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International Assistance during Conflicts: An Assessment of Remote Management in Humanitarian Aid.

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Declaration

I declare that this research project is my original work and has not been presented for a

degree in any other University.

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Dedication

I dedicate this research project to my late mother, Pauline Jemima Waga.

Abstract

The study analyses remote management as a viable option for principled, effective and accountable humanitarian aid delivery in conflict affected environments. The study was inspired by the changing global security environment and its effect on the growing gap between humanitarian needs and the diminishing safe spaces for humanitarian aid.

The study is guided by the assertion that remote management of humanitarian aid is a product of the theory of obligation, and is centered on one foundational assumption, that there exists a moral imperative to assist the structurally dispossessed and functionally abused, regardless of the contextual risks.

The study employed the use of both qualitative and quantitative methodologies using key informant interviews, focus group discussions and questionnaires. The identification of the respondents was done through a non-probabilistic sample drawn from a cross section of stakeholders in the humanitarian sector including the beneficiaries of the same.

The study set to test the following hypothesis, (i) Remote management does not affect the efficiency and effectiveness of humanitarian aid; (ii) Increased use of remote management increases the efficiency and effectiveness of humanitarian aid; and (iii) Increased used of remote management reduces the efficiency and effectiveness of humanitarian aid.

The study findings confirm both the positive and negative hypothesis, thus `increased use of remote management both increases and reduces the efficiency and effectiveness of humanitarian aid'. In conclusion, the study acknowledges that remote management programming has the important benefit of allowing humanitarian aid programming to continue in difficult situations with high threat levels, yet the practice entails a number of hazards and disadvantages that contravene good practises in humanitarian aid.

LIST OF ACRONYMS

CBO	Community-Based organisations
DRC	Danish Refugee Council
ECHO	European Commission Humanitarian Office
HAP	Humanitarian Accountability Partnership
HPG	Humanitarian Policy group
IASC	Inter-Agency Standing Committee
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
IHL	International Humanitarian Law
INGO	International Non-Government Organization
NGO	Non-Government Organization
OCHA	United Nations office for humanitarian coordination
ODA	Official Development Assistance
OFDA	US Foreign Disaster Assistance
UN	United Nations
UNDSS	United Nations Department for Safety and Security
UNHCR	United Nations High Commission for Refugees
WFP	World Food Programme

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CHAPTER ONE

Remote Management of Humanitarian Aid

1.1 Introduction and Background to the Study

During conflict, the need for humanitarian aid is obvious. While humanitarian aid may reinforce, exacerbate or prolong conflict, it may also reduce tension and strengthen people's capacities to disengage from the conflict. Globally, aid agencies are increasingly concerned that their staff are the targets of violence in the conflict affected areas.

Key to this study is the widespread threats to humanitarian work due to the changing global security environment. Humanitarian agencies are alarmed by the gap between humanitarian needs and the diminishing access to populations in need. When a serious incident occurs against humanitarian aid operations, it shakes the confidence not only of the organization affected, but of the whole humanitarian aid community. Due to the shrinking safe spaces, the humanitarian agencies face a difficult choice short of withdrawing essential aid from civilians in need, or running intolerable risks to the lives of their staff and partners, or becoming an instrument of war through the manipulation of aid resources by the belligerent groups.

International Humanitarian Law and United Nations conventions protect civilians and aid workers, from violence during conflict. The humanitarian imperative demands that aid continues to reach the vulnerable civilian populations in need. Faced with deteriorating operational environments that inhibit traditional humanitarian management methodologies, humanitarian actors are adopting new modalities and approaches for aid delivery. Humanitarian agencies have devised the remote management approach that allows them to maintain the humanitarian imperative, by providing aid through national

or local staff and local partners, with the International staff managing the same from a distance.

1.2 Statement of the Research Problem

Conflict and insecurity are the most serious challenges facing some areas described as having the worst humanitarian crises in the world. The challenge for the humanitarian agencies in these areas is to continue serving the humanitarian imperativein an accountable, transparent and principled manner while ensuring safety for staff and partners.

To achieve such a delivery, notwithstanding the operational constraints, remote management, as an operational approach is used to provide relief in situations where humanitarian access to disaster affected populations is limited. By and large, in the last few years, the modality involving humanitarian aid provision with reduced or distant organizational and international staff presence, and a reliance on national and local employees or external partners to provide humanitarian aid is increasingly practised. Most humanitarian organizations assert that the decision to undertake remote management, as opposed to suspending aid operations completely, includes a critical choice between life-saving programmes and loss of innocent lives through total pull out of such services.

In conflict and insecure regions, international agencies are deploying local as opposed to expatriate staff, since the situation continues to threaten and create risks for expatriate humanitarian aid workers. The fact is that aid workers are killed, detained, kidnapped, harassed, and even used as bargaining chips for ransom. For this reason, expatriates manage and coordinate humanitarian activities while they are based at a

distance, in safer capitals in neighbouring countriesor headquarters. This modality through middle non-management structures is what is referred to as remote management.

This study therefore seeks to answer the following question, is remote management modality a viable option for principled, transparent and accountable humanitarian delivery in conflict affected environments?

1.3 Objectives of the Study

In order to achieve the purpose, this research will be guided by the following main and specific objectives;

i)   To assess the viability of remote management in humanitarian aid.

     a. To describe remote management practice by aid agencies.

     b. To analyse remote management with respect to the principles of good management in humanitarian aid.

1.4 Justification of the Study

This research contributes to the understanding of how conflict affects the mode of management of humanitarian aid. The research sheds light on remote management as currently practiced in conflict affected countries.

A lot of academic literature exists on international conflict and humanitarian aid, but none discusses humanitarian management from a distance. There is no academic study that has examined remote management, that is, humanitarian management from a distance. Despite many agencies adopting and applying remote management, not much has been written about the modality. This research contributes to the body of knowledge of managing humanitarian aid from a distance. The study examines the efficacy of remote

management, with a view to develop operational guidelines or a policy framework for its application by humanitarian aid workers.

In terms of policy, this research will contribute knowledge that humanitarian agencies can use to improve the effective management of humanitarian aid through identification of lessons learnt to improve the quality of humanitarian services in conflict affected environments.

1.5 Literature Review

The Literature review is structured around four main themes. The first defines International Assistance and discusses the contending views on whether international assistance achieves its main objectives or not. The second defines humanitarian aid and presents the contending views on whether humanitarian aid attains its intended impact or not. The third reviews the security context in which humanitarian aid is provided summarizing the risks and threats faced by the humanitarian actors, and identifying the strategies the sector has employed in dealing with the contextual risks. The final provides a definition of remote management of humanitarian aid with attempts to identify its rationale and characteristics.

1.5.1 International Assistance

Lindsay[1] defines international assistance as the transfer of resources from donors to less well-off recipients. In this context, there is movement of assistance from prosperous rich countries, to those that are poorer, and unable to meet all of the needs of their populations.

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[1] Lindsay Whitefield, *The Politics of Aid: African Strategies for Dealing with Donors*, Oxford University Press, United Kingdom, 2012, p.17

Riddel[2] views international assistance as all resources – physical goods, skills and technical know-how, financial grants (gifts), or loans (at concessional rates) – transferred by donors to recipients'. In Riddel's[3] definition he identifies `six main clusters of motives that have historically influenced donor decisions to allocate aid as (i) to help address emergency needs; (ii) to assist recipients achieve their development (growth and poverty reducing) goals; (iii) to show solidarity; (iv) to further their own national political and strategic interests; (v) to help promote donor – country commercial interests; (vi) because of historical ties; and more recently some donors have started more explicitly to base aid giving decisions on the human rights records of recipient governments in particular by reducing of halting completely the flow of aid to countries whose record on basic human rights they asses to be seriously deficient.

OECD DAC[4] explains that international assistance is aid provided within three main frameworks of bilateral, multilateral and NGO aid. In this outline, bilateral aid is government-to-government aid or Official Development Assistance (ODA), multilateral organisations such as the United Nations, the World Bank, and the European Commission; and NGO aid is the transfer of resources from rich to poor countries through non-governmental organisations (NGOs), not-for profit bodies which undertake relief work, and provide support to those in need of assistance. OECD DAC's definition outlines that assistance can be in terms of cash, donation of goods and professional services, and is sometimes referred to as aid.

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[2] Roger Riddel C, *Does Foreign Aid Really Work?* Oxford University Press Inc. New York, 2007, p. 17
[3] Ibid p. 91
[4] OECD DAC, *Reporting for 2009 on gross ODA disbursements*http://stats.oecd.org accessed on April 15, 2013

In all the definitions, there is movement of resources either in terms of cash or non-cash items from one source to another, mostly wealthier nations to cover for the needs of poorer nations. While Riddel provides the main reasons for these resource transfers, OECD's definition identifies the frameworks through which the resource transfers are done.

The impact of international assistance has been a subject of a wide range of views, with some scholars concluding that international assistance does not work, while others asserting that it does work, is necessary and should be increased.

In the negative sense, Easterly[5] reports that available data and methods on international assistance does not permit judgement on whether or not there has been a positive, causal link in aggregate between the aid provided and growth, investment or poverty trends.

Riddel[6]contends that aid is sometimes provided in small amounts that it is incapable of making a difference, or in amounts sufficiently large, but channelled into uses that are irrelevant, marginal to poverty reduction or unsustainable, or diverted and used for personal gain.

Erixon[7] supports the view that aid is sometimes harmful as it feeds or fuels corruption, sets off or stimulates other secondary adverse effects which are so pronounced as to eclipse its more immediate beneficial effects. Instead of filling a resource gap, aid could stimulate a fall in taxes leading to an even larger domestic resource gap, and induce a rise in exchange rate, making it more difficult to expand

[5] William Easterly, *The Elusive Quest for Growth*, MIT Press, Cambridge, New York, 2001, p. 56
[6] Roger Riddel, Op. cit, p. 176
[7]ErixonF, *Aid and Development: The Making and Unmaking of the Third World*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, 2005, p. 89

exports thus constraining rather than enhancing overall wealth creation. Donors could also make a faulty analysis of the factors contributing to growth, development and poverty reduction, linking the aid they provide to policies which increase rather than reduce poverty.

Hudson[8] identifies insufficiency, volatility and the yearly variation of aid as causing a reduction in the potential impact of aid. Collier[9] supports that volatility in the allocation of aid is particularly marked in countries emerging from conflict, with aid levels falling sharply at precisely the time when aid could be utilized more effectively.

Birdsall,[10] states that different donors require recipients to comply with different regulations and procedures, and they attach an array of different conditions to the aid they give. Riddel[11] further identifies that the commercial, political and strategic interests of donors in providing aid as responsible for the inflated costs of aid, due to tying the requirement by donors that aid be used solely for the purchase of goods and services, including technical assistance and consultancy services, originating in the donor country.[12]

Renzio and Mulley[13] summarizes the criticism on international assistance by highlighting the high transaction costs from multiplicity of reporting and accounting requirements tied to aid, insufficient spending dictated by donor priorities and procurement arrangements, unpredictable funding levels, undermining state systems

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[8] Hudson J, 'Introduction: Aid and Development', *Economic Journal*, no. 114, 2004, pp. 184 - 185
[9] Collier P and Hoeffler A, 2004, `Aid, Policies and Growth in Post Conflict Societies', *European Economic Review* no. 48, pp. 1125-45
[10] Birdsall N, Rodrick D, Subramanian, `How to Help Poor Countries', *Foreign Affairs Economic Review paper, 2005,* p. 143
[11] Roger Riddel, Op. cit, p. 359
[12] Roger Riddel, Op. cit, p. 359
[13] De Renzio P & Mulley S, *Donor Coordination and Good Governance: Donor-led and Recipient led approaches,* Wilfrid Laurier University Press, Canada, 2007, p. 253

through special staffing arrangements and parallel structures, corrosion of democratic accountability as aid modalities are designed to satisfy donor rather than domestic constituencies, high levels of reliance on donor funding which undermines sustainability and corruption, fraud and rent seeking in the management of aid projects.

Contrary to the above discussions and on a positive note, Riddel[14] reports that most aid funded projects fill gaps in poor countries, the majority of which either would not be met, or would be met far less adequately without the international assistance.

According to Hudson,[15] a notable feature of most official aid funded projects is the high quality of resources generally provided. Roads are constructed and maintained, schools, hospitals, clean water and sewage plants are built, medicines and school books are supplied, the terracing of land to protect soil erosion takes place, credit agency personnel are given the necessary skills, and credit is provided, teachers are trained, computer systems are installed and function, telecommunications equipment is installed and rehabilitated. People receive the skills specified, plans for local councils are drawn up as expected, magistrates complete training courses, election monitors are trained. The scale, range and extent of the cumulative successes of aid projects in terms of what they have produced and what they have achieved is difficult to convey fully.

The impact of international assistance is therefore disputed with critics asserting that aid can do harm, while supporters contending that there is a wealth of experience that aid is beneficial and more aid is vital. The disputes about the impact of international assistance can be traced back to data, coverage, reliability and outcomes.

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[14] Roger Riddel, Op. cit, p. 183
[15] Hudson J, `Introduction: Aid and Development', *Economic Journal*, no. 114, 2004, pp.184-185

1.5.2 Humanitarian Aid

Terry[16]labels the assistance provided to help people during conflict as humanitarian aid, though sometimes referred to as emergency or relief aid. Humanitarian aid is assistance provided to help those whose lives are profoundly affected by, and whose livelihoods are immediately at risk as a result of, natural and man-made disasters.

Riddel[17]identifies disasters and emergencies as occurrences in many forms, some are sudden and unexpected events such as earthquakes, floods, hurricanes and tsunamis, while others are more predictable, even if not easily prevented, including droughts, famines, wars and severe political, economic and social breakdowns. They can be confined to a small locality or extend across countries, and exceptionally even continents. They can result in a few or hundreds and thousands of deaths, to scores, hundreds or even millions of displacement of populations. The proliferation of crises and conflicts around the world, has led to an increase in the scale of humanitarian aid that is required to meet the essential needs of the people affected.

UN General Assembly Resolution 46/182[18]outlines that humanitarian aid comprises financial, material or logistical assistance provided with the primary objective to save lives alleviate suffering and enable those suffering to maintain their human dignity during and in the aftermath of the crisis.

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[16]Terry Fiona, *The Paradox of Humanitarian Action*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca & London, 2002, p.22
[17] Roger Riddel, Op. cit, p. 311
[18]*UN General Assembly Resolution 46/182,*1991, http://www.un.org/documents/ga/res/46/a46r182.htm accessed on April 21, 2013

Borton[19] defines humanitarianism as comprising a multiplicity of international, national and locally based organizations deploying financial, material and human resources to provide assistance and protection to those affected by conflict and natural disasters with the objective of saving lives, reducing suffering and aiding recovery. Humanitarian aid is therefore distinguished from development aid, which seeks to address the underlying socio economic factors which may have led to a crisis or emergency.

Resolution XXVIII of the International Committee for Red Cross and Red Crescent[20] asserts that during conflict, the enshrinement of the right to humanitarian assistance is grounded in two principles of the International Humanitarian Law (IHL), thus (i) the duty to distinguish between the civilian population and combatants; and (ii) the duty to ensure respect, protection and humane treatment for people not or no longer participating in the hostilities. The broad concept of protection established under this principle clearly encompasses assistance for people in need and, as such, is established in conventions and protocols.

The Fourth Geneva Convention Relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War[21] establishes explicitly that States have the duty to provide humanitarian aid to the civilian population under their control of the adverse party and, if the state is unable to do so, it is bound to accept the offer of third parties to provide the required

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[19] John Borton, *An Overview of Humanitarian Accountability*, Humanitarian Accountability Partnership International, Geneva, 2009, p. 21

[20] *Resolution XXVIII of the 20th International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent*, Vienna, Austria, ICRC, 1965

[21] Fourth Geneva Convention, *Relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War*, Articles 55 and 81,1949, http://www.icrc.org/ihl.nsf Accessed April 03, 2013

aid[22]. Article 18 of Additional Protocol II, applicable in non-international armed conflicts[23] establishes the right to humanitarian assistance, imposing on the parties to conflict the obligation to accept humanitarian aid essential to the survival of the population. The duties of States and other parties[24] to conflict in this regard boils down to a duty to permit the entry, passage and distribution of humanitarian aid. This involves the fact that: (i) affected States must authorize the entry and passage of humanitarian aid for the civilian population in need; (ii) affected parties to a conflict must not obstruct, directly or indirectly, the entry, passage or distribution of humanitarian aid; (iii) affected parties must make every effort to facilitate the rapid and unimpeded passage of relief consignments and assist humanitarian organizations and personnel in carrying out their work; and (iv) affected parties must guarantee the safety of relief supplies and humanitarian personnel.

1.5.3 Humanitarian Aid Management

The nature, content and form of humanitarian aid have been a subject of debate. Macrae[25] asserts that there is no universally agreed definition of what humanitarian aid comprises, beyond the very general purpose of saving lives, reducing suffering and maintaining human dignity. In this sense, the very meaning of humanitarianism is elusive, and the lack of clarity makes it difficult to reach an agreement about its impact and how to asses it. Macrae[26] further notes that while there is no dispute about the need to

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[22]Fourth Geneva Convention, Op. cit, Articles 23 38 and 39.

[23]Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949, and *Relating to the Protection of Victims of Non-International Armed Conflicts (Protocol II)* of 8 June 1977 (hereinafter "Additional Protocol II")

[24]Fourth Geneva Convention, Op. cit, Articles 23, 30, 54, 59, 110, 111 and 142

[25]Macrae Joana, 2002 b, 'The New Humanitarianism: A Review of Trends in Global Humanitarian Action', *Humanitarian Policy Group Report no. 11, Overseas Development Institute*, London, 2002, p. 5

[26] Ibid

provide food, shelter, health care, water and sanitation, what is controversial is whether humanitarian action includes providing other, less tangible things notably protection, especially physical and legal protection against human rights violations.

In response to Macrae, Tirman[27]notes that the problem for some agencies is the, engagement in effective protection which may require them to enter into the political sphere, seen by some agencies, as potentially compromising their commitment to the principles of independence, impartiality and neutrality. There are organizations that maintain that a failure to speak out against and attempt to dissuade those perpetrating inhumane activities for fear that it prevents the delivery of relief items to those who desperately need it, compromises or even distorts the humanitarian imperative. On the flip side are there are those who argue that the essence of humanitarianism and humanitarian action requires agencies to strenuously avoid taking sides.

Brubacher[28] asserts that there needs to be agencies who are willing and able to provide relief activities in the harshest of environments and whose legitimacy is protected by an unequivocal commitment to not taking sides in highly charged and dangerous situations. Unless there are agencies that are non-political, Borton[29] argues that the provision of relief items to those caught up in conflict and unable to survive without external assistance can never be assured. This is the position upheld by ICRC, European Commission's Humanitarian Office (ECHO) and Office of the US Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA).

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[27]Tirman J, `The New Humanitarianism: How Military Intervention Becomes the Norm',*Boston Review, December 2003 – January 2004*, 2004, pp. 24 - 27

[28]Brubacher B, `The Moral and Practical Challenge to NGO Neutrality'*, The International NGOs Training and Research Newsletter no. 28,*Intrac, Oxford United Kingdom, 2004, pp 28.1-2

[29]Borton J. E, Brusset and A. Hallam, `International Response to Conflict and Genocide, Lessons from the Rwanda Experience', *Humanitarian Policy Group and Oversees Development Institute*, London, 1996, p.13

Despite the above difference in thought, there are a number of agreements. The UN General Assembly Resolution 46/182[30]has established that in order to promote an ethical framework applicable to all humanitarian aid organizations there are a set of Humanitarian principles that govern humanitarian response. These core principles not only define characteristics, but also conditions for humanitarian response. Organizations such as military forces and profit making companies may deliver assistance to communities affected by disaster in order to save lives and alleviate suffering, but they are not considered by the humanitarian sector as humanitarian agencies as their response is not informed by the core principles.

The principles of humanity, impartiality and neutrality provide the most broadly accepted principles to guide humanitarian action and form the basis of the various codes conduct'[31] that have appeared in the recent years. In addition to the core principles, there is the other principle of proselytism, meaning the provision of aid must not exploit the vulnerability of victims and be used to further political or religious creeds. To Warner[32] these principles are predominantly aimed at convincing the belligerents that all sides are equally entitled to humanitarian assistance and that humanitarian action does not constitute interference in conflict.

The Code of conduct of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies and NGOs in Disaster Relief specifies that the humanitarian imperative is a priority. Terry[33] defines humanitarian imperative declares that there is an obligation to provide humanitarian

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[30]UN General Assembly Resolution 46/182, Op. cit
[31] Ibid
[32] Warner Daniel, `The Politics of the Political/Humanitarian Divide', *International Review of the Red Cross no. 833*, 1999, p. 118
[33]Terry Fiona Op. cit, p. 74

assistance whenever it is needed, and is predicated on the right to receive and to offer humanitarian aid. This privileges the duty to alleviate human suffering over all other considerations. Strict advocates of the right to give and receive humanitarian aid subordinate all other concerns to this fundamental task.

There is also a growing consensus on the fact that humanitarian action ought to be based on the observance of (quality) standards, with the agreement on some specific standards. To Riddel[34], the most significant of these standards include the Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response, Sphere Standards, Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, Humanitarian Accountability Partnership, among others.

Mc Hugh et al, denotes that despite these standards, there is still a general lack of clarity on the boundaries between humanitarian action and development activities (activities which go beyond the immediate saving of life to rehabilitating communities, reconstructing destroyed lives and contributing to rebuilding livelihoods.[35]But perhaps the most difficult is the where the line ought to be drawn between military and humanitarian activities. McHugh et al[36], denotes that a core problem arises when military activity aimed at addressing humanitarian needs is undertaken in a manner that contravenes internationally accepted norms and principles of humanitarian action.

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[34] Roger Riddel, Op. cit, pp. 328 - 329

[35]Buchanan Smith & Fabbri P, *Linking Relief, Rehabilitation and Development, A preliminary review of the debate, 2005,* available at www.alnap.org/tec/pdf/lrrd_tor_annex.pdf (accessed on January 2013)

[36]McHugh G & Gostelow L, `Provincial Reconstruction teams and humanitarian military relations in Afghanistan', *Humanitarian Policy Group and Overseas Development Institute*, London, 2004, p. 17

ALNAP,[37] reports that in terms of saving lives, providing food to those who are hungry; health care and medicines to those vulnerable to acute diseases in emergencies; water, sanitation and shelter to those whose homes are destroyed; convincingly shows that humanitarian action is a resounding success. Each year on average, tens of thousands affected by disasters and emergencies have had their lives saved by the actions of humanitarian agencies. However the overall impact of humanitarian aid is severely impaired by data inadequacies, with three key weaknesses being identified as adversely influencing the impact and reducing effectiveness of the aid provided and the overall humanitarian response.

Borton et al[38] summarizes these as weak coordination of humanitarian activities, insufficient action to protect vulnerable populations and failure of humanitarian activities to effectively contribute to building local capacities.

Conclusively then, though humanitarian aid continues to save lives and alleviate suffering, and help people and communities rebuild their lives, many hundreds of thousands of people in need of life-saving protection remain unprotected and vulnerable to human rights abuses. Consequently, depending on one's assumptions concerning humanitarian action – one could either be broadly happy with, or appalled by, the overall impact of humanitarian action.

1.5.4 Security context for humanitarian aid

Churruca[39] denotes that security is a subjective feeling and as a result relational and relative, implying that it can be felt, indicating an external factor or threat as a source

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[37]ALNAP, ALNAP Review of Humanitarian Action in 2004,*Humanitarian Policy Group and Overseas Development Institute*, London p. 30
[38]Borton J, et al, Op. cit p. 338

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of that feeling. In this sense, security may be viewed as a matter of perception and as a result is an elusive concept. Often, changes in the world have a knock on effect on security issues. These changes can be local or international, and the resulting changes to the status of security then needs to be met with appropriate counter strategies by governments, international organizations, local leaders or individuals in an effort to safeguard themselves.

To Ullman,[40] security itself, when referring to mankind, is simply the preservation of life. This preservation may be understood from a personal, regional or even global context. He further notes that the on-going security debate highlights several threats such as environmental destruction, food and water shortages, threats from terrorist groups and organized crime syndicates. Natural phenomena as population growth and human migration can also pose significant threats to mankind. The many threats to security vary and can directly cause loss of human life and global degradation. Some locations can be described as 'hot spots' as they frequently pose a greater security risk than other areas. Such hot spots exist within the humanitarian space and it is these locations that require carefully formulated security strategies in an effort to preserve the lives of humanitarian aid staff. Global and regional issues can affect security within the humanitarian space making this environment a fragile and unpredictable workspace.[41]

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[39]Churruca, C, `Human Security as a Policy Framework: Critics and Challenges', *Year book of humanitarian action and human rights,* No. 4, 2007, pp. 15-35.
[40]Ullman, R, *Redefining security*, International security, vol.8, no. 1, 1983, pp. 129-153
[41]Ibid

Humanitarian aid workers carry out their duties in high-risk environments and frequently within the global hot spots of insecurity. Bourguignon[42]summarizes the potential threats to humanitarian aid workers as being in the categories of environmental, political and economic threats. Environmental threats include both incidental threats, the so-called collateral damage incurred from operating in unstable and violent contexts, and parasitic threats, where aid workers are targeted for their economic assets – in common crimes or via extortion, for instance; with regards to political threats, aid workers may become either a principal or an associated political target for armed groups. Principal political targeting involves attacks on aid operations and workers to block or divert the delivery of aid to certain groups, or to exact punishment for that delivery. This includes 'terrorist'- type attacks on aid workers designed to send a message, to disrupt stability and normality, to sow fear or to undermine trust in the current authority. Associated political targeting refers to attacks on aid operations and workers for their perceived allegiance to, participation in or non-differentiation from an enemy political agenda; and with regards to economic threats and targeting, a rise in general criminality in many developing countries has been observed since the mid- 1990s. Some have attributed this to increasing inequality and the potentially destabilising effects of globalisation.

1.5.5 Approaches and strategies for management of security in humanitarian aid

Faced with insecure operating environments that limit access to populations in need, humanitarian actors have had to develop and employ differing approaches and

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[42]Bourguignon, F, *Crime As a Social Cost of Poverty and Inequality: A Review Focusing on Developing Countries,* in S. Yussuf,S. Evenett and W. Wu (eds) *Facets of Globalization: International and Local Dimensions of Development,* Washington DC: World Bank, 2001, p.16

security strategies for service delivery. Stoddard et al[43], report that a strategy of the security triangle paradigm of acceptance, protection and deterrence has become and is still taken as the conceptual basis for aid organizational security protocol. The idea of `acceptance' in the security triangle has closeness to the humanitarian principles whereas the protection and deterrence elements greatly compromise the principles. As a result organizations adopting this security triangle strategy that have very strong principles and are committed to them attempt to focus heavily on acceptance as a means of security. Acceptance as a principle of security is generally favoured by many NGO's including the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement.[44] By cultivating relations with the local population and gaining their trust the desire is to obtain general acceptance within the target community, which is an ideal security method. Acceptance is the backbone of security with a development mandate, which implies a lasting relationship between the humanitarian organization and the beneficiary. According to Martin,[45] in today's environment most security managers deny that acceptance is a viable security strategy. For acceptance to be truly successful as a security strategy an organization often requires being in a location for a long period of time. This is not always possible, for example in the case of a new and sudden emergency. In this context the pressures on staff to get programmes up and running often limit their ability to involve the local community and thus reduces acceptance as a reliable security method. Martin[46] further notes that in

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[43]Stoddard, Harmer, A. and Didomenico, V, Providing aid in insecure environments, Trends in violence against aid workers and the operational response, *Humanitarian Policy Group and Overseas Development Institute Document*, 2009, p. 17
[44] `Stay safe*', The International federations guide to a safe mission,* ICRC, 2007.
[45]Martin, R. (1999) 'NGO field security', *Forced Migration Review*, Oxford, United Kingdom, vol. 4, pp. 4-7
[46]Ibid

environments where non-state actors and criminals are rampant, for example Somalia, comprehensive dialogue with all parties is virtually impossible and as a result the threat cannot be softened and humanitarian organizations have to look beyond acceptance and incorporate other security strategies such as protection and deterrence - the other two sides of the security triangle.

Protection as a strategy to provide security to aid staff within the humanitarian space has the function of reducing the vulnerability of organizations as a whole. This strategy does not address the threat but rather hardens the target. The elements of protection can be easily analyzed under three headings; Protection devices, organizational policies and procedures and coordinated operations. Protection devices are the materials needed for security and include thick-skinned vehicles, body armour/flack jackets, gates, alarms and barbed wire, communications equipment and explosive proof materials. Organizational policies and procedures are staff and operational guidelines of good practice and include staff, financial, visitor and vehicle policies, curfews and no-go zones, security training, and convoy operations protocol. The coordinated operations consist of collaborative convoy activities, integrated communications, monitoring and community policing, and active coordination with the United Nations. Bratant[47] reports that these strategies, acceptance and protection are about softening the threat and protecting against the threat but when this does not suffice the strategy of deterrence may be employed.

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[47]Van Brabant, K., 1997, 'Security Guidelines: No Guarantee for Improved Security*', Humanitarian Exchange, Issue no. 7,* Overseas development Institute (ODI), London, 1997, 23

Willitts[48]reports that deterrence presents a counter threat such as employing armed guards or establishing close proximity to a military compound. This strategy also includes arrest, fines, international sanctions and even trial by international tribunals. Basically this form of security has implications on those presenting the threat. Although high gates and armed guards are not as preferable a means of security for a humanitarian organization as acceptance, many humanitarian organizations insist that they have no option other than withdraw aid altogether. As a result varying measures have been taken including employing private security companies and operating remote management operations.

Willits[49]points to another prominent security strategy involving international staff working at a distance from the affected area and increasing reliance on national staff or partner organizations in order to maintain operations. It is a system whereby local staff or partner organisations manage the projects while receiving directions either from a distance or from behind a fortified security compound wall.

Conclusively, it can be said that the ever-growing changes in the security situation today, present issues in the humanitarian space and ability to operate. All the security strategies that are emerging go a long way in counteracting these emerging threats.

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[48]Willitts-King, B, `Background Paper on Remote Control Programming and Localisation in Insecure Environments, *Humanitarian Policy Group and Overseas Development Institute,* Center on International Cooperation, New York University, 2006, p. 23
[49]Ibid

1.5.6 Remote Management of Humanitarian Aid

Bryony[50]understands remote management as an operational response that involves the drastic reduction of international staff field presence in humanitarian aid operations due to security threats. This form of operation implies an implementation of projects by national actors while key decision making processes are maintained by international actors, this at different levels of partnership and cooperation. The levels of humanitarian access in the field varies: five levels of remote management ranging from regular but limited access, irregular access to no access at all have been identified.

In the context of conflict, humanitarian organizations are concerned that their ability to deliver humanitarian assistance is shrinking. While they would like to make a different for the affected populations on ground, access to the intended beneficiaries and locations is affected by various issues as categorized as (i) Security threats (criminal attacks, kidnapping, political motivated attacks….) (ii) Bureaucratic restrictions in affected countries (Influencing of programmes, Visa and travel restrictions, Imposed taxes, fees, etc); and (iii) Indirect constraints (Donor regulations, Politicization of aid, Terrorism legislations, Internal security rules…). Due to the lack of any practical alternative to provision of humanitarian services, the organizations resort to remote management to comply with the humanitarian imperative. Remote management entails the outsourcing of aid delivery to local partners and/or national/local staff. This includes the transfer of managerial and monitoring responsibilities that relate to information and data on the needs of the affected populations, implementation, monitoring and reporting.

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[50]Norman, Bryony. *Monitoring and Accountability Practices for Remotely Managed Projects Implemented in Volatile Operating Environments.Study*, Teddington: Tearfund, 2012, p.32

Lacking alternatives to security management, humanitarian agencies have the option to withdraw or suspend programmes, or even hire armed protection. Some agencies are however, faced with the pressure to stay in an operational context, both a perceived political pressure from donors, and an internal pressure to work in environments where international support to the beneficiaries is vital - and donor financing is readily available. Stoddard[51] reports that to deal with the situation in the high conflict and security risk environments, organizations shift to remote management a terminology that refers to different strategies employed by humanitarian aid agencies to reach the vulnerable populations. These strategies include distance management, long arm programming, remote control, remote support, partnership, cross-border, one-off operations, hit and run, aid on the run, give and go, or window of opportunity.

Despite this variety in terminology, the actual practice of remote management generally has one common goal: to ensure that aid continues to reach the beneficiary population despite security or access constraints. The practice involves largely international staff acting as key decision-makers, designing and programming the humanitarian response at a distance from the crisis-affected area, or in some cases outside the country in question. The national staff in such cases takes increased responsibility, or in some cases it reflects a shift to working with local partner organisations, local authorities, private contractors and community-based organisations.

Practically, 'long arm programming' was mainly used by agencies conducting operations in Somalia in the early 1990s and in Afghanistan in the late 1990s. Quick runs

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[51]Stoddard A., Harner A. & Haber K. `Providing Aid in Insecure Environments: Trends in Policy and Operations',*Humanitarian Policy Group and Overseas Development Institute*, London, United Kingdom, 2006, p. 38

– 'hit and run' and 'aid on the run' – were used during Operation Lifeline Sudan in southern Sudan during the late 1990s. One of Oxfam GB's earliest responses, to the droughts in Bihar, India, in 1951, was through local partners and had some elements of the type of programming that is evident today in conflict affected environments.

Practically, Stoddard[52] highlights Cross-border programming that was used in Ethiopia and Eritrea in the 1980s. For aid agencies in Afghanistan in the 1980s and 1990s, low visibility and increased reliance on local staff and partnering with local agencies were widespread both during the mujahideen and the Taliban periods.[53] Many agencies have used several of these techniques for a number of years in, Chechnya, Somalia, and Northern Uganda. From 2004, driven mainly by experiences in Iraq, the approach gained recognition as a new strategy for service delivery in insecure environments.[54]

Remote control' has been used in Iraq (where programmes have been managed from neighbouring Jordan) and northern Uganda. In contexts as diverse as northern Uganda, Chechnya, Somalia, Afghanistan, Iraq, northern Pakistan, Aceh in Indonesia and Sudan, various forms of remote control approaches have been implemented. These have ranged from short missions to the affected area to handing over programmes to national staff, to working with local partners, the local community, local or national government authorities or private contractors.

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[52] Stoddard, Abby and Harmer, Adele, `Room to Manoeuvre: Challenges of Linking Humanitarian Action and Post-Conflict Recovery in the New Global Security Environment', *Human Development Report: Occasional Paper no. 23*, United Nations, New York, 2005, p. 9.

[53]KarimFarahnaz, `Providing Aid in Insecure Environments: Trends and Policies in Policy and Operations: Afghanistan Background paper', *Humanitarian Policy Group and Overseas Development Institute*, London, 2006, p. 65

[54]Laurence, C. & Poole, L,`Service delivery in difficult environments: Transferable approaches from the humanitarian community',*Humanitarian Policy Group and Overseas Development Institute,* London, 2005, p.23

Management of humanitarian aid from a remote distance is therefore a strategy used by humanitarian aid organizations to ensure humanitarian assistance continues to reach populations in need despite the contextual challenges posed by conflict and insecurity.

1.5.7 Literature Summary

Based on the literature above, it is noted that humanitarian organizations face contextual risks in their day to day management of emergency assistance to civilians and vulnerable populations affected in high conflict and security risk environments. The risks do not allow the organizations to undertake humanitarian aid using the traditional approaches thus the shift to remote management, an operational response to security threats to international staff. While remote management has been applied purely as a temporary measure while awaiting an improvement in the operational context, most organizations in conflict and security affected environments continue to apply the modality to the extent that it is becoming almost a standard operating procedure.

The literature however does not provide information on the efficacy or viability of the remote management practise with regards to the acceptable humanitarian management practise. There is no literature on remote management with regards to the humanitarian principles, accountability and quality management. This study thus seeks to assess the viability of remote management in humanitarian aid.

1.6 Hypothesis

H₁ Increased use of remote management increases the efficiency and effectiveness of humanitarian aid.

H₀ Remote management does not affect the efficiency and effectiveness of humanitarian aid.

H₂ Increased used of remote management reduces the efficiency and effectiveness of humanitarian aid.

1.7 Theoretical Framework

Edwards[55] asserts that remote management of humanitarian aid is a product of the theory of obligation, which is centered on one foundational assumption: that there exists a moral imperative to assist the structurally dispossessed and functionally abused. Donelly[56] defines the moral imperative to assist others has been codified in international human rights laws which have been widely ratified and have garnered global attention and support. Edwards[57] reports that the theory of obligation has two major components: a moral/ethical element which informs decisions as to which issues are appropriate for humanitarianism and which actions are morally permissible in pursuing them; and a pragmatic element which guides us in evaluating the most effective use of available resources. Edwards[58] expounds that the moral component of a theory of obligation can be further broken down into four constituent parts: burden sharing, personal responsibility and institutional accountability, sympathy and compassion, and non-neutrality.

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[55]Edwards, Carolyn Pope, *Rationality, Culture, and the Construction of "Ethical Discourse:" A Comparative Perspective*, Ethos vol. 13(4), 1985, pp. 318-339.
[56]Donnelly Jack, `Human Rights' *in* John Dryzek, Bonnie Honig and Anne Phillips eds. In *Oxford Handbook of Political Theory*, Oxford University Press, 2006, p. 56
[57]Donelly Jack, et al, Op. cit, p. 56
[58] Edwards Carolyn, Op. cit, pp 318-339

Prendergast[59] reports that despite risks seen in conflict affected environments, humanitarians (both practitioners and agencies) admit to a moral obligation to aid the dispossessed and disadvantaged, concurrently admitting to the existence of the burden that they have to carry in such circumstances. In this sense, the burden is the positive load that stimulates response to people in need. Based on this, humanitarians only have an option regarding which type of assistance to offer, not whether we will offer assistance at all despite the risks they face.

Humanitarian agencies as the structures providing aid on the ground must be held accountable for policies and their effects, intended or not in a remote management situation. Burton[60] states that accountability relates to the actual attainment of pre-defined institutional goals. The question of who the institutions are accountable to is currently a subject that is much talked about. Nicholas[61] clarifies that it is broadly agreed that humanitarian aid organizations, across the board, are primarily accountable to aid recipients, to the people on whose lives they have the greatest impact and for whom their services are intended. Smillie[62] supports this view, reiterating that this is also, in part, due to the "obligation" inherent in the theory of obligation: if they acknowledge a moral obligation to aid the disadvantaged, then beneficiaries become the "ultimate arbiters".

In terms of the material component, Edward[63] discerns that of the theory of obligation, there are three constituent parts: pragmatism, felt needs, and the networks of

[59]Prendergast John, *Frontline Diplomacy: Humanitarian Aid and Conflict in Africa,* Boulder, CO. Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1996, p. 63

[60]Borton John, Op. cit, p. 23

[61]Kristof, Nicholas, `Aid: Can It Work?'*New York Review of Books, vol. 53 no. 15, 2006,* pp. 41-44.

[62]Smillie, Ian and Larry Minear, *The Charity of Nations: Humanitarian Action in a Calculating World,* Bloomfield, CT: Kumerian Press, 2004, pp. 18-21

[63]Edwards Carolyn, Op. cit, pp. 318-339

service providers and associated infrastructure. It is of primary importance to recognize the need for pragmatism**:** the acknowledgment of real-world conditions that constrain actions and impact the results of those actions, coupled with the acceptance of the idea that the value of ideas and actions is found in their real-world consequences. As it is obviously physically impossible to resolve every humanitarian issue at once, setting realistic, achievable goals that can be met "on the ground" is vital. The assessment of the felt needs of intended beneficiaries is a key component of a theory of obligation. Central to this is the assumption that the needs and interests of the beneficiaries are of greater importance, regardless of the contextual risks. This is the cornerstone of the humanitarian imperative.

In a conflict affected environments, Verdirame[64] says it is difficult to ensure a working network of service providers and associated infrastructure to enable aid provision, yet these networks are an integral part of the local context that structures humanitarian action.

In many humanitarian situations, and especially in conflict affected situations, there are a multiplicity of aid organizations, governmental actors, belligerent groups and local actors that form a complex web of service providers and service obstructers. The theory of obligation is useful as it ensures the humanitarian imperative and that humanitarians engage in non-neutral activities, do not treat those being served as "the other" and mandates fairness in the accessing of resources and the distributing of assistance.

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[64]Verdirame, Guglielmo and Barbara Harrell-Bond, *Rights in Exile: Janus-Faced Humanitarianism*. New York, Berghahn Books, 2005, p. 8

1.8 Research Methodology and Design

The proposed study was undertaken using the quantitative and qualitative methodologies. Considering that remote management is a phenomenon still undergoing metamorphosis, and with no standard operational procedures, qualitative research methodology gave room for collection of a comprehensive list of features of the modality as it is currently practiced, and the analysis of the practice with regards to good humanitarian management. The quantitative methodology shall be undertaken using the Likert scale.

The researcher used both descriptive and exploratory study methodologies. The exploratory research was utilized to provide the basic facts about remote management, the different applications, the triggers, the risks and good practices. This choice of the design was based on the need to have an open and flexible platform for diverse perspectives in the information collected since remote management as a modality is not yet clearly defined or with standard operating procedures. The descriptive research was used to examine the situation as it is, and yielded quantitative information that that has been summarized through statistical analyses and categorized according to the different common themes.

1.8.1 Sampling Design

The researcher employed the non-probability sampling method of purposive or judgmental sampling because the sample selection was based on the research objectives, context and practitioners. Specifically, the researcher undertook a snowball sampling

process, which Goodman[65]defines as a non-probability sampling technique where existing study subjects recruit future subjects from among their acquaintances. The researcher identified her acquaintances in the humanitarian networks within the specific contexts and relied on referrals from these acquaintances to other subjects. The first group of acquaintances were identified through a convenience sampling methodology, due to the risky nature of the contexts and information the study is expected to elucidate. The acquaintances supported to set up meetings (through skype or telephone) with the local staff, partner representatives and beneficiaries for purposes of discussions on the subject.

1.8.2 Data Collection Tools and Instruments

Undertaking a research in uncertain, turbulent, fluid and insecure environments definitely poses challenges in data collection, mainly due to issues of proximity, access and security. The researcher undertook a desk review of documentations on the remote management from seminars, workshops and presentations; a questionnaire was administered to through an online software platform using the lime survey instrument; key informant interviews through face to face interactions, telephone and skype interviews selected based on the type of organizations, their experience in humanitarian programming in conflict affected environments. All the interviews were conducted on a not-for-attribution basis, and the report refrains from naming specific countries, organizations in terms of their policies, practices, and experiences with remote management. This was done out of consideration for on-going security and

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[65]Goodman, Leo A, `The Annals of Mathematics statistics', *Journal of Mathematics, vol. 32, no. 1*, 1961, pp. 148-170.

confidentiality concerns of the subjects. Finally, the researcherundertook focusgroup discussions with groups through direct face to face and third party. Some discussions and interviews were undertaken through phone or Skype discussions.

1.8.3 Data Analysis and Interpretation

The data analysis was done using both qualitative and quantitative approaches. The data was coded using thematic analysis, ensuring the themes and indicators that are causally related. The themes were drawn from the principles of good humanitarian management, and the specific indicators humanitarian practitioners identify to the principles. From each interview, the responses related to the same topic were grouped and summarized to reflect the patterns of description and understanding in remote management.

1.9 Chapter Summary

The project report is organized in five chapters.

Chapter one: Remote management of humanitarian aid

This chapter provides the introduction and background of the study by contextualizing the research problem and justification of the study. The chapter identifies the objectives of the study and outlines the hypotheses that the study intends to test. It also presents the literature review, theoretical framework and the methodology of the study.

Chapter two: Conceptualizing remote management

This chapter presents a conceptual analysis of remote management of humanitarian aid. The chapter defines the terms `remote' and `management' in their own aspects, and then goes further to define remote management and contextualize it to

humanitarian aid. The chapter goes further to conceptualize humanitarian management and the different aspects related to its management as quality, accountability and principles. To augment the little academic documentation of remote management in humanitarian aid, the chapter further discusses the characteristics, issues and trends so far seen in the application of the remote management approach to humanitarian aid.

Chapter three: Characteristics and issues in remote management of humanitarian aid

The chapter provides the characteristics and issues in remote management of humanitarian aid. The chapter provides the primary information relating to the basis for its application, the modes and styles applied by humanitarian organizations and the justification for the same, emerging issues in remote management, and innovative approaches developed by the humanitarian organizations to ensure principled and accountable humanitarian aid.

Chapter four: The practical application of remote management in humanitarian aid

This chapter discerns the findings of the research based on the information drawn from the literature review, conceptual framework, issues and characteristics derived from primary data using the thematic, descriptive and statistical information drawn from the research findings, the chapter describes remote management, relating these practical applications to the concrete features described in the conceptual framework. The chapter further analyses remote management with regards to the moral, practical and material imperatives of humanitarian aid

Chapter five: Findings and conclusion

The chapter provides the summary of key findings and analyses the same in relation to the objectives of the study, hypothesis and theoretical framework. The chapter

confirms the hypotheses and draws a conclusion on remote management of humanitarian aid, further identifying other areas of research.

CHAPTER TWO

Conceptualizing Remote Management

2.1 Introduction

This chapter presents a conceptual analysis of remote management of humanitarian aid. The chapter defines the concept of `remote' as the ability to manage and control actions from a distance, that is, without being physically attached to the actual unit being controlled. The chapter also defines the concept of `management' as the act of coordinating the efforts of the people to accomplish desired goals and objectives using available resources efficiently and effectively.

The chapter defines remote management and contextualizes it to humanitarian aid as an operational response to security threats to staff and particularly to international staff that involves the drastic reduction of staff presence, more specifically international field staff presence in humanitarian aid provision in conflict affected environments. To augment the limited literature on the concepts, the chapter presents some of the trends in the practise of remote management in the countries affected by conflict.

2.2 The Concept of Remote

Webster[1] defines the term remote as something situated far away. In this sense, the concept of remote is viewed in terms of distance in terms of space. It identifies the act of being situated far away, or being operated or controlled from a distance. The term refers to a phenomenon of being located far away spatially (distant lands), located at a great distance in time or space or degree or separate or apart in time (distant events), having very little physical connection with or relationship to.

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[1]Websters Online Dictionary with Multilingual Thesaurus Translation

Certain concepts have been associated with the term `remote'. These include concepts like remote sensing, remote control, remote working, just to mention but a few. For Eric[2] remote sensing encompasses observation of objects from a distance. It is a scientific and technological methodology used to map the structure and geometrical properties of the ground. With remote sensing, it is possible to measure the gradual changes of the environment, on both the regional and global scales. Tueller[3] supports this view noting that `remote sensing is the acquisition of information concerning an object or phenomenon without physical contact. Eric[4] adds to his definition the technique of obtaining information about objects through the analysis of data collected by special instruments that are not in physical contact with the objects of investigation. As such, remote sensing in this sense relates to "reconnaissance from a distance," "teledetection," or a form of the common adage of being able to look without touching. Remote sensing thus differs from in situ sensing, where the instruments are immersed in, or physically touch, the objects of measurement. Within the above definitions, remote sensing brings the aspects of observation from a distance, acquisition of information on an object without being in physical contact with it, and ability to view without touching.

Tueller[5] acknowledges that the scope of remote sensing has been recently broadened to include acoustical or sound energy under water. With the inclusion of these two different forms of energy, the human eye and ear are examples of remote sensing

[2] Eric Dyring, `The principles of remote sensing', *Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences* vol. 2 no. 3, 1973 pp. 57-69
[3] Tueller P. T, `Remote Sensing technology for Rangeland Management Application',*Journal of Rangeland Management*, vol 42, no. 6 , 1989, pp. 442 - 453
[4] Eric Dyring Op. cit, pp. 57-69
[5] Tueller P. T, Op. cit pp. 442-453

data collection devices. The instruments used for this special technology are known as remote sensors and include photographic cameras, mechanical scanners, and imaging radar systems. Regardless of type, they are designed to both collect and record specific types of energy that impinges upon them.

Eric[6] reports that remote sensing devices can be differentiated in terms of whether they are active or passive. Active systems, such as radar and sonar, beam artificially produced energy to a target and record the reflected component. Passive systems, including the photographic camera, detect only energy emanating naturally from an object, such as reflected sunlight or thermal infrared emissions. Today, remote sensors, excluding sonar devices, are typically carried on aircraft and earth-orbiting spacecraft, which has led to the familiar phrase "eye in the sky." Sonar systems propagate acoustical energy through water for the reconnaissance of subaqueous features. To complete the remote sensing process, the data captured and recorded by remote sensing systems must be analyzed by interpretive and measurement techniques in order to provide useful information about the subjects of investigation. These techniques are diverse, ranging from traditional methods of visual interpretation to methods using sophisticated computer processing. It cannot be emphasized too strongly that data is not information. Accordingly, the two major components of remote sensing are data capture and data analysis.

Konellos[7]introduces the concept of remote control, which he definesas a component of an electronic device, used for operating them wirelessly from a short line

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[6]Eric Dyring, Op. cit, pp. 57- 69
[7]Kanellos, Michael, *Space-age remote control coming in 2007*, http://news.cnet.com/Space-age-remote-control-coming-in-2007/2100-1041_3-6133784.html, Accessed on 20th August 2013 , 2006, p.37

of sight distance. Remote control has evolved and advanced over recent years to include Bluetooth connectivity, motion sensor-enabled capabilities and voice control. Freeman[8] confirms this indicating that commonly, remote controls are used to issue commands from a distance to televisions or other consumer electronics such as stereo systems, DVD players and dimmers.

Remote controls therefore have a programmed ability to control equipment like a computer system from a distant location, either under the control of an administrator or at the request of the user. In remote control, only keystrokes and screen updates are transmitted between the two machines as all processing originates in the remote-control device. Remote control is a technology used mainly to control machines without actual physical contact with the machine in question. This is done via computer applications whereby the operator is situated offsite and uses software to monitor and control machines using video technology.

Mark[9] adds that remote control devices are usually small wireless handheld objects with an array of buttons for adjusting various settings such as television channel, track number, and volume. The remote allowed audiences, for the first time, to interact with their TV without touching it.

In fact, for the majority of modern devices with this kind of control, the remote control contains all the function controls while the controlled device itself has only a handful of essential primary controls. Radio remote control (RF remote control) is used to control distance objects using a variety of radio signals transmitted by the remote control

[8]Freeman, William, Weissman, Craig, `Television control by hand gestures', *Mitsubishi Electric Research Laboratories*, 1995, p.51
[9]Wilson, Mark ,*The Loop Controls Your TV*,Gizmodo, Columbia, 2009, p21

device. As a complementary method to infrared remote controls, the radio remote control is used with electric garage door or gate openers, automatic barrier systems, burglar alarms and industrial automation systems. Remote control is used for controlling substations, pump storage power stations and HVDC plants. For these systems often PLC-systems working in the long wave range are used.

Tueller[10] introduces the concept of remote working, which he defines for employees, as any work completed away from an employer's place of business. For the self-employed, freelancers, and other business owners it is defined as any work completed away from their formal office or customer site. The broad definition of remote working is the ability to choose when and where you work. This could be from a home office, coffee shop, couch, beach, airplane, or wherever you choose. It could be in the morning, afternoon, evening, or middle of the night. It could be in your home city or on the other side of the globe. It is essentially the freedom to choose the time and location where you work. Our definition of remote working also includes part time or full time. It could be one day a week, two days a week, or all week. The location and quantity is less important than freedom of location, which is the key.

Staples et al,[11] describe the structure of remote working as consisting of individuals working towards a common goal, but without centralized buildings, physical plant or other characteristics of a traditional organization. Hill et al[12] assert that remote

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[10]Tueller P. Op. cit. pp. 442 - 453
[11]Staples S, Hulland J. S. & Higgins C. A, A Self Efficacy Theory Explanation for the Management of Remote Workers in Virtual Organizations, *Institute for Operations Research and the Management Sciences*, vol 10. no. 6 Special Issue Communication process, 1999, pp. 758 - 776
[12]Hill T.N. D Smith M F & Mann, Role of Efficacy Expectations in predicting the decision to used advanced technologies, *Applied Psychology* 72 1987, pp. 307-314

employees enjoy considerable work autonomy in a virtual organization, but must rely on their own abilities to carry out and complete various tasks.

Hill et al,[13]further identifies key drivers to effective remote work as including: (i)information technology allowing organizations to establish virtual arrangements that permit greater employee flexibility without sacrificing managerial control and that facilitate communication, (ii) effective communication between the manager and the employee, (iii) experience and training with remote management and remote working arrangements, (iv) effective management practices, including the establishment of realistic expectations about the amount of face to face time that will be available, and (v) the setting of performance expectations. To Staples, effectiveness of remote work is therefore represented by a number of outcomes, including work attitudes (e.g. job satisfaction, organizational commitment) and behaviours (e.g. performance and job stress).[14]

From the various definitions and application of the term remote to describe situations, similar features identified is the ability to manage and control from a distance, that is without being physically attached to the actual unit being controlled. The aspect of this management includes communication, level of control, remote operator and ability to perform. The primary reasons for implementing a remote management system are to ensure productivity regardless of physical distance and contact.

2.3 Concept of Management

The term 'management' encompasses an array of different functions undertaken to accomplish a task successfully. In the simplest form, management is about 'getting

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[13]Hill T.N. et al, Op. cit, pp. 307-314
[14]Staples S, et al, Op. cit, pp. 758 - 776

things done'. In this sense, management refers to the process of how one achieves one's target or goals, and in that respect management is an art and a science. According to Follet,[15] management as an art of getting things is done through people. This thinking is reinforced by Koontz,[16] who adds to this definition the aspect of organization. Drucker[17] moving away from processes, sees management as "supplying knowledge to current situations in a manner that produces best results. For him `management is a multi-purpose activity involving management of business, management of managers, management of workers and management of work'.[18] In synthesis therefore, is both creative and systematic. It involves the flow of knowledge to produce results by using human being and other resources.

Heimann[19] on his part examines management from different perspectives, viz. as a noun referring to a group of managers; as a process referring to the functionality, thus the planning, organising, directing, controlling, etc. In terms of these functions, he identifies some characteristics of management practice. In this sense, management is undertaken by a group or a team not an individual affair, that follows laid down rules and heavily relies on human resources. Thus management is aided but not replaced by computers. For it to succeed, management relies on flexibility this adjusting to situations. It applies a professional approach to accomplish its task; and is dynamic in nature, i.e. it keeps changing and getting better.

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[15] Mary Parker Follet, *Dynamic Administration: The collected papers of Mary Parker Follet: Early Sociology of Management and organizations,* Vol. 3, L. Urwick (Editor), Taylor and Francis, New York. 2003, p. 55
[16] Harold Koontz, `The Management Theory Jungle',*The Academy of Management Review*, vol. 5 no. 2 1961, pp. 175 - 187
[17] Peter Drucker, *The Practise of Management*, Harper Collins Publishers Ltd, Harvard, 1945, pp. 18
[18] Ibid.p. 22
[19] Haimann Theo, *Management*, Houghton Mifflin Publishers, Boston, 1989, p. 54

In terms of approaches, Fayol[20] argues that there are two, industrial organization approach which is informed by economic theory. This approach deals with competitive rivalry, resource allocation and economies of scale, and is pegged to rationality, self-interest, and profit maximization. The Sociological approach deals with human interactions. Its basis is rationality for satisfying behavior and profit sub-optimality.

Based on the above, management can be generally defined in all business and organizational activities as the act of coordinating the efforts of the people to accomplish desired goals and objectives using available resources efficiently and effectively. It comprises planning, organizing, staff, leading or directing and controlling an organization (a group of one or more people or entities) or effort for the purposes of accomplishing a goal. Resourcing encompasses the deployment and manipulation of human resources, financial resources, technological resources and natural resources.

2.4 Conceptualizing Remote Management in Humanitarian Aid

From the above discussion, conceptualization of the term `remote management' can be used to refer to the configuration of a device from a location other than where that device is located. This can be in terms of Web Interface that allows the user to configure the router's settings. Remote management can be enabled to allow an administrator to control these settings from another network (another location). Remote management can also apply to printers, office equipment, and internet-enabled refrigerators, just to name a few.

Even though little academic documentation has been done on the subject of remote management in the context of humanitarian aid, studies by the Humanitarian

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[20] Henri Fayol, *General and Industrial Management*, (Revised by Irwin Gray), IEEE Press, U.S.A 1984, p. 36

Policy Group in 2006[21] identifies that remote management approaches in humanitarian aid generally fall into the categories of off-site programming, distance management, long arm programming, remote control, remote support or the increasingly preferred term 'partnership'; and cross-border or one-off operations, described in the past as 'hit and run', 'aid on the run', 'give and go', or 'window of opportunity'.

Hansen[22] notes that much of the existing literature distinguishes between a range of different remote management approaches, including 'remote control', 'remote support' and 'remote partnership' and 'limited access programming'. Remote control, denotes a situation where top managers cannot be present in the project implementation area and have been withdrawn due to security concerns, thus local staff implement the activities. Hansen,[23] holds that a form of remote programming may be 'remote control' where an immediate response to security threats whereby international staff are evacuated from the project site, project activities may be scaled down, and where national staff continue to implement the projects. International staff continues to manage the national staff, but from a safe location, which could either be in or out of country. Agencies anticipate that international staff will be able to return to the project at some point in the near future. National staff has limited decision making powers, all decisions are made by the international staff and implemented by the national staff. There is very little capacity building or skills transfer to national staff.

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[21]Stoddard A, Harner A & Haber K, `Providing Aid in Insecure Environments: Trends in Policy and Operations', *Humanitarian Policy group and Overseas Development Institute*, London, United Kingdom 2006, p. 38

[22]Hansen, G, 2008,`Adapting to insecurity in Iraq. Focus on operationality. Briefing Paper 1. *Series of Briefing Papers on NGOs' and others' humanitarian operational modalities in Iraq.1-6. NCCI*. Retrieved from http:// www.eisf.eu/resources/item.asp? p. 77

[23] Ibid

Guillemois[24]denotes that remote partnership is a situation whereby the humanitarian agency contracts another organization to implement the activities, but monitor through local staff. Remote management is 'remote partnership' which is evident when at least two organisations come together, each contributing particular resources to the relationship in order to tackle a problem or issue, and where one of the organisations does not have key staff in the country of operation, or when the key staff are unable to access all areas of operation. This strategy was used for example in South East Afghanistan which is a particularly insecure area, and there have been a number of incidents where NGOs, both international and national, have been deliberately targeted. NGO offices were bombed and shelled, convoys were ambushed, thefts occurred, death threats were issued, humanitarian personnel were shot at and threatened and a number were killed (both national and international). As a consequence of this insecurity there were very few NGOs operating in the area, despite the fact that there were significant humanitarian needs. Also donors were hesitant to finance projects in this area because of the insecurity.

Guillemois[25] further defines remote support as a situation where main offices are manned by senior managers but activities are run by local staff without access by senior management. This can be through field offices or directly from the main office. In Hansen's[26] view Remote support is the most durable, shockproof, sustainable, developmental, effective and appropriate way of providing assistance, in highly insecure environments. The approach assumes that there will be a hand over of decision making

[24]David Guillemois, 2012, NGO Safety Programme, `*Operational guide to set up International NGO in Somalia'*, 2012, p.22
[25]David Guillemois, Op. cit, p. 22
[26]Hansen, G, Op. cit, p. 77

and responsibilities from international to national staff, with internationals providing support and advice, whilst the national staff decide what needs to be done. There is a high degree of investment in the capacity building of the national staff to ensure that they have the required skills to take on the management of the projects.

While categorisation and definitions still vary from agency to agency, most organisations accept 'remote management' as common parlance. The Humanitarian Department of the European Commission[27] combines all these terminologies and defines them as remote management `an operational approach used to provide relief in situations where humanitarian access to disaster affected populations is limited. It involves humanitarian aid management with reduced organizational and international staff presence, and a reliance on other means to provide humanitarian aid. In the Danish Refugee Council (DRC),[28] remote management is considered so when senior managers of an operation are temporarily based in a location away from the area of implementation without access at will. This is different from the regular management mode in DRC where senior managers are on location to plan, supervise and monitor the activities, or if they are not in place permanently they can at least monitor at will. In this definition, DRC indicates that temporary relocation of managers from their base, or when senior managers are able to get short term or tourist visas to visit the operational area, these situations would not be considered remote management.

Remote management is therefore defined as an operational response to security threats to staff and particularly to international staff. It involves the drastic reduction of

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[27]Instruction note for ECHO Staff on Remote Management, 2012, http://www.dgecho-partners-helpdesk.eu/_media/remote_management Accessed on April 3, 2013

[28]*Draft paper on Remote Management*, Danish Refugee Council, Copenhagen, 2013, p. 3

staff presence, more specifically international field staff presence. This form of operation implies an implementation of projects by national actors while key decision making processes are maintained by international actors, this at different levels of partnership and cooperation. The levels of humanitarian access in the field varies: five levels of remote management ranging from regular but limited access, irregular access to no access at all have been identified.[29]

2.5 Good Practice in Humanitarian Aid Management

Humanitarian aid management encompasses constraints, or things that individuals and governments must not do, and obligations, or things that they should do. Shue[30] reports that IHL imposes limits on permissible behaviour during conflict; human rights law sets the minimum standards to which individuals are entitled by virtue of their membership in humanity; and humanitarian action seeks to restore some of the rights when individuals are deprived of them by circumstance. Hence the duty to provide humanitarian assistance occurs only once the duty to avoid depriving and to protect from deprivation has failed to be performed. Governments hold the primary responsibility for the safety and well-being of their citizens, and combatants are obliged by the Geneva Conventions to respect civilian immunity in times of conflict. Humanitarian assistance is necessary only once governments or combatants have been unwilling or unable to shoulder their responsibilities. Responsibility as described above is complex, and According to Bovens[31]this connotes responsibility as task and duty, responsibility as

[29]Norman, Bryony, *Op. cit p.17*
[30]Shue Henry, *Basic rights: Subsistence, Affluence and US Foreign Policy*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, 1996, p. 17
[31]Bovens Mark, *The Quest for Responsibility: Accountability and Citizenship in Complex organizations*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge. 1998, pp. 24 - 25

accountability and liability, virtue in terms of behaviour and causal responsibility for a certain outcome.

Nahikan[32] reports that the growing professionalization of the humanitarian sector and the corresponding accountability deficit is the subject of on-going dialogue among international aid agencies and humanitarian aid workers. At the core of this debate are negative consequences of some humanitarian aid management approaches and the fear of loss of public confidence on which fundraising heavily depends. Several initiatives aimed at increasing accountability to the people in whose name the interventions are done. Humanitarian Accountability Partnership (HAP), the Sphere project, the Active Learning Network for Accountability and Performance in Humanitarian Action (ALNAP), One World Trust Global Accountability Framework, Transparency International Handbook on preventing Corruption in Humanitarian Operations, People in Aid, are among other initiatives started.

2.5.1 Humanitarian Principles

The divergent views on the purpose of humanitarian action have obvious implications for the possibility of promoting an ethical framework that is applicable or acceptable to all aid organizations. Brauman[33] denotes that humanitarian action posits a universal ethic founded on the conviction that all people have equal dignity by virtue of their membership in humanity. In terms of definitions of the key principles, (i) Impartiality implies that assistance is based solely on need, without discrimination among

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[32]Nahikan A, *Challenges of accountability towards beneficiaries in humanitarian relief,* accessed at http://www.alnap.org on September 2012 -09-10
[33]Brauman Rony, `L'assistance humanitaire international, in Monique Canto-Sperber', *Dictionnaire de Philosophie morale et politique*, Presses Universataires de France, 1996, p. 96

recipients because of nationality, race, religion, or other factors[34]; (ii) Neutrality denotes a duty to refrain from taking part in hostilities or from undertaking any action that furthers the interests of one party to the conflict or compromises those of the other;[35] (iii) Independence is an indispensable condition to ensure that humanitarian action is exclusively concerned with the welfare of humanity and free of all political, religious or other extraneous influences; (iv) Humanitarian imperative declares that there is an obligation to provide humanitarian assistance whenever it is needed, and is predicated on the right to receive, and to offer humanitarian aid;[36]

The fundamental principles of humanity, impartiality and neutrality provide the most broadly accepted principles to guide humanitarian action and form the basis of the various codes of conduct; while the humanitarian imperative posits an obligation to the humanitarian practitioners in their internal mode of functioning. In conflict situations where access is limited, humanitarians confront the question of what compromises to accept without risking the long term deterioration of humanitarian principles and minimum operating standards.

2.5.2 Humanitarian Accountability

According to Kogan,[37]accountability refers to a condition under which a role holder renders account to another so that judgment may be made about the adequacy of performance. Learner and Tetlock[38] describe accountability as the implicit and explicit

[34]Warner David, 1999, `The Politics of the Political/Humanitarian Divide', *International Review of the Red Cross 833*, p. 109
[35]ALNAP & URD, *Participation Handbook for Humanitarian field workers*, URD & ALNAP, 2009
[36]Terry Fiona, Op. cit, p. 21
[37]Kogan M, *Education Accountability: An Analytical Review*, London Hitchinson, 1986, p. 67
[38] Learner J. S. & Tetlock, `Accounting for the Effects of Accountability' *Psychological Bulletin*, vol. 125, 1999, pp. 255

expectations that anyone may be called upon to justify one's belief, feelings and actions to others. They equate accountability not only to reporting but also to the justification of performance. According to Samuel[39], accountability refers to holding individuals and organizations responsible for performance, measured as objectively as possible. Ross[40] states that the issue of accountability arises as part of the process of delegation. There is a need for accountability when a principle seeks to get an agent to do something for him or her. The principle gives the agent resources or delegates power for a purpose and wishes to constrain or provide incentives to the agent to provide value for money in the use of the resources. Edwards[41] refers to accountability as the obligation to report one one's activities to a set of legitimate authorities.[42] According to Brown and Moore,[43] accountability should be treated as a key strategic issue that will help an organization to define and achieve its highest value.

The Humanitarian Accountability partnership International[44], defines `accountability' as `the means through which power is used responsibly'. It is a process of taking into account the views of, and being held accountable by, different stakeholders, and primarily the people affected by authority or power. Accountability is particularly necessary for organisations that assist or act on behalf of people affected by or prone to disasters, conflict, poverty or other crises. Such organisations exercise significant power

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[39]Samwel P, `Strengthening Public Service Accountability: A conceptual framework' *World Bank Discussion Papers,* The World Bank, Washington,1991

[40] Ross S, , `The Economic Theory of Agency: The Principle's problem', *American Economic Review* vol. 63 no.2 1993, p. 139

[41] Edwards M, `NGO Rights and Responsibilities, A New Deal for Global Governance', *The Foreign Policy,* Foreign Policy Centre, New York, 2002, p.24

[42] Ibid

[43] Brown D and Moore M, `Accountability, Strategy and International Non-Governmental Organizations', *Hauser Centre for Non-Profit Organizations*, Harvard,2001, p. 79

[44] The 2010 HAP Standard in Accountability and Quality Management, Geneva Switzerland, p. 1

in their work to save lives and reduce suffering. It describes how to establish commitments to accountability and the processes that will deliver quality programmes for the people who experience them first hand.

According to Terry,[45]the Codes of conduct and a Humanitarian Charter deal with the ethical standards; the Sphere Project for Minimum Standards in Disaster Response addresses technical benchmarks for assistance; and the Humanitarian Accountability project aims to be a voice of clients, beneficiaries and claimants of humanitarian assistance. Generally then, the initiatives are aimed at promoting ethical and technical standards in relief efforts and to develop a mechanism through which to ensure there is beneficiaries' feedback. The standards are designed for all those providing, contributing to providing, receiving, observing, assessing and assuring the quality of humanitarian action.

HAP Standards should help the International organisations to assess, improve and recognise the quality and accountability of their work, and benefits both the organizations, stakeholders and the people affected by crises. HAP International[46] has developed clear benchmarks, associated requirements and means of verification, that international organizations are expected to use in assessing their accountability and quality management. The benchmarks include: (i) Establishing and delivering on commitments; (ii) Staff competency; (iii) Sharing information; (iv) Participation; (v) Handling complaints; and (vi) Learning and continual improvement. Due to the fact that in remote management modality, the ability to monitor and evaluate the relevancy,

[45]Terry Fiona, Op. cit, p. 51
[46]HAP 2010, Op. cit, p. 10

quality and impact of projects is a challenge raises the questions of accountability and quality management of the interventions in conflict affected areas.

2.5.3 Humanitarian Quality

The debate over quality management amongst humanitarian players is a long unsolved issue over which no overall consensus has been reached, thatgives rise to various interpretations which are inscribed into different value systems. For the purpose of this report, quality management in humanitarian aid is defined as "degree to which each of the stated results of a project or programme, at the outputs, outcome and impact levels, are being or have been achieved".[47]

A European Commission Humanitarian Conference reported that, quality management began with goods/service certification, and later moved towards process certification, especially management practices, more recently the trend is to obtain an organisation's quality certification (e.g. such as ISO certification), which is supposed to include all of the former based on the merit of its management practices (including approaches and processes) and the goods/services it provides. These are defined by a set of standards that stem from the certifying agency (e.g. ISO standards[48]). Based on the above, a universal definition of Quality has been established by ISO, which describes it as 'the totality of characteristics of an entity that bear on its ability to satisfy stated and implied need'. This definition states that the word 'quality' only makes sense in reference to a whole range of characteristics specific to a certain product or a service. Quality takes different forms according to the specific needs in any given context, and depends on

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[47] Partners' Conference Format following presentation and discussion of the initialdraft report on 13 September 2002 in Brussels
[48]ISO 8402, Op. cit

various factors such as culture, environment and standards of living. It can also be approached from different perspectives and is therefore dependent on a comprehensive understanding of needs.

Quality management is required throughout the project life cycle. The project life cycle refers to a logical sequence of activities to accomplish the project goal, beginning from programming, identification formulation, implementation and evaluation. ALNAP[49] denotes that needs assessment and beneficiary consultation are the main tools within the humanitarian sector for ensuring the relevance and appropriateness of humanitarian aid… If done well, they increase local ownership, accountability and cost effectiveness. In humanitarian settings, the greatest potential for saving lives is normally immediately after the occurrence of a sudden-onset disaster. An ECHO evaluation[50] highlighted the trade-off between the time taken to prepare good quality proposals and the potential for saving lives in a sudden onset disaster. Humanitarian organizations therefore have to balance effective interventions based on good assessments, and rapid interventions that have the greatest potential for saving lives. Riddel[51] asserts that accurate needs assessments require close interaction with the people affected by the particular emergency.

A truly programmatic humanitarian organization must put systems in place to implement, assess and monitor the quality of work and the extent to which humanitarian work is having the intended impact. Implementation requires both management and technical oversight that complies which complies with the relevant humanitarian

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[49]ALNAP, Op. cit, p. 180
[50]Cosgrave J and Nam S, `Evaluation of DG ECHO's Action in Response to the Pakistan Earthquake of 2005', *European Commission Review*, Brussels, 2007, p. 16
[51]Roger Riddel, Op. cit, p. 320

standards. Monitoring and evaluation[52] are interconnected activities with distinct roles. Monitoring is a data collection activity that is done routinely by project staff and others who are directly engaged in project implementation. It is the way humanitarian agencies track the progress of the project's activities. The purpose is to collect data that can be used to assure you that the progress is on target, and can be in the form of institutional, contextual, and results or objective based. Evaluation, on the other hand, is an interpretation of the data and its impact on the project and how your project is contributing to the broader program goal. Evaluation requires a periodic "stepping back" and to gain a broader perspective on the effect of the project's activities. The ultimate purpose of monitoring and evaluation is to provide evidence of accountability and to reinforce practice that leads to good program quality. In order to document the progress of humanitarian actions, reporting is necessary. A report is simply a record of the project's progress. Reports also serve to inform others of the evolution of the project, and should provide a snapshot of progress towards project objectives for management purposes, and satisfy external requirements for reporting according to the donor's requirements. Essential aspects of reporting include timeliness, appropriate content, focus on the results, include an analysis, comply with agreement and have an appropriate presentation in terms of being clear, concise and reader friendliness. The project cycle requires continual learning, ensuring that there are lessons learnt. A lesson learned can be defined as "something that contributes to what an organization knows and how it acts." Specifically, it should add to the organization's existing knowledge or field practice. A useful lesson needs to explain specific ways in which a project has gained meaningful

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[52]ALNAP, Op. cit, p. 169

participation of the target groups. Developing lessons learned is a normal part of project management and ensures continual learning.

2.6 Characteristics and Issues of Remote Management

Remote management is an operational response to security threats to staff and particularly to international staff. It involves the drastic reduction of staff presence, more specifically international field staff presence. This form of operation implies an implementation of projects by national actors while key decision making processes are maintained by international actors, this at different levels of partnership and cooperation. Bryony[53] defines the levels of humanitarian access in the field varies: five levels of remote management ranging from regular but limited access, irregular access to no access at all have been identified.

The lack of access is the first and biggest challenge of remote management. However, once forced into a remote management context, humanitarian actors meet numerous other operational challenges. Bryony[54] further identifies four dominant issues for humanitarian practitioners working in remote management frameworks, namely programming, monitoring, capacity building and insecurity. Importantly, insecurity affects both local and international actors. This translates into irregular access to projects by humanitarian agencies, international and local staff, local partners and hampers project management and implementation. Furthermore, it often creates conditions for increased social and political pressure on local partners and staff.

Remote management is an operational response that is usually not planned in advance. As such, local partners and staff may be unprepared for their newly assumed

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[53]Norman, Bryony, Op. citp.17
[54]Ibid

responsibilities and national staff and local partners may have limited capacities. This lack of access also limits the opportunities for capacity building. Given the lack of access, poor communication and lack of technical supervision, humanitarian actors increasingly depend on local partners for programming. This makes it difficult to take strategic decisions normally taken by them. Furthermore, monitoring is based on data and reporting provided by a local partner, yet this data is not always accurate; thus undermining the understanding of the situation.

These issues are translated into operational challenges and asides the technical difficulties they mainly focus on the partnerships with NGOs, how to work together, communication and trust. In remote management, national staff and organizations take on more responsibilities and fill more functions in the field, potentially increasing their visibility and vulnerability. Risk management is an integral part of remote management and this withdrawal of international staff - who no longer share risks with their national counterparts - is commonly referred to as risk transfer.

2.7 Trends in Remote Management

Stoddard[55] reports that violence against humanitarians has dramatically increased over the years. The safety of 260 humanitarian workers was violated during the year 2008, whilst they were performing their duties in conflict areas. The curious question is what has happened? Ever since humanitarian organisations have existed, humanitarians have been working in extremely dangerous settings and exposed to the effects of military attacks. He goes further to indicate that even though fewer incidences were recorded during 2010, violence, in terms of kidnapping, death, and serious injuries against

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[55]Stoddard, A., Harmer, A. & Haver, K., Aid Worker Security Report 2011. Spotlight on security for national aid workers: Issues and perspectives.*Humanitarian Outcomes.*2011, p. 3.

humanitarians has still been the major issue in the discussion of humanitarian workers' security in conflict zones. Especially in the three most violent settings, security issues have brought humanitarian organisations into a difficult situation. In Afghanistan, Somalia, and Sudan, which account for 60% of the attacks, the changing nature of warfare, Western politics, and the influence of local governments, have been challenging humanitarian operations.

An ICRC document[56] reports that as global conflicts continue and increase the needs of people in distress, humanitarian organisations have been balancing between different authorities, time, and security concerns to make their mission possible. Egeland et al,[57] report that providing assistance to civilians amid conflict or generalised violence has always been dangerous and difficult. Humanitarian aid providers have long experience with security-driven adaptations to their traditional means of programming. Throughout the 1980s and 1990s, as the operational presence of international aid organisations in conflict areas increased, they faced a range of threats, including collateral violence, the presence of armed opposition groups, and generalised crime and violence. Findings from the Aid Worker Security Report,[58] show that aid worker casualties have tripled since 2002, reaching over 100 deaths per year; in 2011, 308 aid workers were victims of major attacks – the highest yearly number yet recorded. Analysis shows that even taking into account the growing number of aid workers in the field, the

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[56] `International Humanitarian Law and the challenges of contemporary armed conflicts' *International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent, 28th November – 1st December 2011*. Geneva, 2011, p. 3
[57] Egeland,J., Harmer, A. & Stoddard, A, `To stay and deliver: Good practice for humanitarians in complex security environments', *OCHA Policy and Studies Series*. New York, 2011, p. 13
[58] Aid Worker Security Database, `Aid Worker Security Report, Spotlight on security for national aid workers: Issues and perspectives' *Humanitarian Outcomes*, 2011, Available at: http://www.aidworkersecurity.org

overall rate of violence is increasing year by year. The majority of attacks (72%) took place in a small number of countries: Afghanistan, Somalia, Pakistan and Sudan. The world's newest country – South Sudan – entered the category of most violent humanitarian settings, ranking as number three. The concentration of incidents in a few aid settings has been evident since 2006, and these continue to represent the most difficult and volatile operating environments for aid workers. Attacks in many settings have also grown more lethal and sophisticated, and the number of kidnappings has risen dramatically. Since 2009, kidnappings have become the most frequent means of violence against aid workers, showing the steepest and steadiest rise of all tactics over the past decade. The motives for attacks have both political and criminal intent. Although there seems to be no comprehensive hard data on humanitarian access trends (a significant gap in the evidence), country-level analysis in several contexts indicates that access has worsened, particularly for international aid presence over the past few years. Access has diminished as a direct result of violence and as a consequence of the obstacles and conditions created by militaries, governments, and non- state actors that hinder the impartial provision of aid. A further factor has been greater aid agency caution in the face of violent attacks.

According to Karim,[59] in response the organisations variously employed cross-border programming and 'quick-runs', low visibility and increased reliance on national staff, local agencies and private contractors. Bradbury[60] has also reported that

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[59]Karim, F, `Providing Aid in Insecure Environments: Trends in Policy and Operations: Afghanistan Background Paper', *Humanitarian Policy Group and Overseas Development Institute*, Center on International Cooperation, New York University, 2006, p.19
[60]Bradbury, M., Leader, N. & Mackintosh, K., 2000, `The Agreement on Ground Rules in South Sudan', *Humanitarian Policy GroupReport no. 4,. London,* 2000, p. 29

organizations have also invested in collective principled approaches to negotiated access, established common 'red lines', and made partnership arrangements with local authorities.

Recognising the need to maintain a presence and continue to deliver assistance, aid actors have sought to reframe their ways of dealing with the insecurity of aid operations. Egeland[61] reports that instead of avoiding risk, the emphasis is now on managing risk in relation to identified humanitarian needs. To this end, assistance actors have strengthened their risk management capabilities. The UN, for example, has embraced an 'enabling approach', which seeks to ensure that life-saving programmes (based on a programme criticality exercise) proceed, even in increasingly dangerous environments. Aid agencies have also explored old and new strategies and operational adaptations aimed at creating greater acceptance for their activities and improving their access to affected populations. This shift in approach has given rise to the term 'secure humanitarian access', which emphasises a dual process whereby humanitarian actors gain access to affected civilians, and those civilians gain access to the aid they need, without it bringing increased risk. Stoddard et al[62] reports that despite these attempts to maintain a presence, growing insecurity has often affected the quality and quantity of aid, with beneficiaries suffering from the conflict and violence as well as from reduction in assistance.This has prompted increasing use of 'remote management' programming approaches which include withdrawing international staff, altering management structures to give more responsibility to national or local staff remaining in situ and/or

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[61]EEgeland, J., Harmer, A. & Stoddard, A, Op. cit,p.67

[62]Stoddard, A., Harmer, A., & DiDomenico, V, `Providing aid in insecure environments: Trends in violence against aid workers and the operational response' *Humanitarian Policy Group and Overseas Development Institute*, London, 2009, p. 36

forming new operational arrangements with local partners or contractors. Despite some criticisms of this shift and the overall objectives of the aid enterprise few would disagree that it is imperative to find solutions to delivering aid in insecure environments, so as to support the survival and well-being of people in need.

Maintaining secure access for aid providers is a rapidly evolving area of policy and practice. There is a growing evidence base and body of research, but much more is needed, particularly for understanding the practices of a wide and diverse range of assistance actors. The present study maps out existing knowledge in this area.

2.8 Conclusion

The terminology of remote management denotes the ability to manage and control from a distance, that is, without being physically attached to the actual unit being controlled. Despite the variety in terminology of `remote', the actual practice of remote management generally has one common defining feature that includes control, management, support, partnership, among other aspects from a safe distance.

Remote management of humanitarian aid therefore connotes the continued international ownership and responsibility over programmes without permanent international ground presence. This management and control is undertaken from a safe distance to ensure that aid continues to reach the beneficiary population despite security or access constraints. The practice involves largely international staff acting as key decision-makers, designing and programming the humanitarian response at a distance from the crisis-affected area, or in some cases outside the country in question. In these circumstances, the national staff take increased responsibility, or in some cases the

responsibility is shifted to local partner organisations, local authorities, private contractors and community-based organisations.

Remote management has emerged as one of the principal strategies used by humanitarian agencies to maintain access to populations in need. It is the most commonly used strategy for extremely insecure areas where international staff and organisations have been targeted. The primary reason for implementing a remote management system is to ensure productivity regardless of physical distance and contact.Key aspects in this management style include communication, level of control and the ability to perform.

CHAPTER THREE

Characteristics and Issues in Remote Management of Humanitarian Aid

3.1 Introduction

This chapter provides primary description of remote management of humanitarian aid, the basis for its application, the modes and styles applied by humanitarian organizations and the justification for the same, emerging issues in remote management, and innovative approaches developed by the humanitarian organizations to ensure principled and accountable management of humanitarian aid.

3.2 Actors in Remote Management of Humanitarian Aid

Remote management is practised by a wide range of organizations. Key actors applying this modality in the implementation of humanitarian aid include the United Nations (UN), International Non-Governmental Organizations (INGOs), National Non-Governmental Organizations (NNGOs), Institutional Donors, Private contractors (including Consultancy firms) and Community Based Organizations (CBOs), operating in conflict and insecurity affected countries. In terms of personnel, local staff of remote management in humanitarian aid, while the senior management, particularly the non-national staff are architects of the modality from a distance.

3.3 Basis for Remote Management Approach to Humanitarian Aid

Conflict and insecurity has led to limited humanitarian access, which is defined as the ability of all the staff members of different humanitarian organizations and donors to visit project implementation sites at the time of their choice to provide humanitarian needs based assistance and protection to people affected by crises, in line with the

principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality and independence[1]. Due to the limited humanitarian access, organizations have sought to find alternative ways to implement humanitarian aid.

The initial decision to shift from the standard humanitarian operating procedures to remote management, range from being a reactive situation to a planned strategy. `The main reason for moving into remote management is insecurity for senior managers and associated risk for the entire operation'[2]. Most organizations identify specific and targeted aid worker insecurity either in the form of kidnapping, threats, killing, among others is the key reason for applying remote management. An organization opines that `our entry into a remote management modality in Galkayo area in Somalia was reactive, non-systematic and unplanned, and basically started with kidnapping of two of our international staff.[3]

Aid worker insecurity is confirmed by reports in the NGO Safety programme database, which captures the 2003 bombings in the UN office in Baghdad; 2009 suicide bomber attacks in WFP office in Islamabad killing 5 staff; 2012 World Vision attack in Mansehra district in Pakistan killing 12 staff; 2011 UN Headquarters attack by Boko Haram in Nigeria; just to mention but a few. These statistics point to the growing hostility towards humanitarian actors in conflict affected locations. Additionally, humanitarian organizations grapple with security threats from criminal groups driven by economic interests. In a number of contexts, kidnapping by criminal gangs has become the most pervasive security threat, particularly, though not exclusively for international aid

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[1] Definition of humanitarian space as suggested in an ECHO Internal Review Meeting, Brussels June 2012
[2] Skype interview with a Global Policy Advisor of an INGO with HQ in Copenhagen, June 24, 2013
[3] Face to face interview with an Area Manager for an INGO in Puntland Region, June 12, 2013

workers. The number of abductions for ransom has also risen sharply. In South Central Somalia, there is a high level of criminality and banditry, extortion, kidnapping, looting and taxation of aid at the rising number of checkpoints[4]. Generally humanitarian access to certain locations is completely derailed by conflict and insecurity, for instance, no humanitarian or commercial flight lands in Beletweyne region of Somalia because the airstrips are controlled by an armed opposition group. It is therefore not possible to access the area.[5]

Perception of partisanship due to the political standing of parent organizations or countries jeopardizes the use of standard humanitarian approaches, thus having no option but to apply remote management. Organizations are targeted for attack due to political reasons, as reported, as the humanitarian arm of the European Commission; we take a low profile in support to the vulnerable populations in conflict affected areas due to the European Union's political support to government structures.[6] This view is supported by a UN Staff who indicated that `there is blurring of boundaries between the UN political and humanitarian agencies. In Somalia, UN shows political backing for the Somalia National Government (SNG) and even the previous Somalia Transitional Federal Government, but there are many areas in South Central Somalia that the SNG does not control. This puts all UN agencies at risk with the armed opposition groups and their supporters'.[7]

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[4] Quote from preliminary report presentation, IASC Evaluation Team Leader, June 2012
[5] Face to face interview with an Area Manager for an INGO South Central Somalia Region, June 13, 2013
[6] Skype interview with a Humanitarian Advisor for an Institutional Donor for East and Horn of Africa Region, June 23, 2013
[7] Skype interview with a Local staff of UN Agency in Somalia, June 20, 2013

Conflict affected states and armed opposition groups regulate and restrict humanitarian aid despite severe crisis, thus leading to remote management. In 2010, the Somalia Transitional Federal Government (TFG) actions restricted humanitarian space in Somalia. Administrative interference and hindrance placed an additional burden upon humanitarian agencies, with mistrust developing between the two entities. TFG authorities while attempting to control aid delivery, accused aid workers of supporting terrorists. TFG personnel incited crowds to loot relief convoys allegedly supplying terrorists. Armed opposition groups are not left out of this, in Somalia, Alshabaab attacked UNICEF's warehouse in Jowhar and destroyed most of the cold chain for South Central Somalia.[8] This has been witnessed in Biafra, Ethiopia, Sri Lanka and Sudan.

It is also reported that, governments and armed opposition groups impose restrictions to shield sensitive regions from outside observation and prevent reports about human rights and international law violations from reaching an international audience[9]. Some Governments also accuse the humanitarian community of being infiltrated by foreign intelligence services. In Pakistan, security forces arrested three agents of the German secret service who, pretended to be working for the German Agency for International Cooperation GIZ in 2012.[10]

A demand by either the local authorities or the armed opposition groups for payment of taxes for registration and supplies/service contracts is also a cause of the switch to remote management. It is reported that several organizations pulled out of Hiraan region of Somalia due to a demand by an armed opposition group controlling that

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[8]Quote from preliminary report presentation, IASC Evaluation Team Leader , June 2012
[9] Skype interview with a Country Director for an INGO in Myanmar, June 20, 2013
[10] Telephone interview with a representative of an Institutional Donor in Pakistan, June 23, 2013

area that we pay registration fees to be allowed to operate, and additionally pay 20% for any contracts issued to for either services, supplies or works[11]. According to the Somalia NGO Consortium, in 2010, 23 August, Alshabaab called all aid agencies in Beletweyne town, Hiraan region to a meeting to inform that they should pay USD 10,000 within 15 days, a deadline coinciding with the beginning of Ramadan. This payment would allow agencies to work for six months, after which agencies would pay an additional USD 6,000 for a six month permit to be renewed every six months. Agencies should pay 20% of the cost of signed contracts and 10% of the cost of rented vehicles. Similar instructions were transmitted to all aid agencies operating in Middle and Lower Shabelle, Bay, Bakool, Middle and Lower Juba regions.[12]

Some organizations apply remote management due to the fact that coordination structures, cluster systems, collective security management and consortium approach have been developed in a hub out of the project locations. This is particularly relevant for Somalia currently, and was used during the Sudan Operation Lifeline Sudan for humanitarian support to South Sudan. In Somalia, the Somalia NGO consortium brings together all UN and NGOs working in Somalia to coordinate actions and share information. It houses the NGO Safety programme that provides periodic security briefs to organizations on the security, risk and safety situation of the different locations and their accessibility[13]. The management and coordination structures motivate the humanitarian organizations to operate from Nairobi, as this is considered business as

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[11] Face to face interview with a Local Staff of a CBO in Hiraan, June 13, 2013
[12] Skype interview with a Representative of an NGO Consortium, July 3, 2013
[13] Skype interview with a Representative of an NGO Consortium, July 3, 2013

usual. According to Christian Aid, `use remote management is a standard practise and an internal organization strategy to support and strengthen national organizations'.[14]

Despite the drive to undertake remote management, the need to providing humanitarian services to the needy population despite the high levels of threat is acknowledged. A beneficiary confirms this saying `it is unfortunate that Somalia has been in civil strife for many years. We do not agree with the radical groups, and continue to appreciate the support we get from the NGOs. Despite being chased away from our area, the NGOs have continued to provide us with support. We know they are not very active in our area as the situation is beyond their control'.[15]

3.4 Modes and Styles of Remote Management of Humanitarian Aid

There is a diverse range of remote management modes and styles used by humanitarian organizations in remote management, and the approaches are dependent on the context, and level of conflict and insecurity. In order to undertake remote management within reasonable proximity to the beneficiaries, some humanitarian organizations have invested on hard security measures involving having armoured vehicles, armed guards and other physical measures to protect office premises and residential compounds. However, most of the organizations report that they cannot afford the cost of maintaining the security of staff and humanitarian operations as it requires massive investment. It is expensive to put up a heavily fortified compound that ensures all the hard security measures are taken into account for the security of our staff[16]. The idea of putting up a highly protected facility within the targeted locations is criticised by

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[14] Telephone interview with a Regional Emergency Advisor of an INGO in Horn of Africa region, June 20, 2013
[15] Telephone interview with a beneficiary in Mataban, Somalia, July 9, 2013
[16] Face to face interview with a Programme Manager of a joint Safety Programme, June 20, 2013

the Regional Director of an INGO. In his view `remote management is a better alternative to the bunkerisation of the international community in highly protected facilities, as this gives an impression of being detached from the local community[17]. Hard security measures thus undermine efforts to be accepted by the parties of conflict and the local population. Sustained access requires a certain degree of positive perception among communities that humanitarian organizations strive to assist. This implies that it is better to be away and manage from remote than create a facility that is viewed negatively by the population you would want to serve. This view is supported by beneficiaries in Afghanistan who report that, `we feel like lesser human beings, feared by the people set to support us. We rarely see them, and when they come to visit us, they have security all around them, creating an impression of them and us'.[18]

The more aid workers are removed from the population through hard security measures, the more difficult it becomes to gain the trust and acceptance of civil society actors and armed opposition groups. Additionally, hard security increases the risk of attacks, as humanitarian bases resemble military bases, thus making it difficult to distinguish between humanitarian workers and legitimate military targets. The cycle of stringent security measures and the growing alienation of humanitarian organizations is described in the following, `you need an armed convoy because it is insecure. You get attacked because you have armed police with you. You get more armed convoys to protect you from attacks. After a number of attacks, the whole area becomes a no-go zone and you are unable to make the contact that could guarantee your safety[19].' To move from

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[17] Face to face interview with a Regional Director for an INGO in the Horn of Africa, June 18, 2013
[18] Telephone interview with a group of beneficiaries in Afghanistan, July 9, 2013
[19] Skype interview with a Programme Coordinator for an INGO in Darfur, June 20, 2013

these compounds to project implementation sites, most organizations in Darfur, Pakistan, Afghanistan, and some parts of Somalia rely on armed guards and escorts.

It is generally agreed that UN and humanitarian agencies adopting the approach of hard security are going too far. Investment in hard security is costly and ineffective. Notably, most of the armed opposition groups fight some of the most sophisticated armies, and are thus not deterred by razor wire, concrete walls and private armed guards hired to protect humanitarian premises.[20]

A prominent approach applied involves the withdrawal or drastic reduction of international personnel from the field, and transfer of greater responsibility to local staff and local partner organizations, while overseeing humanitarian aid from a different location. In this case, humanitarian organizations rely on `highly localised operations staffed exclusively with inhabitants from the immediate area'.[21] Senior or International staff of the project, then visit the project locations on a hit and run basis whenever there is a window of opportunity'.[22] These visits are rarely to the project locations, but to towns or capitals considered secure where these senior staff meet with the local staff to get a briefing on the project progress. Common areas visited for such briefings include Hargeisa or Bossaso in Somalia; Kabul or Jalalabad in Afghanistan.

These kinds of visits have been challenged due to the fact that the visits are very short and expensive. Concerns have been raised by the local population that we are spending inadequate time on the ground during out short time trips. Concerns have also been raised regarding the waste of programme resources due to having to use expensive

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[20] Face to face interview with a Regional Security Advisor for an INGO in Horn of Africa, June 5, 2013
[21] Skype interview with a staff of an INGO in Afghanistan, June 18, 2013
[22] Face to face interview with a staff of an INGO in North Eastern Kenya July 5, 2013

helicopter flights to access remote project locations instead of investing these resources on direct implementation[23]. In many instances, humanitarian organizations have to rely on air travel, as opposed to road travel in order to access project offices, due to insecurity along main routes. Additionally, despite sometimes making commitments to the travel agencies with down payments for the flights, visits are cancelled at short notice due to insecurity information, on day to day risk assessments.

To counter the question of having only local staff implementing programmes, some organizations are adopting the policy of hiring expert Somalis from the Diaspora as they are able easily adapt to the context and immerse with the local populations as if they are immediate inhabitants.[24]These staff are expected to complement the skills and expertise of the local staff and partners in order to ensure good humanitarian delivery. While this is seen as a better option in times of threat, the downside of it is the fact that some of the Somalia Diaspora do not have the requisite training to undertake effective humanitarian management. In Somalia particularly, there is a possibility that Somalis can take advantage of the situation, and make it more difficult to bring in expatriates in order to have their own employed by the humanitarian organizations. So far we do not have evidence of this, but it is a possibility.[25] While the Diaspora staff may have exposure out of the country, they are still affiliated to their clan backgrounds and would face the same weaknesses as any other local inhabitants.

Withdrawal of international staff has been highly criticised as it is seen to shift the risk from international to national staff, who have also been targeted, kidnapped and

[23] Skype interview with a staff of an INGO in West Darfur, June 30, 2013
[24] Skype interview with a Global Policy Advisor based in Copenhagen, June 24, 2013

[25] Face to face interview with a Regional Director for an INGO in Horn of Africa, July 11, 2013

sometimes even killed. This modality is based on the assumption that in humanitarian aid, international staff are less exposed than national staff. Statistically, for each international staff member killed, seven national staff members lose their lives[26]. These statistics confirm that the risk for the national staff could be higher, a fact that has not been recognized as confirmed an Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) Evaluation team acknowledges in their brief that `the disadvantage of remote management is the shift of risk from international staff to local or national staff whose risks in hostile environments have not been sufficiently acknowledged by organizations employing them'[27].Unlike fatal conflict and security incidents involving expatriates, the killing of national staff often goes unnoticed by the international media.

Many humanitarian organizations work through local or national partner organizations. The reasons for the choice of this mode include local organizations,: a) having existing structures; b) understanding the local context to support in identifying and refining project implementation; c) ensuring better targeting and community ownership of programmes; d) building of local capacities for self-reliance and sustainability and e) cost efficiency due to reduced operational costs related to security for international staff.

While not a common approach, humanitarian organizations provide aid through private contractors/consultancy firms, particularly to undertake projects that involve shelter, construction, vocational skills training and installation of protection infrastructure. Though they do not share the same values (including humanitarian

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[26] Face to face interview with a Programme Manager for a collective safety programme in Somalia, June 20, 2013

[27] Quote from preliminary report presentation, IASC Evaluation Team Leader June 2012

principles) with humanitarian organizations, they are chosen due to their increased technical capacity to programmes.[28] Donors and UN bodies prefer to work with INGOs, due to the fact that these organizations have greater capacity, systems and sectoral expertise that can be relied on for accountability purposes.

Most of the humanitarian organizations combine different modes or styles at the same time depending on the complexity of the project and the geographical coverage. This is confirmed by a statement that indicates that, despite some donors taking a strong stance against remote management, almost all INGOs in Somalia use some form of remote management in their approach to programming'.[29] This is further confirmed by the fact that, `what was initially seen as a reactive, temporary response to insecurity is now increasingly considered to be a permanent strategy to working in medium to high insecurity'.[30]

For entry into the remote management modality, a few organizations have well documented plans, though these are not widely circulated for legitimate security reasons. This is particularly easier for organizations that already operates in a particular conflict affected areas, as confirmed `switching to a remote management modality in a project area where the organization has had a presence is often more effective than initiating a remote management approach for a project in a completely new project location, because local staff are equipped to manage the day to day implementation of projects'[31]. Remote management works better in areas where the INGO has had a presence historically and an

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[28] Face to face interview with an Infrastructure Engineer for an INGO in Somalia, June 12, 2013
[29] Face to face interview with a Country Director of an INGO in Somalia, June 28, 2013
[30] Face to face interview with a Funding Associate with a UN Agency in Somalia , June 21, 2013
[31] Face to face interview with an Area Manager for an INGO in South Central Somalia Region, June 13, 2013

on-going relationship with the local communities and stakeholders. We would not choose this management approach in a new location, without first having first the opportunity to build acceptance within local communities and without having expertise in the security environment, context and culture for this new location.[32] The notion of community acceptance is disputed in some regions, `it is no longer possible to rely simply on good acceptance to ensure safety and security of programme and project staff. In view of the fluidity of security across Afghanistan, it would be naïve to think that a reliance on community acceptance alone will protect staff. Communities can be manipulated to turn against organizations. Likewise, when there are community disputes or armed opposition group actions against a specific community, an organization might be targeted in order to indirectly target the community that the organization supports.[33]

Communication between the staff location in the field and the International or Senior staff is undertaken through emails, Skype, and telephones. Face to face interactions are scheduled on a monthly or quarterly basis in safer locations within the countries of operation or neighboring country capitals. This limits the interaction between the international staff with the beneficiaries. This is worse in the relationship between the institutional donors and beneficiaries due to the fact that institutional donors fund INGOs, and these funds are them sub granted to local partners. The donor does not have any communication or any form of linkage with the local implementing partner and the beneficiaries.

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[32]Skype interview with a Programme Coordinator for an INGO in Darfur, June 20, 2013
[33] Skype interview with a staff of an INGO in Afghanistan, June 18, 2013

3.5.1 Moral and Ethical Obligations through Humanitarian Principles

With regards to the application of humanitarian principles during remote management of humanitarian aid, most humanitarian organizations have established policies and set of operational procedures to guide the humanitarian principles during remote management. It is however reported that the biggest challenge is the inability to guarantee that field staff and local partners respect the humanitarian principles.[34]

Local staff members may have family, clan or political allegiances that can colour their judgment. In Somalia, `humanitarian actors acknowledge that Somalis struggle to extricate themselves from clan dynamics.[35] More importantly, even if due care is taken to "do no harm," targeting vulnerable individuals or households within a generally deprived population is bound to create frustrations among certain social groups or (armed) actors. Due to the potential pressure on local organizations and staff, national staff could easily be compromised and risk favouring or discriminating against certain groups, which would be against the humanitarian principles'.[36] Strong power relations at a project level may as well influence and pull or push national or local personnel in ways they cannot resist.[37] Additionally, depending on the value of relief supplies, it is easy to see that powerful local players will use their influence to pressure members of humanitarian organizations to put their names or those of their family members on the list of recipients.

The above is however contradicted by a local staff who strongly indicated that the effectiveness of humanitarian principles is that it is an operational tool they use to

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[34]Skype interview with a Programme Coordinator of an INGO in Darfur, June 20, 2013
[35] Face to face interview with an Area Manager for an INGO in South Central Somalia Region, June 13, 2013
[36] Skype interview with a Country Director of an INGO in Myanmar, June 20, 2013
[37] Skype interview with a staff of an INGO in West Darfur, June 20, 2013

enhance their approach to humanitarian aid and gives them staff security.[38] According to the NGO Consortium, all local partners and staff are trained on the `code of conduct', `do no harm' and `sphere standards' to ensure the values are engrained in their day to day activities. These training ensure they mainstream values in the humanitarian principles as they carry out their duties.[39] For the humanitarian donors, we consider humanitarian principles an obligation and not an option and assume organizations we fund oblige to all of them.[40]

3.5.2 Technical and Programmatic Risks in Humanitarian Aid Quality

Several issues and concerns have emerged with regards to quality management of remote managed humanitarian aid. These include, i) programme development based on second hand information and data with no guarantee for evidence based programming (quality of assessments cannot always be guaranteed thus reducing the complexity and quality of programming; ii) limited programme supervision by senior management; iii) lack of or weak technical oversight; iv) poor communication and inadequate information; v) irregular external monitoring that compromises effective and rigorous programme follow up; vi) lack of follow up to ensure corrective measures during implementation; vii) limited capacity of personnel; viii) inaccurate data and reporting, ix) potential for fraud and corruption; x) increased pressure and expectation (social and political), among other issues.

In terms of needs assessment and targeting, it is difficult for both local and expatriate staff to withstand pressures from local authorities. While expatriate staff can be

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[38] Face to face interview with a Local staff of a CBO in Mogadishu, June 12, 2013
[39] Skype interview with a Representative of an NGO Consortium in Somalia, July 3, 2013
[40] Skype interview with a Humanitarian Advisor of an Institutional donor for Somalia, June 23, 2013

evacuated in case they are being threatened, local staff members, on the other hand, are less mobile and cannot simply "pack and leave." To protect themselves and their families, they may have no choice but to accommodate demands from local actors, at least to a certain degree. This is definitely an operational challenges linked to the preparation of independent needs assessment and the impartial selection of beneficiaries.

Negotiations with local authorities at project inception take long, sometimes leading to delays in start-up of projects, often with some organizations not being given permission to operate in certain locations. In targeting of beneficiaries, there are definitely attempts on the part of local authorities and gate keepers to influence the targeting and registration process, and to tax implementing NGOs and beneficiary households.[41] This raises the question of both humanitarian principles and quality management.

The general perception is that shifting to remote management means accepting an unavoidable lowering of technical sophistication and versatility as well as programme monitoring and evaluation standards'.[42] A staff in Yemen reports that `it is difficult guarantee quality when senior staff cannot monitor activities directly or meet beneficiaries thus rely on local staff for all these. Programme quality corresponds to the level of monitoring, thus remote management presents a risk to all these[43]. Remote management presents difficulties in ensuring that project implementation is completed to a reasonable or high quality.[44]

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[41] Face to face interview with a local staff of a CBO in Mogadishu, June 12, 2013
[42] Face to face interview with a Regional Director of an INGO in the Horn of Africa, June 18, 2013
[43] Skype interview with a staff of an INGO in Yemen, June 17, 2013
[44] Skype interview with a staff of an INGO in Afghanistan, June 18, 2013

Programmes with a technical and complex focus seem to have a bigger concern with regards to quality, and most humanitarian organizations struggle to ensure quality as the local engineers do not have the adequate expertise to manage complex projects like construction. In a feedback session during the capacity assessment process of humanitarian organizations, it was noted that in remote management, expatriate staff are not able to visit the projects, and monitoring and evaluation is merely reduced to a `tick the box' exercise, without detailed and consistent data.[45]

3.5.3 Issues in Effective and Accountable Programming

Most of the INGOs are certified by Humanitarian Accountability Partnership and have an obligation to apply the six benchmarks of humanitarian accountability and quality management. The organizations have developed systems and procedures for implementing the accountability benchmarks of; i) Developing an accountability framework; ii) Participation; iii) Information sharing; iv) Staff competency; v) Complaints mechanism; and vi) Continual learning. It is however acknowledged that operationalizing these benchmarks in conflict affected areas is a challenge for all the organizations. It is difficult to verify accountability systems, practises and feedback. There is complete reliance on local staff to report back on accountability systems in place and it is not easy to verify and triangulate this information.[46] This statement is refuted by Niels,[47] who asserts that, there is no apparent reason to believe that local staff members of humanitarian organizations are less accountable to beneficiaries than internationals. In

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[45] Baker Tilly Merali's Team Leader in a debrief session after humanitarian organization's capacity assessment process, June 27, 2013

[46] Face to face interview a staff of an INGO in Somalia, June 12, 2013

[47] Skype interview with a Global Accountability Advisor of an INGO with HQ in Copenhagen, June 24, 2013

fact, it may be easier for community representatives to hold locally embedded staff to account than internationals. As far as donor accountability is concerned, however, remotely managed operations generally compromise common monitoring and evaluation standards. The longer that operations are managed remotely, the more restricted implementing organizations and donors are in their ability to judge and see with their own eyes the extent that taxpayer money is reaching targeted beneficiaries.[48]

With regards to the benchmarks of participation and information sharing, `the armed opposition group controlling central Somalia, particularly Hiraan region does not allow community gatherings, thus providing no room for information sharing and participation.[49] This is an example of a context where accountability to the beneficiaries may be a challenge.

The benchmark requiring the set-up of complaints and feedback mechanism is fairly developed. With funding from the Humanitarian Innovation fund DRC has piloted an innovative approach to beneficiary feedback mechanisms using the social media platforms, particularly an SMS feedback system that has proven to be very successful[50]. Other measures include having a hotline number that beneficiaries can call to complain or give feedback directly to the organizations.[51]

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[48] Skype interview with the Global Accountability Focal Point for an INGO, June 19, 2013
[49] Face to face interview with an Area Manager for an INGO in South Central Somalia Region, June 13, 2013
[50] Face to face interview with a staff of an INGO in Somalia, June 19, 2013
[51] Face to face interview with a Local staff of a CBO in Mogadishu, June 12, 2013

A Country Director reported that `I have a group of demotivated international or expatriate staff who lack a sense of having tangible results of their work as they do not visit projects[52].This raises questions with benchmark two of accountability.

The possibility of implementing the accountability principles in conflict affected areas is a big contention. `Without direct management and the day to day interaction with the project, how can organizations push through the ideas of accountability processes? We are busy focusing our resources on life saving assistance…who would be responsible for adapting accountability process to the remote management context?[53] In the context of Mogadishu, the aid workers concentrate on delivering aid, and accountability is not a priority.

All donors prefer, though it is not an obligation to work with partners who are HAP certified, and thus can be held accountable and responsible. A donor representative remarks that `remote management programming is a common adaptation in extreme circumstances of insecurity and poses many challenges for effective and accountable programming, some areas of good practises are emerging. These include investing in highly localised staff structures for field offices, recruiting staff members in consultation with their communities and appointing nationals from the Diaspora as international staff.[54]

3.5.4 Reporting and Information Sharing in Remote Management

Reporting in remote management is a system based on trust, as local staff or organizations are entrusted to share information, implement activities as discussed and

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[52] Skype interview with the Country Director of an INGO in Myanmar, June 20, 2013
[53] Face to face interview with an Area Manager for an INGO in Mogadishu, June 13, 2013
[54] Skype interview with a Humanitarian Advisor for an Institutional Donor in Somalia, June 23, 2013

transmit results[55]. For these staff, reporting on results is dependent on the personalities of the people involved, mutual understanding between both ends and a common interest to uphold quality of work[56].

Access to information from the field is a major challenge for remote management; it is difficult to get precise contextual data and real time information.[57]This implies that decisions in remote management situations are not real time, as documents and communication have to be exchanged for a sound decision to be made, this causes delays.

Whenever an incident occurs in the field, it takes time to receive a comprehensive and final consolidated report that informs of the happening and can be confidently shared with other stakeholders. An IASC Evaluation team in South Central Somalia reported the lack of presence of senior staff in the field and their consequent distance between field and decision making processes, as a result most decisions are taken at Nairobi level, preventing first hand contextual analysis and direct contact with beneficiaries and local partners.[58]

3.5.5 Donor Compliance in Remote Management

It is speculative that compliance with donor rules and regulations is challenged in remote management of humanitarian aid, particularly with regards to the proper use of resources. Compliance issues relate to; i) the distance management approach; ii) high potential for misappropriation; iii) lack of adherence to laid down guidelines and procedures; iv) misrepresentation of needs of the targeted beneficiaries; v) misinformation by staff on some issues possibility of fraud, among other issues. There

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[55] Skype interview with a staff of an INGO in Yemen, June 17, 2013
[56] Ibid
[57] Face to face interview with the Country Director of an INGO in Somalia, June 28, 2013
[58] Quote from preliminary report presentation, IASC Evaluation Team Leader June 2012

was no certainty on the occurrence of fraud or corruption in the humanitarian organizations. Generally, with remote management and lack of a possibility to visit project locations, there is a concern that this can lead to fraud or corruption.[59]

On the positive side, while remote management is susceptible to corruption and mismanagement of resources, it has led to reduced operational costs.[60] All the travel and accommodation costs for the expatriates can be diverted to goods and services to the targeted beneficiaries. All the organizations reported having clear financial and administrative guidelines that include due diligence checks for all contractors and suppliers to ensure no affiliation with military/terrorist groups particularly for funding from one of the donors.

Sourcing for funding in remote managed humanitarian aid is a challenge due to some donor's restrictions as imposed by their parent country foreign policies. Due to the extremely volatile security situation, anti-terrorism legislation and politicization of aid, some donors do not allow funding to go to areas controlled by armed opposition groups, so we prefer to seek funding from flexible donors who prioritize humanitarian imperative.[61] This is a big challenge particularly for locations like Somalia, where the armed opposition groups control many locations with vulnerable populations. Significantly, is the fact that Alshabaab is officially considered by some western donors as a terrorist organization, because of the threat to Security it poses. This has led some donors to ban aid distribution in Alshabaab controlled areas lest resources be diverted. In retaliation, Alshabaab has labeled several organizations as spies, particularly

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[59] Skype interview with a staff of an INGO in Uganda, June 21, 2013
[60] Ibid
[61] Face to face interview with the Country Director of an INGO in Somalia, June 28, 2013

organizations funded by the US such as CARE, Mercy Corps and World Vision which they have excluded from the areas under their control.[62]

To follow up on this, donors and UN agencies reported that other than relying on the information from their partners, they undertake ghost (secret monitors), third party (external consultants) or triangulated (peer) local monitoring of remotely managed projects.

3.6 Innovative Approaches to Remote Management of Humanitarian Aid

It is worth noting that a lot of effort has been put on programming and developing of alternative and innovative approaches to monitoring of remote managed humanitarian aid. An NGO reported that for instance, for every new funded project, they undertake kick-off meetings to ensure key local staff are familiar with the programmatic, financial and compliance deliverables. In these meetings we develop clear checklists on information, implementation and monitoring procedures for the different projects. On a quarterly basis we undertake project portfolios reviews to check out progress in terms of outputs, expenditure rates and compliance with donor rules and regulations.[63] In terms of training, we have developed innovative remote management training tools / modules for both communities and staff. The training is done using audio visual equipment that communities can watch to understand the intent of the programme so that intended messages reach the target beneficiaries without any distortion or loss of key information. All the materials are translated into Somalia language for ease of understanding.[64]

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[62] Quote from preliminary report presentation, IASC Evaluation Team Leader June 2012
[63] Interview with the Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist of an INGO in Somalia
[64] Face to face interview the Area Manager of an INGO in South Central Somalia Region, June 13, 2013

In terms of monitoring, UNHCR has developed a project tracking database – a computer system to monitor their project activities. Rather than sending staff out to go and see that houses are being built, the local partners take pictures that are uploaded with GPS information. Evidence based monitoring of construction, costs and deliveries take place before, during and after construction, and payments are tied to photographic evidence.[65] Other innovative monitoring strategies include interactive mapping, digital and advanced photography (taking `before and after' photos with GPS coordinates) at implementation sites, social media platform (SMS, facebook, you tube, etc.) for beneficiary feedback, and recording of beneficiary mobile numbers for validation. We randomly telephone beneficiaries to verify information provided by partner agencies.[66] While it is disputable on whether vulnerable populations have access to mobile phones, it is confirmed that while little information is available about the coverage of mobile phone networks in Somalia, there are a number of highly competitive telephone companies in the market, thus the monitoring through telephones or feedback through SMS platform has worked very well in this context.[67]

To give credit to the national staff, it is reported that while monitoring systems are often in place, often data that is collected by local implementing partners or staff, is not analyzed and findings from this data are not articulated or used. The data that is collected goes into a pool of unused data and key lesson learning fails to be captured.[68]The above

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[65] Face to face interview with a staff of a UN agency in Somalia June 28, 2013
[66] Face to face interview with a Funding Associate for a UN agency in Somalia , June 21, 2013
[67] Skype interview with a Somalia Diaspora staff based in Mogadishu, June 21, 2013
[68] Face to face interview with a Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist for an INGO in Somalia, June 13, 2013

points to an issue of inadequate management and project oversight, rather than an issue of capacity.

All the organizations have either Safety and Security Advisors and Security focal points for the remotely managed areas or rely on the collective NGO Security bodies like NGO Safety programme for Somalia, the UN Department for Safety and Security (UNDSS) for risk assessments, mapping and mitigation measures, and daily and monthly security briefings. The NGO Safety programme provides briefs to INGOs, while UNDSS provides briefs to UN bodies, but the two organizations coordinate and share information.

3.7 Efficacy of Remote Management

Despite all the issues mentioned above, beneficiaries report that due to the challenge of access by humanitarian organizations, they are seeing new and improved programming initiatives. Cash programming is getting more prominence in Somalia, than the distribution of food and non-food items that would require massive administrative and logistical efforts.[69]Cash gives us the opportunity to make choice and preserves our dignity.[70]The difficulties of transportation and distribution of commodities has led to a positive outcome for the remote management approach. This may be an unintended positive outcome of remote management. Remote management creates an opportunity for closer community involvement in programmes. In Afghanistan, for example, a greater level of involvement on the part of local authorities and shuras in programmes has been shown to have the potential for greater buy-in.

For the humanitarian organizations, remote management helps the organization to maintain a certain presence and visibility, which is favourable in terms of building

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[69] Skype interview with a group of beneficiaries in Mogadishu, July 9, 2013
[70] Telephone interview with a group of beneficiaries from Mogadishu.

confidence and enhancing vital links to aid recipients, communities and local authorities. The modality ensures there is no complete closure of humanitarian aid to vulnerable populations, thus allowing funding to continue to flow (a particular imperative for many humanitarian agencies). Some organizations also view remote management as a way of keeping in touch for a better 're-entry' when the security situation improves because local knowledge has not been completely lost, as might have been the case if the office and programme had closed.

In terms of programming, remote management programs tend to emphasize direct delivery of material assistance, because it is technically easier to implement and report on them. A number of humanitarian organizations would also prefer to maintain status quo in programming than develop innovative, less tangible and complex humanitarian actions such as protection and advocacy activities.[71] Under remote management, complex programmes become nearly impossible to attempt.

3.8 Conclusion

With the description of the different modes and styles of remote management, it is difficult to clearly define the modality, thus raising the question of whether the study should go deeper to define the level of remoteness in humanitarian aid. All withstanding, remote management provides a widely debated dilemma for management of humanitarian aid in high level risk areas. It is an approach that allows organizations to continue some activities in situations where access is limited by transferring management and monitoring responsibilities to national or local staff members and /or external partners. This reduces control and oversight, increases the risk of aid diversion and project quality,

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[71]Face to face interview with a Regional Director for an INGO in Horn of Africa, July 11, 2013

and entails a risk to local staff or partners. On the other hand, when viewed broadly as often it is the only way to provide assistance to those in need.

Fully aware that remote management is not the ideal way of managing humanitarian assistance, agencies and donors have generally accepted that standards and quality of programmes have slipped. Humanitarians face difficult choices when deciding whether, when and under what conditions remote management is acceptable, and while it is tempting to propose simple, clear cut rules such as `no remote management' or no funding unless monitoring of projects is possible, such rigorous rules would not do justice to the diverse conflict affected areas where humanitarian aid is needed. Humanitarian organizations need to weigh the benefits and downsides for each context in order to make this decision.

In most of the conflict affected areas, it is not anticipated that volatile patterns of insecurity experienced in the areas will change or improve to allow for application of standard operating procedures. It is anticipated that the remote management approach in all areas of our work in Afghanistan will continue indefinitely.[72] This view is supported by aid workers working in Somalia, but not those working in Uganda. Most of other regions are having a `wait and see' approach as they continue to undertake security risk assessments of their respective areas. With the intense restrictions on UN security movements, it is highly unlikely that the UN may undertake direct implementation of projects in conflict affected locations in the near future.

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[72] Skype interview with a Deputy Country Director in Afghanistan

CHAPTER FOUR

The Practical Application of Remote Management in Humanitarian Aid

4.1 Introduction

This chapter deals with the critical analysis, interpretation and presentation of data collected on remote management as practised by the humanitarian agencies, relating these practical applications to the literature review and the conceptual framework. Using thematic, descriptive and statistical information drawn from the research findings as described in the research methodology[1], the chapter analyses remote management of humanitarian aid with regards to the moral, practical and material imperatives of good humanitarian management.

Information and data collected is drawn from key informant interviews, focus group discussions and a total of 53 questionnaires[2] (representing 75% of the 70 questionnaires) administered to humanitarian aid staff. While the primary findings have been drawn from mainly Somalia, a few responses were received from Sudan, Yemen, Myanmar, Afghanistan, Pakistan and Northern Uganda. The respondents were mainly drawn from selected institutional donor representatives, staff of the UN, INGOs, LNGOs and beneficiaries.

Due to the uncertain, insecure, turbulent and fluid nature of the operational environments, the researcher has agreed with some of the key respondents on a not for attribution approach[3], and will therefore as much as possible refrain from naming the respondents, their organizations and areas of operation. The questionnaire was pre-tested

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[1]See Chapter 1 Research Methodology and Design, pp. 25 - 27
[2]See Chapter 1 Data collection tools and Instruments p. 27
[3] Ibid

with five respondents who advised that all the mandatory sections be cleared to give room for not answering questions in case a respondent was not comfortable with providing information on the particular subject.

4.2 Remote Management of Humanitarian Aid as a common Approach

All organization types (UN, INGOs, Institutional donors and Consultancy firms) apply remote management of humanitarian aid as confirmed by Stoddard's literature[4] on the new strategies out of the traditional humanitarian approaches in order to reach vulnerable and needy populations in conflict affected environments. Figure 1 below presents the questionnaire respondent categories, which reflects the average ratio of the organizational presence in the implementation of humanitarian aid in conflict situations. This implies that all types of organizations use the remote management modality. Figure 2 supports the literature on trends in remote management[5] by illustrating that 72% of the respondent organizations have been applying remote management approach for a period of more than 36 months; 13% for a period of between 24 – 35 months, 9% for a period of 12 – 23 months, while 6% pointed that their organization had been applying remote management approach for less than 11 months.

Figure 1: Type of Organisations

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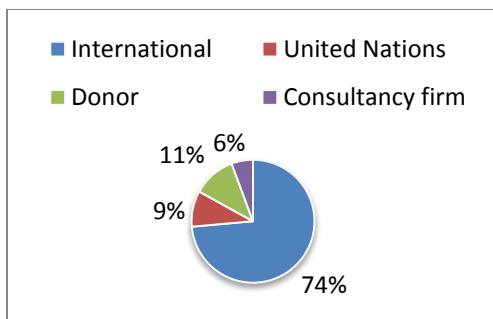
[4]See Chapter 1Literature Review on Remote Management of Humanitarian Aid, p. 32
[5] See Chapter 2 Trends on Remote Management, p. 48

Figure 2: Period of remote management application
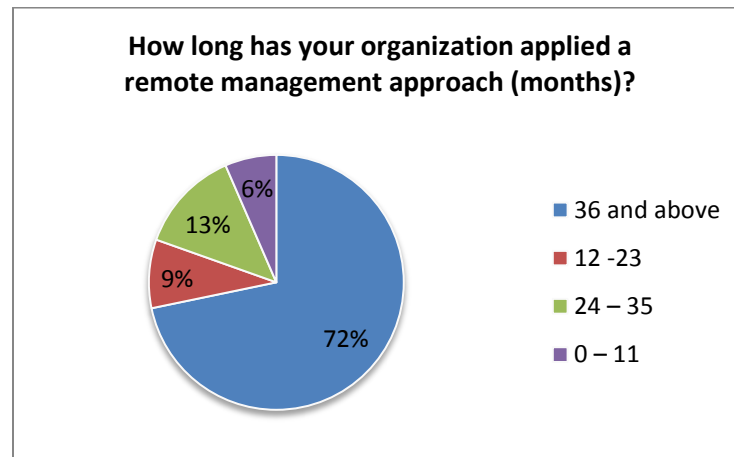
The researcher further sought to know whether these organisations expected to resume standard humanitarian operating approach. Figure 3 illustrates that most (79%) of the organisations would resume the standard approaches should the working environment allow. 21% would not resume standard humanitarian approaches and would rather continue applying the remote management approach in delivery of their services. An assessment of the possible period of resumption of standard humanitarian approaches is illustrated by Figure 4, with 40% of the respondents presenting a possibility of a period not exceeding 11 months;27% in a period not less than 36 months; while 33% of the respondents were of the opinion that they would resume standard humanitarian operations with a period of not less than 12 months and not exceeding 23 months. The expressions above support the issue;[1] while remote management is seen as a temporary measure, it is being considered a standard operating procedure as most organizations would only adopt the standard humanitarian management methodologies if the situation improves.

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[1]See Chapter 3 on Modes and Styles of Remote Management, p.63

Figure 3: Resumption of standard humanitarian operating procedures

Does your organization expect to resume standard humanitarian operating approaches?

■ Yes ■ No

21%
79%
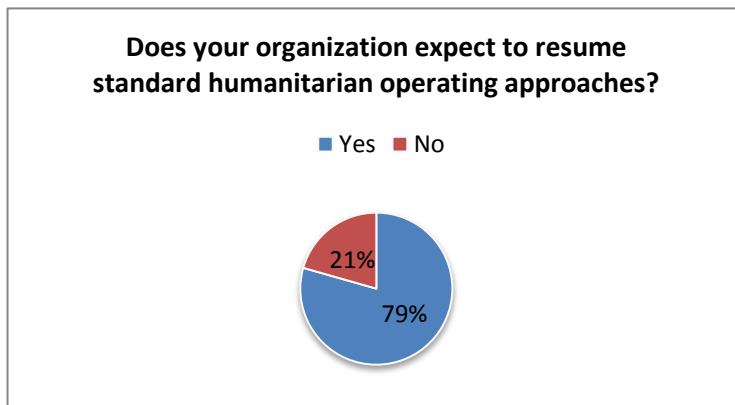
Figure 4: Period of possible resumption

■ 36 and above   ■ 0 – 11   ■ 12 -23

27%
33%
40%
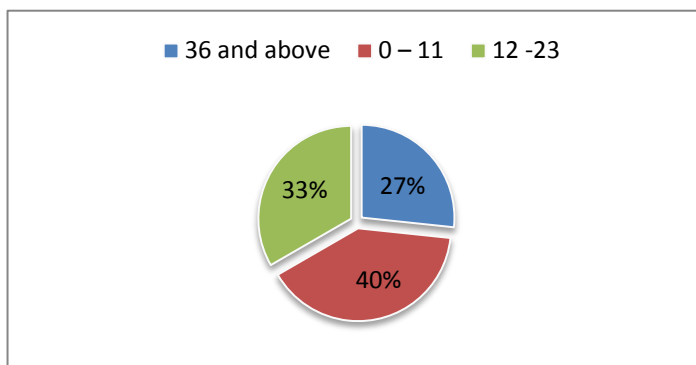
The research findings reveal that remote management of humanitarian aid is a common agency adaptation in high conflict and security risk environments as stated by Stoddard.[2]While many humanitarian actors would prefer to return to the standard operating procedures, they do not anticipate that the volatile patterns of conflict and insecurity experienced in the areas they work would change in the next few months, thus foreseeing the continuation of the remote management approach.[3]

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[2]See Chapter 1 Literature Review p. 20
[3]See Chapter 3 Modes and Styles of Remote Management, p. 63

4.3 Pragmatism as the Basis for Remote Management Application

In the literature review,[4] the factors that drive or influence whether an agency switches to remote management are multiple and context specific with the core driver being security-related restrictions that hamper humanitarian access. Table 1 points out to some of the drivers[5] and their weighting in the decision by humanitarian organizations to undertake remote management.

Table 1: The basis for applying remote management of humanitarian aid

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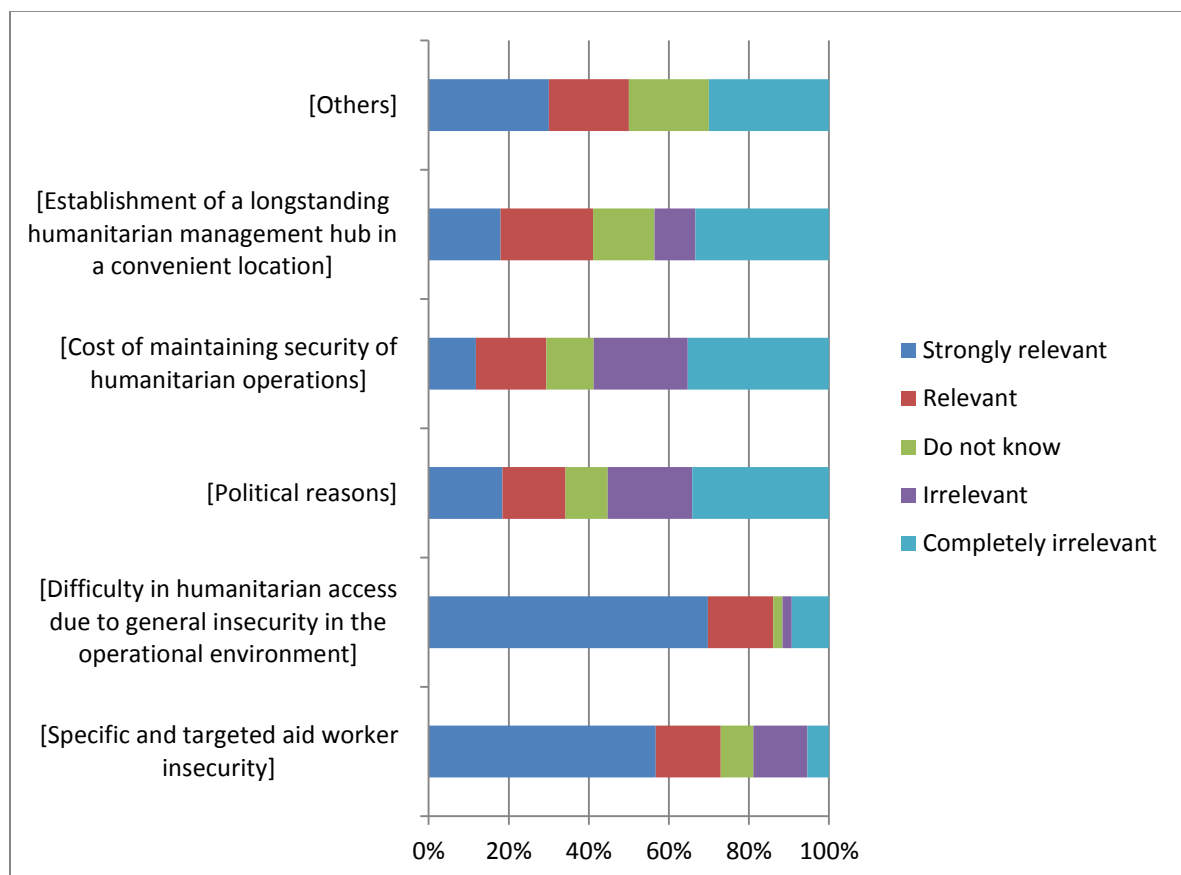
[4]See Chapter 1Literature review on Remote Management of Humanitarian Aid p.31
[5]See Chapter 3 Basis for the application of remote management approach, pp. 54 - 57

With regards to data and information drawn from key informant interviews,[6](i) 27 respondents apply remote management due to direct and targeted aid worker insecurity in form of kidnapping, threats, and killings, among others. (ii) 37 respondents cited difficulty in humanitarian access due to general insecurity in the targeted project locations. (iii) 13 respondents cited political reasons, some highlighting that their organizations are viewed as partisan due to the support provided to the government structures by their parent organizations. (iv) 16 respondents reported that it had become easier to operate from a distance due to the management and coordination structures developed out of the project locations, e.g. for Somalia[7] which has all the UN, Cluster system, NGO consortium and NGO Safety programme in Nairobi. (v) 10 respondents reported that it had become difficult to afford the cost of maintaining security of staff and humanitarian operations in the field. The above confirms information both in the literature and conceptual framework that remote management is applied due to limited access, risk for expatriate staff due to insecurity and perception of partisanship, demands and/or restrictions imposed by local authorities or belligerent groups, among other factors. Stoddard[8]also confirms that all humanitarian actors share one common and important objective for undertaking remote management, that is, of maintaining some level of humanitarian assistance in conflict and security affected environments, which would otherwise stop if the humanitarian agencies withdrew.

This study therefore reveals that the factors that drive or influence whether an agency switches to remote management are multiple and can be highly context specific.

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[6]Ibid, pp. 66-70
[7]See Chapter 3 Basis for Remote Management Application, p. 58
[8] SeeChapter 2 Stoddard's Literature review Remote Management of Humanitarian Aid pp. 31-32

Regardless of the basis or triggers for initiating remote management, all humanitarian actors share one common and important objective, humanitarian imperative, and the need to maintain some level of humanitarian assistance that would otherwise stop if the humanitarian agencies withdrew.

4.4 Distance Management Approach in the Modes and Styles of Remote Management

Key informant interviews[9]reported that organizations set up their remote management approaches in wide variety of forms including bunkerization of the staff compounds, withdrawal of expatriate staff and transfer of greater responsibility to local and partner staff, hiring of Diaspora staff (particularly for Somalia) and operating through private companies or local organizations. Primary data collected from questionnaires and further discussed in the key informant interviews[10] show that (i) 29 respondents reported withdrawing or drastically reducing international personnel from the field to a more secure location, and transferring greater responsibility to local staff and partner organizations. The international staff oversee humanitarian provision from a different location, from where they visit the project locations on a `hit and run' basis when there is a `window of opportunity'. They also visit towns or capitals considered secure to meet with the local staff in order to get briefs on the project progress. Key informants reported that the downside of this approach is the transfer of risk to national staff, who are also targeted, kidnapped and sometimes even killed. (ii) 28 respondents reported working through local or national partner organizations. Key informants[11] favoured this approach

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[9]See Chapter 3 Modes and Styles of Remote Management of Humanitarian Aid, pp. 71 -75
[10]Ibid
[11]See Chapter 3 Modes and Styles of Remote Management of Humanitarian Aid, pp. 71 -75

reporting that local organizations have existing structures, understand the local context to support in identifying and refining project implementation, can ensure better targeting and community ownership of programmes, build local capacities for self-reliance and sustainability, and their use ensures cost efficiency due to reduced operational costs related to security for international staff. (iii) 9 respondents reported working through private contractors/consultancy firms, particularly to undertake projects that involve shelter, construction, vocational skills training, and installation of protection infrastructure due to increased technical capacity of programmes. Despite working with private contractors and consultants, the respondents highlighted the fact that they were aware this raised a normative issue due to the fact they did not share the values (including humanitarian principles) with the humanitarian agencies;[12] (iv) 13 respondents (mostly from donors and UN) reported working with INGOs, and citing that these organizations have greater capacity, systems and sectoral expertise that can be relied on for accountability purposes. Most of the respondents[13] reported combining different approaches at the same time depending on the complexity of the project and the geographical coverage. A mode that was not included in the questionnaire but came up during discussions involved putting up hard security measures with international staff living in heavily fortified compounds within the project locations, to ensure they are protected. This mode was highly criticised for giving an impression that the humanitarian aid workers are detached from the community or the people they intend to serve.

The above shows that given the ad hoc and reactive nature of the decision to 'go remote'; there is a wide diversity of ways in which organisations set up their remote

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[12] Ibid
[13] Ibid

management arrangements. The study has confirmed the approaches identified in the conceptual framework[14] that generally fall into a mix or combination of categories of off-site programming, distance management, long arm programming, remote control, remote support or the increasingly preferred term 'partnership'; and cross-border or one-off operations, described in the past as 'hit and run', 'aid on the run', 'give and go', or 'window of opportunity'.

The study therefore reveals that despite having a diverse range of remote management approaches, the common defining feature for remote management is the ability to manage from a distance, while continuing international ownership, control and responsibility over the programme despite the lack of permanent international ground presence. The control, management, support or even partnership is managed from a safe distance. The study also revealed that while some of the remote management programmes have positive consequences for local partners and staff, humanitarian organizations should not underestimate the risks this modality exposes their national/local staff and partners to.

4.5 Humanitarian Principles in the Remote Managed Projects

The UN General Assembly Resolution 46/182 literature[15] states that humanitarian principles govern humanitarian aid responses, and that the fundamental principles of humanity, impartiality and neutrality provide the most broadly accepted guide to humanitarian aid and form the basis of the code of conduct. All humanitarian actors should consider humanitarian principles as valid, and a basic guide for decisions and

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[14]See Chapter two Conceptualizing Remote Management, p. 48
[15]See Chapter one Literature Review on Humanitarian aid, p. 18

actions, as backed by Warner[16] as he defines the different principles in the conceptual framework.[17]In the key informant interviews[18] and focus group discussions, all organizations implementing the remote management approach reported having established policies and set of operational procedures guiding the application of humanitarian principles during remote management. They however reported that the biggest challenge in the application of humanitarian principles in remote management is the guarantee that field staff and local partners actually oblige to them due to the potential pressure from the local authorities and lineage, and could easily be compromised and risk favouring or discriminating against certain groups. Some informants reported compliance with the principle of humanity and the humanitarian imperative which requires organizations to save lives and alleviate suffering, but reported that this contradicted the requirements to remain neutral, independent and impartial in conflict affected situations. Most of the organizations reported training their local partners and staff on the code of conduct, do no harm and sphere standards to ensure the values are engrained in their day to day activities, but reported that staff are still faced with a lot of pressure from local authorities and armed opposition groups to influence the reach in terms of locations and selection criteria. Donors reported that humanitarian principles are an obligation and they assume all the organizations they fund adhere.

Table 2 illustrates how organizations apply the humanitarian principles during remote management of humanitarian aid based on questionnaire responses. Key informants[19] reported that most of the organizations recognize and take a conscious effort to ensure application of

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[16]See Chapter 1 Literature Review on Humanitarian Aid Management p. 24
[17]See Chapter 2 on Definitions of the Humanitarian Principles p. 52
[18] See Chapter 3 on the Moral and Ethical Obligations through Humanitarian Principles. p. 65
[19] Ibid

humanitarian principles. However, the challenge according to the key informants[20]in the application of humanitarian principles in remote management is the guarantee that field staff and local partners actually oblige to them due to the potential pressure from the local authorities and the possibility of being compromised to favour or discriminate against certain groups.

Table 2: Application of humanitarian principles in remote management
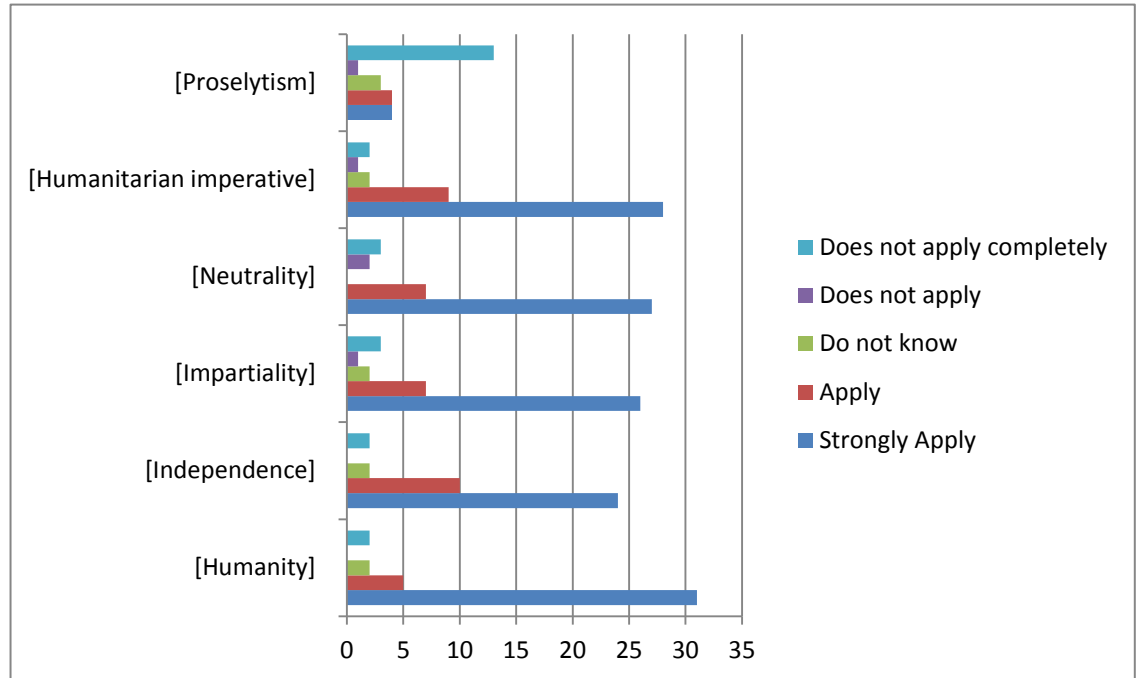
The study reveals that while all humanitarian actors consider humanitarian principles as valid, and a basic guide for decisions and actions in remote management situations, there is no guarantee in the application of humanitarian principles in remote management of humanitarian aid.

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[20] See discussion on the characteristics and issues on the sub topic moral and ethical obligations through humanitarian principles. pp. 77-78

4.6 Humanitarian Accountability in Remote Management of Humanitarian Aid

Riddel's literature[21] identifies humanitarian accountability as one of the key standards that organizations need to oblige to in their humanitarian response. The study used the 6 HAP International accountability benchmarks of establishing and delivering on commitments; staff competency; sharing information; participation; handling complaints; and learning and continual improvement as described in the conceptual framework,[22] as a yardstick to measure if humanitarian organizations implemented accountability requirements in remote managed humanitarian aid. The key informant interviews[23] reported that a majority of the International organizations reported being certified by HAP international and have developed systems and procedures for implementing the HAP benchmarks. In some locations, it was reported that governments or even some armed opposition groups do not allow community gatherings, thus providing no room for information sharing and participation. Most of the institutional donors had relatively minimal focus on the specific benchmarks of accountability, but expected that they organizations they fund would oblige to them. Some respondents indicated that HAP principles are irrelevant as they could expose their staff to insecurity. Most organizations have developed innovative ways of beneficiary feedback mechanisms using the social media platforms. The short messaging system (SMS) had worked very well in Somalia, where the mobile network is reported to be very wide. Respondents mentioned regular reviews either periodically and/or annually to identify lessons for continual learning. In terms of staff capacity, some respondents noted that their

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[21]See Chapter one Literature Review on Humanitarian Aid management , p. 25
[22]See Chapter two on HAP Benchmarks by HAP International , p. 55
[23]See Chapter three on Effective and Accountable Programming, pp. 81-83

organizations had a group of demotivated international or expatriate staff who lack a sense of having tangible results of their work as they do not visit projects.

Key informants and focus group discussions[24] reported that in some areas, there is complete disinterest in the principles and practices of accountability as the staff already have enough pressure that accountability is just not a priority. Organizations are however initiating some creativity in the programming to mainstream some aspects of accountability practices, such as information-sharing, participation, complaint handling and capacity development of appropriate staff function within the context of remote management. Based on the above, most of the organizations are focussing on upwards accountability towards donors, in terms of reporting and monitoring systems. Downwards accountability towards beneficiaries is receiving significantly less attention.

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[24]See Chapter three on Effective and Accountable Programming, pp. 81-83

Table 3: Humanitarian accountability in remote management of humanitarian aid
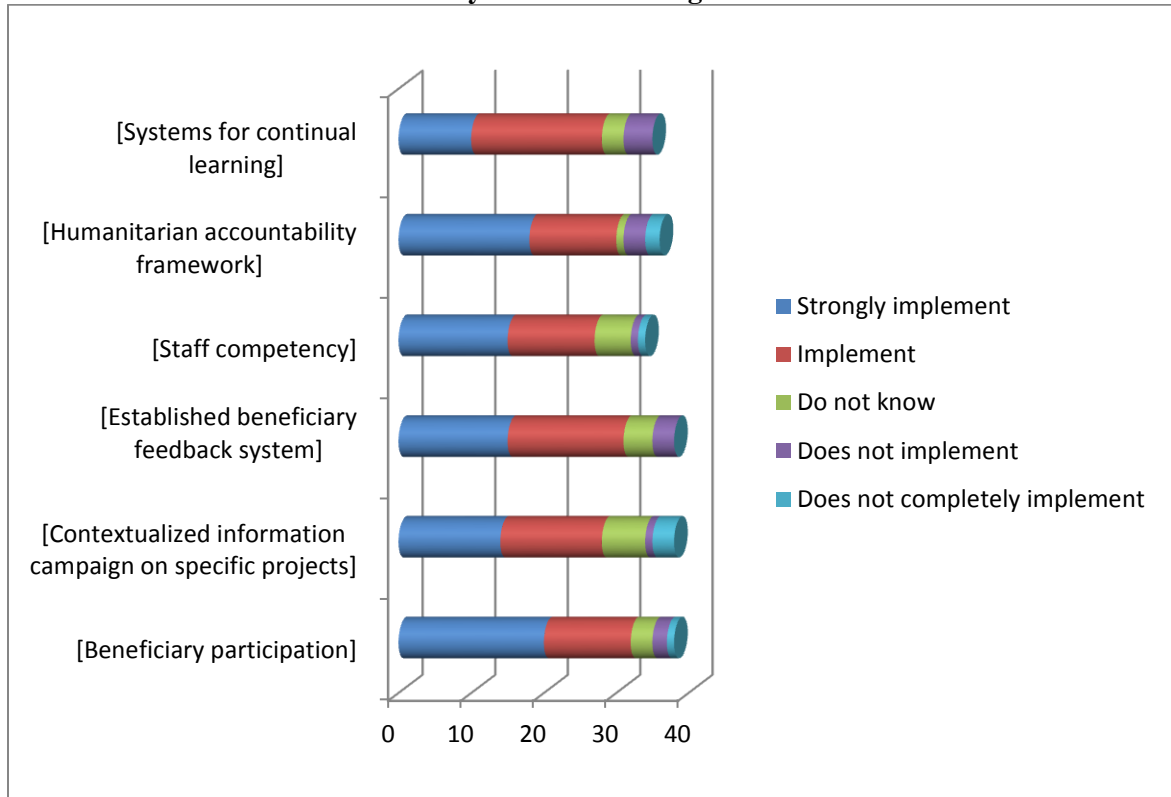
Table 3 illustrates the findings of the application of each of the 6 benchmarks,[25] as follows: (i) 32 respondents reported that their organizations ensured beneficiary participation; (ii) 28 respondents reported that their organizations developed and shared contextualized information on specific projects; (iii) 31 respondents reported that their organizations a system of complaints and feedback mechanism; (iv) 27 respondents reported that their organizations developed systems to ensure staff competency; (v) 30 respondents reported that their organizations had developed accountability frameworks for ensuring implementation of humanitarian accountability; and (vi) 28 respondents

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[25]See Chapter two on description on HAP Benchmarks by HAP International , p.55

reported that their organizations their organizations undertake periodic reviews to identify lessons for continual learning.

The study thus reveals that while organizations are HAP certified, and have developed systems and procedures for implementation, operationalizing humanitarian accountability benchmarks is a challenge in conflict affected and insecure environments.

4.7 Quality Management in Remote Management of Humanitarian Aid

Fiona's literature[26] indicates the general consensus on the fact that humanitarian action ought to be based on the observance of quality standards. The conceptual framework[27] supports this with a requirement that quality management is required in the whole project cycle beginning from programming, identification, formulation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation. The primary information drawn from the study[28]show that in remote management, programme development is based on second hand information and data, thus they would be no guarantee for evidence based programming; the quality of assessments cannot always be guaranteed, and the modality reduces the complexity of programming and thus quality of projects. Respondents[29] agreed that remotely managed operations can bring about a loss of control and oversight, due to lack of guidance to ensure corrective measures are introduced during project implementation. Remote management curtails monitoring of progress of projects, decisions are not real time, as documents and communication have to be exchanged for a sound decision to be made, and this causes delays. Due to the distance[30] between

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[26]See Chapter one Literature Review on Humanitarian Aid Management, p. 25
[27] See Chapter two discussion by ALNAP on Humanitarian Quality, p.58
[28]See Chapter three on Technical and Programmatic Risks in Humanitarian Aid Quality, pp. 78 - 80
[29]Ibid
[30]See Chapter two on the Concept of Remote, pp. 29 - 34

international and national staff, there is potential for fraud and corruption, increased pressure and expectation (social and political), among other issues.

In order to counter the aforementioned potential weakness in remote management of humanitarian aid, the respondents reported having developed systems and procedures ensure quality programming and management. Some respondents[31] reported that their organizations undertook project inception or kick-off meetings for new projects to ensure key field staff are familiar with the programmatic, financial and compliance deliverables. In these meetings the organizations develop clear checklists on information, implementation and monitoring procedures for the different projects. Most organizations undertook quarterly project portfolios reviews and annual reviews to ensure all plans are implemented. In terms of training and monitoring, organizations reporting to have developed innovative remote management training tools / modules for both communities and staff using audio visual equipment that communities can watch to understand the intent of the programme so that intended messages reach the target beneficiaries without any distortion or loss of key information. Innovative monitoring of projects include like photographic evidence (taking `before and after' photos with GPS coordinates)[32] at implementation sites, web based project tracking database, social media platform (SMS, facebook, you tube, etc) for beneficiary feedback, and recording of beneficiary mobile numbers for validation. Respondents[33] from institutional donor organizations reported that other than reports received from the funded partners, they undertook ghost (secret monitors), third party (external consultants) or triangulated (peer) local monitoring of

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[31]See Chapter three on Innovative approaches to Remote Management of Humanitarian Aid, p. 72
[32]See Chapter two on the Concept of Remote and the techniques in Remote sensing, pp. 29 - 34
[33]See Chapter three on Donor Compliance in Remote Management, p. 70

remotely managed projects. The issues surrounding remote management do pose a substantial threat to programme quality, and it seems to be a fact that shifting to remote management means accepting an unavoidable lowering of technical sophistication and versatility, as well as for programme monitoring and evaluation standards. The research unveiled a plethora[34] of innovative and good practices that humanitarian organizations have developed in order to address these quality related issues, through monitoring remote managed projects. It is however not clear whether the innovative approaches are confined to individual organisations or shared more widely within the humanitarian aid network to promote learning and best practice amongst all the actors.

From the questionnaire data received showed that organizations undertake several actions to address the issue of quality in remote management,[35] as i) 27 undertake strategic reviews to assess the relevance of the strategic programme documents; ii) 28 ensure their field staff are provided with adequate enough information to implement the projects; iii) 26 ensure staff have enough information in a timely manner to manage the programmes; iv) 24 ensure staff have sufficient information to make strategic decisions; v) 18 undertake periodic portfolio reviews to asses programmes progress and quality in operations; vi) 27 ensure adequate technical oversight on the programmes; vii) 26 have adapted their project monitoring and evaluation plans to suit the remote management modality; vii) 28 reported that their staff collect adequate and accurate data; viii) 19 undertake third party monitoring; ix) 21 receive structured reports from the field that enable automatic comparison between different projects; and (x) 4 respondents reported that their organizations undertook ghost monitoring.

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[34]See Chapter three on Innovative approaches to Remote Management of Humanitarian Aid pp. 72-74
[35]Ibid

4.7.1 Entry and Exit Strategies for Remote Management

To further augment the issue of quality in humanitarian aid, the study investigated if the humanitarian organizations had developed systems for entry and exit of remote management of humanitarian aid. Table 5 illustrates that, (i) 19 respondents reported that their organizations had strategic plans for entry; (ii) 29 respondents reported that their organizations had safety and security focal points; (iii) 28 respondents reported that their organizations undertake periodic safety risk assessments; (iv) 17 respondents reported that their organizations had remote management phase out protocols; and (v) 16 respondents reported that they had developed an exit strategy with regards to remote management of humanitarian aid.

Further discussions[36] on the entry and exit strategies revealed that organizations have well documented plans, but these are not widely circulated for legitimate security reasons. Some respondents reported that within their organizations, their entry into a remote management modality was reactive, and was basically ignited by an incident and evolved or continued without a clear strategic plan.[37] Some respondents reported that their organizations implemented humanitarian aid in conflict affected areas due to the availability of donor funding for such areas. Some respondents reported that plans for entry and exit are project specific and generally not formally defined in their organizations. Most organizations[38] have Safety and Security Advisors and Security focal points for the remotely managed areas. Risk assessments, mapping and mitigation measures are carried out either as single organizations or through collective NGO

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[36]See Chapter three on Basis for Remote Management Approach, p.66
[37]See Chapter two on the Trends in Remote Management, pp.48 - 52
[38]See Chapter three on Innovative approaches to Remote Management of Humanitarian Aid p. 74

Security bodies like NGO Safety programme for Somalia, the UN Department for Safety and Security (UNDSS) and information is shared through the NGO Consortium arrangements.

The primary information[39] discerned that humanitarian organizations have put in place several measures to ensure there are security and safety focal points, safety and security risks assessments are undertaken periodically, and phase out protocols and exit strategy put in place.

Table 4: Established systems for entry and exit of remote management
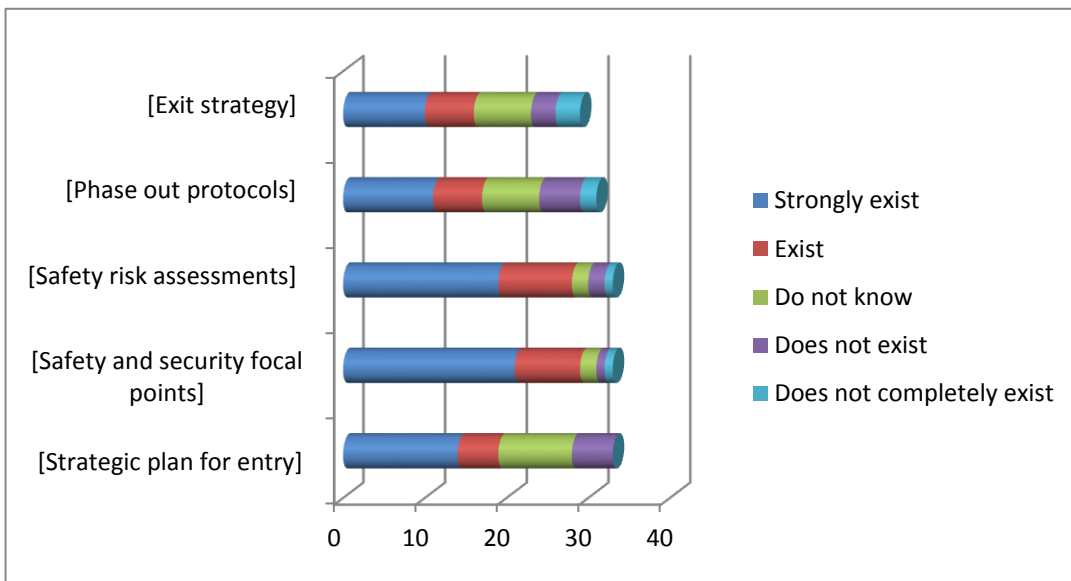
4.7.2 Access to Information and Reporting in Remote Management of Humanitarian Aid

The study sought to establish the humanitarian aid workers level of confidence on most of the field reports used to develop consolidated reports to their headquarters and donors. Out of the 35 responses to the questionnaires, i) 8 respondents reported being very confident of the field reports; ii) 23 respondents reported being fairly confident; iii)

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[39] Ibid

3 respondents were not confident; while v) 1 of the respondent was not confident at all of the field reports . Most of the respondents did not respond to this question, noting that it would be a breach of their organizational values.

Figure 5: Level of confidence with field reports
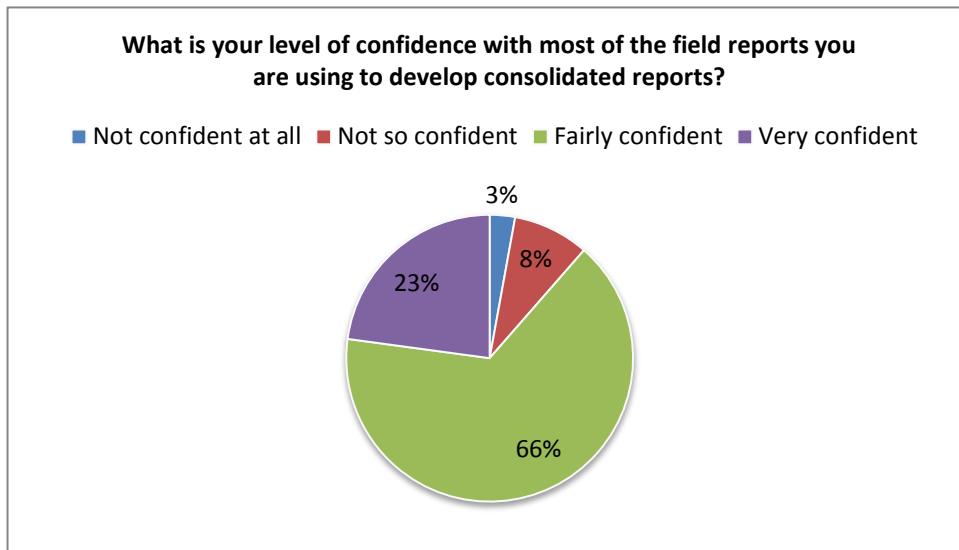
In the key informant interviews and further discussions,[40] most of the organizations reported that remote management is a system based on trust. Local staff or partners are entrusted to share information, implement activities as discussed and transmit results. The outcome of this process would therefore depend very much on the personalities of the people involved, mutual understanding between both ends and a common interest to uphold quality of work.

The study further sought to establish the number of sources of information used by international staff to verify field key aspects by the humanitarian organizations. Table 10 provides the findings which reveal that 53% of the respondents used between 2-4

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[40]See Chapter three on Reporting and Information Sharing in Remote Management p. 79

sources of information, 34% used 1-2 sources, while 14% used more than 4 sources to verify key aspects of field reports. Only 32 persons responded to this question.

Figure 6: Number of sources of information used to verify field key aspects
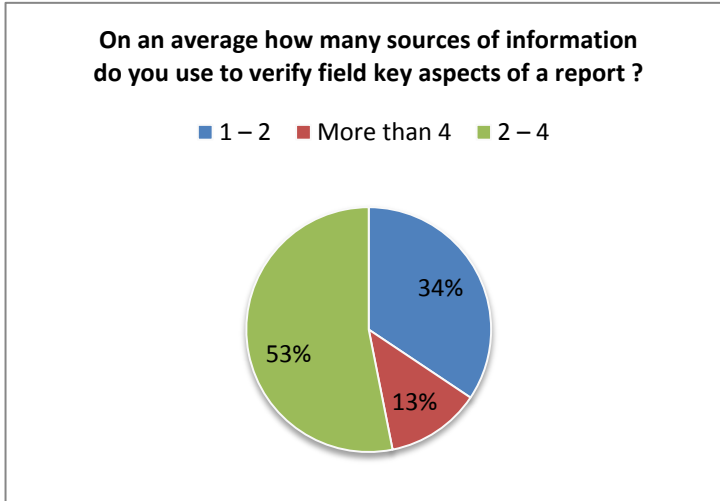
The study sought to know the frequency of written reports from field staff or local organizations to the international staff or organizations. 12% of the respondents reported that they provide daily reports, 28% reported that they provide weekly reports, 41% reported monthly reports, while 19% submitted quarterly reports. This question only received 32 responses.

Figure 7: Frequency of reporting from the field
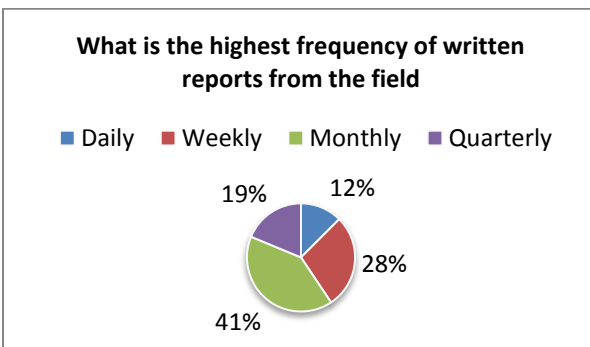
With regards to the average period of time taken between the occurrence of an incident in the field, and the time taken to receive final and consolidated information on the same[41], the findings as shown in the figure below reveal that majority (56%) of the respondent pointed that they receive final consolidated incident report within less than one month from time of occurrence, 25% indicated that they receive final consolidated report within 1-2 months from time of occurrence; 13% reported that they receive final consolidated reports within a period of more than 4 months from time of occurrence, while only 4% receive final consolidated report immediately. A total of 32 responses were received from the questionnaire.

Figure 8: Average time between the period of an incidence to the final reporting
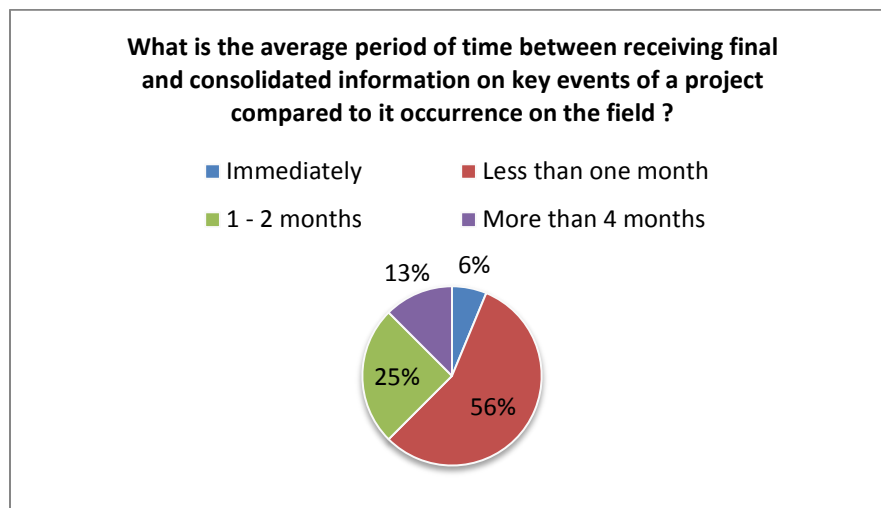
The above findings reveal the fact that the humanitarian organizations are fairly confident of the information and reports received from the field offices despite the fact the information is not real time and when reports are received the authenticity has to be

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[41]See Chapter three on Reporting and Information Sharing in Remote Management p. 79

verified by two or more sources. Additionally, decisions are delayed as reports take a while to be consolidated and shared with the relevant offices.

4.7.3 Organizational Structures to Support Remote Management of Humanitarian Aid

The study reviewed whether humanitarian organizations complied with donor guidelines[42] in a remote management modality. This was considered a very sensitive question, thus some respondents shied away from responding. The findings as shown in figure 13 below reveals that out of the 31 respondents, I) With regards to programming based on donor requirements (16 complied, 1 did not comply while 14 were not aware of whether they complied or not); ii) in terms of general compliance with donor ruled and regulations (18 complied, while 14 were not aware of whether they complied or not); and iii) with regards to the reporting deadlines (14 complied, 1 did not comply, 17 were not aware of whether they complied or not).

In the key informant interviews and further discussions,[43] most of the respondents particularly from the INGOs reported that programming was biased and based on funding opportunities and donor restrictions, as some donors do not allow funding to go to areas controlled by armed opposition groups, while others are flexible and prioritize humanitarian imperative. Due to the distance[44] between the senior management and the field staff, the respondents were uncertain about the proper use of resources. They indicated that with this approach, there is a high potential for misappropriation, lack of adherence to laid down guidelines and procedures, misrepresentation of needs of the

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[42] See Chapter one Discussion on the need for compliance with donor guidelines on International Assistance, pp. 4 - 7
[43] See Chapter three on Donor Compliance in Remote Management, pp. 71-72
[44] See Chapter two on the Concept of Remote, pp. 29 - 34

targeted beneficiaries, misinformation by staff on some issues, possibility of fraud, among other issues. Nevertheless, while remote management is susceptible to corruption and mismanagement of resources, most of organizations reported that it has led to reduced operational costs.

All the organizations reported that they had developed clear financial and administrative guidelines[45] that include due diligence checks for all contractors and suppliers to ensure no affiliation with military/terrorist groups particularly for funding from one of the donors.[46]

Figure 9: Compliance with donor guidelines
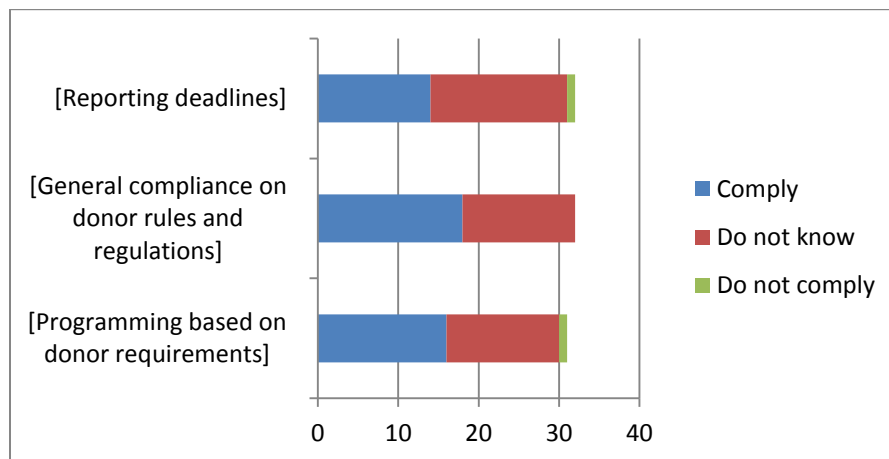
The findings above reveal that humanitarian organizations consider compliance to the set guidelines of the organization and the donors as vital to the management purpose of the organization. The key informants and focus groups[47] however reported that there is however an unconfirmed perception that the distance management approach could give room for corruption, misappropriation and mismanagement of resources. Donor policies

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[45]See Chapter three on Donor Compliance in Remote Management, pp. 71-72
[46]Ibid
[47]Ibid

and or parent country foreign policies influence programming, thus the humanitarian actors do not have a free hand in deciding the projects to undertake in the conflict affected areas.

The research sought to determine the existence of organizational structures for remote management. The findings[48] were as follows: i) 33 respondent reported that their organizations had organizational decision making structures; ii) 29respondents reported that their organizations has defined information needs for remote management; iii) 31 respondents noted that their organizations had developed communication methodologies and equipment for use in the remote management approach; iv) 28 respondents reported that their organizations had remote managers with strong contextual and cultural knowledge; v) 27 respondents reported that their organizations undertook free and fair recruitment processes; vi) 27 respondents reported that their organizations had programmes for capacity building; and vii) 32 respondents reported that their organizations had clear, financial management, procurement and logistics guidelines. Table 6 reflects the responses given to the questionnaires on the same.

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[48] See Chapter three on Modes and Styles of Remote Management of Humanitarian Aid, pp. 59-64

Table 5: Organizational structures for remote management
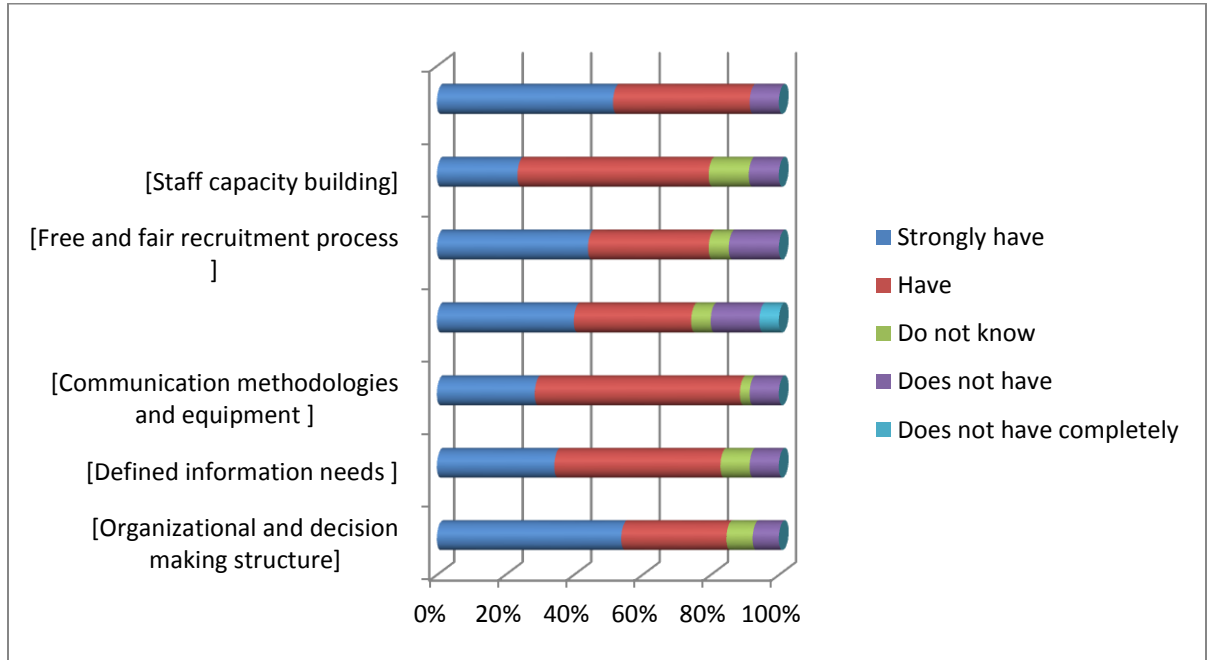
Further to the organizational structure,[49] the researcher sought to investigate whether there were any significant changes realized as a result of remote management. From the findings, 70% of the interviewed respondents indicate that the decision making process has changed because of remote management while the rest (30%) indicated otherwise. Further 81% indicated that composition of teams had changed because of remote management, while 19% diverged with majority opinion. Finally, 83% opined that their organizations had realized a significant change in project management brought by remote management while the rest 17% were of a negative opinion. Figure 15 presents the findings of the information above.

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[49] See Chapter three on Modes and Styles of Remote Management of Humanitarian Aid, pp. 59-64

Table 6: Significant change realized as a result of remote management
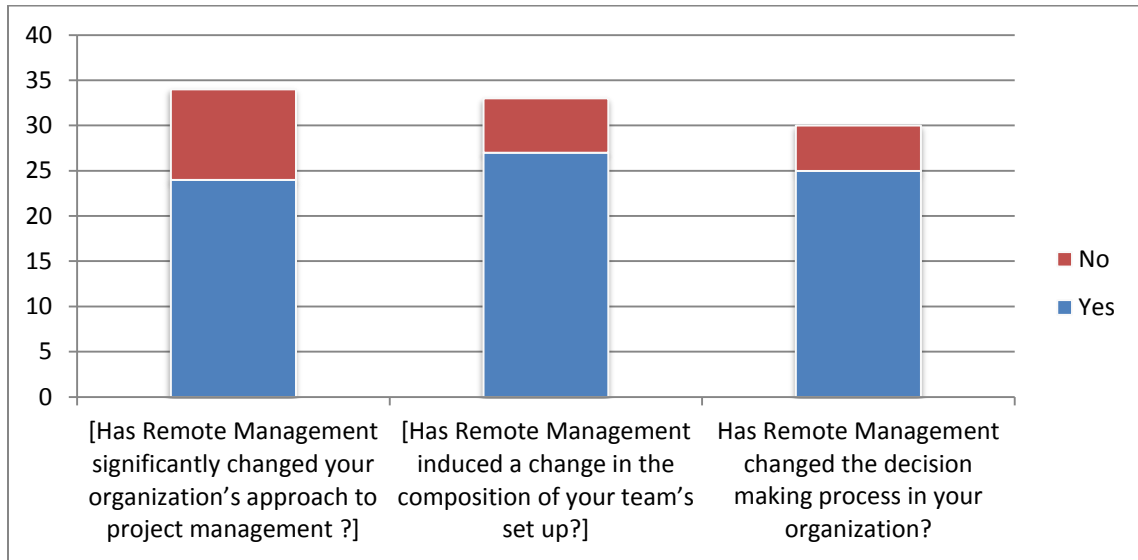
With the response above in mind, the respondents were requested to rate whether remote management had changed their ambitions in terms of project outputs or the level of approach to project implementation. 45% of the respondents report that remote management had increased their ambitions in the level of project outputs compared to 55% whose ambitions had decreased. In terms of the level of approach to project implementation, 47% of the respondents reported that their level of ambitions had increased compared to 53% whose ambitions had decreased.

Table 7: Ambition levels in remote management
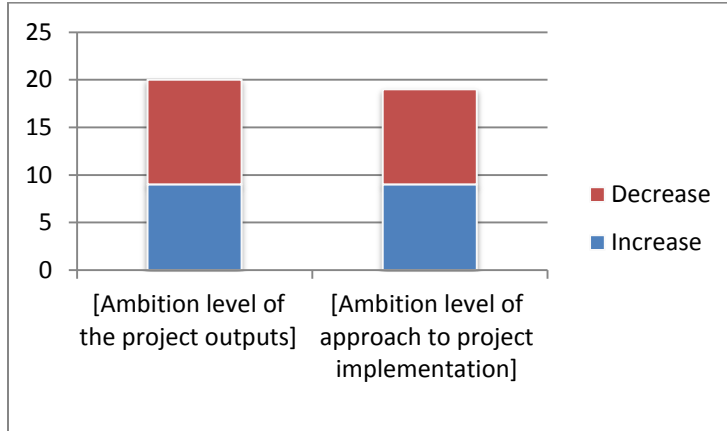
From all the above, the study thus reveals that despite humanitarian organizations developing innovative and good practises, the standards and quality of programming reduces in remote management of humanitarian aid. The reactive, short-term decision-making mind-set nature of remote management hinders strategic planning for entry and transition. Additionally, the remote management approach poses difficulties with logistics, communications, monitoring, and interagency coordination. While organizations have undertaken several steps to define the structures for remote management, there is a significant change of approach to general programme management. Notably, there is a decrease in the level of ambition for project outputs and approach to implementation.

4.8 Conclusion

In conclusion, remote management can be described as a universal and pragmatic approach applied by humanitarian organizations to provide relief activities in situations where humanitarian access is limited due to conflict related insecurity and regulatory obstacles by the local authorities or armed opposition groups. There is a wide diversity of

ways in which organizations' set up their remote management arrangements, depending on the context. Often, humanitarian organizations combine different practices in their approach to remote management. While remote management allows humanitarian aid to continue despite the levels of threat, the practice has significant negative implications for monitoring and accountability practices and for the assurance of project quality. Additionally, the practice raises a number of normative questions with regards to the risk transfer from international staff to national staff. Nevertheless, the approach ensures vulnerable populations receive support at whatever risk.

CHAPTER FIVE

Summary of Key Findings and Conclusions

5.1 Introduction

This chapter provides the key findings of the study and suggests areas of further research. The overall objective of study was to assess whether remote management modality is a viable option for principled, transparent and accountable humanitarian delivery in conflict affected environments. The main objective was to assess the viability of remote management in humanitarian aid, whereas the specific objectives were twofold: one to describe the remote management practice by aid agencies; and two, to analyze remote management with respect to the principles of good management in humanitarian aid.

The chapter revolves around three main sub topics: one, presenting the main findings of the study and reviewing the same to ascertain whether the study has achieved its objectives or not; two, drawing conclusions based on the theoretical framework and the hypotheses of the study; and three, identifying some areas for further research with regards to remote management.

5.2 Summary of Key Findings

The study has drawn six key findings as outlined,(i) Remote management of humanitarian aid is a common agency adaptation in high conflict and security risk environments; (ii) the decision to undertake remote management is driven by the humanitarian imperative; (iii) the common defining feature for remote management is the ability to manage from a distance, while continuing international ownership, control and responsibility over the programme; (iv) there is no guarantee in the application of

humanitarian principles in remote management of humanitarian aid; (v) operationalizing humanitarian accountability benchmarks is a challenge in conflict affected and insecure environments; (vi) the standards and quality of programming reduces in remote management of humanitarian aid.

5.3 Key Findings and Conclusions

This section discusses the key findings of the study with regards to the objectives of the study; and thereafter drawing conclusions on every finding.

Specific objective one: To describe remote management practice by aid agencies

Under this specific objective,[1] the study has drawn three findings: (i) Remote management of humanitarian aid is a common agency adaptation in high conflict and security risk environments; (ii) the decision to undertake remote management is driven by the humanitarian imperative; and (iii) the common defining feature for remote management is the ability to manage from a distance, while continuing international ownership, control and responsibility over the programme.

The first finding reveals that remote management of humanitarian aid is a common agency adaptation in high conflict and security risk environments[2]. It is one of the strategies humanitarian organizations are developing out of the traditional humanitarian approaches in order to reach vulnerable and needy populations. Theoretically, the shift from traditional humanitarian management strategies to remote management confirms the need for pragmatism in the theory of obligation,[3] the acknowledgement that real world conditions that constrain planned actions. The general

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[1]See Chapter one Objectives of the Study, p. 3
[2]See Chapter four on Remote Management of Humanitarian Aid as a common approach, p. 80
[3]See Chapter one, Edwards discussion on the Theoretical Framework, p. 36

fact is that while the modality is seen as a temporary measure, it is increasingly becoming a standard practice for most of the humanitarian organizations. In assessing the viability of remote management in humanitarian aid, this finding confirms the fact that all organizations have recognized the modality thus making it a common approach. The finding confirms the positive hypothesis[4] that increased use of remote management increases the effectiveness of humanitarian aid, as the modality is embraced by all stakeholders providing humanitarian aid to vulnerable populations in conflict affected environments.

The second finding reports that the decision to undertake remote management is driven by the humanitarian imperative[5].The factors that drive or influences whether an agency switches to remote management are multiple and context specific with the core driver being security-related restrictions that hamper humanitarian access. All humanitarian actors however share one common and important objective for undertaking remote management that of maintaining some level of humanitarian assistance in conflict and security affected environments, which would otherwise stop if the humanitarian agencies withdrew. This revelation confirms the theory of obligation to support the vulnerable populations regardless of the contextual risks[6]. As it is obviously physically impossible to resolve every humanitarian issue at once, setting realistic, achievable goals that can be met "on the ground" is vital. The assessment of the felt needs of intended beneficiaries is a key component of a theory of obligation. Central to this is the assumption that the needs and interests of the beneficiaries are of greater importance,

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[4] See Chapter one Hypothesis, p. 22
[5] See Chapter four , the Pragmatism as the Basis for Remote Management Application, p. 83
[6] See Chapter one, Prendergast and Verdirames's discussion on theTheoretical Framework, pp. 35 - 37

regardless of the contextual risks. In this sense, the humanitarian organizations admit the moral obligation to aid dispossessed and disadvantaged populations, admitting to the existence of the burden that they carry in their circumstances. This is also the cornerstone of the humanitarian imperative[7].In assessing the viability of remote management in humanitarian aid; this finding confirms the fact that all humanitarian organizations view the remote management as an alternative measure to ensure provision of life saving services, as opposed to suspending or withdrawing aid completely. The finding confirms the positive hypothesis[8] that increased use of remote management increases the effectiveness of humanitarian aid. Remote management ensures vulnerable populations receive humanitarian services regardless of the contextual risks.

The third finding of the study notes that the common defining feature for remote management is the ability to manage from a distance, while continuing international ownership, control and responsibility over the programme.[9]The study shows that there is a wide diversity of ways in which humanitarian organisations set up their remote management arrangements, given the ad hoc and reactive nature of the decision to 'go remote' thus providing a description on the practise of remote management as required by the study objective. Theoretically, the shift to distance management confirms the need for pragmatism[10] as stipulated in the theory of obligation, the acknowledgement that real world conditions that constrain planned actions and choices, coupled with the acceptance that actions are found in real world consequences. The theory acknowledges that while it is obviously impossible to resolve every humanitarian issue at once, setting realistic and

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[7] See Chapter one Literature on definition of Humanitarian Imperative, p. 12
[8] See Chapter one Hypothesis, p. 22
[9]See Chapter four on Distance Management approach in the Modes and Styles of Remote, p. 85
[10]See Chapter one, Edward's discussion on the Theoretical Framework, p. 36

achievable goals that cannot be met on the ground is vital. The finding confirms the positive hypothesis[11] that increased use of remote management increases the effectiveness of humanitarian aid. Despite the distance and inaccessibility, humanitarian organizations continue to identify alternative strategies to reach the conflict affected populations.

Specific Objective two: To analyse remote management with respect to the principles of good humanitarian management

Under this specific objective,[12] the study has drawn the fourth and fifth finding as, (iv) there is no guarantee in the application of humanitarian principles in remote management of humanitarian aid; (v) operationalizing humanitarian accountability benchmarks is a challenge in conflict affected and insecure environments; (vi) the standards and quality of programming reduces in remote management of humanitarian aid.

The fourth finding states that there is no guarantee in the application of humanitarian principles in remote management of humanitarian aid.[13]All humanitarian actors should consider humanitarian principles as valid, and a basic guide for decisions and actions. The finding contravenes the theory of obligation[14]that presents humanitarian principles as a moral/ethical element that informs decisions on issues that are appropriate for humanitarianism, and the actions that are morally permissible in pursuing them. The study reveals that maintaining humanitarian principles in conflict affected or violent contexts is a challenge in any operation, and made more so when undertaking a remote

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[11] See Chapter one Hypothesis, p.22
[12]See Chapter one Objectives of the Study, p.3
[13] See Chapter four on the Humanitarian Principles in the Remote Managed projects, p.87
[14]See Chapter one, Edward's discussion on the Theoretical Framework, p.35

management approach. It is therefore a difficult to guarantee that field staff and local partners actually oblige to them, due to the potential pressure on the staff and partners from the local authorities, and the possibility of being compromised to favour or discriminate against certain groups. In assessing the viability of remote management in humanitarian aid, this finding responds to the specific objective of analyzing remote management with respect to the principles of good humanitarian management which it confirms, the modality does not. The finding confirms the negative hypothesis[15] that increased use of remote management reduces the effectiveness of humanitarian aid. Despite the fact that humanitarian organizations recognize and take a conscious effort to ensure the application of humanitarian principles in remote management, there is immense pressure on local staff and partners from the local authorities and belligerent groups, thus there is a possibility of being compromised to favour or discriminate against certain groups.

The fifth finding states that operationalizing humanitarian accountability benchmarks is a challenge in conflict affected and insecure environments.[16] Humanitarian accountability is one of the key standards that organizations need to oblige to in their humanitarian response. The theory of obligation[17] demands that humanitarian organizations must be held accountable for policies and their effects, intended or not in a remote management situation. The findings however show that humanitarian accountability benchmarks are complex, and definitely challenging in a remote management context. The context does not allow prioritising and mainstreaming

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[15] See Chapter one Hypothesis, p. 22

[16] See Chapter four on the Humanitarian Accountability in Remote Management of Humanitarian Aid, p. 90

[17] See Chapter one, Prendergast's discussion on the Theoretical Framework, p. 35

accountability, and at times there is complete disinterest in the principles and practices of accountability as the staff already have enough pressure that accountability is just not a priority. In assessing the viability of remote management in humanitarian aid, this finding responds to the sub objective of analyzing remote management with respect to the principles of good humanitarian management which it confirms, the modality does not. The finding confirms the negative hypothesis[18] that increased use of remote management reduces the effectiveness of humanitarian aid. Most of the organizations in remote managed programmes focus on upwards accountability towards donors, in terms of reporting. Downwards accountability towards beneficiaries is receiving significantly less attention.

The sixth finding of the study indicates that the standards and quality of programming reduces in remote management of humanitarian aid[19]. Humanitarian action ought to be based on the observance of quality standards throughout the project cycle. The material component of the theory of obligation[20] demands that humanitarian aid is provided based on felt needs, pragmatism and within the networks of service provides and associated infrastructure. The findings show that remote management poses a substantial threat to programme quality, and for most of the humanitarian organizations, the shift to remote management means accepting an unavoidable lowering of technical sophistication and versatility, as well as for programme monitoring and evaluation standards. Stakeholders are fully aware that remote management is not the ideal way of managing humanitarian aid, agencies and donors generally accept that standards and

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[18] See Chapter one Hypothesis, p. 22
[19] See Chapter four on the Quality Management in Remote Management of Humanitarian Aid, p. 102
[20] See Chapter one, Edward's discussion on the Theoretical Framework, p. 35

quality of programme activities have slipped. The remote management approach poses difficulties with logistics, communications, monitoring, and interagency coordination. In assessing the viability of remote management in humanitarian aid, this finding responds to the sub objective of analyzing remote management with respect to the principles of good humanitarian management which it confirms, the modality does not. The finding confirms the negative hypothesis[21] that increased use of remote management reduces the effectiveness of humanitarian aid. Despite humanitarian organizations developing innovative and good practises, the nature of remote management, management from a distance does not allow for adequate oversight necessary for good quality management throughout the project cycle.

5.4 Hypothesis Testing

The study set to test the following hypothesis, (i) **H₁**Increased use of remote management increases the efficiency and effectiveness of humanitarian aid; (ii) **H₀**Remote management does not affect the efficiency and effectiveness of humanitarian aid; and (iii) **H₂**Increased used of remote management reduces the efficiency and effectiveness management of humanitarian aid.

Finding one, two and three confirm the positive hypothesis. In these findings, the remote management is a modality is embraced by all stakeholders providing humanitarian aid to vulnerable populations in conflict affected environments, it ensures vulnerable populations receive humanitarian services regardless of the contextual risks, and despite the distance and inaccessibility in conflict affected situations, humanitarian

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[21] See Chapter one Hypothesis, p. 22

organizations have identified this strategy in order to reach the conflict affected populations.

Finding four, five and six confirm thenegative hypothesis. In these findings, the study has acknowledges that despite humanitarian organizations recognizing and take a conscious effort to ensure the application of humanitarian principles in remote management, there is usually immense pressure on local staff and partners from the belligerent groups, thus creating a possibility of being compromised to favour or discriminate against certain groups. These findings further confirm that most humanitarian organizations in remote managed programmes focus on upwards accountability towards donors than downwards accountability towards beneficiaries; and that the application of remote management presents an automatic lowering of the quality of humanitarian aid as management from a distance does not allow for adequate oversight necessary for good quality management throughout the project cycle.

From the analysis, the study findings confirmboth the positive and negative hypothesis. The practise of remote management in humanitarian aid thus increases and decreases the efficiency and effectiveness of humanitarian aid, depending on the perspective of review.

5.5 Conclusion of the Study

This study, on the basis of the findings point out to the fact that remote management has emerged as one of the key strategies used by humanitarian agencies to maintain access to populations in need. This modality has been developed out of necessity to maintain the humanitarian imperative, of ensuring humanitarian aid reaches the vulnerable populations regardless of the contextual risks. From the study findings,

remote management programming has the important benefit of allowing some aid programming to continue in difficult situations with high threat levels. The study also acknowledges that the practice entails a number of hazards and disadvantages. These can include lower-quality and less-efficient service delivery, difficulties maintaining a strategic programme and planning focus, the risk of corruption, and accountability concerns. In addition, it raises serious normative and ethical questions regarding the transfer of security risks from international personnel to national actors who often have fewer security resources, less training, and scant alternatives for other gainful employment.

Remote Management should therefore be considered a last resort, an unfortunate necessity, a difficult option undertaken in the meantime to save lives in volatile and insecure project areas. The adoption of remote management strategies should be inspired by the humanitarian imperative, and should not be the ideal or deemed to be the best approach. It should only be applied if accompanied by good practices to ensure that accountability standards are not lowered in the long-run and to prevent remote management from turning from the exception to the rule.

5.6 Recommendations

The main objective of the study was to assess remote management as a viable option for principled, transparent and accountable humanitarian delivery in conflict affected environments. From the findings and conclusions described in chapter four and five, the study draws the following recommendations.

5.6.1 Academic Recommendations

The study has achieved its purpose of assessing the general efficacy or viability of the remote management practise with regards to the acceptable humanitarian management practise. However, due to the limitation in the scope, the study has not reviewed the efficiency and effectiveness of remote management with respect to cross cutting issues in humanitarian aid. Minimum operating standards in humanitarian aid demand that all humanitarian operations must ensure disaster risk reduction, positive environmental impact, HIV & AIDs, Age, Gender and Diversity are taken into consideration during humanitarian programming.

The study therefore recommends a further exploration on the practical application of remote management in all the conflict affected environments with a view to documenting the efficiency and effectiveness in dealing with cross cutting issues in humanitarian aid programming. Such an investigation should yield a practical and comprehensive knowledge base on cross cutting issues in remote managed humanitarian aid.

5.6.2 Policy Recommendations

The study recommends the development of a policy guideline to direct humanitarian organizations on how to balance between the humanitarian imperative and good practises in humanitarian management. The policy should clearly document what compromises humanitarian organizations in remote managed operations need to accept without risking the long term deterioration of established humanitarian principles and minimum operating standards, thereby determining the point at which compromises required to keep humanitarian operations going, should be considered so overwhelming

that leaving people in need to their own choices is the best option. The policy document should also identify some internal or emergency-wide "red lines" that specify acceptable practice that would be essential for upholding humanitarian standards and principles in a remote management situation.

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Annex 1: Questionnaire

UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI

INSTITUTE OF DIPLOMACY AND INTERNATIONAL STUDIES

This questionnaire is intended to facilitate the study on "**International Assistance during conflicts. A case study of Remote Management of Humanitarian Aid**.' The study is for academic purposes and is carried out as partial requirement of the award of Master of Arts degree in International Conflict Management. As a key practitioner, you have been selected to provide vital information that will facilitate the study. Your response will be treated with utmost confidentiality.

Thank you very much for your valuable time.

SECTION A: BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1. Type of organization

   National ☐ International ☐ United Nations ☐ Donor ☐Consultancy firm ☐

2. How long has your organization applied a remote management approach (months)?

   0 – 11 ☐   12 -23 ☐   24 – 35 ☐   36 and above ☐

SECTION B: REMOTE MANAGEMENT DESCRIPTION

3. What triggered your organization to apply the remote management approach to humanitarian aid?
   Indicate the level of relevance with the following statements using the following rating:
   1 – Strongly Relevant 2 – Relevant 3 – Do not know 4 – Irrelevant 5 – Completely Irrelevant

3(i)	Specific and targeted aid worker insecurity	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
3(ii)	Difficulty in humanitarian access due to general insecurity in the operational environment	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
3(iii)	Political reasons	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
3(iv)	Cost of maintaining security of humanitarian operations	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
3(v)	Establishment of a longstanding humanitarian management hub in a convenient location	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
3(vi)	Others Please name_____	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐

4. What approaches does your organization use in the remote management of humanitarian aid?
Please indicate your level of application with the following statements using the

following rating:

1 – Strongly Apply 2 – Apply 3 – Do not know 4 - Does not apply 5 – Does not completely apply

4(i)	Directly operational with reduced number and range of personnel	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
4(ii)	Operates with international partner organization, managing the project from a different location	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
4(iii)	Operates with a local organization	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
4(iv)	Contracts out direct project implementation to a private organization	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
4(v)	Supports local community self-management structures to implement and monitor projects	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
4(vi)	Other approaches (please name) _____	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐

5. Explain the reason for applying the remote management approaches ticked above highlighting potential benefits, weaknesses and hazards?

_____

_____

SECTION C: HUMANITARIAN PRINCIPLES

6. Does your organization apply the following humanitarian principles in the remote managed projects
   1 – Strongly Apply 2 – Apply 3 – Do not know 4 - Does not apply 5 – Does not completely apply

		1	2	3	4	5
7(i)	Humanity	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
7(ii)	Independence	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
7(iii)	Impartiality	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
7(iv)	Neutrality	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
7(v)	Humanitarian imperative	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
7(vi)	Proselytism	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Comment on the above with regards to:

   i. Current practice_____

   _____

   ii. Good practice_____

   _____

iii. Suggested minimum operating procedures and guidelines

_____

_____

SECTION D: ENTRY AND EXIT STRATEGIES FOR REMOTE MANAGEMENT

7. Does your organization have established system of entry and exit of remote management of humanitarian aid

1 – Strongly exist 2 – Exist 3 – Do not know 4 - Does not exist 5 – Does not completely exist

8(i)	Strategic plan for entry	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
8(ii)	Safety and security focal points	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
8(iii)	Safety risk assessments	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
8(iv)	Phase out protocols	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
8(v)	Exit strategy	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐

Comment on the above with regards to:

i. Current practice_____

_____

ii. Good practice_____

_____

iii. Suggested minimum operating procedures and guidelines_____

_____

SECTION E: HUMANITARIAN ACCOUNTABILITY

8. Does your organization implement the following accountability benchmarks

1 – Strongly implement 2 – Implement 3 – Do not know 4 - Does not implement 5 –
Does not completely implement

		1	2	3	4	5
9(i)	Beneficiary participation	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
9(ii)	Contextualized information campaign on specific projects	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
9(iii)	Established beneficiary feedback system	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
9(iv)	Staff competency	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
9(v)	Humanitarian accountability framework	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
9(vi)	Systems for continual learning	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Comment on the above with regards to:

i.   Current practice_____

_____

ii. Good practice_____

_____

iii. Suggested minimum operating procedures and guidelines_____

_____

SECTION F: PROGRAMME QUALITY MANAGEMENT

9. Does your organization implement the following ensure programme quality management
   1 – Strongly implement 2 – Implement 3 – Do not know 4 - Does not implement 5 – Does not completely implement

		1	2	3	4	5
10(i)	Strategic reviews to assess the relevance of the Strategic programme document	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
10 (ii)	Staff have enough information on the project implementation	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
10 (iii)	Staff access information in a timely manner to manage projects	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
10 (iv)	Staff have sufficient information to make strategic decisions on project management	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
10(v)	Periodic portfolio reviews	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
10(vi)	Technical oversight to programmes	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
10(vii)	Project M & E plans adapted to remote management	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
10(iix)	Collection of adequate and accurate data	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
10(ix)	Third party Monitoring	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
10 (x)	Ghost monitoring					

Comment on the above with regards to:

i. Current practice_____

_____

ii. Good practice_____

_____

iii. Suggested minimum operating procedures and guidelines_____

Section G: Programme Reporting

10. What is your level of confidence with most of the field reports you are using to develop consolidated reports?

Very confident ☐ Fairly confident☐   Not so confident☐   Not confident at all☐

11. On an average how many sources of information do you use to verify field key aspects of a report?

0 ☐   1 - 2 ☐   2 - 4☐

12. What is the highest frequency of written reports from the field
Daily   ☐   Monthly   ☐   Quarterly☐

13. What is the average period of time between receiving final and consolidated information on key events of a project compared to it occurrence on the field (months)?

Immediately☐   One month☐   2 months☐   4-6 months☐

SECTION G: FUNDRAISING AND DONOR RELATIONS

14. Does your organization comply with the donor guidelines

1 – Strongly comply 2 – Comply 3 – Do not know 4 - Does not comply 5 – Does not completely comply

11(i)	Programming based on donor requirements	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
11(ii)	General compliance on donor rules and regulations	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
11(iii)	Reporting deadlines	1	2	3	4	5

		☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Comment on the above with regards to:

    i.   Current practice_____

            _____

    ii.   Good practice_____

            _____

    iii.   Suggested minimum operating procedures and guidelines_____

            _____

SECTION H: OFFICE SUPPORT AND REMOTE OPERATION

15. Does your organization has the following with regard to the remote management office and remote operation

1 – Strongly have 2 – Have 3 – Do not know 4 - Does not have 5 – Does not completely have

12(i)	Organizational and decision making structure	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
12(ii)	Defined information needs	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
12(iii)	IT, Communication methodologies and equipment	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
12(iv)	Remote managers with strong contextual and cultural knowledge	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
12(v)	Free and fair recruitment process	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
12(vi)	Staff capacity building	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
12(vii)	Clear financial management, procurement and logistics	1	2	3	4	5

	guidelines	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Comment on the above with regards to:

    i.   Current practice_____

_____

    ii.   Good practice_____

_____

    iii.   Suggested minimum operating procedures and guidelines_____

_____

SECTION I: GENERAL QUESTIONS

16. Has Remote Management significantly changed your organization's approach to project management

Yes ☐   No ☐

17. Has Remote Management induced a change in the composition of your team's set up?
Yes ☐   No ☐

18. Has Remote Management changed the decision making process in your organization?
Yes ☐   No ☐

If yes, tick the main changes on your organization due to the RM

	Increased	Decreased	Same
Ambition level of the project outputs	☐	☐	☐
Ambition level of approach to project implementation	☐	☐	☐

19. Do the staff feel able to influence management of the project

Yes ☐   No ☐

20. Does your organization expect to resume standard humanitarian operating
    approaches?

Yes ☐   No ☐

If yes, in what period (months)?

0 – 11   ☐   12 -23 ☐   24 – 35   ☐   36 and above
☐

*Disclaimer: This data is strictly for my MA ICM project and it will not be released to
the public or utilized for any other purpose*

Annex 2: Questionnaire Transmittory Email

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am currently undertaking a study on "**International Assistance during conflicts. A case study of Remote Management of Humanitarian Aid**", for academic purposes in partial fulfilment of the award of Master of Arts degree in International Conflict Management, at the University of Nairobi's Institute of Diplomacy and International studies.

As a key practitioner in Humanitarian aid, this is to request you to kindly fill the questionnaire on the link: http://fielddatacollection.org/limesurvey/index.php?sid=76817&lang=en

The responses shall be treated with utmost confidentiality.

Should you require further clarifications or details, do not hesitate to let me know.

Please let me know when you have done so.

Thank you,

Faith Awino