a central component of assistance. The ubiquity and scale of mobile networks means they have become attractive delivery channels for many forms of humanitarian assistance. Recent reports have been published in this area, for example the 2014 World Disaster Report which focused on the increasing use of ICTs in preparation and response efforts, and the 'Principles for Digital Development' which have aimed to build a body of best practice. This shift has necessitated that MNOs and humanitarian organisations work together to deliver life changing interventions.

DIGITAL AID

Traditional forms of aid are increasingly delivered via mobile technology. For example, rather than transport and distribute cash, some organisations are choosing to make payments to recipients via mobile cash-transfer. Mobile technology is increasingly seen as a channel for information sharing, and humanitarian organisations are looking to how informative materials can be shared in digital form. As work continues in the space of mobile identity, here too we expect to see mobile play a role in people's access to humanitarian assistance and resources.

Further resources:

UNOCHA Humanitarianism In the Network Age report

Humanitarian Assistance; Mobile Cash Transfers in Afghanistan

Working Group on Emergency Telecoms

Humanitarian Innovation Fund

Successful partnerships in this space are those which at their foundation are beneficial to both partners, leveraging the subject matter expertise and content of the humanitarian sector and pairing it with the core communication competency and scale that mobile operators possess. A solid understanding of the capacity, limitations, expectations and interests of each partner is a cornerstone of any partnership, but particularly so when the parties may have diverse drivers and ways of working. Developing such partnerships can be challenging, especially when they are being created in stressful and complex operational environments. Sudden-onset and protracted crises provide different sets of challenges for partnerships, where partnerships may need to be on standby for a sudden-onset disaster, or be sustainable/open-ended in the case of protracted events.

This report aims to draw on a number of existing toolkits and guidelines on developing successful partnerships between the humanitarian and private sectors. It addresses the critical success factors specific to partnerships between MNOs and humanitarian organisations with a nuanced view of how these unfold in crisis-affected settings. For the purposes of this paper, "humanitarian sector" refers to NGOs, INGOs and UN agencies. The overview below offers practical actions and considerations for humanitarian and mobile stakeholders to ensure that potential partnerships start on the right foot to bring positive impacts for those for whom these partnerships are intended to benefit.

This guideline document first works to "debunk" common myths about working with mobile operators and humanitarian organisations. It then sets out a step-by-step set of key considerations and questions for parties approaching a partnership, drawing from deeper case studies where successful partnerships have been achieved in both sudden-onset and protracted crises scenarios. It then presents a selection of existing resources available for structuring partnerships between MNOs and NGOs and highlights their key recommendations.

Breaking down the myths

Myth 1: "The private sector is all the same"

Like all sectors, the mobile industry is made up of a diverse set of actors, with MNOs being one of the key stakeholder groups. However not all mobile operators are one and the same and a successful approach or partnership developed with one may not necessarily be replicated with another. Despite offering similar core services, mobile operators may be structured very differently, some being partially or fully-state owned, may be operating in very different competitive markets, and may be focused on very different priorities, such as delivery of 2G and 3G services, infrastructure roll-out, or investing in the newest technology. Additionally, most MNOs will have their own sustainability and corporate social responsibility (CSR) programmes which underlie their community engagement strategy and priorities. For example, Telenor Group has a focus on climate change, healthcare and disaster response in countries such as Bangladesh, Thailand and Pakistan, while Vodafone Foundation has its own disaster and humanitarian programme as part of their Mobile for Good work. It is important to be aware of the diverse distinctions between different companies, and understand their structure and priorities in order to properly navigate them. Identifying the most relevant department and business units, key decision makers and short and long term business and sustainability priorities of each target mobile operator partner, and recognising their individuality is a good way to start.

Myth 2: "The NGO sector is slow, it takes ages to get anything done"

Whilst some elements of NGO work can be limited by funding and approval mechanisms, in many cases these organisations are able to respond immediately in emergencies and often act as 'frontline responders'. It should also be recognised that NGOs are diverse and that capacity will be different from one to another depending upon size, how long they've been established and their area of focus. For example, the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent (IFRC) reaches over 160 million people a year through its 189 national member societies. Exploring what the potential opportunities are ahead of time will reduce the risk that speed of action becomes a barrier to successful partnerships.

Myth 3: "Mobile Operators are not working to support humanitarian initiatives"

Mobile operators may already be working on disaster preparedness/response activities or be supporting organisations that provide humanitarian relief through corporate philanthropy, sustainability or CSR programmes, through employee volunteering initiatives or as part of their core business. It is important to be aware of what level of engagement already exists, and how mobile operators have worked on these issues in the past. For example, Smart Communications in the Philippines has a community engagement programme that they have been stewarding on disaster preparedness, mitigating cyclone damage in recent years, while in Iraq, Asiacell developed a call centre with a local government ministry to provide support to Syrian and Iraqi refugees. Vodafone has a partnership with the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) on providing connectivity in remote refugee camps, while Dialog Axiata has developed a disaster early-warning system (DEWN) as part of its service offering and Ericsson has developed a response team to deploy with the UN Emergency Telecommunications Cluster. Recognising where existing competencies lie, and that there may already be mature partnerships at the local level in this area is critical to ensuring that conversations can begin on solid footing.

Myth 4: "We can't partner with them, they have a different operating model/values than us"

Rather than being a cause not to partner, the different operating models that MNOs and NGOs bring offer an opportunity to address more of the challenges of humanitarian operations in a more effective manner. With their strong community ties and vast networks, NGOs are able to reach people who are valuable potential customers and clients of mobile networks. At the same time, MNOs have strong infrastructure systems, distribution models, and networks of users that can help NGOs expand the reach of their programming and make a more significant impact on communities following an emergency. During the Ebola crisis in West Africa, a number of NGOs worked to harness the distribution/agent networks of MNOs in Sierra Leone to distribute a payment scheme. Leveraging these additional MNO assets will be key to the future delivery of humanitarian aid and as such an understanding of how they can be used should be developed by both MNOs and the humanitarian sector alike.

Myth 5: "We have to wait until an emergency to work together"

Often mobile networks and NGOs wait until there is a humanitarian response underway to start getting to know one another. In reality, the most successful partnerships between MNOs and NGOs have started long before an emergency or humanitarian relief effort. It is important to understand that once an emergency occurs, both MNOs and NGOs are working hard to address immediate challenges, and it may not be the ideal time to negotiate agreements and form partnerships.

MNO / Humanitarian sector checklist for partnerships during crisis

The following checklist aims to bring together the existing best practises for private-public sector partnerships and tailor them to partnership development between MNOs and the humanitarian sector during emergencies.

Understand timing: In all partnerships, taking the time to develop relationships and mutually understand and respect the way each partner works is an important component for a successful outcome. Whilst this can be much more challenging when working in crisis and disaster situations, the most important recommendation is to have started building this relationship ahead of time. In 'non-crisis' periods, work to identify potential partners and start the process. If required work to create standby agreements which can be activated when needed or at least provide a basis from which to begin specific partnership discussions. When this is not possible, be as up front with one another as to the desired timeframe for action and the time limitations internally impacting each organisation. In some cases decision making processes for both humanitarian organisations and MNOs can be expedited during crisis if the need for rapid action is understood by decision makers and the systems into which they report.

Manage expectations: When entering a partnership it is important for both partners to understand one another, acknowledging where there are differences in their models and approaches. Perceived weaknesses of one sector may in fact be considered strengths. Being aware of the limitations of each partner ahead of time will reduce the risk of disappointment or frustration when these arise. Asking where these potential limitations may exist and being open about the limitations facing your organisation, be they funding restraints, mobile coverage, regulatory conditions or internal/external policies, will allow both partners to enter the process with realistic expectations. Full alignment of aims and operating models are not necessary for a successful partnership, as long as compatibilities do exist around the areas critical for the specific aims of the partnership. As noted in the previous point, this process is best had ahead of time, however if this is not possible then listing 'crisis-time' limitations of each partner will keep proposals realistic.

Work for mutual benefit: For partnerships to be most likely to succeed they should be mutually beneficial. In times of disaster and crisis many organisations want to support those in need of assistance where possible. However, MNOs can often be under huge levels of pressure in the hours, days and weeks following rapid onset disasters. The primary concern of the MNO will be to restore services to enable the network to continue to support access to communication. For affected populations with access to mobile, this can be a critical lifeline in their response. MNOs who do not regularly experience disasters may not understand the humanitarian system and method of operating. For many humanitarian organisations, who may not have experience of the mobile industry it may not be clear what role MNOs play in response. Identifying activities that meet the aims of both humanitarian organisations and MNOs can be challenging, but it is important that each is seen as providing a critical part of the partnership. An agreement where one organisation gets what it wants from the other, with no return, is unlikely to be positive or long lasting. It is also important to define what activities of the MNO will be commercial and which will be part of the humanitarian response. This can be a difficult area to navigate and may intersect with regulatory or financial constraints.

Plan for sustainability, scale, and exit: Developing a plan to ensure the outcomes of the partnership can be sustained for either a defined period of time or on an ongoing basis will reduce the risk of the partnership ending prematurely or in a negative manner. In protracted crises where the intention is to provide an ongoing service or intervention then a sustainable financial/funding model will be required to allow the project to run sustainably or through pre-agreed financial support from one or more of the partners.If required, a strategy should be built around how the project or intervention is taken to scale. In shorter term interventions, or when funding/policy restrictions duration, having a well defined exit strategy will not only provide clear expectations for each partner, but also ensure that the wrapping up of the project does not have negative or unexpected consequences for those it has been intended to serve.

Clearly define roles and responsibilities: Clearly outlining the expected roles and responsibilities of each partner will allow each to enter into a partnership agreement with an understanding of the commitment they are making as well as what they are to expect from one another. When day-to-day operating processes are strained during crisis and disaster situations, it will be critically important to take the time to ensure that these expectations are accurate and understood by all partners. If each partner does not understand what their roles are then it is unlikely that the outcome will be as expected.

Ensure the partnership is needed - avoid partnerships for the sake of partnerships: Partnership requires investments of time and resource. Providing evidence for the need for a partnership will increase the likelihood of organisations being able to make a case internally to engage in the process. Providing examples of where past interventions or similar activities have produced the required outcome and why this was necessary will increase the appeal of joining. Partner for the right reason and with the right organisation. There should be a clear reason for requiring the support and engagement of another organisation to justify the time and effort required to bring together a successful union.

Be aware of 'language' barriers: The different nomenclature, acronyms and definitions used by the humanitarian sector and the mobile industry can create confusion or misunderstanding. Words or acronyms that are familiar to one party may be unknown, or defined differently by the other. Making a conscious effort to avoid these terms and speak in neutral language should aid understanding of a situation. Taking the time to highlight where words have very different meanings for each sector will also avoid confusion. For example, within the mobile industry, interoperability means the ability for technological systems to interact, while in the humanitarian community it typically refers to the ability for different organisations to work together.

Outline financial commitments: Be clear where the financial responsibilities lie, whether direct or in-kind. If the partnership is dependant on external funding make sure this is secured prior to entering the partnership agreement - if this is not possible make sure all participants acknowledge the risk and potential funding limitation. If an element of the partnership relies upon pro-bono work, a fee-waiver, subsidised service provision or any other donation of services or finances, ensure that this agreement is clearly understood and agreed prior to commencing.

Create clear partnering agreements: Completing a comprehensive partnering agreement increases the likelihood that many of the best practises are followed when creating a partnership. It will also provide each partner with a record of the agreement, allowing any necessary internal sign-off from the appropriate authority and a point of reference for future review.

Review with honesty: Partnerships and their outcomes should be reviewed at appropriate intervals depending upon timescale. Discussing openly where things are working well and where there are challenges will give each partner chance to adapt if required. If the context has changed and roles and responsibilities are impacted then discussing whether and how these changes can be made by partners will enable the partnership to adapt, or in a worst case scenario, be wound down if deemed necessary. It will be especially critical in times of crisis and disaster that required changes are made quickly to provide the most effective outcome, and that efforts are conserved if continued partnership engagements are not producing positive or required outcomes. The best partners will be able to criticise one another, adapt, learn from one another, and continue working with positive outcomes.

INITIAL OUTREACH

The best time to build relationships and develop partnerships is ahead of time, before they are needed. In the context of disaster and crisis this can be challenging, especially when events may arise in which an MNO/humanitarian organisation partnership may be useful yet could not have been predicted. However, in markets where it can be expected that partnerships may be required at some point, it is critical that these conversations take place well ahead of time.

Beginning the partnership process before it becomes a priority is easier said than done, especially between two sectors in which the demands upon time and resources are high. Preferably the groundwork for partnership would be conducted pre-event, with the potential to create stand-by agreements to be activated when required. If many of the common roadblocks to partnerships have already been cleared (lack of common understanding, lack of familiarity), then when an intervention is required the focus can be on the issue at hand. Successful examples of long standing partnerships can be found, such as the ongoing work between Safaricom and the Kenyan Red Cross Society. Developing connections with critical points of contact will enable communications to be much easier in times of crisis, yet the goal should always be to have formalised agreements in place before they are required.

Specific guidelines for reaching out to an MNO and securing a successful first meeting can be found in the GSMA Connected Women. Mutual Value, Mutual Gain: 'Best practices from successful social sector partnerships with mobile network operators'.

Case studies

RefUnite partnership creation; mutual benefit and clearly defined roles

In some circumstances caused by crisis, or in instability following disaster, the fear of political persecution or violence may be so great that people intentionally avoid being traceable. For this reason, any service requiring personal information needs to be both secure in terms of its data management, but also intrinsically trustworthy by the end-user if it is going to be successful in engaging buy-in from this vulnerable user group.

By harnessing the power of mobile technology, Refugees United aims to empower refugees to take the search for missing loved ones into their own hands, through a mobile device. Achieving this goal requires leveraging the scale that MNOs possess through their infrastructure, brand and reach in even the most remote of places. The organisation has partnerships with mobile operators in Kenya, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Somaliland, Somalia, Jordan, Turkey, Iraq, Philippines, Egypt and South Sudan.

RefUnite also partners with a number of humanitarian organisations in each market and with technology vendor, Ericsson. In building each of these partnerships, RefUnite is leveraging the scale of not just one MNO, but of MNOs across target regions for their work. The group has managed this through clearly defining the role of each partner as well as outlining the benefits, direct and indirect to each. These are outlined in the table below:

PARTNERSHIP ROLES AND BENEFITS:

Partner group	Role / offering	Direct benefit	Indirect benefit
Project lead (Refugees United)	Coordination and strategic planning Platform & database maintenance	The ability through the technological platform and access to target populations to works towards refugee tracing and reconnection	Building reputation amongst humanitarian and private sector organisations, leading to potential future partnerships
Technology partners (Ericsson)	Technical development and support Engagement with MNOs	Connecting separated families in line with their Technology for Good agenda	Recognition of brand and customer engagement and strengthening brand reputation
MNOs (Including Safaricom, Vodacom DRC, Telesom, Hormuud, Asiacell, Zain Jordan)	Network reach and access Awareness raising Zero-rated services	Helping families in their local communities - in line with their CSR and Foundation goals	Improvement to brand power and customer satisfaction/loyalty
Humanitarian organisations (e.g. UNHCR, National Red Cross organisations)	Trust through familiarity Awareness raising On the ground support/access	Collaborative effort which aligns with and contributes towards core aims of the organisation	Exposure to new technological partnerships with the potential for future engagement in other areas of work

Key lessons from the Refugees United Partnership:

MNOs view their partnership with Refugees United as part of their social responsibility in the markets in which they operate. While this remains a philanthropic initiative at the heart of it, there are indirect benefits that MNOs may extract from their partnership including brand health, customer loyalty and satisfaction and marketing opportunity.

MNOs can make a humanitarian difference in their countries. By partnering with small organisations MNOs can make or break planned initiatives.

Support from larger humanitarian organisations can assist in facilitating trusted access to user groups through familiarity.

The partnerships with Ericsson and MNOs, have allowed Refugees United to demonstrate proof of concept to the telecommunications industry.

Public-private partnership with the mobile industry is enabling Refugees United to carry out family tracing work on a scale which would be inconceivable for a small NGO of its size, and indeed for many much larger humanitarian groups. The unique blend of technological, humanitarian and mobile expertise is facilitating a process that requires input from each of its components to be complete and successful.

The full report can be read here: Reconnecting Refugees Through Mobile; Refugees United's platform and partnerships

DEVELOPING AGREEMENTS

Once there is agreement that a partnership would be a beneficial undertaking that both sides are interested in participating in, a partnership agreement should be formulated. This will ensure that partners understand both their own role and expectations from the partnership.

A sample partnering agreement, developed by the Partnering Initiative, is shown below. This document should be used as a guide and tailored to the specific needs of partners and the agreement in zquestion. However, each of the headings listed are important considerations to be made before a partnership is formalised.

Source: The Partnering Toolbook, The Partnering Initiative

TOOL 3   SAMPLE PARTNERING AGREEMENT

1.0   PARTNER ORGANISATIONS

1.1   Partner A
          Contact details
          Contact person

1.2   Partner B
          Contact details
          Contact person

1.3   Partner C
          Contact details
          Contact person

2.0   STATEMENT OF INTENT

2.1   We, the undersigned, acknowledge a common commitment to / concern About…

2.2   By working together as partners, we see the added value each of us can bring to fulfil this commitment / address this concern…

2.3   Specifically we expect each partner to contribute to the project in the following way(s):
          Partener A…
          Partener B…
          Partener C…
          All partners

3.0   STRUCTURE AND PROCEDURES

3.1   Partners roles and responsabilities…

3.2   Co-ordination and administration…

3.3   Working groups / commitee(s) /advisory group(s)…

3.4   Decison-making proccesses…

3.5   Accountability arrangements…

4.0   RESOURCES

4.1   We will provide the following resources to:
          a) the partnership and
          b) the projects…

5.0   AUDITS/REVIEWS / REVISIONS

5.1   We agree to make available all inforamtion relevant to this partnership to partners as necessary

5.2   We agree to review the partnership every… months

5.3   An independent audit of yhe financial arrangements of the partnership (and any project resulting from the partnership) will be understaken on an annual basis

5.4   We agree to make adjustments to the partnership (including re-writing this agreement) should either a review or an audit indicate that this is necessary for the partnership to achieve its objectives

6.0   CAVEATS

6.1   This agreement does not permit the use of copyright materials (including logos) or the dissemination of confidential information to any third party without any written permission of the partner(s) concerned

6.2   This agreement does not bind partner organisations or their staff/ officers to any financial or other liability without further formal documentation

SIGNED

_____
                              on behalf of Partener A

_____
                              on behalf of Partener B

_____
                              on behalf of Partener C

DATE
_____

PLACE
_____

Working together in protracted conflict zones; Internews connects families to aid in Gaza

Not every emergency starts with a large scale disaster overnight. In fact, most emergency scenarios result from long and protracted period of tension and conflict between parties. These protracted conflicts can escalate quickly, and MNOs and humanitarian organisations are well placed to support response efforts.

Protracted conflicts are characterized by deprivation of human needs, and ongoing, cyclical or suddenly escalating violence. In Gaza, the protracted conflict has led to lack of economic and education opportunities, poor healthcare, weak infrastructure, and shortages in food, building materials, and water. These conditions, combined with extremely limited freedom of movement make it difficult for families to get key information about aid and security, even when the conflict is at a low level.

This need was particularly evident to Internews and mobile network Jawwal following the sudden increase in violence in 2014. As aid efforts ramped up across the Gaza Strip, Internews led the charge as one of ten organisations working to provide life-saving relief for more than half a million Gazans affected by the conflict.

To bridge these information gaps, the Internews-led Gaza Humanitarian Information Service produced a live daily radio program with useful, actionable humanitarian "news-you-can-use" and timely updates with details on aid distribution. Crucially, Jawwal strengthened the service by enabling two-way communication between communities and aid providers – through mobile data collection and listener polling, which allowed Gazans to give direct feedback on their urgent needs.

By partnering with Jawwal, along with Souktel Mobile Solutions and nine media partners in Gaza and the West Bank, Internews was immediately able to reach close to 95% of Gaza's population via mobile and radio – underscoring the importance of basic accessible technology to support emergency response at scale.

In protracted conflicts, context and community needs can change with little warning. By maintaining open lines of communication before there was a major emergency MNOs and humanitarian organisations can enable quick and effective responses when violence escalates and the needs of communities become urgent and imperative. Taking advantage of the unique skills and expertise of the different partners, this partnership was successful in making swift and actionable choices that resulted in a product highly valued by community members. The solution harnessed the technical expertise of Jawwal, while serving a critical need identified through Internews' close relationship with community members.

Agility and flexibility in partnership planning

Preparing for the Unexpected; Ooredoo responds to a Water Crisis in the Maldives

On the 4th of December 2014, a fire broke out at the Maldives Water and Sewerage Company Generator Unit located on the island capital Malé resulting in the cutting off of drinking water to over 150,000 people.

Whilst government bodies acted quickly to distribute bottled water, supplies were limited and stocks quickly dwindled. With a critical water shortage affecting a third of the nation's population, a State of Emergency was declared by the Government of the Maldives. It was estimated that the population would struggle to access safe drinking water for the following week. Key services such as hospitals were also put at high risk.

As news of the crisis broke, the business continuity management (BCM) team within Ooredoo Maldives met. Given that a critical utility had suffered a major outage and a national crisis had been declared by the government, the group followed BCM protocol and the internal disaster response business continuity plan] was activated.

The Maldives National Defence forces (MND) led the emergency response, transporting and distributing safe water supplies to those affected. Whilst no formal partnership agreement existed between the MND and Ooredoo, the defence forces are Ooredoo Maldives biggest corporate customer. As such there was an existing relationship through which the Ooredoo team was able to offer support.

During a visit to the National Operations centre for the crisis, the Ooredoo Maldives team discussed the ways in which communications could add value to the response. The need for up to date location based information for the water distributions was identified as a key requirement.

To address this challenge, Ooredoo Maldives developed a solution combining its existing M2M service 'Locate' with cell broadcast and Interactive Voice Response (IVR) technology to communicate information about the location of the water trucks. Firstly, maps of the water drop off points as well as information on the expected timetables was shared via SMS, IVR and social media. This information was further improved with the installation of the 'Locate' system within each water truck cabin. Real time information could then be gathered on the trucks location and shared via live map, made freely available to members of the public. This meant that rather than wait unnecessarily, people were provided with greater situational awareness enabling them to access a more predictable service.

This partnership was successful due to the good pre-existing relationships between the MNO, the government, the MND and humanitarian organisations operating in the country, meaning that coordination could be swift and decisions made based upon existing trust and mutual understanding. The MDN was already an existing customer and so Ooredoo was well placed to offer additional support when required. The solution provided used the expertise and existing technology of the MNO, but in a new and specialised way, serving a critical need and with clear benefit for all involved in the partnership. The speed in which this partnership was able to come together highlights the importance of laying the foundations and building familiarity and understanding ahead of time.

Summary

Whilst many of the points on the below checklist are important during any partnership, they are all the more critical when exploring partnerships focusing on crisis and disaster contexts, where time can be a scarce resource and both the pressure and stakes much higher for all involved. Considering these points ahead of time should increase the chance of developing successful partnerships.

Timing - Start partnership conversations as early as possible, ideally prior to crisis/disaster

Manage expectations - Understand the industry/sector you want to partner with, both their strengths and limitations

Mutual benefit - Do you benefit from this partnership? Do your partners benefit? If the answer is no, is there a compelling reason to proceed? Define this

Sustainability or exit strategy - Build in sustainability for greater impact, develop an exit strategy to preserve positive impacts and positive partner relationships

Clearly defined roles and responsibilities - Understand what your role and that of your partners

Evidence for partnership need - Why is the partnership necessary? Avoid partnerships for the sake of partnerships

'Language' barriers - Overcome barriers caused by misunderstanding

Financial support - If the success of the partnership depends on financial input, directly or in-kind from partners, highlight this prior to commencing

Partnering agreements - Record the agreement to capture its details and ensure signoff

Review with honesty - Review partnerships at regular intervals to make sure intended inputs are translating to required outcomes. If they aren't, react and adapt

Appendix - Key Resources

A number of key resources already exist on cross-sector partnership development, and more specifically, focused on developing partnerships with MNOs. It is not therefore necessary to entirely reinvent the wheel when it comes to MNO partnerships in disaster and crisis contexts, as many of the lessons are universal to partnerships of any form.

Below we introduce a number of these existing resources with an explanation of their key messages.

Partnering Initiative: The Partnering Toolbook

The Partnering Initiative is an independent not-for-profit organisation driving cross-sectoral collaborative action. The Partnering Initiative was founded to advocate for the power of partnerships between business, government, humanitarian organisations and the UN to address development and business sustainability challenges.

Focusing broadly on cross-sectoral partnership development, this toolbook should be the first-read of anyone responsible for partnerships in their organisation. The toolbook addresses each stage of the partnership process, from the decision to seek a partner through brokering and implementation, and on through to sustainability and managing partnership exits. It includes a number of templates and step-by-step process guides which we reference in this report.

12 steps towards successful cross-sector partnerships:
http://thepartneringinitiative.org/tpi-tools/12-steps-towards-successful-cross-sector-partnerships/

Developed by the Partnering Initiative described above, these 12 steps map out the key considerations for successful partnerships. An adapted version can be found in this report, with specific additions made for the mobile industry.

Mobile industry partnering guidelines:

1. GSMA Intelligence: 'The importance of partnerships to mobile network operators' value added services'

This paper focuses on developing and scaling mobile for development (M4D) value added services (VAS). This report includes useful guidelines for pitching a partnership request to an MNO.

2. GSMA Connected Women. Mutual Value, Mutual Gain: 'Best practices from successful social sector partnerships with mobile network operators'

This report focuses on how to develop partnerships with MNOs, with a focus on programmes targeting women. Many of the best practises for social sector/MNO partnership development will be applicable to partnerships dealing with disaster and crisis contexts.

Of particular use in this report are;

- Guidelines on partnerships with MNOs

- Research findings on the strengths that both the social sector and MNOs bring to the development of joint projects

- Advice on the practical aspects of partnership creation; How to get a meeting with an MNO; How to negotiate a partnership agreement

3. GSMA: Guidelines for Establishing Effective Collaboration between Mobile Network Operators and Government Agencies

This report sets out guidelines for creating collaboration between MNOs and Government agencies. Thre report includes a number of case studies of successful MNO / Government agency partnerships, as well as noting the common challenges and pitfalls. Many of the recommendations made are applicable and will be useful for MNO / humanitarian organisation collaboration.

4. GSMA: Towards a Code of Conduct: Guidelines for the Use of SMS in Natural Disasters

This report presents a suggested set of guidelines for the use of SMS during natural disasters. We would recommend that any organisation (MNOs included) who plan to utilise SMS based services in the space of disaster or crisis take time to explore these guidelines
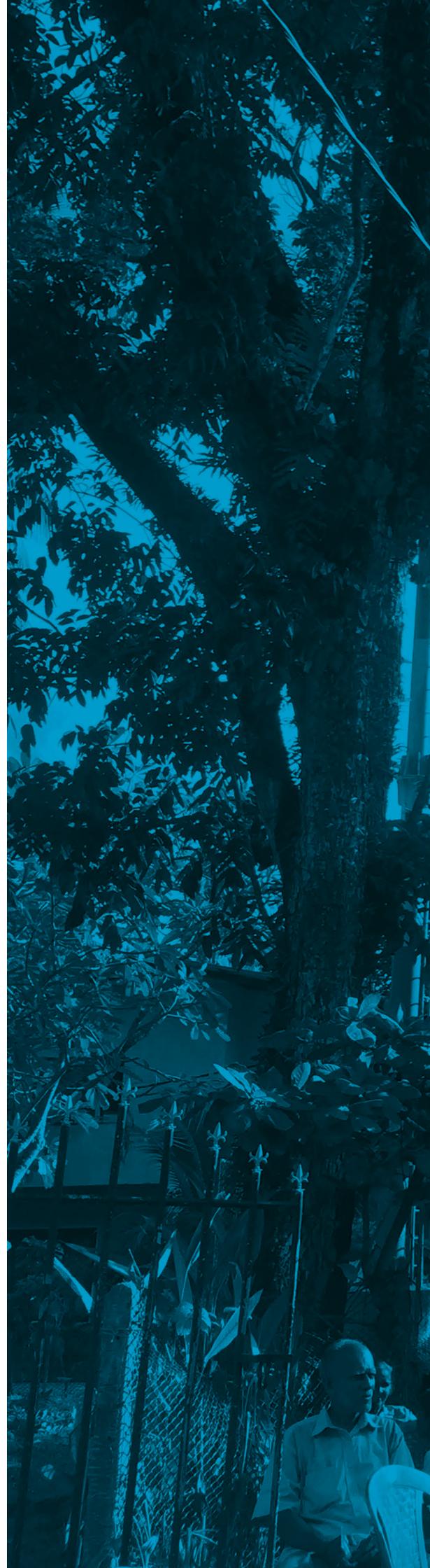
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