

**INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN OPERATIONS UNDER THE SIEGE
OF SYMBOLS**

by

Diego Fernandez Otegui

A dissertation submitted to the Faculty of the University of Delaware in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Disaster Science and Management

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PREFACE

I want to share with the readers a life-changing experience. It was one of those circumstances that only a few have had the unfortunate privilege to live and have informed this work. It acted as a catalyst for the way I perceive the world, and most importantly, it created a conflict in those most essential beliefs about how our global society should respond to disasters to help the people in need. This preface is not required nor necessary, but I believe it will help the reader to know more about me and what drove me to engage in this research.

In 2001, I received a strange call. I was only 25 years of age back then, still immature I must say, and I had no understanding nor experience in emergency management, conflict, international relations, or any other related disciplines for that matter. I was, however, informed by the voice on the phone, that I had been selected by the United Nations to perform as an electoral officer for the presidential elections in East Timor. Back then I only had the distant dream of becoming a humanitarian worker. I had already been to a few countries and experienced suffering in my own flesh, but to say that I was prepared to face this challenge, would be a lie. Nonetheless, I rushed to accept the mission.

I arrived in East Timor with nothing but a few books, hoping for the best, but knowing that my chances of helping the local population were scarce. The differences between me and the isolated community where I was deployed, meant an almost immediate communication breakdown. It didn't take me much time though, to notice that the inefficiencies in the operation were a result of clashing cultural, ideological,

spiritual, and many times historically constructed realities between the local population and the international humanitarian workers and related personnel.

The entire experience was overwhelming and captivating, stressful though enjoyable, in that it challenged me. It stole from me, for a while at least, my capacity to smile. But it also enlightened me into what would become my present future. My appreciation of things back then was of course constrained by my limited expertise and knowledge, but it was this same immaturity that pushed me to start wondering about the importance of acquiring a deeper understanding of what it is that makes us the way we are.

It was during one of my daily field trips, that I met a young girl that changed my life forever. She must have been 12 or 13 years of age back then, and for reasons that are confusing even to this day, in a somewhat peaceful and docile manner, she shared with me the details of the most atrocious moment a young girl could experience. She spent a few minutes looking down at the dust floor of the shack where we were and described to me how during the war she was forced to perform as a sex slave after members of her family were violently murdered.

I believe that my presence in that place, at that time, was somewhat miraculous. Had another individual been in my shoes, her story might have been lost. But it was not. I happened to be there, and she opened to share with me her hurting spirit. It took me years to be able to grasp the essence of what had happened in that “mystic” moment. It was through my engagement in the study of epistemology that I came to realize that she was providing me with knowledge. Not the kind of knowledge that you get in college though. I am pretty sure that she was among the large group of young people on the island that hadn’t had the chance to go to school, and so her idea

of knowledge was probably limited to the things she could see and touch. But even so, she somewhat knew that by sharing her felt experience, she would allow me to have a revelation, to make sense of her world.

I belonged to the opposite side of the globe and all that defined me -and still does- was diametrically different from what defined her. For me, as for many other emergency-related personnel, much more would have been needed to fully understand things the way she did. At some point, I realized that I was making sense of nothing but what I wanted to make sense of. It was my definition of sense-making and it was thus both biased and extremely limited. I am glad, though simultaneously embarrassed, to say it was not long ago, that I finally understood the “hidden” message that this little girl had for me.

It was certainly not about the facts. As atrocious as it was, many of us know that these horrific things happen all over the world. Neither it was about her feelings. Although I strongly empathized with her, the possibility that I truly shared her feelings was impossible. I know now that what she wanted, was for me to understand that this had happened to Her and that it would never happen to Me. What she wanted, was to help me see that there are circumstances that shape our realities differently and that I, and all other members of the mission, must be fully aware when we step into someone else’s life, even if the purpose is to help.

Even to this day, I still do not know how the United Nations learned about me. I was just one of the many thousands of individuals and organizations that rushed into the country after the conflict. Our convergence in East Timor was nothing but the outcome of the decisions made behind closed doors by executives and decision-makers, driven by their organization’s goals and agendas. And the fact that they

recruited me over the phone to travel across the world and go from Argentina to such a distant country, is just a tiny sample of how this massive phenomenon called convergence takes place in the aftermath of a disaster and I desire to shed some light about it.

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

- ALNAP Active Learning Network for Accountability and Performance in Humanitarian Action
- EERI Earthquake Engineering Research Institute
- IFRC International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent
- OCHA Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
- RCNS Red Crescent National Society
- RCS Red Crescent Society
- SCHR Steering Committee for Humanitarian Response
- UN United Nations
- USAID United States Agency for International Development

ABSTRACT

The disaster and humanitarian literature have extensively documented the many problems that exist in post-disaster operations. This research explores how and the extent to which these problems might be generated by how actors, including humanitarian leaders and survivors, enact different symbolic constructions to interpret their surroundings. The question that drives this research is: *how do institutional logics influence international humanitarian operations?* The theory of institutional logics informs this research. It states that each institution (family, religion, state, market, profession, and corporation) distinguishes a set of organizing principles, practices, and symbols that act as a frame of reference for how individuals and organizations make sense of things, and consequently how they make decisions.

The work includes three analytic chapters. The first focuses on: *What is the impact of the institutional logics at the individual, the organizational, and societal levels on disaster deployment decisions?* The rationale aligns with the framework of institutional logics that considers individuals, organizations, and institutions, as three nested levels within one another. The second chapter responds to the following question: *How do institutional logics affect the way that western humanitarian architecture relates to those they serve?* The focus here is on the discrepancies that exist between what humanitarians say and do, and the meaning they assign to local survivors. The third question, which is responded to in the third chapter is: *what are the values and principles that guide human relations in the context of a post-disaster deployment?* This chapter is based on the idea that the six existing institutional logics

proposed by Friedland and Alford (1991) are not sufficient to explain how humanitarians relate to local survivors and analyses ‘relations’ as an institution with its dominant logic.

The study relied on semi-structured interviews to collect data from 30 humanitarian officials as well as data gathered from field research trips in Mexico, the Dominican Republic, and Puerto Rico. The analysis of the data was done through multiple coding cycles and a combination of deductive and inductive approaches.

Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Problem Statement

While humanitarian action is a noble activity, it is important to recognize that its actions can have negative effects on the populations it serves. It can be successful at providing basic life-saving assistance, but it can also be “less relevant to people’s priority needs” (ALNAP, 2018). This is especially true when the priorities of aid organizations are not compatible with the priorities of the local population. In the West Bank and Gaza, for instance, the effects of these discrepancies are pushing groups to steer clear of EU and US money (Hatuqa 2019).

This was the focus of the 32nd Annual Meeting of the Active Learning Network for Accountability and Performance in Humanitarian Action (ALNAP) in 2019, where I was invited to share a panel with other experts. The panel met to discuss how humanitarian action could respond to diverse perspectives and still be relevant. One of the main ideas that I extracted from the event, is that humanitarian action is not just about the logistics involved in feeding or sheltering the poor. Also, although still a common theme, the center of attention in humanitarian action is no longer in the managerial structures and mechanisms to guarantee accountability to donors and produce cost-effective interventions. These are increasingly seen as less important than understanding if and how humanitarian action harms the people it intends to help.

The concept of “relevance” that guided the conversation at the conference was accurately chosen. It was used to draw attention to the idea that humanitarian action

can be appropriate for the local population, but that does not necessarily mean that it will be relevant (Beck 2006). An organization, for instance, can respond with the delivery of food, (which would be an appropriate response), but deliver a type of food that can be not be consumed (this would be an irrelevant response).

In my mind, this was a clear indication that the conversation is shifting. The humanitarian community is increasingly acknowledging the effects of having to deal with a larger number of more diverse actors from around the world (including the local population), who in the aftermath of a disaster converge with a purpose, but may see the world differently, a situation I call “convergence of meanings.” It is important to consider this, especially because humanitarian actors seem to be more willing to try to understand how others feel about their work.

This is an acknowledgment that the humanitarian system is not what the western world sometimes thinks. Rather, “the system”, is “a number of different systems, each with its own capacities, motivations, and incentive structures” (OCHA, 2016, p. 13). And beyond that, among these multiple interconnected systems, those that have traditionally been marginalized, and disregarded (such as the systems of the countries from the global south), are flourishing. The fact that the systems from the north are ‘listening more’ is certainly important, but so is that the peoples from the global south are becoming more connected to the international community, with more capable and knowledgeable populations and leaders, and they are slowly starting to claim their right to be heard.

In a way, international humanitarian organizations are repositioning themselves relative to local populations. In the recent past, one important milestone in this reflective process was the realization that the local populations did not have to be

mere recipients of aid. When this happened, the humanitarian community tried to elevate the ‘status’ of the local population, and the effort was put into broadening the boundaries of the humanitarian space, and conceive the local population as an equal partner in the provision of aid. But the major setback of this approach is that it assumed that there is some sort of a “spatial dimension” to equality, that to elevate the status of the local affected population, all that was needed was to ensure that representatives of both collectives could be at the same time in the same place. The failure in this approach has driven the world to challenge the universality of the international humanitarian system (Davey, Borton, and Foley 2013).

Equality is much more complex than that, especially in the international arena. Despite their shared humanity, humanitarian actors and the local population are not the same. Both collectives are diametrically different. They are different in ways that are important and go beyond the income level, the color of their skin, the religious beliefs, and their government system. The unalterable fact is that one group comes from the wealthiest and most stable regions in the world, while the other lives under structural poverty, corruption, diseases and has, on top of that, suffered the impact of a disaster. Both collectives belong to vastly different systems, and because of this, they rely on different ideas, principles, values, general ways of life, based on the societies to which they belong (Burnes and Jackson 2011).

Humanitarian action, in its international dimension, has largely focused on developing mechanisms that rely on managerial practices, protocols, and education. But these practices have not been enough to bridge this divide, and the consequences have been documented in the academic humanitarian and disaster literature. In probably one of the most extreme interpretations, some authors have characterized

external humanitarian actors as incompetent (Vaux 2006), and Allen (1990) even defined them as the “expatriate-expert telling the stupid peasant what to do” syndrome.

This research is driven by the idea that what drives these collectives apart are fundamentally different values and principles (Burnes and Jackson 2011), that are socially and historically constructed. At this cognitive level, is where individuals decipher what is important to them, but also it is where they attempt to determine what is important to others. This is a crucial process at which we all too often fail. It is where humanitarian leaders try to decipher what is relevant for those they serve, and according to the conclusions they reach, they decide how they will respond to a disaster. In the case of humanitarian action, this is also the space where disaster victims and survivors assign value to all aspects of their new post-disaster life. Yet, how local communities assign value to their reality and how they define what is relevant, is often unknown to outsiders, including humanitarian decision-makers.

At this level, meaning is assigned through symbolic constructions that help us respond to a powerful question: “what do we see when we see?”. These symbolic constructions affect how we assign meaning to different things, including disasters and crises, but also people. They help us find a point of reference from which we can determine how we relate to others. This includes humanitarian leaders, who to make decisions about deploying people to the aftermath of a disaster or a humanitarian crisis, strive to understand what is relevant to those that they try to help, and make sense of how their organization relates to those in need.

In summary, these two collectives, humanitarians on one side, and the local populations on the other, both determine what is relevant to themselves and to others

in a way that is private and thus unknown. This analysis argues that these symbolic divides may be a fundamental reason why the relationship between the two has long been found to be unequal and asymmetrical (Worms 2010), abusive (Rességuier 2018), and problematic (Davey 2012).

1.2 Summary of the Contributions and Structure of the Document

This study focused its attention on two novel ideas. First, that members of both collectives use symbolic constructions to elucidate the reality in front of them, and that this cognitive process affects humanitarian-related decisions. Second, patterns in human connections are a researchable theoretical construct that can help us understand more about the interaction between humanitarian actors and survivors in the aftermath of a relief operation. The dissertation researched both ideas through the application of a qualitative methodology in combination with the theoretical framework of institutional logics that was introduced by Friedland and Alford in 1991. In the remainder of this section, I present the structure of the document with a summary of the content of each chapter. In chapters five, six, and seven, is where I discuss the findings of the analysis and present a summary of their merit. A more comprehensive discussion is introduced in the final chapter.

Chapter 2 presents the most relevant humanitarian literature, with an emphasis on research related to humanitarian deployments, and the research associated with the way international humanitarian actors and the local population interact. It also includes a discussion of the construct of convergence, a sociological construct that was developed by Fritz and Matthewson (Fritz and Matthewson 1957).

Humanitarian operations are no longer exclusively the outcome of planned organizational responses and can share some of the unstructured traits of disaster

convergence. The response of the global community to humanitarian crises, either those originated by natural disasters, or by complex emergencies, can in many ways resemble a spontaneous and unstructured response as has been the focus of related work from convergence.

With this new scenario in mind, the work that follows borrows some of the core dimensions from the theory of convergence, and apply them to the conversation led by humanitarian scholars.

Chapter 3 presents the theory of institutional logics which is applied here as the theoretical framework. The theory states that each institution (family, religion, state, market, profession, and corporation) distinguishes a set of organizing principles, practices, and symbols that act as a frame of reference for how individuals and organizations make sense of things, and consequently how they make decisions. The dissertation is guided by the presumption that humanitarian deployments, the convergence of international actors that it generates, and ultimately, the success of the interventions, depending on the way that humanitarian leaders and survivors enact different logics. Chapters five, six, and seven explore how members of each collective apply and utilize those symbolic constructions to process available data and make humanitarian-related decisions.

Chapter 4 describes the methods used for the collection of the data. This includes in-depth interviews with 30 humanitarian leaders, and various data and interviews with local disaster survivors conducted in the United States, Mexico, the Dominican Republic, and Puerto Rico. It also discusses the details of the multiple coding cycles that led to the findings presented in chapters 5, 6, and 7. The process

allowed me to examine how members of both collectives draw from symbolic constructions and relate to one another.

According to the theory of Institutional Logics, all six institutional logics influence human behavior at three levels. Chapter five presents this dimensionality. It focuses attention on the following question: *What is the impact of institutional logics at the level of the individual, the organization, and the society at large on humanitarian decisions?* The chapter specifies how logics affect individuals, organizations, and institutions, as three nested levels. This facilitates understanding the full spectrum of their effect. The first section focuses on the relationship between humanitarians. More precisely, it studies how humanitarians use institutional logics to make sense of their relationship with other humanitarians, and how this, in turn, defines the contours and nature of the humanitarian space. The second section discusses the impact of these logics at the level of the organization. The focus is on post-disaster needs assessments and fundraising, as two conflicting management demands that are driven by distinct and even contradictory logics. The third and last sub-section focuses exclusively on the level of the individual, and how each humanitarian applies institutional logics to build a belief system that helps him or her understand the nature of their work and the meaning of humanitarian work as a whole.

Therefore, this first chapter analyzed the nuances of how people draw from multiple logics by means of identifying the symbolic constructions, as well as the interrelationship that exists between them at the three levels. The data suggests that institutional logics can lead to groups of people having fundamentally different views of what needs to be done. The multiple ways in which institutional logics can be used suggest the existence of multiple interpretations, but two distinct postures were very

present in this study, and are distinct, almost as two extremes of a continuum. In the case of the groups of humanitarian leaders that were interviewed, the presence of the market, the corporate and the humanitarian logic was very pronounced. The main difference between the two postures appears to reside in the way that they prioritize these logics.

The goal of chapter six is to present the way that each of these large groups applies institutional logics to navigate the post-disaster context and how they relate to one another in such settings. It does it by responding to this question: *How do institutional logics affect the way that western humanitarian architecture relates to those they serve?* The first sub-section proposes that to improve humanitarian practice, we need to know more about the cognitive structure that humanitarians use to relate with local stakeholders. This section disentangles the discrepancies that exist between what humanitarians say about and do, relative to local stakeholders, and the deeper meaning they assign to them. The second sub-section argues that in the aftermath of a disaster, the inter-institutional systems of both humanitarians and disaster survivors are different, and because of this, how they prioritize those logics changes. In the final third sub-section, I present the effect that institutional logics have on the relationship between the two.

This research analyzed how overall life circumstances affect their cognitive processes and the prioritization of logics. The underlying idea is that the things that happen to all individuals in their lives, such as the death of a family member, a work promotion, a death in the family, the graduation of a child, etc., affect the way we all perceive the world around us. Somewhat different from previous studies, it paid attention to the post-disaster circumstances of those that were directly affected by a

disaster but also paid attention to the circumstances of humanitarian leaders, which is not commonly seen in the humanitarian literature. What this means is that, even though it is unlikely that humanitarians themselves have been affected by the disaster, the fact that they will eventually find themselves immersed in a post-disaster intervention, affects them intensely. One important finding is that these life circumstances make humanitarian leaders and local survivors prioritize logics differently. The finding lends support to the novel idea, that in the design process of humanitarian missions, attention should be paid not only to the circumstances faced by affected populations but also to those faced by humanitarian actors.

Related to this, this chapter introduces a second important finding in that it identifies a discrepancy between the way that these groups perceive the depth of the relationship with one another. The data indicates that the discrepancy could be related to the failure to take into consideration how differently both groups make sense of their post-disaster reality. Within the humanitarian sector, the idea that, based on our shared humanity, all individuals are equal, has helped to promote an understanding that humanitarians and disaster survivors make sense of their relationship in similar terms. This chapter points to a different conclusion, which is that the value that both groups assign to the relationship is different. This has important implications for humanitarian practice as it challenges the validity of standardized and out of the box strategies in humanitarian operations.

Chapter seven introduces “relations” as a new institutional logic. This discussion was not planned in the original research project but rather reflects an issue that emerged during the analytical process. The central assertion is that objective, and verifiable post-disaster information is necessary, but not sufficient, condition to

understand how humanitarian programs come to exist. What drives this idea is that the way humanitarian leaders experience post-disaster contexts is highly influenced by how they feel and relate to others. The relational logic is a way of thinking about our position relative to other people. It proposes that the way individuals make sense of these relationships is imbued by symbolic constructions that are complexly ingrained in their cognitive structures.

To tackle this question, I extended the typology of interinstitutional systems presented by Friedland and Alford (1991). The data revealed that relationships are an institution with its dominant logic which I have called “relational logic”. It pointed out that when people, such as humanitarian leaders and disaster survivors analyze information, they simultaneously make inferences about the relationship with another individual or collective. One important merit of this contribution is that the relational logic complements the six original logics that were presented by Friedland and Alford (1991). Without this logic, the theory does not fully explain the impact of the cognitive connections that people create with others. This has an important implication for humanitarian practice. In the case of humanitarian leaders, this finding offers compelling evidence that decisions about deployments, such as who to send to the field, how many to send and for which purpose, are not made, at least entirely, according to concrete and factual information, but humanitarians unconsciously consider who else is involved in the process, including who are those being served. The utility of this possibility is that it can explain divergences in the way organizations determine the specifics of a humanitarian intervention.

Chapter eight concludes this dissertation. The first section presents the contributions of the study. Among others, it reinforced that the movement of people

and organizations towards a disaster-impacted area is not entirely the outcome of the needs of disaster survivors, or the demands generated by the disaster agent. Applying institutional logics, I was able to illustrate that convergence-related decisions can be traced to the moment when decisionmakers involved in the design of a humanitarian intervention apply institutional logics to give meaning to the information they have at their disposal and that they use to make those decisions. Secondly, it shows that institutional logics play a role in deciding issues related to humanitarian interventions, and consequently also affects international convergence. The relational logic plays an important role in determining how the western humanitarian infrastructure understands the nature of those that are considered to need aid, as well as the relationship with them, and consequently, convergence will eventually depend on how sense-making processes are resolved. What this means is that humanitarian action behaves differently depending on who needs support, and who else is involved in the process.

Institutional logics proved to be an innovative approach to study this phenomenon. Its most important merit is that it offers an alternative path to understanding and studying convergence. The study provides the basis to continue the extensive research that has already been done, and so it would lend itself well for use by scholars who are interested in forwarding our knowledge on how people, materials, and information move towards a disaster-impacted location.

Chapter 2

HUMANITARIAN ACTION AND CONVERGENCE THEORY

2.1 Introduction

It is important to recognize that when humanitarian organizations deploy missions, and thousands of international actors converge in a place that was hit by a disaster, not all they do is positive. Their purpose is honorable, no question about that. But humanitarian action involves people from all over the world, and when people from different contexts meet, assessing the results is often more complicated than it seems. This study is about understanding the intersection of international humanitarian actors and the local population. More precisely, it is about understanding how humanitarian leaders process information affecting the local population and make decisions about international deployments.

To understand what drives humanitarians to go towards an impacted area, there are two important bodies of literature that are covered in this chapter. The first one is the literature on convergence, a sociological construct that was developed in the 1950s (Fritz and Matthewson 1957). I borrow from it some of its core dimensions and merge it with the conversation led by humanitarian scholars. I used both bodies of literature to portray humanitarian action, more specifically those aspects related to the decision to deploy humanitarians operations (that will eventually ‘converge’ in the impacted area) and to explain the complex relationship that exists between them and the local population.

2.2 Convergence Theory

The notion of convergence has incredible theoretical potential but remains understudied (Holguín-Veras et al. 2014). It comes from the body of knowledge on collective behavior, a line of work of sociologists that is concerned with the interaction among individuals who make up a crowd or social movement (Turner and Lewis 1993). Eventually, the notion jumped into the world of disaster studies that have used it extensively.

The first report of post-disaster convergence was identified almost 100 years ago by Samuel Prince (1920), in his book about the Halifax explosion of 1917 (Scanlon 1988). He noticed that when a disaster affects an area, there is a massive movement of people and things towards the impacted location. It was Fritz and Mathewson (1957) who coined the term and brought attention further to the phenomenon. In their work, they offered the following definition: “movement or inclination and approach toward a particular point’ by interested and impacted individuals or groups” (p. 3).

The notion of convergence, as used by disaster scientists, has been traditionally used to refer to the un-planned and un-affiliated disaster response. Several scholars (Fritz and Mathewson 1957, Stallings and Quarantelli 1985, Wachtendorf and Kendra 2004) characterized it as a problem because it made coordination of disaster response more difficult (Botha 2019). Humanitarian scholars are also interested in studying the movement of people towards a disaster. Even though the line between the two is not as clear as it used to be, one important way in which the line of work of both disciplines are different is the context of operations. While after a natural disaster most of the pressure is in taking critical actions to save lives, the response to complex emergencies usually addresses structural issues that normally take years to resolve (Katoch 2006).

Humanitarian action, however, has evolved significantly over the past decades to take on numerous new issues such as the displacement of people, conflict resolution, and climate change (Davey, Borton and Foley 2013). But despite the enlarged areas of interest, at its heart humanitarian action is about connections; connections between humanitarian providers and those that they try to help. A relationship that is built between two groups of individuals that may not know each other and may come from opposite sides of the world. It is about tens of thousands of people coming together to help and to be helped. In a sense, humanitarian action particularly after disasters can share some of the unstructured traits of disaster convergence despite a greater influence of organizational and institutional pressure. As a consequence of these developments, humanitarian operations are no longer exclusively the outcome of planned organizational responses. The response of the global community to humanitarian crises, either those originated by natural disasters, or by complex emergencies, can in many ways resemble a spontaneous and unstructured response (U.N. 2005,) as has been the focus of related work from collective behavior.

Even though there is still a significant separation between the two (Fordham 2007), at least in this sense, disaster science and humanitarian studies, are closer than they used to be. With this new scenario in mind, the work that follows borrows from the theory of convergence to study humanitarian operations. The lens is beneficial as it offers a language that is missing in the humanitarian literature to describe this mass movement. In the remainder of the chapter, I extend the original notion of convergence, to refer to the process through which international humanitarian actors

meet in the place where they will eventually perform their operations. To simplify the presentation, I have named this phenomenon “humanitarian convergence”

2.3 The Convergence of Humanitarian Actors

We live in a highly interconnected global society in which continuous news cycles and social media put people on alert all around the world in a matter of minutes (Nelán and Wachtendorf 2016). This is an important new role for social media in the disaster sphere (Hughes et al. 2008). It has allowed the growth of information sharing (Sutton, Palen and Shklovski 2008) that reinforces the likelihood of more people acting in response to a disaster event and converge in the location where it happened. This phenomenon is called personal convergence. It is one of the three types of convergence presented by Fritz and Mathewson (1957), together with material and information convergence, and it was defined as the “actual physical movement of persons on foot, by auto or other vehicles” (p.4).

An overwhelming portion of those that learn about a disaster, chose to physically go towards the impacted location (Older 2019). Almost 50 years ago Barton conceived this sloppy convergence of people as a “mass assault” (Barton 1962). Forty years later, Neal (1994) shared the characterization by referring to the number of people approaching the area after Hurricane Andrew as “mass convergence” (p.27).

Convergence has been of interest to social scientists for decades and has been identified in domestic as well as in international settings. Back in 1952, after the Arkansas tornado, for example, it was recorded that police officers said that two days after the event, there were cars lined bumper to bumper for 10 miles (Marks and Fritz

1957)¹. In international disasters, personal convergence has also proven to be extremely large and diverse, with people arriving from all corners of the world. Chia (2007) reported that in the aftermath of the tsunami of 2004, approximately 700 nongovernmental organizations showed up, coming from 40 different countries. In the Haiti earthquake of 2010, there was an incursion of nearly 2000 rescuers from Britain, Canada, the Dominican Republic, Argentina, the United States, China, Iceland, and many other countries (Paul 2011).

A portion of those that chose to go towards a disaster-impacted area is just individual citizens with no organizational affiliation (Holguín-Veras José et al. 2007, Paul 2019), and they are better understood as the community's response to the disaster (Barton 1962). They gather in countless small groups of inexperienced 'humanitarians' and mobilize on their reactive attitude and act purely on the impetus and not entirely integrated into the more organized system. This self-driven practice has generated a marked increase in convergence in the format of smaller organizations known as MONGOs (My Own NGO) (Polman, 2013). Two important problems with these groups are their lack of general skills, and their little knowledge about how the larger mechanism works, which makes it hard for them to plug into formal and structured response operations. Consequently, they have been generally considered problematic. After the Indian Ocean Tsunami, for instance, the United Nations concluded that "numerous "well-wishers" arrived in the affected areas with or without resources, many without appropriate experience in working in disaster situations" (U.N. 2005, p. 3). Nonetheless, due to the very nature of these smaller groups, they

¹ Extracted from Fritz and Mathewson (1957)

can also bring benefits in the form of resources and flexibility (Wachtendorf and Kendra, 2004) that allows (allegedly) for the provision of disaster services quickly.

In international contexts, things are a bit different. A considerable portion of those that render assistance, act under the framework of well-established western-based, non-state actors (Older 2019). They are inherently more organized and better equipped than isolated individuals (Barton 1962), even though many of them have poor intervention strategies (Older 2019). It is mostly made of organizations from different sectors, such as government agencies, church-based groups volunteer organizations, U.N., multilateral organizations, and private companies. (Holguín-Veras José et al. 2007, Paul 2019), from both affected as well as non-affected countries (Paul 2019).

2.4 The Driving forces behind Humanitarian Convergence

In the past 100 years, since sociologists first started talking about convergence, our world has changed significantly. And so, the behavior of our global society is also different from the behavior of the societies of the past. The convergence of individuals after a disaster has increased its size, and it is fundamentally different in its structure with much more physical movement across borders but also with a ‘virtual convergence’ through social media that did not exist back then. The world’s evolution has even forced changes in the very nature of collective action and post-disaster convergence.

The very first humanitarians (red crossers), were purely motivated on reducing human suffering, (Davey, Borton and Foley 2013). Current humanitarian action is more than just alleviating suffering and it focuses its attention on all sorts of new things such as supporting the market, improving governability, taking care of the

environment, and others. And so, today's humanitarians, at large, include many other actors that are not necessarily driven by a desire to help (Rességuier 2018).

This leads to the question of what motivates individuals to approach a disaster area? This has been a question that disaster and humanitarian scholars have tried to respond to for many years. Not only they noticed that people, instead of fleeing from the disaster site they were moving towards it, but they also noticed that they were willing to engage in the most shocking tasks such as searching for dead bodies (Osborne and Scanlon 1992).

From the side of sociology, Fritz and Mathewson (1957) were the first to try to respond to this question. In their work, they divided the main motivations that they found into five discrete categories: 1) returnees, 2) anxious, 3) helpers, 4) exploiters, 5) curious. Kendra and Wachtendorf (2003) later extended the discussion and added the 6) supporters and the 7) memorializers as two additional categories.

Even though the focus of the work of both Fritz and Mathewson (1957) and Kendra and Wachtendorf (2003), was primarily on the convergence of domestic unofficial, unauthorized, and unorganized isolated individuals, their typology can provide insights into international deployments. Many of these seven categories can be applied to the motivations of those that chose to become humanitarian workers and "provide assistance" in a more organized manner. The main motivation of most humanitarian workers continues to be the desire to help people in need, even though it has also been found that when humanitarian workers decide to engage in this line of work, some of them are mostly looking for an income-generating activity, some others are more interested in developing technical skills to advance their profession, and some others want to take advantage of the possibility that humanitarian action

provides to explore different cultures (Rességuier 2018). Most unfortunately, the media has also unveiled how ‘disaster workers’, including isolated individuals, but also more traditional humanitarian workers, the military and government officials, occasionally engage in deviant activities and misconduct behavior².

These examples help to point out that the habits and actions of isolated individuals after a disaster, can translate into more formal structures, and the typology presented before can also be very helpful to study motivations in international settings. The historic claim of humanitarian organizations that they are driven by their “concern for the person in need” (Vaux 2001), has been challenged. It has been increasingly acknowledged that international humanitarian organizations are driven by very complex and sometimes political motives (Portsea 1992, McEntire 1997, Eikenberry et al. 2007, Harrald 2006). They are independent of one another and act “in their own ways” (Kapucu and Özerdem 2013, p.229), and “are generally committed first and foremost, if not exclusively, to their own programs, ...to the point that their objective cannot be called humanitarian” (Minear and Weiss 1995, p. 205)

2.5 From Material Convergence to Cash Transfers

Despite the challenged motivations of the organizations and/or the individual humanitarian workers, the goal of humanitarian action is to save lives, alleviate suffering, and protect and maintain human dignity (Rességuier 2018). And to do this, organizations from around the world focus their attention on different needs and

² See for instance the case of Oxfam workers paying for sex while working on the response of the 2010 Haiti Earthquake (<https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2019/jun/11/oxfam-abuse-claims-haiti-charity-commission-report>)

sectors. Some provide shelter, some other food, or clothing, some others provide medical care or fix the affected infrastructure. Some focus on the education of children or those that engage in search and rescue operations.

Regardless of what exactly is it that organizations do, there is one thing that they all have in common. They all require the mobilization of large volumes of things. This is an aspect that has been barely covered by humanitarian scholars but has been extensively studied by disaster scientists (Paul 2019, Holguin-Veras et al. 2014, Nelan and Wachtendorf 2016, Arnette and Zobel 2016, Destro and Holguin-Veras 2011, Holguin-Veras et al. 2010). In the literature on convergence, this has been referred to as material convergence. Interestingly, material convergence is so massive that it silently and inconspicuously affects the size, the format, the objectives, and the very essence of any humanitarian intervention. The success or failure of an individual humanitarian intervention, as well as the larger humanitarian convergence, cannot be adequately assessed without including into the analysis the convergence of materials. This is another critical dimension of the theory of convergence that is beneficial to the humanitarian literature.

It was originally defined as “...movement of supplies and equipment...” (Fritz and Mathewson 1957, p. 4), and has proven to be massive and extremely diverse and heterogeneous. It “includes the supplies and equipment sent by all of the entities that respond to a disaster” (Holguín-Veras et al. 2014, p.2). After the Rio Grande Flood of 1954 in the United States, for instance, a “San Antonio radio station sent 22 truckloads of unrequested goods to the disaster area” (Neal 1994 p.23). Nearly 60 years later, Holguín-Veras et al. in 2012 found that “delivering and distributing supplies to the

two million Port-au-Prince residents after the 2010 earthquake in Haiti required 20,000 staff members (comparable in size to a US Army division)” (p.496).

The most substantial portion of the materials that arrive at an impacted location is adequate relief items, and they are of extreme importance to the local communities. However, not all elements are essential. The general population tends to assume that everything and anything can be of use (Holguin Veras, 2014), an interpretation that creates a massive influx of ‘unsolicited aid’ and ‘low priority items’ such as Viagra, Christmas costumes (IFRC and RCS 2006), and unusable footwear for rescue animals (Nelán and Wachtendorf 2016). These low priority elements are not eligible to be distributed to the general population, as they can create significant problems (Neal 1994, Wachtendorf, Brown, and Holguin-Veras 2013, Destro and Holguin-Veras 2011) for humanitarian operations to the point that many scholars have used the term a second-tier disaster (France 2002, Islam et al. 2013³).

Despite these problems, they are generally presumed as coming from good-hearted people that are interested in the wellbeing of those in need. Nonetheless, Paul (2019) stated that in the aftermath of the Indian Ocean Tsunami in 2004, “Sri Lankan officials seized several containers packed with narcotics, weapons and other illegal goods sent as disaster relief by criminal elements from foreign countries”⁴.

Logistics is just one of the problems generated by the sending of stuff towards a disaster, but there are others. The humanitarian literature has extensively described

³ See Holguín-Veras et.al. (2014) for a discussion about the complications of material convergence.

⁴ In his book Paul 2019 cites the following media article: Sikh Donations Left Rot at Port in Sri Lanka. Aug 4. http://www.sikhsangat.org/publishg/article_237.shtm. Last Accessed 8 Aug 2005. The 1st of July of 2019 this link was not working.

how in complex emergencies, relief items can end up serving one or the other of the parties in conflict (Blouin and Pallage 2008). Disaster scientists on their end, have found that the deployment of large volumes of materials can affect negatively the already vulnerable economic system and existing markets (Nelán and Wachtendorf 2016)

During the past years, these many problems encouraged the humanitarian architecture to engage in a new conversation about the benefits of monetary donations and the use of cash as a more efficient alternative. It is not only the more flexible resource (Thomas and Fritz 2006), but it can also positively affect the local economy (Nelán and Wachtendorf 2016) and it “is one of the most well-researched and rigorously-evaluated humanitarian tools of the last decade” (ODI 2015, p. 8)

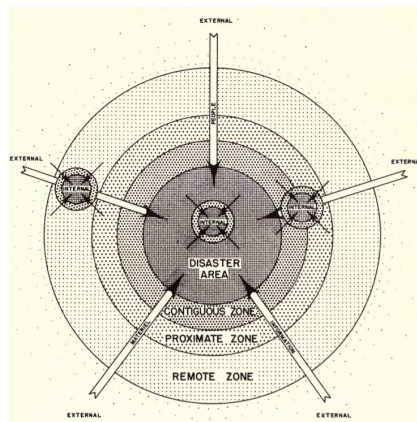
Even though cash transfers seem to be an ideal tool to replace or complement the in-kind delivery of aid, it is still uncertain whether it will succeed. There are two main concerns at this point. The first is a problem of interest and selfishness. It is related to the possibility that this tool remains to be a small part of the total aid, with “its adoption inhibited by the institutional mandates and interests of humanitarian organizations” (ODI 2015). The second one is an issue of generalized distrust from the global humanitarian system in the local populations who have been portrayed to be dishonest and mainly interested in the consumption of alcohol (Evans and Popova 2017).

2.6 Destination of Humanitarian Convergence

The work of Fritz and Mathewson (1957) becomes handy again to introduce this final section. In a very original way for that time, they offered a first characterization of the spaces that seemed to be the destination of those who chose to

“show up” after a disaster. This model applies both for isolated individuals and for a more institutionalized response, domestically and internationally. They interpreted the space around the area that had been impacted as a series of “superimposed circles of ever-widening diameters” (p.5). The inner-circle represented the location of impact, and the progressive external circles more distant regions only suffering at a decreasing rate. Nowadays, there is a growing literature that studies digital convergence (Hughes 2008), but back then, their characterization was fundamentally geographical and physical.

Figure 1 A Spatial Model of Convergence Behavior⁵



In this model, the place where the disaster hit is where most of the convergence will happen. In more complex scenarios, however, this is not necessarily the case. In nuclear explosions, for instance, an important part of the impact sometimes happens thousands of miles away from the epicenter (Paine 1992). In the case of epidemic outbreaks where there is no visible destruction of the infrastructure, the points of

⁵ Extracted from Fritz and Mathewson (1957) p. 7

convergence are many and can be dispersed along with broad geographic areas (Penta 2017), or the mitigation measures could prevent the displacement of people altogether such as the case of COVID-19 where the large majority of countries imposed compulsory confinements.

Following this last line of thought, Osborne and Scanlon (1992), identified that the movement of people was not always towards the epicenter of the disaster, but instead, that they tended to move towards other locations as well. Similarly, after studying the aftermath of the 9/11 terrorist attacks on US soil, Kendra and Wachtendorf (2003) realized that people also converged towards other people and proposed that convergence occurred towards a “point of significance.” They defined what they called the disaster milieu as “the complex of people and places involved in the response, a multilocal field of social activity” (p.102).

Bevc, Barlau, and Passanante (2009) addressed the idea of convergence space. They focused their attention on social movements and different social formations. For them, the emphasis should be the space (both virtual and material) where “interests, goals, tactics, and strategies converge.” (p.4) So, following this interpretation, Bevc, Barlau, and Passanante approached the study of the 9/11 terrorist attacks while considering this newly defined space as a facilitator for interaction among responding organizations.

The study of where the post-disaster response takes place evolved from being exclusively physical to trying to understand the meaning that people and organizations, assigned to the places. In the specific case of humanitarian action, the meaning is presumably bounded by the humanitarian imperative, a core principle that compels humanitarians to “provide assistance wherever it is needed” (CHS

Alliance et.al. 2014, p.8). This definition reinforces the importance of human need in deciding who to help, but also where to go. Interestingly, the humanitarian imperative, which is an intangible human principle, influences the physical/geographical dimension, by removing boundaries and allowing humanitarians to move around freely as they please⁶. This, of course, is only so, if they pursue the ultimate objective of helping people in need, an objective that is currently being challenged as we have seen in the previous sub-section. By logical extension, this ‘invitation to act’ opens the door for all to move around the world at will, despite what their true concealed intentions are.

2.7 Chapter Summary

This chapter pointed out the benefits of combining different bodies of literature to study humanitarian deployments. It combined some literature from the side of humanitarian studies, with the construct of convergence from the field of disaster sciences. These are two bodies of research that have long been used independently from one another, but there is merit in using them together. Each of them contributes differently to the conversation. Convergence, on one hand, was originally developed to capture the problems that unorganized, unaffiliated individuals bring to the overall domestic response to a natural disaster. The literature on humanitarian action on the other has generally focused on the planned and organized international response from organizations that provide relief to victims of humanitarian crises.

⁶ Be aware that at this point I am using the term humanitarians and not humanitarian organizations, as the principle essentially affects both organizations and individuals interested in practicing humanitarian action

Both bodies of literature differ in the type of phenomenon that they study, in the contexts where they happen, and the main actors involved. Nonetheless, they complement each other very well. The reason is that modern humanitarian action is no longer what it used to be, and the current contexts are fundamentally more complex but present characteristics that are of interest to both.

Humanitarian action has become a very large mix of organizations and individuals with all sorts of different motivations. It has developed a logic of its own that sometimes can be disconnected from individual events, local contexts, and even needs. It is a currently popular and highly visible and even expected collective reaction guided by rules of its own. Individuals from all around the world, in a more or less organized and structure fashion, assign meaning to these events as they please, and if they find it appropriate, move around the world with complete freedom, to provide whatever assistance they see fit. It has also evolved into a multi-billion dollar lightly regulated transnational enterprise, where the money flows through channels that did not exist before, and where the actors must satisfy larger numbers of more diverse stakeholders, including the local population and victims, transnational organizations, and even the society at large.

The contexts in which they operate has also changed. The humanitarian crises that used to be their center of attention, more generally than not, are the cause or the consequences of natural disasters. The many new responsibilities that they have taken on, brought with it an increase in the number and diversity of actors involved, many of which are not necessarily affiliated with any particular organization.

The pressure that humanitarian decision-makers in charge of designing humanitarian and post-disaster deployments and its consequent convergence have is

tremendous. And this applies to different extents to both the experienced leaders that act within the structure of highly renowned and established organizations, as well as the motivated through under-resourced and poorly qualified immature humanitarians. They all want to serve those in despair, but they also must comply with new demands. The strongest of current demands is that they must figure out a way to provide valuable services, without harming the people. This new demand is calling for more sensitivity from leaders to acknowledge and understand the biases generated by the specific symbolic constructions that they use to interpret information and make decisions.

Chapter 3

INSTITUTIONAL LOGICS

3.1 Introduction

Post-disaster and humanitarian deployments depend on the decisions made by humanitarian officials who are regularly exposed to various demands. To start with, they are affected by societal expectations that are historically and culturally grounded. To improve the quality of life and minimizing the suffering of the people they serve, the western humanitarian sphere has increasingly encouraged humanitarian organizations to master the context in which they operate, protect the views of local stakeholders, strengthen local capacities and put emphasis on locally driven responses (ICVA 2020, Alexander 2006; Portsea 1992; McEntire 1997). Humanitarian leaders also must comply and even advocate for the interests of their organization. One such interest is funding. International humanitarian interventions are an extraordinary source of income. After the Indian Ocean Tsunami of 2004, funding from international sources was estimated at USD 13.5 billion (Telford and Cosgrave 2007). Available post-disaster funds can be the origin of strong organizational demands that push decision-makers to have a pro-intervention mindset. Finally, they must reconcile these pressures with their own beliefs and understandings as well.

These are forces that frequently contradict one another (Friedland and Alford 1991, Pache and Santos 2013, Goodrick and Reay 2011). It follows that international deployments and the convergence they produce are the outcomes of decisions that are unwittingly manipulated by demands that exist simultaneously in three interconnected

levels, that of the individual, the organization, and the society at large. To resolve the dilemma, individuals appraise available alternatives through the lens of concrete symbolic constructions. Numerous scholars have addressed the implications of convergence for post-disaster and humanitarian operations, but very few have devoted efforts to understanding how it originates. Even fewer have studied how underlying beliefs, principles, and societal norms influence the way humanitarian officials interpret post-disaster information and how these interpretations, in turn, affect international convergence.

This dissertation tackles this gap by studying post-disaster deployment decisions through the eyes of institutional logics. The first section discusses the concept of an institution. The second section explores the significance of institutional logics and how these, in their application to post-disaster decisions, affect the number, shape, and overall impact of a growing international convergence.

3.2 Institutions

An institution is a construct that dates back several decades and has been addressed and defined in various ways. For Veblen, they are “settled habits of thought common to the generality of man” (Veblen 1909, p.239). Sumner, one of the early institutional theorists, said that “an institution consists of a concept (idea, notion, doctrine, interest) and a structure” (Sumner 1906, p.53). Weber paved the way for the construction of more recent formulations, emphasizing the extent to which all sectors and their constituent organizations contain multiple, competing conceptions of rational behavior – varying institutional logics (Scott 2014, p.16). Friedland and Alford (1991) proposed that “institutions are supra-organizational patterns of human activity by which individuals and organizations produce and reproduce their material subsistence

and organize time and space. They are also symbolic systems, ways of ordering reality, and thereby rendering the experience of time and space meaningful” (p.243). Lammers and Barbour (2006) stated that institutions are “constellations of established practices guided by formalized, rational beliefs that transcend particular organizations and situations” (p.364).

The extensive history of institutional theory proves that for a long time, scholars have believed that human interactions are driven and determined by something that exists beyond concrete experiences. These numerous and varied propositions try to explain social life and to do so assume to one degree or another the existence of certain stability or familiarity. I believe this is the case because not long ago, people could go through life without caring much about the possibility of things changing their meaning abruptly and or having their views challenged by others. As globalization increased, things changed. Information from all over the world bombards societies continuously, and all of us are reminded of the infinite ways in which people give a different meaning to those things that we once considered universal.

Pre-event structures and ideas are critical to making sense of our daily lives. Nevertheless, when a disaster happens, the stability and familiarity of these structures and ideas are disrupted. In the case of an international disaster, both foreign humanitarian workers and local survivors find themselves interacting with one another, trying to understand life from the vantage point of the other, under uncertainty, and many times destruction. This scenario has become a new normal, and we need to re-assess the meaning, the characteristics, and the very nature of institutions under these critical circumstances.

But the abstract notions behind the idea of an institution, are challenging to apply analytically (Thornton, Ocasio and Lounsbury 2012). It helps to think of them as intangible symbolic supra-structures that allow us to make sense of the way that “a particular social world works” (Jackall 1988, p. 118). With this more straightforward approach in mind, Friedland and Alford (1991) proposed six elemental institutional orders: “family, religion, state, market, profession, and corporation.” This list was merely suggestive. Societies are generally organized according to a set of functions, and the number of institutions varies. Besharov and Smith (2014), for instance, presented the “community” as a separate institution, and Goodrick and Reay (2011) suggest the same thing of “fields and industries.”

Different guiding principles define all institutions, but they all share two essential characteristics. Firstly, the same institutions are available to all individuals to draw from, but this does not mean that all individuals draw from them in the same way. We all prioritize institutions differently. In other words, the governing principles and values of each institution affect us in different ways. The principles of the family, for instance, could eclipse the principles of the institution of religion for one individual, while it could be precisely the opposite for another. This happens because each inter-institutional system is society specific, for they are the outcome of historical and cultural processes (Thornton, Ocasio and Lounsbury 2012). Consequently, two individuals that belong to different institutional arrangements (like countries that are in different places of the development continuum and historical context) will tend to value institutions differently.

The prioritization of institutions also varies over time (Thornton, Ocasio, and Lounsbury 2012), and this occurs for several reasons. Institutions, for instance, just

like individuals and organizations, have a unique interest in survival (DiMaggio 1988). This implies that each institution will be faced with the dilemma of having to accept the demands of different existing actors and compete for their patronage (Hugues 1936). Religion, for instance, has played a critical role in the humanitarian sphere, but this role has fluctuated over time. It finds itself continuously negotiating its participation in post-disaster contexts. And the way this happens is for instance, through a more robust commitment of religious leaders to propose and emphasize spiritual principles in the delivery of humanitarian aid. Should this be the case, it could be possible to notice changes in the humanitarian architecture, with an increase in post-disaster donations to religious organizations and an additional focus on the delivery of spiritual support.

Other things help explain why institutions are prioritized differently across societies (and individuals). Communities with larger populations, for instance, are governed by a formal public structure (Peoples and Bailey 1991). In more traditional civilizations, on the other hand, communities tend to be smaller, and social order is more dependent upon kinship than rigid structures defined by law. Being this so, the importance of the “state” as the dominant institution and the government as the dominant actor, loses significance when compared to “developed” societies. Similarly, the market as an institutional order, and even the rules and regulations that define actions within it, vary drastically between emergent economies and wealthy nations.

The second thing that all institutions share is that their nature evolves and changes. The idea that societies and individuals prioritize institutions could give the impression that they exist separate from one another in rigidly defined compartments with fixed and observable boundaries. They are often presented in this way

analytically as ideal types, to make their relevant features more distinct and unambiguous (Weber 1949). In reality, they are intertwined with one another in complex inter-institutional systems (Friedland and Alford 1991).

Even their very nature, which is usually taken-for-granted (Lammers and Barbour 2006), varies continuously. Their “institutional boundaries” are constantly negotiated (Lammers and Barbour 2006), “contested and hence fluid” (Friedland and Alford 1991 p.262). Before the 16th century, for instance, the nature of Christianity as an institutional order was defined by a series of values and theological doctrine. Its very essence was then challenged by those who rejected the Roman Catholic doctrine of papal supremacy and supported the priesthood of all believers. In this case, changes occurred over many decades. But at the level of the individual, what religion means to someone could drastically change from one moment to another. The faith in God as a protector could suddenly evolve into sentiments of disbelief when consumed by the sadness of seeing a loved one die in a disaster. Similarly, our jobs, which in our modern world consume much of our time and energy, could all of a sudden be reinterpreted. In critical circumstances, how we understand the role of money in our lives and our professional status could change, from being considered central elements of our modern world, to being wholly repudiated.

3.3 Institutional Logics

Humanitarians regularly interact with multiple organizations that have structures, hierarchies, policies, regulations, and procedures. These are all in place to define what is possible and what is not within their boundaries, but most importantly, they also influence the way people understand and give meaning to what happens inside of them. When we go to church, when we have a meeting with one of our

child's teachers, when we present a claim in a governmental agency, or when we are at work, our mindsets change, and a new cognitive structure is born. This cognitive structure allows all individuals to find a sense of belonging to this new space and develop a series of symbols that help us connect to others within that space (Cohen 1989). But all humanitarians are different. They differ in their nationality, ethnicity, and religious beliefs. They also differ in their understandings about the meaning of a family, the principles that govern their actions, how they value specific forms of government, and their relationship with money, just to name a few. And because of this, their cognitive structure is also different, and so is the meaning they assign to those spaces.

Human interaction not only takes place within the boundaries of organizations. We find meaning to life by belonging to intangible higher-level spaces that we call society. In the context of this dissertation, this level refers to supra-structures that exist in a higher place to that of organizations, but that different to what happens with organizations, its boundaries are not political or legal but defined by symbolic connections (Cohen 1989). In the specific case of humanitarians, for instance, they are all part of one unique community, which is filled with potent symbolism. This community is called the humanitarian space (Abild 2010).

According to Friedland and Alford (1991), all individuals inhabit these three nested levels and are always forced to make sense of the three simultaneously. They have to pay attention to what is possible and what is not within an organization, they have to follow the values, norms, and principles of higher-order societal structures, and they have to do all this while paying attention to their personal beliefs and understandings. While doing so, they are “exposed to multiple and contradictory, yet

interconnected, institutional arrangements” (Seo and Creed 2002 p.228). In an almost endless iterative interaction that humanitarians have with others, they try to influence and move institutional boundaries. At any given time, two humanitarian workers, for instance, might be discussing the role of family members during relief aid distribution. The specific symbolic constructions, the cognitive boundaries that allow them to assign meaning to the concept of ‘family member,’ will probably be very different for the two of them. For an individual that comes from a society characterized by large rural families, the role of that family member will be different from that of his counterpart that comes from a developed urban area characterized by nuclear families.

While dealing with this issue, both individuals will also have to reconcile their interpretations with whatever policies, doctrines, or regulations exist within their organization. In the case that both individuals work for different organizations, there are yet other higher-level structures where organizations participate, that try to impose their own boundaries. Such is the case of the mechanisms that exist to enhance post-disaster coordination like the United Nations Cluster System. As if this were not enough, they also have to reconcile the pressures that exist within the specific societal space where they perform their activities, such as what we call the humanitarian space. The cognitive constructions that each use to comply with the demands of the three levels, often contradict one another. But they will eventually converge and come to a resolution, and a deployment decision will be made.

The analysis of these three levels can be done using institutional logics. This framework says that action in each of the institutional orders is driven by a dominant logic which is a “set of material practices and symbolic constructions” (Friedland and Alford 1991, p.248). They are also a “complicated, experientially constructed, and

thereby contingent set of rules, premiums, and sanctions that men and women in particular contexts create and recreate in such a way that their behavior and accompanying perspective are to some extent regularized and predictable” (Jackall 1988 p.112). They “shape individual preferences and organizational interests as well as the repertoire of behaviors by which they may attain them” (Friedland and Alford 1991 p.232). Each of these central logics is particular to each order (Thornton, Ocasio and Lounsbury 2012), defines the way our cognitive structures behave, how we experience the world in front of us (Thornton, Ocasio and Lounsbury 2012), and it consequently drives our action (Thornton and Ocasio 2008, Besharov and Smith 2014).

All individuals (including humanitarian officials), the theory continues to say, “are affected by coexisting multiple logics” (Goodrick and Reay 2011 p.377). They are consistently faced with pressures to meet professional standards such as delivering aid in a certain way (professional logic), compete with others to raise money to sustain the organization (market logic), work within large bureaucratic structures (corporate logic), and also adhere to strict government regulations (state logic) (Goodrick and Reay 2011).

Institutional logics affect the entire humanitarian arena. They affect its structure as they are used by those within it, to determine who is welcomed and who is not. They affect its purpose by influencing decision-makers about the type of assistance that needs to be provided. And it even affects its very essence by forcing humanitarians to question the pertinency of their actions. They also exert influence at three different levels. They are used by individual practitioners, for instance, to construe what they consider to be the essence of humanitarian work and find meaning

to their actions. Within organizations, institutional logics also play a critical role. According to the theory, “organizational fields are made up of a variety of organizations that have their values anchored in different societal-level institutional orders” (Thornton, Ocasio, and Lounsbury 2012).

What this means is that organizations within the humanitarian space may have values attached to different institutional orders. World Vision (religion), ALNAP (profession), USAID (state), Google Disaster Response (corporation), are good examples. The fact that they all belong to the same field, is not enough to understand why and how they differ from one another, why and if they cooperate or compete, and the efforts that they put into ensuring their uniqueness. This does not mean that organizations that share the ‘home institution’ will always behave the same way. The institutional logics perspective also acknowledges that both individuals and organizations have agency within the boundaries and constraints of each institutional order, and this is because they are constantly faced with different and many times contradicting logics of other institutions. Being this so, Word Vision and Christian Aid, as well as many other organizations whose primary values are anchored in the institution of religion, constantly push the boundaries of their own identity. The same is true for other actors as well.

Likewise, the agency of these logics extends to the level of society, where humanitarians share the ‘humanitarian space.’ Conversations within this space are regularly affected and even silently disturbed by profound dilemmas. Some of these dilemmas are to what extent the western humanitarian machinery should abide by local cultural practices that could be perceived to violate human rights or accept local capabilities (Abild 2010) that could be assessed as inferior by western standards.

Individuals deal with many different, contradictory symbolic constructions that are in tension, which they use to “creatively reconstruct the social arrangements” (Benson 1977, p.5). In other words, even though institutions and their logics are relatively stable (Barbour and Manly 2016) and the means and ends available to individuals are constrained, actors are partially autonomous (Seo and Creed 2002), which allows them to exercise agency and generate a social change. When humanitarian actors are finally capable of bringing these contradictions to a resolution, they are driven by their self-assigned legitimacy (Barbour and Manly 2016). This means that their own set of logics essentially drives their decisions. The agency of their logics has the power to affect post-disaster deployments.

Allow me to provide some practical examples to show how the presence of many logics in tension affects daily humanitarian decisions, including those that can affect the number, the purpose, and the final destinations of those who converge. Well established humanitarian organizations often suggest that the participation of smaller and ‘less qualified’ organizations in humanitarian operations should be limited (Older 2019, U.N. 2005). This posture affects the size and diversity of those that are deployed into the field. One of the main reasons behind their argument is the difficulty of coordinating efforts during humanitarian operations (Nielsen et.al. 2010). Institutional logics could help us explore and present alternative arguments, such as that at a subconscious level, humanitarian officials try to avoid sharing the space with more competitors in an already oversaturated market.

The level of expertise of an individual to be ‘deployable’ in a humanitarian mission is generally an essential requirement for decision-makers. To be considered qualified, humanitarian workers must take a series of courses and have certifications

that are homogeneous across humanitarian organizations (Ramalingam 2013). It could be argued, however, that such requirements are the outcome of an institutional process that conceives standardized knowledge to be a more natural mechanism to develop and lead a homogeneous team, as opposed to having a hugely disparate group in terms of their values, norms, and principles.

Disaster scholars have found that not paying attention to the styles of the housing that is provided to disaster survivors, create jealousy among community members (Older 2019). Decisions about which type of shelter to offer, are probably made with the best intentions, but they reflect inaccurate interpretations of what matters to the community. While those providing the shelter might assume that for a disaster survivor, any roof is a good enough roof, they fail to recognize that disaster survivors are still community members. As such, sentiments that exist under normal conditions, such as jealousy, envy, and pride, also exist after a disaster.

Low-priority items are items such as clothes that, from the point of view of humanitarian organizations, are not essential to the purpose of humanitarian intervention. International humanitarian practitioners, most generally from the developed world, agree that these items create logistical problems for relief operations (Paul 2019, Destro and Holguin-Veras 2011). They end up being discarded. Institutional logics could help us challenge this posture by using different vantage points and trying to understand the value that is assigned to these donations by disaster survivors and donors.

This discussion is also relevant for understanding problems in inter-organizational coordination. Under the framework of the Cluster System mentioned previously, for instance, representatives from a government agency, a church, a

humanitarian organization, and a private company, regularly get together to discuss the distribution of relief aid, or to develop a plan to facilitate access to education of affected children. A critical element of the agendas of these meetings is the security and likelihood of accomplishing the project without risking the well-being of the humanitarian workers. In this scenario, even with the same information, the different representatives will find it difficult to agree on the meaning of the minimum levels of security and what the information they have means to the process. The government representative might be forced to follow the indications of his government concerning access to an area. The representative of the church might be inclined to propose that regardless of the information they have, it is imperative not to judge the local circumstances and trust in the plan that the Lord has laid for them. Similarly, the private company might be more interested in exploring what their insurance coverage might say, and the secular humanitarian worker might need to distribute the aid, per the primary objective of the organization.

The contradictions and the tension between the logics they use to make sense of that security level are not exclusively based on the pieces of information they have in front of them. The possibility of agreeing will be influenced by what each other feels about the others. The arguments presented by the humanitarian worker, for instance, will not be assessed in the same way, if that individual is perceived to be foreign and uninformed of the local context, or if it is someone that was born and raised there.

Chapter 4

METHODS

4.1 Data Collection

Building on the ideas in preceding chapters, this dissertation was originally driven by the following questions: 1) How do underlying beliefs, principles, and societal norms influence the way humanitarian officials interpret post-disaster information? 2) How do these interpretations, in turn, affect international convergence?

Essentially, the goal was to understand how humanitarian leaders apply institutional logics in the decision-making process. More specifically, how institutional logics influenced humanitarian deployments. For this, I needed to dig deep inside subjective interpretations. It also required speaking with those that have participated in disaster relief operations. The method I selected was in-depth interviews, which are described in the first sub-section.

Since the defense of the original proposal, the possibility to travel to disaster impacted areas opened. I collected additional data from field research trips to Mexico, the Dominican Republic, and Puerto Rico, which had been recently impacted by disasters. This opportunity offered me the possibility to extend the research. The final question drove this dissertation is: *how do institutional logics influence international humanitarian operations?* The method used to collect data during these trips is discussed in the second sub-section.

Having into consideration the limited amount of data collected, the findings of this dissertation cannot be considered representative of the global humanitarian community. But it provides important concrete insights to open a new field of research that has not received enough attention yet: the role of symbolic constructions in humanitarian decision-making.

4.1.1 Interviews

According to Patton (2002) “understanding what people value and the meanings they attach to experiences, from their own personal and cultural perspectives, are major areas for qualitative inquiry” (p.174)

To study the role of the individual is not only important but necessary, to the point that “noted scholars in many fields have suggested that the study of individual lives over time is indispensable for social inquiry” (Hone 1998, p.3). Furthermore, it is at the level of the individual, where the practices and symbols that conform to each institutional order can be manipulated (Friedland and Alford, 1991), and it has been pointed out that “the agency of aid workers is an area that remains particularly unexamined in humanitarian studies” (Nielsen et.al. 2010, p.64)

I used semi-structured interviews to collect data from 30 humanitarian leaders, which allows the researcher to gather specific information as well as probe for additional details after using open-ended questions (Berg and Lune 2012). They are “...optimal for dynamic and unpredictable situations, and situations in which the variety of respondents suggests a wide variety of types of responses” (Berg 1998 p. 111), and they are also an “effective technique for idea generation” (Morgan 1996, p.139). Merriam (2009) cites DeMarrais, Bennett, and Lapan (2004) who define an

interview as “a process in which a researcher and participant engage in a conversation focused on questions related to a research study” (p.55).

I chose interviews for data collection because they allow us to understand individual subjective interpretations of the facts (Berg and Lune 2012). Furthermore, “it is among the most basic and fundamental of methods, and one which, if executed well, brings us arguably closer than many other methods to an intimate understanding of people and their social worlds.” (Hermanowicz 2002, p.480). What is more,” interviewing represents the most used method in qualitative disaster research” (Phillips 2014, p.66)

Norman Denzin pointed out that method and life are intimately interconnected, and one cannot be selected without paying close attention to the definitive aspects of the other and that “one learns about the method by thinking about how one makes sense of one's own life” (Denzin 2003, p.315). Following this precept, I considered interviews as the best methodology to enter the uniqueness of the world of disaster participants, as it allows a personal and intimate interpretive conversation characterized by “value, judgment and individual insight” (Rabinow and Sullivan 1987).

The interview was guided by questions oriented at understanding how the institutional logics (symbolic constructions and material practices) affected the perception and sense-making of the reality that each interviewee was experiencing. The nature of these types of interviews allowed for some flexibility, which was used to understand more about the way these different interpretations affected the interaction with other individuals in the process of making decisions about deployments. The guide was designed to capture the way that people use institutional logics to the many

dimensions and elements that affect a post-disaster intervention. They were also designed to capture the actions that they took after making decisions.

The strategy for selecting the candidates was purposeful sampling which according to Patton (2002) “focuses on selecting information-rich [samples] whose study will illuminate the questions under study” (p.53) and has been defined to be a well-suited technique for disaster research (Stallings 2002, Phillips 2014). Purposeful sampling entails selecting candidates according to a pre-defined criterion (Phillips 2014) “and should be used to include people who know the most about the topic” (Merriam 2009, p.94). They were selected “strategically in alignment with the inquiry’s purpose, primary question and data being collected” (Patton 2002 p.264)

I defined the candidate according to the relationship with the process, instead of the pre-disaster position inside the organization, and I only interviewed individuals with the power to influence the profile and number of the final deployment. To assess this, during the recruitment stage I specifically asked all candidates to describe how deployment decisions are made within his/her organization and provide concrete examples about their participation in past events. The final group was made of decision-makers in different areas, such as communications, institutional development, operations, public relations, and human resources.

The dissertation is interested in organized convergence. What this means, is that the selection of the individual candidates depended on them participating in the decisions to deploy personnel internationally but under the framework of a well-established humanitarian organization. Table 1 in appendix A presents a list of all the organizations that were identified as critical players in the humanitarian ecosystem and were approached in the recruitment process. Once this list was completed, I followed

three simultaneous processes to produce a list of internal contacts who could be in a position to help me identify and connect with the final person/s that would meet all the necessary criteria.

In the first one, I identified individuals within each of these organizations with whom I had had contact in the past, and that I could reach directly. Each candidate was approached through personalized messages. Secondly, I put together a list of other individuals (friends and colleagues) that might be able to introduce me to new decision-makers in each of these organizations. Thirdly, in the case where I was not able to reach anyone in an organization that I considered necessary, I established direct contact by phone or by email. I asked to be communicated with someone that might have been involved in the decision to deploy personnel in a recent international event.

In all three processes, whenever someone offered to help, I followed a snowball sampling (Patton 2015) strategy by requesting to facilitate connection through introductions with other decision-makers. In all cases, an email was sent to them with additional information about the research. They were asked to visit a website with information about the study and the necessary criteria they had to meet to participate and make an informed decision.

Following these three simultaneous processes, I was able to produce a list of individuals that were either willing to participate in the research or to help me identify someone else. The final list was built using a specific information-rich sample (Patton 2015, p.267). For this, I combined information they shared directly with me by email or phone, with the information I extracted from their profiles on different social media platforms like LinkedIn and Facebook that have become a truly global community of

humanitarian practitioners (Walker 2010). I also extracted information from reports and institutional documents that were published online.

To answer the research question, I had to dig deep into moments where the interviewee recalled how s/he processed information related to the intervention. I requested each interviewee to identify and focus on one single event. This practice helped minimize the breadth of data and helped the interviewee bring back more detailed memories. To help them select among many possible past events, in the initial package that was sent to each of them, I included a list with the specific criteria. The package is provided in appendix D.

All interviews lasted between 60 and 90 minutes. Ninety percent of them were conducted in English and the remaining in Spanish. As part of the original package, permission was requested from all interviewees to record the meeting. In only a few cases, this was not possible due to technical problems or because the permission was denied.

The research focused on individuals that were working for either a formal humanitarian organization or a United Nations organization at the time of the disaster. I focused on large international humanitarian organizations (with offices and operations in more than one country). Informal, non-registered volunteer groups were not included in the sample. Private companies and other types of entities were not directly targeted, but someone working on any of these, that presented the necessary criteria was considered for the study. The purpose of focusing on these two types of organizations is to minimize dispersion and produce more accurate conclusions.

To sum up, the essential requirement for someone to be considered a qualified candidate for an interview were as follows:

- The interviewee must have participated (and have had an important level of decision-making power) in the process to decide whether to deploy personnel to another location to perform post-disaster-related activities. It does not necessarily need to be the place where the disaster happened.
- The disaster must have impacted a society different from the society of origin of the interviewee.
- Lastly, the interviewee must have been outside of the impacted country at the time of the disaster to account for the effects of the institutional logics on international convergence.

4.1.2 Field Data

The trip to Mexico took place in 2017, only a few months after the sequence of seismic events that hit the country that year. In the aftermath of these events, the Earthquake Engineering Research Institute (EERI) deployed a multi-disciplinary group of five scientists (including myself) on a reconnaissance trip. Not long after my trip to Mexico, the University of Delaware awarded me a dissertation grant that allowed me to travel to Puerto Rico and the Dominican Republic. The logistics of this trip were facilitated by the regional Panama office of the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC). The first destination was the Dominican Republic. The staff of the IFRC facilitated the connection with the principal office of the National Society of the Red Cross (RCNS). They collaborated with logistics and resources. They helped me organize field trips to locations on the island that had been hit by Hurricane Maria early that year.

The objective of the reconnaissance trip was to collect perishable data (Stallings 2006) such as documents and the perceptions of the people, which can change over time as they are subject to things such as memory decay (Bourque, Shoaf & Nguyen 1997). They help highlight important issues that might benefit from further research but do not necessarily provide methodologically strong conclusions. Nonetheless, the data collected enhances the familiarity with particular social problems and settings (Lofland and Lofland 1995).

The questions that I asked during the interviews and informal conversations followed the instrument originally presented to the Internal Review Board at the University of Delaware which is included in the Appendices. The only difference was that the questions tried to capture the way that each drew from different institutional logics to make sense of the relationship between them and the many international actors that participated in the response efforts. In all cases, I tried to capture if there had been differences, between the way they related to other local stakeholders, and the way they related to converging international actors.

In Mexico, as well as in the Dominican Republic and Puerto Rico, data were collected from all sites visited including emergency operation centers, logistics centers, warehouses, and shelters, and other sites in the communities that had been affected. The data collected came from the following sources. 1) Documents, including news articles, photographs, reports, maps, and various personal notes and memos, 2) Informal conversations and interviews with regular citizens from different socio-economic backgrounds, status, sectors, and educational levels including drivers, hotel employees, beneficiaries of humanitarian programs, and other residents that were affected by the events in multiple locations, 3) A total of 15 formal interviews with

local decision-makers, policymakers, technocrats, government officials, scholars, and business owners, 3) A total of nearly 150 hours of direct field observations in nearly 20 locations between the two trips.

In both trips, interviews were organized using a snowball sampling. In the case of Mexico, team members organized a few meetings before arrival, and interviewees were asked to provide references and introduce us to other friends and colleagues (Gliner, Morgan and Leech 2009). In the case of the Dominican Republic, interviews were organized using the same snowball sampling strategy and through connections made by IFRC and RCNS executives. The IFRC and RCNS arranged a few of the meetings before departure. Other interviews were organized by me by contacting residents.

4.2 Data Analysis

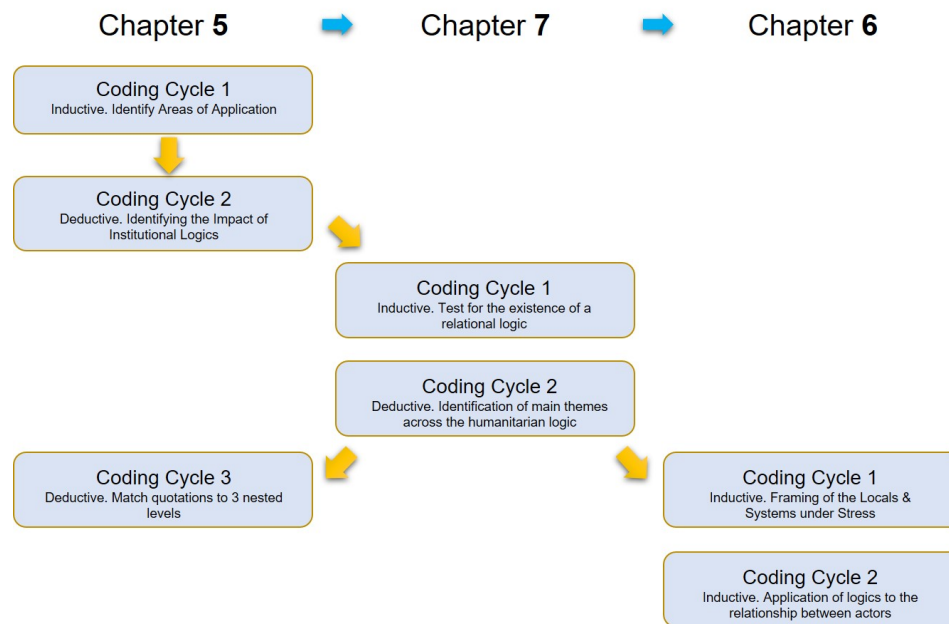
I engaged with the data through a content analysis approach using Atlas TI software. This type of analysis is defined here as “a research method for the subjective interpretation of the content of text data through the systematic classification process of coding and identifying themes or patterns” (Hsieh and Shannon 2005 p.1278). According to Corbin and Strauss (2008), “a researcher can think of coding as “mining” the data, digging beneath the surface to discover the hidden treasures contained within the data” (p.66).

The analysis of the data and the construction of the codes are two processes that took place simultaneously as they help reciprocally “in the evolution of understanding a phenomenon” (Weston et al. 2001 p.397). It assisted me in thinking critically, reflecting, and deciding how I had interpreted the information, and what intellectual connections I had seen and made between pieces of data. Ultimately, I was

able to review with precision and verify the process of knowledge acquisition that I followed. This reflexive engagement with the data and coding is described by Mason (2002 p.5) as “thinking critically about what you are doing and why, confronting and often challenging your assumptions, and recognizing the extent to which your thoughts, actions, and decisions shape how you research and what you see”

Having into consideration that the original research proposal was adapted to use the data collected in Mexico and the Caribbean, the three chapters of this dissertation followed a somewhat different analytical process. The entire process is presented in the following figure. The details of the process followed in each chapter are presented separately below.

Figure 2 Sequence of Analysis



4.2.1 Chapter 5

This chapter presents the impact of institutional logics at each of the three levels of analysis, that of the individual, the organization, and the society at large. The findings presented here are what was promised in the original research proposal.

That data analyzed in chapter 5 included 1) the full transcripts of all the formal in-depth interviews to decision-makers, 2) memos that were taken during the conversations in which I captured my interpretations and judgments, and 3) “metamemos” (Saldaña 2013, p.39) that I created to summarize the data and that allowed me to focus with more attention in specific themes.

The goal of the coding process was to identify how individuals processed information (interpreted) and formulated decisions (acted upon their interpretation) employing utilizing institutional logics.

Before the formal coding process took place, all the available data up to that point and the literature were reviewed repeatedly to augment the sense of immersion (Hsieh and Shannon, 2005), and to search for “codable moments” that are worthy of attention (Boyatzis, 1998). The coding process began after I had finalized the transcription of the first few interviews. This allowed the retrieval of valuable information, which was contrasted with the data from the remaining transcriptions (Bazeley 2007).

4.2.1.1 1st Coding Cycle

The first coding cycle was entirely inductive, an approach in which the analysis of social phenomena “begins with analyzing the empirical world towards theory-building based on the collected data and researcher’s interpretation” (Moon 2008, p.71). This implies that there is no reality beyond the reality which is

subjectively constructed by each individual, and it is the task of the researchers to “interpret” these multiple realities by “immersing themselves in the world inhabited by those they wish to study” (Esterberg 2002, p.16). So, I engaged the data without other preconceived notions or categories (Kondracki, Wellman, and Amundson 2002).

The focus at this stage was to explore possible initial categories, patterns, and themes. I used a combination of techniques, including initial coding, InVivo, and Values coding. Initial coding “is what one does at the beginning of data analysis... it is tagging any unit of data that might be relevant to the study” (Merriam and Merriam 2009 p.200). It is pertinent as its goal is to remain open to all possible theoretical directions indicated by the readings of the data (Charmaz 2006 p.46). An InVivo technique complemented this approach by allowing me to find “imagery, symbols, and metaphors for rich category, theme and concept development” (Strauss 1987, p.160), and it was used to honor the voice (how they refer to) of the interviewees and “ground the analysis from their perspectives” (Saldaña 2013, p.48). Values coding “tap into the inner cognitive system of participants” and “assesses a participant’s integrated value, attitude, and belief system at work” (Saldaña 2013, p.86). This technique became of substantive importance to identify the subjective meaning that was assigned.

Through this analysis, I identified the main areas of interest that the interviewees chose to reflect upon. I developed and applied codes to passages in which it was easy to identify an operational area. For example, when and if a respondent would say “the purpose of the intervention was”, this fragment would be coded as “intervention-goal”. In a similar line of thought, if another respondent said, “by doing this we were able to feed thousands of people”, this fragment would be coded as “intervention-outcome”.

By the end of this coding cycle, I had a good understanding of the multiple areas that were of interest to all my respondents which by definition, were the areas in which the logics were applied.

4.2.1.2 2nd Coding Cycle

The codes developed in the first coding cycle were used as the foundation for the second cycle (Saldaña 2013), during which I confirmed, and tested, the appropriateness of the inductive approach used in the first cycle. At this point, the previous codes were “subsumed by other codes, relabeled, or dropped altogether (Saldaña 2013, p.10), using a combination of pattern and focused coding. These approaches allow developing a sense of categorical, thematic, conceptual, and theoretical organization from the previous codes (Saldaña 2013).

I managed to produce a much more cohesive set of categories which I corroborated to be essential for my interviewees. The codes, which added to nearly 200 by the end of the first coding cycle were grouped into the following: 1) Impacted Area, 2) Event, 3) Overall Response, 4) Organizational Response, 5) Deployment Reasons, 6) Deployment Restrictions, 7) Organization, 8) Humanitarian space, etc. Still, AtlasTi provides functionality that allows the researcher to maintain the original codes. So, for instance, under the code 6-Deployment Restrictions, I was still able to see all the sub-categories of that code such as 6a-Deployment Restrictions (Legal) or 6b-Deployment Restrictions (Logistical).

I also focused on identifying how the interviewees coped with and confronted the contradictions and tensions (Barbour and Manly 2016) experienced in the enactment of each of the six original institutional logics presented by Friedland and Alford (1991). During this process, I noticed what appeared to be a gap in the theory.

When I was performing the deductive coding using the six existing institutional logics, it did not seem like it was capturing all the dimensionality of what was driving the interpretation and subsequent action of my respondents. The theme was driven by a powerful idea, which is that the six logics, seemed to be insufficient to explain human interaction. The idea that relations could be an institution in and on themselves grew stronger, and the notion of the existence of a seventh logic emerged. To pursue this possibility, I deviated from this original path. The coding process that was used to analyze the existence and key attributes of this logic is described at the end of this chapter. This was unexpected and unplanned and after careful consideration of its merit, I decided to introduce this finding into the dissertation in Chapter 7.

The analysis confirmed this and consequently when I returned to continue this second cycle, I also explicitly coded for the logic of relations in the same deductive way as I did with the original six logics presented in the theory. Different from the other six logics, its origin, rather than being from the existing literature, was a parallel deductive analysis. Essentially, when I recommenced the analysis, in addition to the original six existing logics, I continued the coding process as if the relational logic had always existed.

To determine how individuals drew from these logics, this part of the analysis was essentially deductive, which is an approach through which the data are analyzed through an existing framework (Patton 2015). The level of abstraction of the work of Friedland and Alford (1991) is challenging to apply as they did not provide practical information to identify the presence of institutional logics empirically. To resolve these challenges, I followed the work of Thornton (2004), who laid the ground for a pragmatic approach. She developed a tool that is idealized as a series of key attributes

of the institutional orders. According to her, each of the institutional logics has attributes that are presented on the Y-axis of a two-dimensional matrix. They vary according to each institutional order (X-axis), and so, they are different for each institutional logic and “specify the organizing principles that shape individual and organizational preferences and interests” (Thornton, Ocasio, and Lounsbury 2012, p.54).

The entire matrix is presented in Appendix G. The attributes displayed in this matrix were used as codes to identify not only the presence of a logic but also to distinguish what attribute of the logic was mostly used to drive interpretation.

4.2.1.3 3rd Coding Cycle

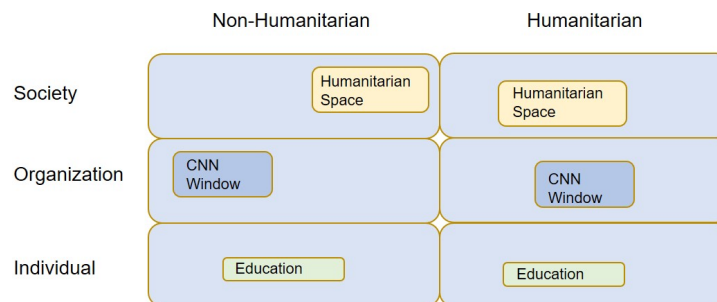
This third iteration had the following complementary purposes. The first one was to achieve an even greater conceptual clarity and pertinence in the classification of the previous codes that were identified in the first two cycles. I used the number of quotes and the depth of the emphasis that was put by the respondent into a certain idea to define the categories and themes that were more salient and ultimately discussed in the chapter

The second one was to organize these themes in a way that would be coherent with the theoretical framework. One of the biggest contributions of the theory presented by Friedland and Alford (1991), is that institutional logics affect interpretation at the level of the individual, the organization, and society. I decided to study the influence of logics at the three levels. To do this, I paid attention to the level that was being referred to in a quotation. For example, if someone said, “I thought of doing this, but my organization has strict policies we have to follow”, this quotation would be classified as “organization”. If someone said, “All that matters to me is how

I feel”, then the quotation was classified as “individual”. Lastly, if one of my respondents said, “even if your organization has a mission, we all try to work together and respect the more general expectations”, then this quotation was classified as “society”.

The last purpose of this cycle was to assess the role of the relational logic, relative to the other logics, so I applied 2 unique codes to track the influence of two main instantiations of this logic, namely the humanitarian logic, and the non-humanitarian logic. At the end of the third cycle, I had produced a matrix that contained the 3 levels of analysis on the Y-axis and these two categories on the X-axis, as seen in the following image.

Figure 3 Matrix of Thematic Analysis



After selecting the most salient codes as described above, I located them in the table, and using the quotations identified in the first inductive coding cycle, I was able to detect the areas in which institutional logics were having a heftier influence. The painted squares represent the themes that were identified and discussed at each of the three levels. The data for each theme was analyzed using each of the existing logics. For the specific case of the relational logic, I studied the influence of its two instantiations as described above. For instance, the idea of the humanitarian space is

one of the themes that is discussed in chapter 5, and that was used by the respondents to refer to the level of analysis of society. Similarly, the idea of the CNN window was mostly used to present the tension between logics at the level of the organization.

4.2.2 Chapter 7

During the first stages of the analysis, I encountered the possibility that relations could be driven by a dominant logic that is different from the other existing logics presented by Friedland and Alford (1991). To make this change to the original proposal I followed the appreciation of anthropologists George and Louise Spindler who in 1992 said that “only the human observer can be alert to divergences and subtleties that may prove to be more important than the data produced by any predetermined categories of observation or any instrument...The categories of happenings repeat themselves endlessly in human affairs, yet each event is unique” (1992, p.66).

Following their observations, and with the goal of testing for this possibility, I engaged in a parallel analysis to see if the existence of a relational logic could have the explanatory power that I felt the theory was missing. During this time, the opportunity to collect additional field data in Mexico and the Caribbean presented itself. The decision to include data collected during these trips was based on that the focus of this new line of analysis was centered on how individuals relate to others. Interestingly, a portion of my interviewees had referred to deployments in these countries. Consequently, some of the people that I interviewed during the trips were directly related to the decisions that my previous interviewees had made. This allowed me to analyze the concrete way in which both groups related to one another. This was a new

theme that became the content of chapter six. The method used for this analysis is presented here.

4.2.2.1 1st Coding Cycle

The relational logic is a way of thinking about your position relative to other people. The analysis started with an inductive approach, to identify passages in the transcripts in which my respondents referred to others with whom they maintained a relationship. The codes that were developed and used at this stage additionally tried to classify the data according to the specific group and reason behind that relationship. This logic was applied to the data collected from humanitarian leaders as well as from the local people.

The codes that were defined in this coding cycle were of two kinds. One was aimed at identifying the sequences in the transcript when one group was referring to the other, or another group. The codes were grouped under the name 1) Relation-Group. Within this group, the following codes were applied 1.a. Relation-Group-Donor, 1.b. Relation-Group-Local 1.c. Relation-Group-Media and so on. The second kind of code was essentially used to determine the rationale behind that relationship. This did not necessarily mean that a real relationship existed, but what the interviewee thought about the one that s/he was referring to. The codes were grouped under the name 2) Relation-Rationale, and some of the codes that were used within this larger group are 2.a Relation-Rationale-Complaint, 2.b. Relation-Rationale-Assistance, 2.c. Relation-Rationale-Power, and so on.

The codes developed at this stage served the purpose of identifying that relations and how individuals make sense of these relations, matter, and affect the way

they make decisions. They were mostly used for the analysis presented in chapter 7 where I discuss the relational logic.

4.2.2.2 2nd Coding Cycle

As discussed in Chapter 2, all the logics have multiple instantiations. The second cycle focused the attention on one of its possible instantiations, which I named ‘humanitarian logic.’ In other words, I borrowed the framework for what is a logic, and I described how what I was looking, would look like within this framework. I defined the attributes of the humanitarian logic, for which I used the methodological arguments and theoretical considerations that Thornton (2004) used to produce the content of each of the building blocks of her instrument (the cells in the table in Appendix G)⁷. The main attributes of the institutional orders displayed in the Y-axis, “are grounded in the conventional nomenclature of social science empirical research, sociological, anthropological, archeological, psychological, political science, or economic concepts that assist the scholar in the comparative interpretation of cognition and practice within and across institutional orders” (Thornton, Ocasio, and Lounsbury 2012, p.55). I chose to maintain the same set of attributes and developed a specific way in which those attributes present themselves in the western world. I grounded the process in the practice of humanitarian action and complemented it with the literature on disaster science, humanitarian studies, social science, and other disciplines.

⁷ For a full description of the methods I recommend reviewing the work of Thornton, Ocasio, and Lounsbury 2012, Chapter 3

Thornton (2004) worked with ideal types. In this regard Swedberg and Agevall (2005) clarify that ideal types “can be described as a schematic representation of some configuration of social action” (p156), and continue to say that “once constructed, is confronted with empirical reality. As a result of this confrontation, the researcher will be able to handle the concrete empirical configuration and explain it” (p156). I followed this argument and used the attributes of the humanitarian logic as codes to identify the presence of the humanitarian logic across the data. These attributes of the humanitarian logic are presented below. The entire table, with the attributes of the remaining of the logics, is shown in appendix G⁸.

This process was the same as the one that I was following during the second cycle described in the analysis of chapter 5. (Just to recap, during the second cycle, I decided to pause the process to analyze the existence of this new logic). The application of these codes and the data that was classified was later used to finalize the second cycle and produce the content of chapter five. The only difference is that in this “intermediate and parallel” coding cycle I used the coded data only to detect the presence of the humanitarian logic. Differently, to continue the second cycle of

⁸ In many of the quotations presented in the remaining of the dissertation, a small table has been attached below it. This table lists the specific logics and the attributes that have been identified in it. It is important to highlight to in reality, in the same expression, or in a portion of an expression, many logics are used simultaneously so it could be the case that other attributes from the same logic or other logics in the table presented in Appendix G could be identified. The ones that have been listed in each quotation are those that facilitate the explanation of the major points of the section where they are discussed. In some other quotations, this table is omitted and a letter referencing the specific logic that was identified is included between parentheses. The nomenclature is as follows: (M) Market, (C) Corporation, (P) Profession, (S) State, (F) Family, (R) Religion, (Re) Relational, (H) Humanitarian

chapter five, the data was used in combination with the other six logics to study the impact of the now seven logics in humanitarian operations.

Table 1 Attributes of the Western Humanitarian Logic

Attributes	Humanitarian Logic	Attributes	Humanitarian Logic
Economic System	<i>Nonprofit Capitalism</i>	Informal Control Mechanisms	<i>Public Scrutiny</i>
Natural Effect of Symbolic Analogy	<i>Impacted Area as Service Delivery Area</i>	Formal Control Mechanisms	<i>Peer Accountability</i>
Sources of Identity	<i>Commitment to Others</i>	Forms of Ownership	<i>Public</i>
Sources of Legitimacy	<i>Presumed Knowledge of the Local</i>	Organization Form	<i>Network Organization</i>
Sources of Authority	<i>Humanitarian Space</i>	Logic of Exchange	<i>Active Offering</i>
Basis of Norms	<i>Intervention Force</i>	Logic of Investment	<i>Capital Committed to Visibility</i>
Basis of Attention	<i>Willingness to Sacrifice</i>	Management Style	<i>Determined Locally</i>
Basis of Strategy	<i>Increase the Well-Being of the Other</i>	Main Motivation	<i>Paternalism</i>
Learning Mechanisms	<i>Field Experience</i>	Delivery	<i>Assistance</i>

4.2.3 Chapter 6

Chapter five confirmed that an important part of the work of humanitarians is affected by the discrepancy that exists among humanitarians about the underlying ideal that drives humanitarian work. This ideal is essentially relational and has to do with the way humanitarian workers understand their relationship with other providers of relief, and with the recipients of that relief.

During my trip to Mexico and the Caribbean, I noticed discrepancies between the value that humanitarian decision-makers and local actors assigned to the relationships with one another. This is indeed a major theme right now in humanitarian work, and this chapter contributes to that conversation. Although it was

not what I originally set out to do, is a contribution to an important and current intellectual conversation.

The analysis for this chapter was done through two consecutive inductive coding cycles of all available data, which included the interviews with humanitarian leaders and the interviews in the field and various notes that were taken. The rationale for using an inductive approach is that it allows "gaining direct information from study participants without imposing preconceived categories" (Hsieh and Shannon 2005 p.1280).

4.2.3.1 1st Coding Cycle

The theory states that institutional logics are socially and historically constructed. Having in mind that the core of this dissertation is the humanitarian exchange that occurs between international actors and recipients of aid, which involves the relationship between them, the first coding cycle was designed to study how inter-institutional systems of both collectives relate to one another in the aftermath of a humanitarian disaster.

The coding scheme was applied to the transcripts of the interviews with humanitarian leaders, as well as to all the data that was collected during the field trips. The codes were inductively defined to capture the essence of the relationship between both collectives. Being this so, the passages in the transcript, as well as the notes from the field that contained expression about what each of these two collectives felt about the other, were coded. I also used an important portion of the codes that were

developed for the analysis that is presented in chapter seven⁹ to study the relational logic.

In this cycle, I also focused the attention on identifying pieces of data that referred to the contexts that each of the collectives experienced. This idea was born out of the many expressions that my interviewees and the people that I met during my trip used, to describe how their “normal” way of life had been impacted by the disaster. This was an indication that the forces that generate those changes in the lives of individuals could generate a reprioritization of the logics. This aspect of the analysis was not a part of the original proposal, but I considered it important to study if and how the relationship between humanitarians and the people they serve changes.

4.2.3.2 2nd Coding Cycle

Shortly after starting this first coding cycle, I had numerous classified pieces of data that could be used to understand how each collective feel about the other, and to understand how those feelings change after a disaster. The data also pointed to the possibility that institutional systems do not relate the same way during a disaster, as they do in times of “blue sky”, the way that humanitarian refers to the space in time when there is no crisis. This led me to design a second coding cycle that is presented below. Even though this was the second cycle, the analysis aimed at understanding the forces that affect the relationship between institutional systems during a disaster.

⁹ Be aware of the sequence of analysis. In the dissertation, the order of the chapters 5, 6, and 7 do not coincide with the sequence of the analysis. As shown in figure 3, the analysis of chapter 7 took place before the analysis of chapter 6, and that is why the analysis is presented before this section.

Chapter 5

THE APPLICATION OF INSTITUTIONAL LOGICS

5.1 Introduction

The world is going through tough times. Last year alone, 210 million people needed humanitarian assistance due to multiple ongoing crises. In the same year, 68 million people were affected by natural disasters around the globe (USAID 2008). In response, we have witnessed tremendous growth in humanitarian assistance efforts.

A portion of such efforts is individual citizens that are not particularly related to any single organization (Holguín-Veras José et al. 2007, Paul 2019). These reactive and inexperienced humanitarians generally gather around smaller organizations known as MONGOs (My Own NGO) (Polman, 2013). The provision of relief by these thousands of self-motivated individuals sometimes resembles a mass assault (Barton 1962). But there has also been a remarkable increase in more formal and structured humanitarian action. From the end of the second world war to our present time, for example, the number of humanitarian organizations with consultative status in the United Nations has expanded from only a handful (Roeder and Simard, 2013) to over 5,161¹⁰. The trend has also been accounted for, in the number of humanitarian workers employed in these organizations. In 2008, this number was conservatively estimated at 210,800 (ALNAP 2008). By 2015, the number raised to 319.000

¹⁰ Extracted from <http://csonet.org/> on the 16 of November 2019

(ALNAP 2015) and by 2018 jumped again to 570,000 (ALNAP 2018). In this context, the importance of studying how members of this workforce relate to others and one another has increased.

The analysis of this chapter is grounded in the theory of institutional logics (Friedland and Alford's 1991). The theory identifies six central "institutions," including market, corporation, profession, state, family, and religion. One of the main findings of this dissertation is the existence of a seventh institution which I have called the 'institution of relations' and is presented in Chapter 7. Each of these institutions has a dominant logic, which are defined as a "set of material practices and symbolic constructions" (Friedland and Alford 1991, p.248). They are also a "complicated, experientially constructed, and thereby contingent set of rules, premiums, and sanctions that men and women in particular contexts create and recreate in such a way that their behavior and accompanying perspective are to some extent regularized and predictable" (Jackall 1988 p.112). They work as lenses to understand the cognitive structures that individuals use to make sense of their environment as they "shape individual preferences and organizational interests as well as the repertoire of behaviors by which they may attain them" (Friedland and Alford 1991 p.232).

The theory includes an important assertion that guides this chapter's analysis. It considers individuals, organizations, and society, as three nested levels within one another, and the logics of each of the institutions exist at the three levels.

At the lowest level, all individuals are driven by institutional logics, but the specifics of those logics vary in meaningful ways, and so they all make sense of things differently. A humanitarian worker, for example, could be mostly driven by a religious logic, while a colleague working for the same organization could be driven by a

professional logic. To make things more complicated, in a parallel scenario, they could both be driven by two different instantiations (variations) of the same logic. They could be both driven by a professional logic, but one might be more strongly influenced by the values and principles of a health professional, while the other could be more influenced by the values of the military. The same thing happens at the level of the organization. A religious entity such as the United Methodist Committee on Relief could be more strongly driven by a religious logic. In contrast, a non-religious counterpart such as Doctors Without Borders could be driven by a professional logic. In some cases, organizations could be influenced by multiple logics. A current example could be Hospitals of Home, an organization that is both Christian and medical. Finally, at the societal level, institutional logics influence the broader humanitarian community, and they affect how humanitarians perceive their place in that community. At this level, individuals center the attention on the symbolic constructions that are necessary to navigate social expectations and demands.

All these logics and their multiple instantiations are different and exist in tension, and to make decisions, individuals reconcile potential discrepancies that exist at the three levels. Following these theoretical appreciations, this chapter responds to the following research question: *What is the impact of institutional logics at the level of the individual, the organization, and the society on disaster deployment decisions?* It does not evaluate a causal effect between the application of institutional logics and the decisions made. Rather, it explores how humanitarian leaders draw on multiple logics at the three levels, to make sense of a post-disaster context, and make decisions about international interventions. More specifically, it seeks to understand the logics that humanitarians use to relate to the many members of the humanitarian ecosystem

(with an emphasis on the foreign communities they serve). The response is built describing how the relational logic presents itself relative to the other logics. This approach allows us to study the nature of the relationship between individual humanitarian workers and the humanitarian sector broadly defined, during the decision to engage in disaster deployments.

5.2 Society

The theory of institutional logics states that the level of the society, the organization, and the individual are nested within one another, the society being the largest and most abstract. Society is an intangible space that can be thought of as an umbrella, a symbolic space of convergence where organizations and individuals interact. The society is considered here as supra-structures that extend beyond the boundaries of any single organization. The humanitarian space is one such structure. It is defined as a cognitive space, which boundaries, and its very nature, are mostly determined by how those that inhabit it, relate to one another and with multiple stakeholders, including the local population in the regions where they operate (Hilhorst and Jansen 2010).

This section focuses on how and the extent to which humanitarian officials draw from different institutional logics to understand and give meaning to the humanitarian space. The analysis showed that references to these higher-level symbolic spaces were rare. And this is understandable. Individuals are much more used to dealing with their values, beliefs, and principles, and those of their organization, than with those of the supra-structures where they operate. But these relatively few references provided sufficient evidence to draw some conclusions about the actions of the organizations and the individuals that operate in it.

The first reference about the humanitarian space was introduced to the conversation in the following manner:

“I believe there is space, there is more human need **(1)** than can ever be filled by anyone actor. [...], I would say that the market **(2)** is crowded. Just from a pure business perspective, if we were to treat the industry like a business where customers are beneficiaries **(3)**, and we should be filling the needs of those customers, I think the market is not only saturated, it lacks a coordination role ... I believe outside of the humanitarian space there is a role for regulation around market design and market approaches **(4)**”

- | |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1: Humanitarian (Basis of Attention: Commitment to Others) |
| 2: Market (Economic System: Market Capitalism) |
| 3: Corporation (Delivery: Products and Services) |
| 4: State (Basis of Strategy: Increase Community Good) |

This individual starts his argument by referring to the nature of the relationship between humanitarian actors and those that are served. From what we can extract from this quotation, this relationship appears to exist within the boundaries of the humanitarian space because it has the purpose of satisfying a human need. It is driven by a guiding value that is embedded in the humanitarian logic, which is that those they serve have a need that needs to be satisfied (Vaux 2001). Interestingly, he moves on to express other dimensions of this relationship. To some extent, the force of the humanitarian logic is somewhat overshadowed by other logics. He argues for instance that there is an excess of supply, which according to economic theory, prescribes that suppliers (humanitarian response in this case) perceive that the value of the service they offer is higher than the value that consumers (beneficiaries) are willing to pay. This could be interpreted as an indication that the rationale behind the relationship between humanitarians and beneficiaries is driven by a humanitarian logic, but the strength and the directionality of that relationship are defined by something else (market forces in this case).

In summary, this first quotation gives us a first indication that at the societal level, the essence of the relationship between these two unique collectives, the reason why they both inhabit the humanitarian space, is defined by a humanitarian logic, but the specifics of that relationship is not. Differently, it appears to be defined by a market logic, which interestingly, according to him, needs to be controlled or regulated, which is an expression of a state logic. This same idea was also present in this other quotation when another interviewee expressed the following:

“I am a firm believer in the humanitarian space. So much of what we do is done through a constructivist approach **(1)**. There are always different realities and different cultural contexts, but ultimately, I believe in just my own personal theoretical framework that is one in which I believe that we socially construct **(2)** our own realities. And what may be keen when something like a hurricane is approaching for the (name of local organization), may not be the same lens that I am seeing at (name of US organization). However, I am convinced that the fundamental principles allow us to get to a point where we have a mutually beneficial relationship **(3)** or engagement.”

- | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1: Profession (Formal Control Mechanism: Internal and External Peer Review) |
| 2: Humanitarian (Sources of Authority: Humanitarian Space) |
| 3: Market (Natural Effect of Symbolic Analogy: Market as Transaction) |

This respondent believes in the existence of a humanitarian space and acknowledges the influential role of culture in the creation and development of such space, which is historically and socially constructed (Burnes and Jackson 2011). He points out that a disaster event is perceived by local and international organizations differently. It is important to emphasize that disaster events are the reason for both collectives to have a relationship in the first place. By acknowledging that they both interpret them differently, we could extract that he also accepts that the purpose of their relationship is also understood differently. Despite their dissimilar views on the event itself, and the purpose of their relationship, both local stakeholders and international actors can establish a relationship that is based on a mutual benefit,

which is an idea rooted in a market logic. The value of money and the market logic within the humanitarian space is also clearly stated in this next quotation:

“There's no question. I mean, if you look, if you really want to understand what drives the system, it's really the money **(1)**. So that's what is the underlying push behind all this. And so, a lot of the money is coming from particular governments **(2)**. U.S. government, the British government, the European Union, the Japanese government. So, if you look at kind of the world order **(3)** or whatever you want to say, now the Chinese are coming to a greater extent as well. You know that's where a lot of the drive for this comes from.”

1: **Corporation** (Basis of Strategy: Increase Size and Diversification of Firm)
2: **States** (Sources of Identity: Political Ideology)
3: **Humanitarian** (Basis of Norms: Intervention Force)

These previous quotations help us understand how humanitarians combine a humanitarian logic with other logics to establish and determine how their relationship with local stakeholders operates within the confines of the humanitarian space. They serve as an indication that the humanitarian logic is used to define the nature of the relationship but loses some of its strength in the presence of other logics (i.e. market, state) which affect its strength and purpose.

Both quotations also reflect the presence of a variation of the humanitarian logic; one that is driven by a permanent and almost endless ‘human need’ that must be satisfied through the will to put ‘the other’ first, and to abide by the needs of the populations that they are trying to help. This seems to reflect the original conception of humanitarian action that was embodied by Henry Dunant in 1863, with the creation of the Red Cross. It does not mean that humanitarians know how to assess those needs, but that their intent is centered on capturing, understanding, and following the demands and requirements of local populations.

From an interview, I extracted a powerful and complementary idea that allows us to have a clearer picture of the symbolic constructions that are used to define the humanitarian space.

“And the reality is what is happening is the machine is getting in motion at the same time that you go out there **(1)**. So, you know the supplies are being put on airplanes, the machinery **(4)** is in motion if you will **(2)**. So, you spend a lot of time trying to manage that machinery, and not as much time focused on the communities **(3)**”

- | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1: Humanitarian (Natural Effect of Symbolic Analogy: Impacted Area as Service Delivery Area) |
| 2: Humanitarian (Delivery: Assistance) |
| 3: Humanitarian (Logic of Exchange: Active Offering) |
| 4: Profession (Basis of Norms: Membership in Guild) |

In the data that was collected, there was evidence data, that humanitarian action evolved into an engineered structure that, in a way, has a life of its own. In this quotation, my interviewee refers to it as a machinery that starts operating while humanitarians begin their deployment to provide support. This machinery is more than just people converging in the impacted location. It is a vast logistical, bureaucratic, and very politized apparatus, that is put in motion at the very same time that someone learns about the occurrence of a disaster. From what we can obtain from the quotation, this machinery reacts even before the two collectives have had the chance to communicate and even discern the value of the relationship. When this quotation is viewed in combination with the previous ones, it is apparent that this machinery has been built on a unilateral appreciation of what humanitarians think about human needs, what these human needs are. Interestingly enough, they can be met globally through rapid and standardized responses and channels, that are often externally imposed, with little impact from the communities and consequently, not necessarily relevant (Swithern 2019).

The evidence presented in this section helped demonstrate the existence of the humanitarian logic, but it also pointed that the humanitarian space is a construct that is not purely built on it. It suggested that it has grown into a complex machine that, in a way, has a life of its own. Not only it becomes operational with independence, but it even seems to guide the way of what needs to be done. This machine is driven by other logics such as the corporate, the market, and the state.

5.3 Organization

The organization is the concrete environment where humanitarians work. It is defined by managerial structures, processes, policies, regulations, and laws. But it is also defined by intangible symbolic constructions. You can take for instance the case of Médecins Sans Frontiers (MSF), one of the most renowned international humanitarian organizations. All individuals use institutional logics to make sense and find a point of reference to understand what this organization means to them. But this meaning will not be the same for a person that lived through a disaster thanks to MSF, or to someone that knows nothing but its name, or to an ex-employee that was fired. This cognitive dimension to defining an organization is the focus of the attention of this section.

When sharing their stories, all interviewees mentioned numerous functional areas within their organization. They spoke of human resources and recruitment, finances, logistics, communications, public relations, and so on. The collection of data was one of the most extensively used, generally concerning the common practice of establishing the ‘needs of the people’. What was salient about this theme, is that despite the many available channels to collect data, when inquired about deployment decisions, many of my interviewees agreed in their preference to receive firsthand

information directly from the impacted locality. This practice, they continued to say, is generally done through an ‘initial field assessment.’ This was peculiarly present also in transnational organizations that are well known for having solid and well-established partnerships with local organizations. Someone explained to me:

“And you know we have a couple of quite pragmatic clear points **(1)** in terms of what needs to happen you know. So there needs to be an initial deployment of a coordination and response team **(2)** that needs to do the initial assessment as quickly as possible **(3)**.[...] And that's my distinct memory also from the (name of country) operation is of course is one thing to have rules and systems, and another thing whether you have the right and competent people to make those a reality, to translate those rules and frameworks into action... [...] In (name of country) we were fortunate enough in that the team on the ground was strong; very experienced people who had the respect of most of the (name of the offices that this organization has around the world) **(4)** that showed up with their own team”

- | |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1: Corporation (Management Style: Efficiency) |
| 2: Corporation (Basis of Attention: Status Position in Hierarchy) |
| 3: Humanitarian (Logic of Exchange: Breadth and Depth) |
| 4: Humanitarian (Formal Control Mechanisms: Peer Accountability) |

This quotation represents how, for some organizations, the deployment of assessment teams is an automatic, policy-driven, first activity that takes place immediately after a disaster. There is no debate, and there is no democratic process. There is no consideration for the pertinence, accuracy, and value of the information that could be provided by local partners and others stationed in the field. It is a good example of the “proceduralization” pointed out by Anderson et.al (2012), a term they use to “describe the codification of approaches that are meant to accomplish positive outcomes into mechanical checklists and templates that not only fail to achieve their intent but actually lead to even worse outcomes” (p. 67). The velocity with which, for these organizations, these assessment teams are deployed, aligns with the automation of the humanitarian machine that was discussed in the previous section.

This quotation also allows us to see the application of the humanitarian logic to share an organizational posture about an issue that is commonly debated within humanitarian spheres. At its core, the central argument gravitates around the idea that an intervention must consider the benefits and harms of performing a field assessment more rapidly, to the detriment of the quality of that assessment. He acknowledges that this almost automatic practice requires a competent team. It calls the attention that for such a critical activity, performed with such little time, the competence of the team is assessed in terms of being recipients of the respect of others within the same organization, that also came from outside of the country.

From this, we could hypothesize that the process of putting together a needs assessment operation involves more than just deploying a group of people with pre-defined methods to collect data. In the minds of humanitarian officials, what they consider to be an automatic and almost purely operational activity, is cognitively inseparable from the need to satisfy organizational demands. Moreover, these demands are not homogeneous. On the one hand, they must reconcile thoughts and ideas that are associated with the desire to serve people in need. On the other, they must navigate an ocean of organizational politics and varied leadership. This could mean that at an unconscious level, the objective of gathering supplementary data might be overshadowed by the need to interpret and navigate the complex institutional systems of others, that can be both internal and external to the organization, and that can prioritize logics differently. The following expression supports this idea as well.

“So, we started to build the information so that we could potentially develop these (field) assessments because it was clearly with the information we received from our colleagues in (name of the country), and what we got from the (name of another country) mission **(1)** that

the situation was much more acute that was initially portrayed by the government (2)”

- | |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1: Humanitarian (Sources of Authority: Humanitarian Space)
2: Humanitarian (Organization Form: Network Organization) |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

This participant provided me information about a mission they had in an Asian country. At some point, they started receiving news directly from members of their organization in the field. Some of them were stationed in the same country, and some of them were part of a separate mission in a neighboring country. In this quotation also, the interviewee is using a humanitarian logic as well as other variations of the relational logic simultaneously to refer to two different stakeholders. In the first part, he establishes the authority of colleagues within the humanitarian space, and that is consequently, automatic recipients of trust. At first glance, the second part of the quotation appears to be driven by a state logic, but it is not. At least not entirely. This part of the expression does not say anything about the government itself. We could change the word government by any other organization, and the meaning of the expression would not change. We can consider this quotation, as an expression that uncovers a way to relate to this other subject (the government), in a way that is different from the way the speaker (and the organization) relates to those in the field. Interestingly, those that were providing information were partners from the same organization. And even in these circumstances, they chose to put in motion a mechanism to collect additional information.

This second quotation differs slightly from the previous one. In the first one, the humanitarian logic was applied to make sense of the relationship with disaster victims. In the second, it was used to make determinations about the relationship with those that are considered part of the same organization, such as those stationed in the country that provided the additional information. The non-humanitarian logic, in turn,

while it was utilized to refer to others in the same organization, in this second quote, it was used to speak of the government.

Needs assessments have proven to be of extreme importance in feeding the design of intervention strategies (Darcy et.al. 2013). But these efforts would be useless if they were not accompanied by another type of effort aimed at providing the primary resources necessary to satisfy whatever needs are found to exist in the ground. Such efforts are driven by a different combination of institutional logics that herd individuals into a narrower cognitive space. What this means is that a humanitarian mission cannot be achieved in isolation. Whatever freedom humanitarian workers consider having to produce a detailed assessment of what is needed, the local population, is then subject to the scrutiny of other institutional logics. In the case of humanitarians from the western/global north, this cognitive territory is dominated by a solid corporate logic. Allow me to develop the idea further with the following quotation:

“...in response phase, there's an expectation that there will be an active response phase because that's when you have your CNN window **(1)**. That's when you have your opportunity. So, I have no choice but to come up with something that can meet the needs of the survivors **(2)** but also meet the needs of the institution **(4)** and can launch us into this process **(3)**”

- | |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1: State (Sources of Legitimacy: Democratic Participation) |
| 1: Humanitarian : (Logic of Investment: Capital Committed to Visibility) |
| 2: Humanitarian (Basis of Norms: Help Others) |
| 3: Corporation (Basis of Strategy: Increase Size and Diversification of Firm) |
| 4: Corporation (Logic of Investment: Capital Committed to Firm) |

In this example, the respondent also uses both instantiations of the relational logic and combines them with the corporate and the state logic. The salient aspect, however, is that the humanitarian logic that is used to refer to the needs of the survivors is secondary to the other logics. Humanitarian action has been historically

represented as a joint effort, primarily (or exclusively) driven by the needs of the people (Rességuier 2018). Even in our modern world, this posture continues to lead the way that international humanitarian action is depicted. But this expression is evidence that allows contradicting this posture, and the way it does it is by applying a version of the humanitarian logic that is somewhat distorted. The response is not sustained in the pain of the affected population, but in the institutional expectation (demand) to seize the opportunity that the event presented.

The dilemma of having to comply with organizational demands is not new (Kreps 1973). One could expect that funding, for instance, has always been an issue. But it would be reasonable to assume that in some circumstances, the humanitarian logic is significantly more potent than other logics. In these cases, decisions would be made based on the needs of the people, and only after, the mechanics to secure the necessary resources would have been activated. This quotation indicates that logics are not applied in sequence, but simultaneously. In a way, deciding what ‘the others’ mean to us, as an organization, cannot be disentangled from corporate needs; humanitarians must make determinations about the relationship with survivors and with the organizational demands simultaneously.

Another organization explained to me how they used the “CNN windows” in their favor:

“And in case of a special, special event, we can use a special system to receive more money. We call that CNN event **(1)** and, in this case, all (Name of the Organization), work on fundraising on one subject to try to have the maximum of money **(2)**, who will be allocated to one emergency.”

1: **State** (Sources of Legitimacy: Democratic Participation)
2: **Corporate** (Main Motivation: Money)

Once more, the respondent is very explicit as to what extent an organization might be willing to focus its entire attention on the raising of money. The first portion of the quotation is like the previous one. It uses a State logic that relates to the idea that the population has the freedom to participate in civic life and choose a destination for its donations. What is peculiar about the second part of this quotation is not only that he uses a corporate logic, but he even implies that the entire organization can suddenly be aligned under this one single logic. For a private company, to be driven by a corporate logic of producing revenue, this would not call the attention, but in the case of a humanitarian organization, it does. In a sense, he implies some sort of abandonment or relegation of their main goals to maximize profit, an idea that has been discussed by Weiss (2013).

This section demonstrated how institutional logics affect an organization, which is like the way they impact higher societal super-structures. The idea that not only organizations are driven by multiple logics, but that these logics are distinctly used depending on who people relate to, grew stronger. The data provide insights into that the modern humanitarian organization inhabits a humanitarian space in which the type of relationships that are established with various actors, dictate the specific logic that will be used. And it appears that a similar thing happens at the level of the organizations.

5.4 Individuals

Because of the tremendous growth that the sector has experienced in the past few decades, humanitarian work is very diverse. Be it within the confines of an office or in the field in a post-disaster context, the humanitarian workforce is made of hundreds of thousands of individuals from all walks of life, nationalities, professions,

ages, religious beliefs, and political ideologies. This diversity brought with it, new conversations about how to practice humanitarian work. This section finalizes the sequence and takes the discussion down to the level of the individual, which is the lowest of the three nested levels of analysis presented by Friedland and Alford (1991). It focuses on the logics that humanitarians draw from, to make sense of the very nature, the identity if you will, of their work as humanitarian practitioners.

Within western humanitarian officials, the discussion about what it means to be a humanitarian was somewhat dichotomous. One of my interviewees stated:

“I’ve come across those who are very sensitive to this area. But I’ve also encountered people who are completely clueless. I think that in our profession **(1)** the challenge is that we have a lot of well-meaning people **(2)** you know but having a good heart and being ignorant **(1)** is a dangerous combination [...] But I think the more we can find standards **(3)**, the more that we work with our host nations and host partners **(4)**, I think we can get to a point where we are controlling movement of these people a little more effectively **(4)**”

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| 1: Profession (Main Motivation: Help/Care)
2: Humanitarian (Basis of Strategy: Increase Well-Being of the Other)
3: Profession (Sources of Authority: Professional Association)
4: Humanitarian (Informal Control Mechanisms: Public Scrutiny) |
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Throughout our conversation, this interviewee was very opinionated about the low level of preparation that many humanitarian workers showed at the time of doing their jobs in an international context. By the time the interviewee made this comment, we were discussing the extent to which humanitarian organizations and their employees and volunteers can understand and respect the local culture. Her reference relates to the number of organizations that converge in the aftermath of a disaster (Older 2019, Neal 1994), and that due to their (many times) ad-hoc origins, are generally under-qualified and even sometimes culturally offensive (Telford and Cosgrave 2007).

In the eyes of this respondent, good intentions are a necessary but not a sufficient condition to be good in the provision of relief aid. This was one of his main sources of concern, and it called my attention because it represents the increasing recognition that the satisfaction of human needs is a much more complicated endeavor than what has been considered in the past, which has impacted the strong tendency towards professionalization (Nielsen et.al. 2010) that the western humanitarian sector is experiencing. But within this tendency, his quotation underlies a current dispute. On one hand, some support standardized, replicable approaches (Ramalingam 2013), while others support more flexible approaches (Obrecht 2019).

Underneath this discussion, there is another one that is more philosophical and is driven by the following question. What defines a good humanitarian worker? At least superficially, the response lies in the level of qualifications, such as what the respondent seems to be defending. But this quotation conveys something somewhat different, which is that more traditional humanitarian actors reserve for themselves the prerogative to assist populations in despair. This can be seen in the way in which she applied both the humanitarian and other logic. She used a non-humanitarian logic to speak of those less prepared converging actors, while she used a humanitarian logic to refer to partners and host nations. The distinct use of both instantiations is vital because it allows us to see another use of the relational logic that goes beyond establishing a relationship with other actors. She considers newer converging less qualified actors to be harmful to humanitarian action, and the cognitive mechanism she produces to prevent this from happening is through a close connection to other actors that already exist within the humanitarian space. This is an indication that the

humanitarian logic can be used to define and strengthen the borders of a space that is intended to be less porous to new players.

During another interview, I took notes of an expression that called my attention:

“At some point you get tired of working with expats **(1)**. The model of many of these organizations is based on volunteer work and kind of by definition, volunteers are not the most qualified **(2)**. The most of them do not know what reflection is. They believe they know what to do because they took all the FEMA courses, but you know, I do not know if you took some of them, those courses do not teach you how to think; you just have to remember stuff. Some are better prepared and have master’s degree. You see this more often, but it is still rare.”

1: **Humanitarian** (Sources of Legitimacy: Presumed Knowledge of the Local)

2: **Profession** (Sources of Legitimacy: Personal Expertise)

This respondent was the only one that brought into the conversation the courses offered by FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency). The quotation captured the difference in training between those that pursue a formal master's degree or higher, and those that are interested in developing an operational profile. At some point, the knowledge acquired through both methods seem to overlap but only superficially. The core point, this interviewee is making, is that, at least in international settings, you need people that can reflect. In these circumstances, according to this interviewee, the type of knowledge you gain from operational courses does not automatically translate into an ability to question why things are done in one way or another. He does not necessarily reject the value of these types of courses. Still, he implies that their value resides in giving people around the US, instruments, and mechanisms through which they can work together, share the same language, coordinate better their efforts. These objectives, although very much pursued in international settings, cannot be achieved through the same instruments that

work in the United States. Therefore, these skills need to be complemented by other skills that, according to him, can only be acquired through another type of training such as graduate education.

Once again, the quote represents a posture that officials from more traditional humanitarian organizations have about newer players. The discussion continues to orbit around how traditional actors relate to new actors, as well as to those they try to serve. On the one hand, newer actors bring a certain level of training that is generally standardized. In contrast, more traditional actors are increasingly recognizing that international humanitarian action demands an ability to reflect to fully capture the new circumstances that take place in unknown environments.

The scale was, however, significantly leaned towards the other side of the dichotomy. Much of data extracted from members of the second group, pointed that the identity of this second group refers back to the view that humanitarian action is an activity for individuals that are willing to go to the field, put their lives on the line and be close to the people in need. In a certain way, it refers to the type of logic that drives those newer actors that were referred to by the previous two respondents. I came across abundant allusions to this type of mentality during my research. Two interviewees made the most unambiguous reference. In their own terms:

“There are lots of theorists [...]. The theory and the practice if you know what I mean. I am a pragmatic; I believe in pragmatism **(1)**. So, when I see people that theorizes too much **(3)**, and in the case of Haiti, I saw a lot of people theorizing, and I still see people theorizing, those theorists have not produced any solution for the people **(4)**. It is possible that the solution of the pragmatics was not so good, but at least they saved lives **(2)**”

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| 1: Profession (Sources of Legitimacy: Personal Expertise)
2: Profession (Basis of Attention: Status Position in Network)
3: Humanitarian (Basis of Norms: Intervention Force)
4: Humanitarian (Basis of Strategy: Increase Well-Being of the Other) |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

“...personally, I believe today we try to have too much people with diploma (1), more people with diploma, and lack experience (2)”

1: **Profession** (Formal Control Mechanism: Internal and External Peer Review)
2: **Humanitarian** (Learning Mechanism: Field Experience)

In the mind of these two leaders, humanitarian action is represented in terms of theory and practice. They both use a professional logic to establish the differences between both schools of thought, and they use a relational logic to emphasize their discrepancies with those in the other group. Interestingly, in the first case, the official complements his posture by using the humanitarian version of this same relational logic to present the bond with the local population of Haiti. The humanitarian logic is used here to defend his posture and solutions to that population, which, interestingly, he considers to be true.

Other decision-makers aligned with this pragmatic approach, referred to the ideal set of skills that were needed to respond in a foreign region:

“...in the case of (name of event) we recognized OK we need somebody with a response background (1), that we trust sending into a first-round situation, right? We trust being one of those very first people first Toyota Land Cruisers to cross that destroyed bridge and get things started again (3) to get the initial base set up make those initial contacts, plug into those initial coordination mechanisms (2). So, you're looking for individuals that have that profile either that experience, or that skill set and experience, that you can send into those situations. “

1: **Profession** (Sources of Legitimacy: Personal Expertise)
2: **Humanitarian** (Organization Form: network organization)
3: **Humanitarian** (Learning Mechanisms: Field Experience)

Later on, this same executive provided me with more precisions about the type of skills that were required. He mentioned, among many things, the need to know how to set up telecommunication systems and navigate spaces (such as airports) that had been affected by the disaster. In this quotation, the respondent is clear about the type of individuals that are more conducive to the accomplishment of the mission. The

‘response background,’ which is, according to him technical, invokes the source of professional legitimacy that is expected.

The humanitarian logic was also used in this quotation. It complemented the symbols offered by the professional logic to produce the final imagery that drove this respondent’s interpretation. In his mind, the connection with the local survivors is established through two of the attributes of the humanitarian logic. The first cognitive connection is established through one of the most prevalent mental images that invade all minds, which is the destruction generated by the disaster. The extended conception of disasters in terms of destroyed infrastructure and paralyzed systems produce a humanitarian rationale that propels a preference for this type of more practical profiles. The second cognitive connection is related to the previous one. The destruction of the event and the presumed temporary inability of the locals require establishing mechanisms to coordinate efforts with other external actors.

This quotation helped me notice that many humanitarians, especially those with a stronger operational profile, have a conception of humanitarian work that is in nature romantic and heroic. All my interviewees had to share information about deployments in a particular disaster. They were asked to share the circumstances of those deployments, as well as things related to their personal lives. And there was a strong correlation between their deployments and the underlying meaning that they assign to those interventions. At some point during the conversations, for instance, one of my subjects shared the following two expressions:

“So, I was actually somewhat of a sabbatical [...], just coming up on vacation. I was in (name of country) for (description of her activities) when I start seeing the hurricane moving, and I was kind of dreading... I would say that I got home had like eight hours at home to pack up,

and then I was back out. I did not know. I was supposed to go for four days, and I end up going for over 60 days.”

“Yeah, I am an ex pat through and through. I have two passports I've lived and worked in over 50 war disasters zones before we had our daughter. We just lived in some of the toughest places on earth. So, I think really what I do, you know it's what I believe in, humanitarian work, it does define me. I am a Christian. So, I do have a faith-based motivation to serve people who are suffering.”

Another interviewee helped me consolidate this by sharing the following opinion:

“You know I believe in, and I am a humanitarian at heart **(1)**. I certainly do not do this for the paycheck. I definitely do not get paid enough to do what I do. But I get paid enough to allow me to do this **(2)**. I've been working my entire career to get here. And now I am here. And I love it. So, I get to use all the different pieces of my brain. When I am at the headquarters, I get to think at the strategic level and wear a suit and live in a comfortable life, and then when I am in the field, I get to solve real problems, directly help people, I get to use my hands.”

1: **Humanitarian** (Sources of Identity: Commitment to Others)

2: **Corporation** (Main Motivation: Money)

They both presented their arguments appealing to the importance of the heart, and they both emphasize that there are additional motives beyond money to do what they do. This is a strong representation of the humanitarian logic. The underlying imagery seems to be one that portrays destruction and conflict, a space that can only be filled by external humanitarians. Once confronted with the pre-conceived and persuasive idea that a mutilated society can only be fixed by someone external that is capable of crossing that crumbling bridge and create a new system from scratch, humanitarians embark on a romantic incursion that put them in the role of saviors that must relinquish high economic compensation.

5.5 Chapter Summary

This chapter studied the influence of institutional logics at the level of the individuals, the organizations where they work, and broader societal supra-structures, which are according to Friedland and Alford (1991), three levels that are nested within one another. It paid special attention to the role and power of the relational logic. More specifically, it tried to understand how two instantiations of this logic, (the humanitarian and the non-humanitarian logic), present themselves relative to the other logics.

At the highest level of the society, the most important finding was that the humanitarian space, a concept that is extensively used to discuss humanitarian action, is an idealization that fluctuates according to the specific instantiation of the relational logic that is used by those that inhabit it. In the past, the main force of attraction that has traditionally brought actors within the space, from the side of humanitarians at least, is the humanitarian logic in its purest form; a form that accentuates the perception that humanitarians have, that this world is oversaturated by unmet human needs, which they strive to confront. According to the humanitarian logic, humanitarians consider that the ‘world out there’ is suffering extensively, and the basic norm of this logic is the provision of assistance to alleviate such suffering. But this seems to be no longer the case. The operationalization of the humanitarian commandment has grown to become a machinery that is no longer exclusively driven by a humanitarian logic. On the contrary, other logics such as the market and the corporate, play a significant role in defining the very essence of the humanitarian space.

A similar thing was found at the level of the organization. The chapter examined how institutional logics are applied to two regular organizational practices.

The first one is field assessments, which are critical organizational activities designed to help humanitarian officers appraise with more consistency, the nature of the disruption in the field, and collect information to design intervention strategies. The second one is related to fundraising and resource development. Even though both the humanitarian and the non-humanitarian logic, influence both practices, the humanitarian logic seems to have a stronger impact in the first, while the non-humanitarian logic influences more heavily the second. Although this is not conclusive, the tension between the two could be related to the increased professionalized and bureaucratic humanitarian system (Rességuier 2018). This is a strong force that pushes the organization to prioritize structural strength, and economic and financial stability, which in a way reduces the attention to the needs of the people.

At the level of the individual, the data corroborated that humanitarians also use institutional logics to elicit the nature of their work. They are divided in their understanding of what humanitarian work is all about. The main difference is that their identity was constructed on a dichotomic imagery system. There was a separation between those that felt that humanitarianism should be based on a more theoretical/reflective approach and those that were confident in the impact of pragmatic action. There is evidence that suggests that this dichotomy was highly influenced by the specific instantiation of the relational logic. Those in the first group were more strongly driven by a non-humanitarian logic. The ones in the second group were mostly influenced by a humanitarian logic. All the humanitarians that were interviewed had responsibilities related to post-disaster deployments but not to the same degree, and it is difficult to say at this stage what are the factors that make one logic more pronounced over the other. At first glance, it appears that this has to do

with how close a humanitarian feels to be to the affected local population, but this is something that will still need to be tested.

Chapter 6

THE COLLISION OF INSTITUTIONAL SYSTEMS

6.1 Introduction

The term ‘humanitarian space’ has been extensively used to invoke an operational environment, mostly occupied by traditional humanitarian actors alone (Abild 2010). In the past few decades, things changed. Its boundaries expanded, and more actors suddenly found their way in. The entire space mutated into something more complex and ambiguous, to even include collectives whose main objective is not necessarily the provision of relief. Such is the case of private companies, governments, the media, and others. This expansion induced an adjustment in the very nature of humanitarian work. The term humanitarianism became a pennant for inclusivity of sorts. The self-reference to all those that assist, evolved from a ‘small we’ (humanitarians), to a ‘big WE’ (humanitarians + others), or from the ‘old’ to the ‘new’ or ‘non-traditional’ actors as Davey (2012) puts it.

One of the most important collectives of the modern humanitarian space is those who were affected by the disaster. The new vision of both collectives, international humanitarian organizations and local survivors and various local stakeholders working together, was reinforced in 2007 when the Global Humanitarian Platform¹¹, developed and endorsed the Principles of Partnership. One of the five

¹¹ The GHP is a consortium of leaders from the UN system, the Red Cross and Red Crescent movement and NGOs. For more information visit:
<https://www.icvanetwork.org/global-humanitarian-platform-ghp-overview>

principles is “complementarity”, and states that humanitarian organizations should strive to make local capacity an integral part of emergency response. A recent report from the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) of the United Nations entitled “Leaving No One Behind” also addresses the need to leverage the comparative advantages of all international and local actors. International forces possess tremendous material, economic, and technical resources that can complement the supply and capabilities of the local forces in terms of local knowledge, drive, desire, and skills (OCHA 2016).

The change in paradigm brought with it several operational and strategic innovations within the humanitarian environment. It meant fewer expatriates staying less time on the ground; it meant involving more local staff (ICVA 2020) and the transfer of programmatic responsibilities. In a way, it meant reconciling the idea that humanitarian action is a concerted effort in which all parties have an equal responsibility to contribute.

In the case of local survivors, defining their precise role within the humanitarian infrastructure is particularly complex, because this group has a dual role. On one hand, it is a recipient of aid and the sole purpose of the existence of the entire humanitarian infrastructure. On the other, there has been a growing recognition that despite the effects that a disaster might have had on them, there is no reason to believe that they are not in a position to make important decisions about their own lives and their communities. And so, they have been increasingly regarded as a valued humanitarian partner actively involved in the decision-making process, and as a critical humanitarian player capable of providing timely assistance (Davey 2012).

This new role demands that the group is given freedom of action, resources, and trust, not to mention a minimum level of power and acceptance to abide by and follow their decisions (Pouligny 2009). Such expectations can only become real if followed by a recognition that considering the pain, grief, and disorientation of those that suddenly find themselves living in a broken society is a necessary but not sufficient condition. Humanitarian organizations have regularly tried to resolve these tensions through fairly simple mechanisms, such as recruiting more staff that can speak the language or that is familiar with local cultural practices, seeking support from local partners and advisors, or implementing participatory methods to hear the voices of the locals. These practices have proven to be futile, and nothing more than a ‘box-ticking exercise’ (ALNAP 2018 p.160). To design a locally driven and honestly sensitive humanitarian operation, requires humanitarian actors to generate a reliable symbolic connection to the local population, to not only understand their language and cultural practices but to retrieve the real meaning that individuals assign to their new circumstances.

This chapter is intrigued by how international humanitarian actors and local survivors and beneficiaries connect at a symbolic level. The question that drives this chapter flows naturally from the previous one, by responding to the following question: *How do institutional logics affect the way that western humanitarian architecture relates to disaster survivors?* The focus in the first section is put on the discrepancies that exist between what humanitarians say and do, and the deepest concealed meaning they assign to local survivors and local partners. To shed light on the way that humanitarians and local stakeholders relate, the second section pays attention to the forces that affect the prioritization of logics in both collectives. The

third section takes a step further and discusses how this cognitive structure affects their relationship.

6.2 The Framing of the Locals

The relationship between humanitarians and survivors is very complex. And it is even more difficult in an international unfamiliar context. Scholars have recently undertaken the challenge of understanding how both collectives relate to one another. Rességuier (2018) for example, studied the way that humanitarians feel about the people in need and found that the perceptions that humanitarians have of this group are highly influenced by societal expectations that are rooted in a sectoral moral culture. This first section pursues a similar line of work but focuses the attention on the hidden layer of cognitive and symbolic constructions that affect how humanitarian leaders perceive the essence of local survivors and various stakeholders, and how this, in turn, affects the nature of their relationship.

One of the most interesting conversations was with an executive of a sizeable health-related organization. While exchanging ideas about Ebola, we stopped for a bit to discuss the possibilities of the disease spreading to other parts of the world. The analysis starts then with the following quotation:

“I am not medical, but I've been working with the medical organization for years now, and I've watched emergency vaccination since then **(1)**. But then I knew that the Ebola it cannot spread out in a developed country **(4)**. You put five things that stop the virus, and then it will not spread out **(2)**. It's not an airborne virus [...] I mean you know when you know the Ebola is where you realize that the contamination was mostly because the people like in Liberia **(3)**, they touch each other a lot because there were these graving things where your mother or somebody from your family die. That's when you're supposed to kiss the body to touch the body. And this is the highest moment of contamination. That's why the epidemic exploded **(3)**.”

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| 1: Profession (Sources of Legitimacy: Personal Expertise)
2: State (Sources of Authority: Bureaucratic Domination)
3: Humanitarian (Sources of Legitimacy: Knowledge of the Local)
4: State (Formal Control Mechanisms: Enforcement of Legislation) |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

In this quotation, the interviewee makes a distinction between developed and underdeveloped countries. This distinction is used by him to construct the main argument that is based on the interpretation that “these types of things” (Ebola) only happen in “those places.” The informant creates a divide between different nations and transitions between logics when thinking about one place or the other. In this person’s mind, there is an automatic and almost natural distinction between developed and underdeveloped nations and appeals to different logics to make sense of each of them. Even though this is probably common for all humans, it is important to acknowledge it and study its implications. What drives her interpretation of developed nations is a state logic. According to her, the virus can spread to another country through mechanisms that are generally a prerogative and a responsibility of public agencies. Differently, the problem in underdeveloped societies is not related to the capacity of the state, but exclusively around the culture of the people. Using an alternative line of thought, for instance, she could have addressed the many constraints of local governments such as lack of resources, infrastructure, or capacities, and ways in which these same governments could facilitate the practice of these rituals in a way that reduces the contagious nature of the virus.

One pastor at a religious charity helped me put the conversation into a different perspective. In a way, she helped me understand better how those from developing countries are perceived by western humanitarians when he said to me:

“...after seven years in (name of country), I realized even though I can be fluent in Thai and I can read and write, that I will always be a

cultural outsider. The color of my skin, the way I dress, the way I walk **(NH)**. I mean, I can imitate them pretty well. But the white skin pretty hard to change. So, I learned in a hard way in a painful way that I'll never be truly an insider and fully trusted. Even though I am a Christian, and they are my brothers or sisters in Christ **(1)**, they will still I am not a member of the tribe fully **(2)**. I am a first cousin, but I am not exactly a family member **(3)** [...] So, when I go into disaster relief or development situation I know [...] they are going to do things that I do not fully agree with, but I have to trust them locally. So, I choose to trust. I generally choose not get too upset about a small use of funds **(4)**. I wish they'd done it this way, but it's not like they put it in their own pocket. They actually used it. So, they're going to have other priorities. I've just learned to accept that and live with that.”

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| 1: Religion (Sources of Identity: Association with Deities)
2: Non-Humanitarian (Basis of Attention: Relationship to Others)
3: Family (Sources of Legitimacy: Unconditional Loyalty)
4: Corporate (Main Motivation: Money) |
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This quotation was notably enlightening and corroborates that, regardless of how close someone can be to someone else from another part of the world, our cognition automatically establishes a distance. This person had a very close connection with the local population. Not only was she a pastor at the same denomination, but she had travelled to this location multiple times. She was very well connected and knowledgeable of the place; she spoke the language fluently and had many close local friends. Despite this, she acknowledges the existence of a natural distance that made her an outsider. Like the previous quotation, she applies different logics to make sense of her own reality and to the reality of the locals. What is different in this case is that she is aware of this distinction. In her mind, money is a critical component of disaster relief. But what seems to be more important are the policies and processes that have been put in place by her organization to determine how this money can be used. In her expression, even though she is aware that the use of funds did not follow such policies, she chooses to accept it. By doing this, her actions corroborate one of the central premises of institutional theory, which is that

each society prioritizes institutional logics differently, and also, that institutional logics are prioritized differently depending on who else is involved in the context as presented in chapter seven of this dissertation.

There was another salient theme that helped me elaborate a more comprehensive explanation of why humanitarians and local stakeholders relate the way they do in a post-disaster context. An important volume of evidence points towards the idea that in the eyes of western humanitarians, clients from developing countries are misfortunate. This is intrinsically important, because a western human reaction to this feeling of regret and sorrow, is accompanied by a certain distance, the perception that ‘the other’ needs space and time to reflect, to put things in order. It occurs to me that in a way, this perception is somewhat like other feelings someone might have about an individual that has suffered a traumatic shock. One of them is post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), a mental health condition that has received lots of attention in the past years.

The following quotation serves well as an example:

“the basic premise of alleviating human suffering **(1)** is one that certainly factors into every decision. You know I consistently will ask like how does this impact clients **(2)** or communities that we serve **(3)**, so you know that essence in terms of who I am as a person drives a lot of, I think my decisions and how I frame decision making. Yeah, I mean part of its culturally ingrained in the way I was raised with my parents **(4)**, about you know helping those that are less fortunate in different socio-economic status **(5)**, and you know always trying to do the best possible for Humanity **(6)** which sounds a little bit cheesy, but it guides a lot of you know, my passion for this type of work and my decision making.”

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| 1: Humanitarian (Main Motivation: Prevent Suffering) |
| 2: Corporate (Delivery: Products & Services) |
| 3: Humanitarian (Basis of Strategy: Increase Well-Being of the Other) |
| 4: Family (Sources of Identity: Father-Son Relations) |
| 5: State (Basis of Norms: Citizenship in Nation) |
| 6: Humanitarian (Sources of Identity: Commitment to Others) |

What stands out in this quotation is the reference to economic status to define the locals. The expression ‘less fortunate’ does not relate exclusively to a population being impacted by a disaster, but the combination of the disaster event and the ‘precarious’ condition in which ‘the client’ lives in normalcy. This expression can be interpreted as a sample of the extent to which humanitarians grant to themselves the prerogative to define how and how much the other is suffering. Also, to some extent, that they are the ones who know more what it means to suffer and to be less fortunate.

My interviewee also shared the following:

“it's pretty fascinating. I was weak on the job. So, there is a newness element to not knowing your new role **(1)**, moving both my partner and I moved from (name of a city) to back to (name of a city) It's our second time back in (name of country) **(2)** So, I was literally in (name of transportation) when I saw Hurricane (name of a hurricane) approaching. So, I was making decisions on deployment domestically as well as knowing that I now led a team of (number) people globally that were now involved in hurricane (name of hurricane)”

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|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1: Professional (Main Motivation: Prevent Suffering) |
| 2: Family (Delivery: Products & Services) |
| 3: Humanitarian (Basis of Strategy: Increase Well-Being of the Other) |

At this moment of our conversation, my interviewee was sharing with me her personal circumstances during the time of the disaster. This quotation complements the previous one and supports what has been said so far. Contrary to the main state logic that she used to define the local context, she used both a family and a professional logic to characterize her life. This might seem unimportant and even evident as the hurricane had impacted somewhere else. However, her previous response could have been very well articulated in terms of how disasters affect the family life and work conditions of local survivors.

These data reveal the possibility that from the perspective of the humanitarians, the ‘misfortune’ of the clients becomes then a compelling negative aura that puts a distance between the two collectives. It was told to me:

“Any earthquake is bad, but to hit a country that is that poor **(1)** that you know which is not stable **(2)** and that has a relatively weak national organization, from the point of view of (Name of the Organization) was the challenge **(3)**”

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| 1: Market (Economic System: Market Capitalism) |
| 2: State (Logic of Exchange: Political Power) |
| 3: Humanitarian (Basis of Norms: Help Others) |

Even though there is research that supports otherwise, most disaster scholars have, for many years, agreed that the impact of disasters on poor communities does generate an additional burden (Rodriguez 2003, Tierney 1999). But there are a few important things to note from this quotation. His expression refers to a humanitarian logic when he uses the term challenge to denote the interest of her organization to go into a difficult place to assist. Interestingly, he does not use the same logic to establish how challenging the context was, but a market and a state logic instead. He points to the economic situation of the country as well as the political context.

Chapter seven establishes the existence of a relational logic. It also describes that humanitarians relate to locals through the application of humanitarian logic, while they use other instantiations of the same logic to connect to other stakeholders. This section furthered that analysis and used institutional logics to understand how the western humanitarians that were interviewed perceive and engage with the local population. In the case of a post-disaster deployment, with the available evidence, we can ascertain that the humanitarian logic that is used to make sense of local victims tends to be more extensively used in combination with a religious logic. In contrast, the non-humanitarian logic that is used to establish a connection with other actors in

the humanitarian space seems to be found more regularly in combination with a state, profession, and family logic. Even though it is not possible to establish a causal relationship, it could be that the different prioritization of logics is a byproduct of the agency of the relational logic. What this means is that the prioritization of the other logics is influenced by the relational logic. This not only supports the existence of the relational logic and the use of different instantiations for different stakeholders but also provides additional support to the idea that the application of one instantiation or the other is correlated with different logics.

6.3 Institutional Systems Under Stress

Institutional logics supply us with symbols that are critical to understanding those around us. But to understand why humanitarians and local survivors relate to one another the way they do in times of disasters and humanitarian crisis, we must understand the combination of logics that each use, find if they are different in any way, and ideally, find a root cause that can help explain these differences. This section builds a response to these questions by studying the different ways that disasters affect the environment in which the two collectives select their corresponding logics. And it starts by emphasizing that how humans associate and prioritize logics is inextricably connected to the circumstances, which are, for the most part, familiar and predictable. And so, we take for granted the set of expectations of each institutional order and the stability of the entire inter-institutional system. Significant disruptions such as a disaster, remove this stability from both humanitarians and local stakeholders' life, but in different ways. Therefore, they filter and reprioritize available logics differently.

While in the Dominican Republic, I visited an impoverished community where I stopped to converse with an older man. The community was small and was located on the riverbank. He told me the following story:

“I remember when they (humanitarians, government, and others) came with their helicopters. Some of the people here chose to leave, but many of us stayed. If you leave, they (thieves) will take the little things you have left.”

This older man had already suffered similar circumstances in the past. It was interesting to know that the river rises often. The remarkable thing that captured my attention was that he considered that his survival depended more on him, preventing the loss of the few belongings he had, than running away from the water. He had learned and developed a mindset that allowed him to coexist with the river in a way that might be considered by others as peculiar at best. I later probe his response by asking him why he feared being drowned less than losing a few material assets, to which he responded:

“I do not trust them. They (external actors) only show up when it is convenient for them.”

At some point, he explained more precisely what he meant by that. What might sound to me like a good strategy (that of being evacuated by a helicopter or a truck), was instead the acceptance of a strategy of doubtful conclusion. He explained to me that at that point, nobody knew anything; they had not been told where they would be taken, when they would be allowed to come back or what would be of him during his evacuation. In his mind, previous experiences had convinced him that lack of information was a good indicator that ‘they’ were not to be trusted. This type of evidence strongly suggests that the cognitive relationship that disaster survivors develop with humanitarian actors across time, make them assess survival in an entirely

new way, a way in which things that might be considered trivial for some people such as personal belongings, actually mean so much, in some cases even more than their own lives.

Surprisingly, a woman I met while in the Dominican Republic also shared with me a somewhat similar point of view. She was Haitian and had left her country after the 2010 earthquake when she lost many members of her family. She shared her incredible story:

“It is all very vague now. It has been quite a long time, and everything was so difficult that I could only pay attention to what I had in front of me, you know? It is as if I couldn’t see those around me. I did not care about anything but where I would sleep. But I remember the feeling of having to leave everything behind. They were all going crazy and killing each other for a bottle of water. My family had died, so I started walking and never went back. A few weeks later, when all these organizations came, I told them that I wanted to go back and search the rubble to see if I could find something. But nobody wanted to help me with this. They were distributing tents and food, which was ok, but I needed my things”.

It was difficult at the beginning to capture entirely what she was trying to share with me. She spoke Spanish with some difficulty and spoke a bit of French as well. Some of my colleagues helped me later, with some additional information about the situation at the border. Many Haitians had fled into the Dominican Republic with the little things they had left. Right after the earthquake, I was told, many stayed in their country, but after a few days, episodes of violence started to be documented by the media and the reports from the numerous arriving organizations. At some point, the survivors found themselves utterly alone in a foreign country and with none of their belongings. The few things that they had were still underneath the debris.

Nonetheless, it is as if they still had faith that a few of their belongings could be recovered. And as necessary as it was to receive food, water, and shelter, they were

increasingly feeling the need to have with them something that they could hold in their hands that could alleviate their pain and the disconnection from everything they had known until that day. Most unfortunately, none of the organizations were able to help them with that.

The available data collected, suggests that one of the main reasons why the institutional system of the humanitarians differs from that of others, in that its purpose is to facilitate the pilgrimage towards the provision of relief to those that require immediate assistance. But even for humanitarian workers who live on a constant level of awareness, and an expectation that a catastrophic event might happen at any minute, the chaos and uncertainty of the terrains in which they operate are forces that exercise tremendous influence. Another idea that has been extensively present in the data, is that the powerlessness originated in the inability to appeal to past experiences, to connect with trusted peers in the field, to understand the rule of law, and the traits of the culture, add to the discomfort generated in the disaster event itself. All these things combined eliminate the existence of a safety net that usually simplifies the selection of the most appropriate symbols and, instead, makes individuals doubtful and concerned.

Even in domestic disasters, the uncertainty of not knowing ‘what works well and what is broken’ will make individuals cautious about their next move. In a disaster that originates in an unknown place, the ability to decode what resources are at our disposal and how those resources can be used diminishes drastically. As a starting point of this conversation, allow me to share the following. One renowned executive of a large humanitarian organization shared with me her experience during a disaster in her hometown city of New York. Not only was she highly knowledgeable, but she was deeply familiar with the city and the officials of other organizations and

governmental agencies. Even in this situation that was deeply familiar to her, she defined her intervention as a ‘freefall.’ She then continued in these terms:

“What I mean by freefall it is much like skydiving. Is that you're just going to jump out of that plane. You do not know where you're going to land, you do not know how you're going to land.”

This executive was discussing with me the specific circumstances of a post-disaster operation in New York, a city that was well known by her and in which she had plenty of contacts and information and even an extensive safety network. This first quotation also emphasizes that disaster contexts are uncertain. Quotations such as this encouraged me to pay attention to the extent to which other interviewees referred to high levels of uncertainty and anxiety. The reason behind this is to understand how people face uncertainty and how these feelings affect and modify the way we prioritize our logics. In my case for instance, as someone that comes from a society that is inherently violent and uncertain, these feelings are familiar to me and consequently, their impact on me is reasonably less.

One prominent official stated the following when referring to one operation under his command:

“We're not going to be able to find the women headed household and give her a blanket because as soon as we roll into town, they're going to mob our truck, and then they're going to loot us.”

The context of the operation was indeed problematic. Reports were popping up from several different sources addressing the presence of crime and anti-social behavior. It is important to remark that the reports consumed by the humanitarians are generally produced by the same humanitarian actors and trusted partners. And this is important because they could establish a mindset through which to read and process

the information contained within. This is to say that it is not objective information, but information that has already been processed through similar logics if you will.

As a final piece of data to support these ideas, I will share the words of another interviewee.

“So, what we're really looking for is somebody who can go into a really difficult scenario situation, adapt, and be successful. And that's not an easy thing to do in any way, shape, or form given some of the contexts of where we're operating in. But certainly, that adaptability and flexibility are cool. So, people can kind of move forward, what I call moving forward in a changing environment. Somebody who can advance things really well and can work safely and productively. So yeah. So that's one of the big ones. I think you know; you're also looking for somebody with a good background in safety and security. One who can manage themselves very well. Somebody who understands the humanitarian context.”

This quotation represents well many of the points that were discussed already. It comes down to the underlying concerns that external actors have in sending their ‘own people’ to an environment that is pre-conceived to be dangerous and one in which “the system” has been affected. The automatic cognitive response to such a pre-conception appears to be to prioritize a strategy that involves the deployment of individuals whose main skillset is defined by an ability to navigate and adapt to that context.

The section complements the purpose of the entire chapter by arguing that there is a strong indication that the post-disaster context of both groups, humanitarians and local stakeholders, are influenced by very different forces. These forces affect how they prioritize their inter-institutional systems. Humanitarians, on the one hand, strive to accommodate their systems in a way that is familiar and stable. Differently, local stakeholders try to accommodate theirs, to the possibility of guaranteeing the survival of their own identity.

6.4 The Collision of Institutional Systems

This last section describes the way that humanitarians and beneficiaries relate at the level of institutional logics.

Before starting this section allow me to describe conceptually how individuals from different groups connect at the level of their institutional systems.

Regularly, when people from around the world connect, the relationship occurs under known conditions. Friendly and familiar contexts allow both parties to decode the meaning of that relationship. But when we try to make sense of what the other means, we do through the application of all institutional logics and not just the relational logic. What is more, we also unconsciously assess the logics used by others.

This process can be more easily understood by responding to the following question: When you see someone, what exactly do you see? This dimension is what I call the meaning of the relationship. It can be thought of as what is the specific place that we assign to people in the general context in which we operate. Once we assign meaning to a relationship, we then assign a value, or strength if you will. This allows us to categorize people within the same group, in different ways. The meaning and the strength of that meaning.

Without the instigation of external pressures (or in a blue-sky situation, as some organizations refer to the absence of disasters), in situations where the relationship is born out of mutual interest and desire, the meaning and the value or strength assigned by each to that relationship is similar. In such cases, the relationship between different institutional systems can be said to be generally bidirectional (as shown on the left side of the figure below).

The previous section showed that in the aftermath of a disaster, the institutional systems of the humanitarians and the local stakeholders are different, in that the

prioritization of logics occurs under the influence of distinct external forces. These forces change the directionality of attraction of these systems. When a disaster hits, the regular association between institutional systems suddenly mutates into a **unidirectional coupling** where humanitarians divert their attention towards the impacted society with additional strength, and the purpose of the interaction is invaded by the need to ‘do something for the other’ (right side of the same figure).

At the same time, the one that was impacted by the disaster finds him or herself in a new position of powerlessness, in which the relationship to the humanitarians is not the outcome of desire, but of need (Letter ‘A’ in Figure below). In other words, the combination of the overwhelming potency of the humanitarian impulse combined with the debilitating, confused if you will, institutional system of the local population, contributes to the removal of the bidirectionality.

This finding, which is described below, corroborates the assertions of Worms (2010) who said that the relationship between the two collectives has long been found to be unequal and asymmetrical (Worms 2010) due to the very nature of the relationship. These asymmetries brought concern to the humanitarian sector to avoid the risk of abuse (Rességuier 2018).

Figure 4 Directionality in Systems Coupling



On the side of the humanitarian, the moment when this new directionality is born is the exact moment when they are notified of a disaster. Not that they have to participate, but that they will participate. There is no room for doubts; there is no time to think; there is nothing to think about. The entire set of logics they were being used up to that moment changes, and they become absorbed into a whole new mental, philosophical, and emotional status that dominates interpretation and action. The authority of one large humanitarian agency put it this way.

“So, you know that was an initial sort of switching from ‘time off mode’ to gosh, something big has happened and needing to come in, and then you know it because if you work for an international organization like this, there are many issues to deal with. What is then very clear in such a moment, you drop everything else, and you have some thoughts about what other things, but you clear about the adrenaline. There's I do not know there is a term some people use it negatively, but I actually can relate to it, which they talk of disaster junkies. I really think that that that happens when something big like this happens, there is a couple and I am not the only one, people whose adrenalin kicks in, and you immediately switch into really being quite consumed by this and dropping everything else including personal life. You know my wife knows or knew at the time when something like this happens, the next couple of days if not weeks you know, I am sort of incommunicado.”

This respondent had more than 30 years of experience and the humanitarian sector and had worked in several of the most challenging humanitarian emergencies and post-disaster contexts. Still today, he was clear in that at the very moment he learns about a disaster, he gets immersed, drawn if you will, into an entirely new mindset that makes them drop ‘everything else including personal life.’ Such a reflection highlights a cognitive structure that ‘pulls’ humanitarian workers (Letter ‘B’ in the figure above) to divert their undivided attention to the circumstances of others. But this force of attraction gains strength from a supplementary and equally powerful

source, which is the sacrifice that humanitarians consider to be doing to help. It is the sacrifice of leaving the loved ones behind, the sacrifice of receiving a smaller paycheck, the sacrifice of risk of being in a dangerous environment. This feeling that they have left so many things behind serves as another source of vitality that ‘pushes’ (Letter ‘C’ in Figure above) and intensifies the new directionality.

The two combined forces of the humanitarian conglomerate are expressed in an unbelievably tenacious sense of purpose, that in a way, prevents them from achieving the necessary sensibility to see things with ‘the eyes of the other.’ On my way to Mozambique in 2019, the field representative of the organization that deployed me was very emphatic about this. He said to me:

“For us, it is all about the mission. The mission is the most important thing. The people we are trying to help is the most important thing. And to achieve this, we need extremely committed volunteers. We own our volunteers. We own you. From the moment you accepted to be deployed, we own you, and you have to be willing to do what we say.”

The entire experience helped me achieve a much higher level of clarity about the endurance of the symbolic representations that dominate the mind of western humanitarians. To hear these words was quite shocking and scary to be quite honest, but this was only the very beginning of a failed field deployment. The individual that I was talking to, said these words amid a conversation that took place less than half an hour after my plane had landed in South Africa. It happened in a context in which I had been told that the organization was going to provide me with malaria pills so I could reach Mozambique with adequate prophylaxis. This was not the case. Because of what seems to have been a confusion, two hours after my arrival, the organization made the unilateral decision to buy me another plane ticket and send me home. What was remarkable about this ordeal, is the demeaning and to a point humiliating attitude

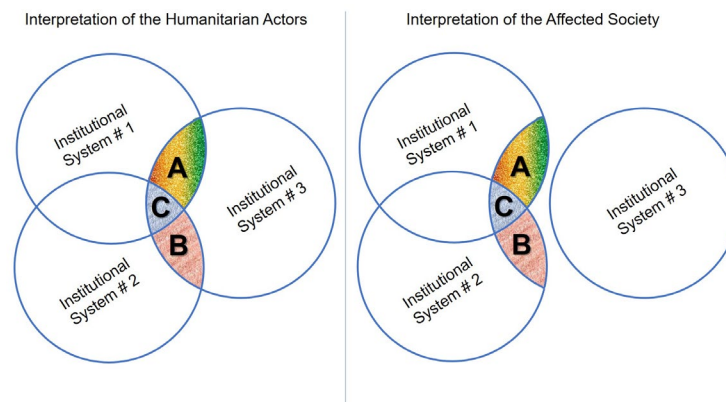
with which the organization treated this confusion. Even though I was extremely clear and emphatic that I had been told that malaria pills would be given to me, instead of making an effort to find a solution¹², they decided that I had made a mistake. Consequently, I was ill-prepared to face the challenging environments where the mission was taking place.

When two individuals relate, they also connect at the level of symbols. Institutional logics are used by each of them to give meaning to that relationship and all information. In other words, their institutional systems (the way that different logics are prioritized to make sense of things) try to connect. The driving logics of one of them will, in a sense, reach out towards the other and vice versa. This is what I call institutional “coupling.” But this is something that occurs sub-consciously. It happens without people being genuinely aware of how that happens. And this is also true for the relationship between humanitarians and survivors. It is important to note that this is not always a conscious decision and that in the aftermath of a disaster, there is a change in the directionality of institutional coupling that has tremendous implications for post-disaster international deployments and even has the potential to affect the DNA structure of humanitarian efforts. Allow me to explain further. Figure 5 presents the interpretation of the humanitarians and the interpretation of local stakeholders of the way their institutional systems relate to each other. The image on the left is the interpretation of humanitarians, and the image on the right is the interpretation of the affected society. The circles represent institutional systems. Institutional systems # 1 and # 2 belong to two humanitarians, and the institutional system # 3 belongs to the

¹² I found only a couple of hours later that it was extremely easy to find malaria pills. They can be bought both in Mozambique and in South Africa without a prescription

affected individual. The shaded/overlapping areas represent the coincidence of logics as seen from the humanitarian side; actions supported by specific symbolic constructions, aimed at doing something for the victims, as conceived by the victims (but again, understood by the humanitarian).

Figure 5 Perception and Reality of the Confrontation of Institutional Systems



As the reader has probably noticed, the difference between both images is that, from the point of view of the affected society (right image), their institutional system remains distant from the other two systems. On the contrary, in the interpretation of the foreign actors, their symbols overlap with the symbols of the affected community. Interestingly, in the image on the right, the shaded areas continue to exist. This illustrates that even though those affected by the disaster might not feel that their logics are coupled with the logics of the humanitarians, they are convinced (and behave accordingly) that humanitarians believe otherwise. In other words, even though humanitarians believe that what they are doing is consistent with what the affected society wants, this belief is the result of the forces presented in the chapters above in action.

6.5 Chapter Summary

In the mind of humanitarians, they operate under a new paradigm in which disaster victims and survivors are not recipients of aid anymore, but equal peers in the humanitarian space. They are empowered to take control of their own lives and be involved in the decision-making process. The imagery of international humanitarians and local forces sharing the humanitarian space was identified in the discourse of my interviewees as a “remarkable aspiration.” Most of them, during the interviews, shared with me many circumstances that genuinely captured the essence of this selfless, unified, romantic humanitarianism. These circumstances described how both those in need and the external humanitarians work together to achieve the common goal of reducing human suffering in a way that is legitimate and sensitive to the local community.

The analysis of the data illustrated a different reality. It emphasized that despite their (presumably) honest desire, local stakeholders continue to receive lower levels of attention and that their participation in decision making is often only tangential. Rather than seeing this as a deliberate decision, I argue that the reason this occurs is linked to the symbolic constructions that they use to make sense and understand what victims and survivors mean to them. At this deep cognitive level, different symbols create an invisible barrier that is hard to break. In a way, the symbolic mental representation they have about their clients is plagued by pre-judgments and unknowingly, also discrimination. For the most part, humanitarian leaders tend to reduce the significance of local actors; they do it by producing a cognitive structure in which the clients are underqualified and unfortunate individuals.

This, in a way, confirms that the provision of relief continues to gravitate around humanitarian agencies (Abild 2010). While western humanitarian actors may

believe that they have elevated the status of local actors to equals, and even if their discourse is essentially local-centric, the humanitarian space (at least its western version) continues to be characterized by a white-savior complex (Older 2019, p 279) and led by a colonialist and paternalistic conception of humanitarianism.

The second section supported that disasters affect international humanitarian actors and local stakeholders alike, but in different ways, and because of this, their post-disaster institutional systems are unarguably different. At the very moment, a humanitarian is notified about their imminent involvement in a disaster response operation; one interesting thing happens: they become ‘consumed.’ This feeling is the powerful re-prioritization of institutional logics. It is not about uncertainty, the lack of sleep that is to come, or the quasi-forced detachment from their families. These are just consequences of their absolute commitment to those that have been impacted by the disaster. Their hasty and almost impulsive dive into ‘humanitarian mode’ and the impression that they sacrifice so much to help others, dominate their emotional and intellectual systems. They reinforce one another and increase the pressure to succeed. These new interpretations will now be driven by a set of logics that belong to what I have called a humanitarian institutional system. It is equivalent to the pre-disaster system, but it varies in that humanitarians will experience a full immersion into the notion of “a mission that must be accomplished,” and the core question that will drive it is a managerially oriented focus on: How do I make this work?

Differently, in the case of local stakeholders, most notably in developing countries, the effects of a disaster are significantly different. It showed that the disruption, chaos, and uncertainty translate into a higher level of permeability of their protective mechanisms. To the constant suffering and pressures coming from having

to deal with structural poverty, disasters wipe out the few assets that they generally count on, leaving survivors with an extremely conflicting sensation that affects their institutional system in a different way to that of humanitarians. Their new system is highly influenced by the fact that societal normalcy no longer exists, a scary idea that triggers the ignition of a survival mode. The combination of logics that are chosen to deal with this new context is bound by a concern in the perpetuation of their identity. The core question that drives them is philosophical: How do I continue being who I am?

The discussion ends with an exposition of how institutional systems relate under stable conditions, and by an explanation of how this relationship changes after a disaster. To do this, I appealed to the idea of directionality. Under normal conditions, two institutional systems relate in a bi-directional manner using a non-humanitarian relational logic. Disasters reduce the flow of this directionality into a single unidirectionality. They change the way both inter-institutional systems connect to one another, and this has to do with changes in the type, strength, and purpose of the relational logic that each stakeholder use. From the side of humanitarians, the non-humanitarian logic they use to relate to a local populations changes into a humanitarian logic, and from the side of the survivors, the non-humanitarian logic changes into a sort of self-centered logic, an instantiation of the relational logic in which ‘the other’ loses importance.

Such differences create a situation in which the connection between institutional systems is perceived differently from both groups. Humanitarians, on their side, observe a broad and deep connection of logics, that naturally translates into an idea that they are both understanding one another. Local stakeholders, much

differently, perceive an irreconcilable gap which they choose to resolve by making the humanitarians believe otherwise.

Chapter 7

THE RELATIONAL LOGIC

7.1 Introduction

The humanitarian space is a term that is widely used by humanitarian practitioners and scholars. It is regularly used to connote a physical and/or a symbolic environment where multiple actors dedicated to the provision of humanitarian assistance, interact (Hilhorst and Jansen 2010). It was initially conceived to invoke the operational environment of humanitarian action (Abild 2010), and it was mostly defined by what are today the traditional humanitarian organizations. Over time, this changed. Private companies (Katoch 2006), government agencies, local survivors, and even isolated individuals, who were also members of the space but with much less influence, suddenly found their way in. They might not have direct responsibility in the distribution of relief, but they are increasingly considered as critical clogs in the humanitarian machinery (Roepstorff 2020, Pouligny 2009). All these new actors are driven by different logics and have a distinct way of understanding humanitarian delivery.

This evolution brought with it, new discussions about the meaning of the humanitarian space, and even its very nature (Hilhorst and Jansen 2010). This chapter adds to that conversation. The central argument is that the meaning of the humanitarian space, or any other symbolic space for that matter, directly depends on, and cannot be detached from the meaning that those within that space assign to others in that same space. It proposes that even when humanitarians could be honestly driven

by the dominant idea of serving others (Vaux 2001), they think about their own position within that space, relative to others. This has significant consequences for humanitarian action.

The chapter was driven by the following research question: *what are the values and principles that guide human relations in the context of a post-disaster deployment?* To respond to this question, I use the theory of institutional logics presented by Friedland and Alford (1991). The theory says that each of the central institutions (family, religion, state, market, profession, and corporation) distinguishes a set of organizing principles, practices, and symbols that act as a frame of reference for how individuals make sense of things, and consequently how they make decisions. In other words, each institution has a central logic that drives interpretation and action.

This chapter is structured as follows. In the first section, I present the relational logic as an ideal type. It introduces examples that show how individuals in the aftermath of a disaster, use the relational logic to interact with others. Most importantly, it also describes how important this logic is, in helping individuals prioritize other logics. The section that follows describes one possible instance of this logic, which I have called humanitarian logic.

7.2 The Relational Logic

Relations matter not just as a concrete, verifiable human practice, but also as a cognitive experience that helps us find a place in our social world. Relations with other human beings and collectives are both a ‘practice,’ and a symbolic construction, but they are also affected by normative pressures (Thornton, Ocasio, and Lounsbury 2012).

The following examples illustrate how the relational logic drives interpretation. The quote below expresses unusual feelings one participant shared after his community had been hit by a hurricane:

“I do not mean to sound like a bad person, but the hurricane helped my business a lot. It was the only time in many years when I had full occupancy **(C)**. But it was not only about the money; it felt good **(H)** to have all these (humanitarian) organizations staying in my hotel,” and he continued saying, “I did not even give them a discount. Actually, I charged them more **(C)**. But in my community, I was the guy that was giving them (humanitarians) a place to sleep **(Re)**”

In this example, the participant identifies three different actors, namely international humanitarian organizations, himself, and the broader affected community. The person speaking was the owner of a hotel in which I stayed during one of my field trips. His hotel was somewhat isolated from any tourist or business center but was well located to accommodate humanitarian workers arriving in the area. The fact that he chose to charge the humanitarian workers more, could imply that he was mostly driven by a corporate logic of supply and demand or profit over people. But there is another more nuanced interpretation that is based on how he relates to these humanitarians. At first glance, he primarily saw them as outsiders bringing in resources to his business. But their presence had other meanings as well. On one hand, they were a source of joy, as they were bringing aid to the local community. But most importantly, they were also a source of pride, as he was conceived by his community as part of the response and the delivery of aid.

Another quote from a local resident after the floods that affected a portion of the Dominican Republic in 2017 also illustrates the way that symbolic constructions affect how individuals understand a relationship with others. This impoverished local community had been built by the border of a river. During my visit, an older woman

was telling me about the time when the president of the country visited the area, and she said:

“I was happy to see him put his feet into the mud. It is rare to see the president **(S)** in your neighborhood, and he felt like a friend **(Re)** to me. I believe it was he who gave the order to build the wall.”

The entire scene was strange to me. We were sitting inside her small house right by the river. She told me that someone (she presumed it had been the president) had given the order to build a massive wall on one of the sides of the river to prevent it from flooding the community again (see pictures below). By the time I got there, the construction crew had built only sections of the wall and relocated many of the families whose houses were “in the way of the wall.” This lady’s house was next in line to be demolished. It was curious that the constructors had taken all the heavy machinery away, and nobody knew when and if they were going back to finish the job.

Figure 6 Images of the Wall being built in the Dominican Republic



In her conversation, she uses a state logic to connect with the idea that it was the president of the country who had visited her community. This statement is followed by the idea that he was a friend. She was not entirely sure that he had been

the one to give the order to build the wall, but in this participant's eyes, the proximity of the president and his involvement in the provision of the solution helped her relate to him in such an unusual way. This case shows how two individuals from such different contexts become members of the same humanitarian space, by means of using unique and very personal symbolic constructions that are used to make sense of a relationship. This is the relational logic.

Allow me to go deeper into this novel idea with another example. During one of my field research trips, I had the opportunity to join a team of individuals from the United States, Germany, and Sweden that were volunteering for an American organization in Puerto Rico after Hurricane Maria. One day, the party of six was asked to repair the zinc roof of a single mother who was living with his only son. The house was roughly 100 sq. Feet, dangerously built with wood on a very difficult to access and steep hillside. Immediately after our arrival, it was easy to detect profound gratitude from the homeowner. She had been waiting for months for her roof to be fixed. From the side of the volunteers, their eyes showed a mixture of anxiety and impatience. They openly commented on their feeling of sadness to see a humble woman living in such poor conditions. Almost immediately, they started making plans to bring down all the materials to repair the roof. In a fashion that resembled military efficiency, they managed to organize the workplace in less than two hours.

Even though they did not speak the local language, before I realized it, they were already removing the broken remaining zinc sheets from the roof, moving the very few pieces of furniture that she had left outside of the house, and building a scaffold in the middle of the living room. Almost unconsciously, when they saw the woman living in such conditions, they automatically concluded what needed to be

done and how. In their eyes, what this woman needed was her roof to be replaced. Their mission was instantly defined: to change the roof as quickly as possible.

I tried to help a bit, but I remained vigilant in my role as a researcher. I lifted, carried, and hammered while paying attention to my surroundings. Surprisingly, not long after the work had started, I recognized a strange look in the woman's eyes. A few hours later, she opened to me and shared her feelings. At some point, she saw one of the volunteers carrying around an old chair, which he put outside the house, near a pile of old stuff that I assume had to be thrown away. The old lady told me that the chair had belonged to someone exceptional in her family and that it was one of the few important things she had left. She understood that for the volunteer, this was nothing but an old chair and that it had to be moved for him to continue his work, but she could not help become very conscious not only about how little things she had left, but that those things meant nothing to others.

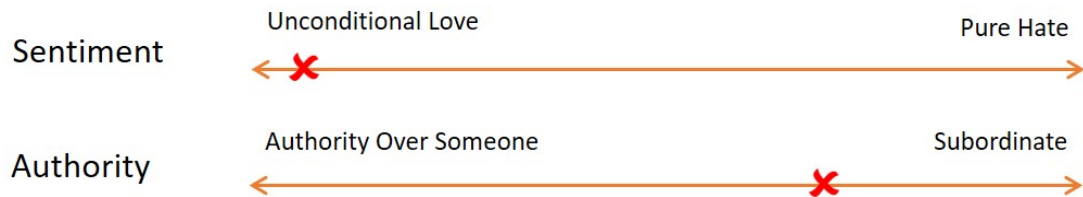
I asked myself the reason why she had chosen to remain silent instead of kindly asking the volunteer to be careful and sensitive to her things. The response was simple, and it was related to what this working party meant to her. They were outsiders, they did not speak the language, they were younger, they were white, they were from rich countries, and the wellbeing of her son was in their hands. They held the key to fix a roof for which she had waited for such a long time. This was an opportunity she did not want to jeopardize.

Most probably, the final report of this event would have read: "Mission accomplished." For the volunteers, they did what they had to do, in the way they had to do it. But I believe that ironically, the lady would also have agreed that they did their job to the highest standards. This is probably because none of the parties is

trained to analyze the deeper layers and ideal objectives of an intervention. But institutional logics helps us see that there is space for improvement. What happened in this situation is that both the team of volunteers, as well as the homeowner, made sense of their interaction with the other, according to a set of pre-existent symbolic constructions. They drew from them to make sense of what the other meant and designed a path to move forward. The relationship between them was consequently rapidly established. For the volunteers, the homeowner was exclusively interested in the roof being replaced. For the homeowner, the volunteers were people with power who were not to be disturbed or challenged.

This section introduced the relational logic and documented examples of how it presents itself in real life. But institutional logics are ideal types, and similarly that Christianity and Islam are two instantiations (variations) of the religious logic, the logic of relations also has multiple instantiations. They are generally presented in a discrete format, but it helps to think of them as a continuum, for they are interpreted differently around the globe. In the case of the relational logic, it varies according to the type of relationship we establish with others and the specific symbolic constructions and material practices we use to make sense of that relationship. To understand better how this instantiation relates to other instantiations and, ultimately, how all of them come to exist, I ask the reader to focus on the following graph. It presents a series of dimensions or variables that individuals draw from to produce symbolic constructions that will be used to make sense of those around us. To keep the argument simple, only two dimensions are discussed below, but there could be many more. Also, for the explanation, the variables are presented as a continuum with two extremes.

Figure 7 Dimensions of the Relational Logic



The first of these variables relate to the general feeling that individuals have towards others. On one extreme, you have unconditional love, which is the type of attitude that drives humanitarian action as the representation of complete surrender to serving others. On the other, we can imagine a different scenario such as war, which forces individuals to see others as the enemy and the need to kill for a higher purpose. In fact, a person could go from one extreme to the other very quickly. Such would be the case of military personnel that chooses to use his skills in the humanitarian sector. Team Rubicon, for example, is an organization that was born in 2010 by members of the US military in the aftermath of the Haiti Earthquake. Most of its volunteer members are now retired military personnel who have chosen to use their skills to help others.

This general sentiment is also applied in combination with other variables. The same sentiment of love that drives a humanitarian worker does not present itself with the same strength if those that have been impacted by a disaster are a rich community in Norway or a poor community in Yemen. Using once again, the example of the military member that becomes a humanitarian worker, another dimension that could affect the symbolic constructions that are used to relate to others, is related to the level of authority. While the military has been trained to follow orders in a rigorous vertical line of command, more traditional humanitarian workers have not. Their two different, almost opposite mental frameworks make them understand the relationship with local

survivors in a different way. It could be expected, for instance, that the military might be more inclined to prioritize the order of a superior, even if he believes that the order is not very beneficial to the survivor. Similar things happen with race, gender, age if the other person has a disability if he or she has kids, economic status, and others.

The existence of multiple variables playing a part in the definition of a logic should not come as a surprise. The same thing happens with other logics. Continuing with the example of religion, and more concretely with Christianity as one of its instantiations, the logic is not solely construed on the existence and belief of Jesus Christ. The belief system plays a significant role, but the final symbolic constructions of any religion are also influenced by its rituals, its myths, the particulars of its community, the history or past experiences one has with it, its material expression such as the location and style of its temples and so on.

Each person selects a combination of symbolic constructions that extracts from these many continuums, such as the ones marked with an X in the graph above. And once we do it, the reality is perceived in a certain way. Even objects have different meanings depending on the combination of “X” that we use to relate to others. A cup, for example, could be conceived as a container to bring food to a disaster survivor, or a weapon. Such is the power of the relational logic, a logic that helps us assign different meaning to reality, depending on who we have in front of us.

The following section discusses in more detail one of the instantiations of the relational logic, which is widely present in the humanitarian space. I have named this instantiation ‘humanitarian logic.’ I will not discuss the nuance of all intermediate alternatives, but I will use the term “non-humanitarian logic” to refer to all other instantiations, should this be necessary. The non-humanitarian logic is defined as the

“symbolic constructions that are used to understand a certain relationship with those that do not require assistance.” These include people from inside and outside the humanitarian space.

The data extracted to analyze this instantiation is the same that was used throughout the entire dissertation, so to avoid repetition, in the section below, I only present a few quotations that expose some of its attributes.

7.3 The Humanitarian Logic

In what follows, I present the humanitarian logic which was extensively used in this study of humanitarian work. A simple way to understand it is to acknowledge that for humanitarian workers, disasters are a context in which others suffer, and the purpose of their existence is to reduce that suffering. The Humanitarian Logic is thus defined as “the drive to assist those who otherwise would suffer extensively.” In the remainder of this section, I present data that contain examples of the attributes or key characteristics of this logic that are presented in Appendix G.

One of the most significant attributes is the basis of attention, which refers to the way individuals relate to each other within the specific institution to which the logic pertains to. In the case of the relational logic, this attribute is extraordinarily cumbersome due to the very nature of this institution. In the case of the family, the basis of attention has been defined as membership in a household. For the corporation is the status in a hierarchy, and in the case of the profession is the position in a network. In the case of the humanitarian logic, the basis of attention is defined as the position relative to someone in need.

One respondent put it in these terms:

“Yeah, I am an ex-pat through and through. I have two passports I have lived and worked in over 50 war disasters zones **(Re)** before we had our daughter **(F)**. We just lived in some of the toughest places on earth. So, I think really what I do, you know it is what I believe in, humanitarian work, it does define me. I am a Christian. So, I do have a faith-based motivation **(R)** to serve people who are suffering **(H)**”

For this respondent, the basis of attention comes in the format of a belief, based on his Christian Faith, that those in need must be served. So, in this case, the relational logic is complemented by combining it with a religious logic.

The source of identity is another attribute and, in this case, is the “Commitment to Others and Willingness to Sacrifice.” It is present in the description that this interviewee provides about his numerous experiences in countries affected by war. It is essential to highlight that the force of the humanitarian logic that took him to live in so many countries affected by conflicts, was later significantly reduced by the substantial increase in the power of the family logic that was born simultaneously with the birth of his daughter.

The same attribute appears in the following expression, where an interviewee referred to another form of self-sacrifice.

“You know I believe in, and I am a humanitarian at heart **(H)**. I certainly do not do this for the paycheck. I definitely do not get paid enough to do what I do. But I get paid enough to allow me to do this **(C)**. I've been working my entire career to get here **(P)**. And now I am here. And I love it”

This is an expression of someone passionate about what she does, to the point that she chooses to sacrifice the income that she could get by working somewhere else, which is a reference to a corporate logic. Additionally, she uses a professional logic to describe the effort she had to make to get where she is today.

Another characteristic of the humanitarian logic is that even though it is an instantiation of the relational logic, it is also an ideal type. Consequently, even though

it embodies the principles and values of helping those in need, people around the world assign different meanings to it. The quote below illustrates a subtle difference between a humanitarian logic driven by the “Humanitarian Imperative” vs. one driven by a vision of the work as “charity,” as we can see in the next quotation when an executive put it in these terms:

“First and foremost, for me, I think an underlining principle so to speak is the Humanitarian Imperative and I would say in my background is international training where we talk more about U.N. based humanitarian imperatives and human rights **(H1)**. That is very different than in the United States or North America we are very rarely do we talk about it in that context. Rarely do we see it in that context. More we see it as I will have this pop up in training all the time, it's more seen as charity **(H2)**. It's more seen as charity. It's not seen as anything. Right. So that is just part of my DNA over the years of having learned **(P)** that and believe that, this is actually a right to provide these services.”

What stands out of this quotation is that it simultaneously presents two variations of the humanitarian logic. While either could serve as a mantle or a dome that fosters an environment of symbolic convergence for those that want to help, but the variation reveals that the idea of “helping others” is ultimately a normative construct. On one hand, she presents her values of the work she does. In her mind, the provision of assistance to those who suffer is a human rights issue which is deeply related to the humanitarian imperative, defined by Older (2019, p. 291) as an “impulse of solidarity, a desire to help those who need it most.” But the norms contained in the humanitarian imperative are more than that, for it is made of the idea that if someone suffers, there is an obligation to intervene (Slim 1997).

On the contrary, in the United States, the provision of assistance is generally related to charity. This concept involves the idea of achieving happiness through giving to another something that belongs to you. They might both have the same goals

of helping people, but the cognitive mindset that drives one or the other is significantly different. While one is driven by an obligation, the other one is driven by the need or desire to achieve higher levels of happiness.

7.4 Chapter Summary

This chapter presented data that corroborates that relationships are an institution in their own right, with its dominant logic, which I have called ‘relational logic.’ This logic complements the six original logics that were presented by Friedland and Alford (1991). It pointed out that when a humanitarian decision-maker alludes to a specific aspect of a deployment, he or she is simultaneously making inferences about the relationship with another individual or another collective that exists in that same space. So symbolic constructions are not used exclusively to process concrete and tangible information. They are also a point of reference to make sense of those around and how they relate to each other.

This finding conceals important implications for post-disaster contexts in general, and international deployments in particular. Humanitarians make strategic and operational decisions while making circumstantial determinations about the relationship to others around them, such as other humanitarian workers, victims, survivors, private companies, and others. This means that the same information is assessed depending on who else is involved in that cognitive process.

The research also found that not only this logic has multiple instantiations, but that each instantiation is understood differently by different individuals. One of the variations was called the “humanitarian logic” and is the logic that drives interpretation when the relationship involves people that are suffering and in need of prompt assistance. But there are other instantiations which I have grouped in this

article in one, which I have named “non-humanitarian” logic. This helped emphasize that humanitarians relate to others in a way that is different from the way they relate to those in need. What this means is that, within the humanitarian space, one might be tempted to assume that all those within it are driven by the same forces, but this is not the case. Even though they might be all deeply concerned and interested in providing the best support to those in need, they are all profoundly affected by who else is involved.

This finding has important repercussions in understanding how humanitarian leaders make decisions. It could spark new conversations about the extent to which pre-design, standardized, out-of-the-box operational procedures to respond to disasters and humanitarian crises, are destined to succeed or fail. It would suggest that such processes cannot be external to the relationships between those that must implement them.

Chapter 8

CONCLUSIONS

This last chapter contains six sub-sections. The first one reviews the findings. It is followed by another one that presents the intellectual contributions of the entire study, in terms of the literature, that was presented in chapters 2 and 3. It is followed by another section that reviews the importance of these findings for the practice of disaster response and humanitarian action. The fourth section presents the limits of the research, and it is followed by a discussion on possible future research areas. In the last section, I present some concluding remarks.

8.1 Contributions of the Study

Humanitarian action is a concrete human activity, but it is also an idea, that can be largely defined as rooted in the relationships between people. Governments, local organizations, private companies, survivors, humanitarian organizations, the media, religious groups, and others, are all critical elements in the humanitarian machinery. They all connect regularly. When a disaster occurs, they come together and try to coordinate their actions with the intent of providing valuable support that is relevant and sensitive to the standards and needs of the local communities they serve. As a result, one of the most critical relationships in humanitarian aid is between humanitarian workers and disaster survivors.

This dissertation addressed the gap between aid workers and survivors by focusing research on the symbolic constructions that members of each collective use

to make sense of the nature of their relationship. It also explores how they apply and utilize those symbolic constructions to process available data and make humanitarian-related decisions. The dissertation proposes that their cognitive processes, also influence the final convergence of international actors.

The research was driven by three bodies of literature. Chapter two presented the related research on convergence and humanitarian action, and chapter three presented literature on institutional logics, most specifically the work of Friedland and Alford (1991), which was applied here as the theoretical framework. The findings were presented in three chapters, each of which was driven by a distinct research question.

The attention in chapter 5 is put on the following question: *What is the impact of the institutional logics that drive the individual, the organization, and the society at large on disaster deployment decisions?* This research question was guided by the idea that when humanitarian organizations chose to intervene in a post-disaster situation and deploy a humanitarian operation, they unknowingly shape and bound that operation according to the influence of unique symbolic constructions that, as the theory explains, exist, and operate simultaneously at the three levels. Therefore, this first chapter analyzed the nuances of how people draw from multiple logics by means of identifying the symbolic constructions, as well as the interrelationship that exists between them at the three levels.

The data suggests that institutional logics can lead to groups of people having fundamentally different views of what needs to be done. What is more, it revealed that these divergent views are highly influenced by the institutional logics that are applied at the three levels. What this means is that it confirms that individuals are not only

driven by their logics, but that their cognitive processes are highly influenced by institutional logics that exist at the level of the organization and the society as well.

At the level of higher societal structures, the data indicates that the humanitarian space (at least its western version) is an idea, as much as it is the concrete materialization of social connections. What this means is that it appears that the humanitarian space, is to a large extent, generated by the relationships of the actors (individuals and organizations) that inhabit that space. In other words, it is an intangible idea that comes to life according to how those that consider themselves to be part of the space, relate with one another.

The data that was used in this chapter, came exclusively from interviews with humanitarian leaders from large organizations that are headquartered in developed nations. For this group, it is not surprising that the importance of the humanitarian logic in defining the essence of the space is paramount. This group is strongly driven by the conviction that those that have been affected by a disaster, need relief aid. This conviction represents how humanitarian workers chose to relate to them. Interestingly, the analysis of the data also showed that this restricted group of humanitarians is also intensively influenced by a market logic and an underlying tendency to think in terms of benefits.

Another important notion that came out of the analysis is that the space contained within organizational boundaries is affected by the same logics, and in a similar manner. It is like if these symbolic forces spill from one level to the other. The humanitarian logic, for instance, is actively present in standard managerial practices such as those aimed at gathering information. A way in which the uncertainty generated by the disaster, and the little knowledge of the local culture and context

affects organizations, is by encouraging them to develop mechanisms aimed at having more clarity about what needs to be done. The humanitarian logic is one of the main logics that drives these efforts, although not homogeneously. Needs assessments, for instance, are not entirely driven by this humanitarian logic. Those in charge of this activity tend to reconcile their driving logics with those of others that have responsibility for the financial stability of the organization. In a sense, the power of the humanitarian logic is paralleled by and competes with a corporate logic. When two logics are used jointly, they can have multiple effects, but there is one that deserves special attention. The data gives the impression that when reconciling the tension between the two logics, individuals find themselves in a narrower cognitive space than the one in which they would be if they were driven by a unique logic.

These same tensions appear to spill into the final layer of the individual. The research found consistent data that the humanitarian logic is highly present, but so are other logics. An important finding is that humanitarians use institutional logics to elicit the nature of their work. The multiple ways in which institutional logics can be used suggest the existence of multiple interpretations, but two distinct groups were very present in this study, and are distinct, almost as two extremes of a continuum. The main difference between the two resides in the imagery system that they use to define the identity of the work they do. Those that are driven by a humanitarian logic, tend to value more rapid, intense, (almost heroic) interventions, while the second group, that is highly influenced by the corporate and the market logic, tend to choose a different approach, that appears to be more reflective, driven by organizational concerns which prioritize marketing, fundraising, and communications objectives.

When considered altogether, the impact of institutional logics can be summarized as follows. In the case of the western humanitarian architecture, the corporate logic and the relational logic are the two with the most considerable influence, and they exist in constant tension at the three levels. The imagery and values that give meaning to the humanitarian space, the managerial practices found at the level of the organization, and the self-perceived identity at the level of the individual, struggle between two extraordinary forces. On one side, the humanitarian variation of the relational logic pushes the entire architecture to prioritize what humanitarians consider to be a very fragile situation of local survivors. This posture makes them think of humanitarian action as life-saving support. On the other side, the corporate and the market logic, to a lesser extent, encourages humanitarian to think in terms of the need for financial stability. This posture makes them prioritize money and fundraising over the needs of the people.

The dissertation then focused on describing some interesting aspects of how the entire western humanitarian architecture relates to those they try to help. These findings are presented in chapter 6. The chapter revolves around how the interinstitutional systems of the humanitarians and local survivors connect in the aftermath of a disaster. Many expressions used by those that were interviewed, including humanitarian leaders and local survivors, strongly imply that both collectives prioritize their logics differently. This seems to be to a large extent, due to their unique post-disaster circumstances. The underlying idea is that the things that happen to all individuals in their lives, such as the death of a family member, a work promotion, a death in the family, the graduation of a child, etc., affect the way we all perceive the world around us. In the case of a disaster, what this means is that, even

though it is unlikely that humanitarians themselves are affected by one, the fact that they will eventually find themselves immersed in a post-disaster intervention, affects them intensely.

This observation has a direct implication in our understanding of how international humanitarian actors and local people and survivors connect and relate during a humanitarian operation. I have been able to obtain enough evidence to argue that the way that the institutional systems of the two connect, is perceived differently by both groups. Taken together, the data collected through interviews with humanitarian leaders, support that they observe a broad and deep connection of logics, which translates into a conviction that they are both understanding one another. The reason behind this appears to be associated with the relational logic that bounds their cognitive space and funnels their interpretation into the idea that both collectives are essentially equal. Differently, the data collected from disaster survivors point to a different scenario. Local stakeholders and survivors perceive an irreconcilable gap which they choose to resolve by making the humanitarians believe otherwise. A possibility that emerges from the data is that the relational logic also plays an important role in this alternative interpretation, but in a different way. Many survivors expressed that in the aftermath of the disaster, they go through some sort of introspective process that, when combined with the material reality that they need to confront, they chose to not disclose the discrepancies they perceive to humanitarian actors.

Chapter 7 responded to the following: *what are the values and principles that guide human relations in the context of a post-disaster deployment?* The data revealed that relationships are an institution with its dominant logic, which I have called

‘relational logic.’ It pointed out that when people, such as humanitarian leaders and disaster survivors analyze information, they simultaneously make inferences about the relationship with another individual or collective. So symbolic constructions are not used exclusively to process concrete and tangible information. They are also a point of reference to make sense of those around and how they relate. Similar to what happens with other logics, this relational logic has multiple or infinite instantiations. One of them was extensively present in this research, which I have called the ‘humanitarian logic.’ This logic is driven by a series of symbolic constructions and material practices that drive people to help those that are perceived to need urgent support.

8.2 Theoretical Implications of the Study

The application of institutional logics proved to be an innovative approach to incorporate to humanitarian and disaster studies. As I see it, its most important merit is that it offers an alternative path to understanding and studying convergence. The study provides the basis to continue the extensive research that has already been done, and so it would lend itself well for use by scholars who are interested in forwarding our knowledge on how people, materials, and information move towards a disaster-impacted location.

To start with, it reinforced that the movement of people and organizations towards a disaster-impacted area is not entirely the outcome of the needs of disaster survivors, or the demands generated by the disaster agent. The research addressed the belief that symbolic constructions, which are culturally and historically determined, play a role in deciding issues related to humanitarian interventions, and consequently also affect international convergence. Employing applying institutional logics, I was able to illustrate how convergence-related decisions can be traced to the moment when

someone applies institutional logics to give meaning to post-disaster information and make decisions about humanitarian deployments. In other words, humanitarian interventions and its consequential convergence, depending on how this sense-making process is resolved.

Another important contribution to the theory is that previous studies on humanitarian deployments and convergence have mostly focused on the impact and consequences of a disaster. This study complements that research by paying attention to the post-disaster circumstances of those that were directly affected by a disaster, but also incorporating into their analysis how overall life circumstances of humanitarians, affect their cognitive processes and the prioritization of logics. This finding opens a new line of research. It lends support to the novel idea, that in the design process of humanitarian interventions, attention should be paid not only to the circumstances faced by affected populations but also to those faced by humanitarian actors. Essentially what this means, is that the conditions that are faced by humanitarian workers, matter. Personal circumstances such as the birth of a child, a promotion, moving with the family to another location, and so on, are all circumstances that affect the way that they prioritize institutional logics, and because of this, they indirectly affect post-disaster decisions and international convergence.

On top of this, there is compelling data to affirm that the relational logic, in particular, plays a critical role in determining the success of a humanitarian intervention. On one hand, it affects how the western humanitarian infrastructure understands the nature of those that are considered to need aid, as well as the relationship with them. Decisions about a deployment, such as who to send to the field, how many to send and for which purpose, are not made, at least entirely,

according to concrete and factual information, but humanitarians unconsciously consider who else is involved in the process, including who are those being served. What this means is that the humanitarian machine behaves differently depending on who needs support, and who else is involved in the process. A similar thing happens from the side of the recipients of relief aid, and it can be argued that survivors experience the aid that they receive differently, according to who delivers the aid. The importance of this finding lies in that it can help reveal for instance, who are the ideal humanitarian providers for each circumstance.

The importance of this finding is paramount because it uncovers an area of research that can respond to many current and old dilemmas within the humanitarian sector. For many years, humanitarian scholars have tried to understand better how humanitarian workers and the larger structures in which they operate, relate to populations they serve. This challenge lies at the heart of many other current dialogues, such as how to minimize the negative impact of colonial thinking residues, and how to improve localization practices. This has been an important area of tension and disappointments, and no theory that captures the sources of the disconnection has been developed yet. Further study on the role of the relational logic in the humanitarian sphere can change that.

The discovery of the relational logic has theoretical intrinsic merit, especially for the field of institutional logics, as it complements the six original logics that were presented by Friedland and Alford (1991). Without this logic, the theory does not fully explain the impact of the cognitive connections that people create with others. In other words, the theory did not explain if, how, and to what extent, decisions are driven by the way we make sense of those around us. What this means is that without having this

new logic into consideration, the application of the remaining logics would be the same, regardless of who else is involved.

8.3 Practical Implications of the Study

In the face of a thriving global interconnectedness, crisis and disasters occurring on one side of the globe, affect almost instantaneously the interests of people and organizations on the other side. Globalization has made our world smaller, and an increasing number of humanitarian organizations sometimes with very little or no expertise at all, make almost unilateral decisions to travel vast distances to assist in a way that they consider fit. Countless independent international agencies converge in the field of operations with imperfect information, with a wide diversity of interests and agendas, and many times conflicting ideas and approaches.

To resolve the dilemmas generated by this more diverse and complex ecosystem, humanitarian practitioners and scholars alike have increasingly called for a more homogeneous and standardized response, a strategy that required allocating resources to produce better coordination mechanisms. The Sphere project developed by a consortium of non-governmental organizations in 1997 and the Cluster System initiated in 2005 by the United Nations are two such mechanisms (Older 2019).

The findings suggest that this approach might have been based on an assumption that was lightly assessed. The word ‘humanitarian’ itself conveys one of the most appealing and honorable values of humankind. It embodies passion and commitment; the constant struggle and strive of those that dedicate themselves to doing good for others. It is both the channel and the tool to make this world a better and more livable place, the world in which each of us wants to leave; a world of brotherhood, of care, of respect, and equality; a world that does not discriminate, that

is blind to the color of the skin, to religious beliefs and sexual orientation; a world that is incapable of pre-judging and admires each human being for who they are. The strength of this popular vision has led many humanitarian players to believe that all humanitarian actors have an underlying interest in agreeing on what type of assistance to provide, and in the way to provide it. The global standardization of humanitarian practice and the mechanisms to improve coordination were deemed possible because they were conceived to be driven by a humanitarian ideal that is presumed to be shared by all.

The findings of this study have an enormous potential to put this harmonious vision of humanitarian practice to the test, and by doing so, the study can make substantial contributions to the humanitarian system. One such contribution is to let us at least acknowledge what is to my understanding, an unnoticed expression of modern international humanitarianism, the negative consequences that coordination efforts have for the interaction between those willing to provide help and those in need of assistance.

Coordination efforts were synthesized if you will, on the trust and confidence humanitarians from all around the world have in the ‘power of humanitarianism.’ And the outcome is visible and palpable. Humanitarians nowadays reach out to others for multiple purposes, such as sharing information, experiences, best practices, and suggestions for corroborating data and even defining joint intervention strategies. The absolute abnegation of humanitarian workers to help disaster victims is, however, paired by their commitment to help each other and protect each other. They are proud to recognize that their power does not reside in the strength of their members, but their (close) collectivity. This vision is saliently present in their imagery, as a combination

of values and principles that manifest in the development of a feeling of belonging to the exclusive global social group of “humanitarians.” Even though ‘we’ do stuff for the other, at the very end it is ‘we’ who do the work, it is ‘we’ who make it happen; ‘we’ go out there and ‘we’ put our lives on the line; ‘we’ embrace danger, uncertainty, and divorces; ‘we’ miss birthdays, ‘we’ choose to receive a smaller paycheck and ‘we’ are proud and happy to be able to do what we do.

The already exceptionally vigorous symbolic connection between them is intensified and heightened even more by this actively promoted and enforced coordination apparatus. Ironically, the demeanor that strengthens the bond between humanitarians also facilitates the distancing from those that they are trying to help and prevents organizations from understanding the disassociation that exists between them both entirely. There is an ever-increasing unintentional and almost indiscernible separation between the humanitarians on one side, and local stakeholders on the other. In institutional words, the gap that exists between their institutional systems makes it harder or even impossible to translate and understand the logics of ‘the other.’ This happens to be a compelling negative aspect of humanitarian practice. The stronger the relationship between humanitarians, the weaker the link between them and disaster survivors and other local stakeholders.

This counter-intuitive phenomenon is so strong that sometimes it even hinders the attempts to provide disaster survivors and victims, with the space and support they need and deserve to be equal players in the decision-making process. In other words, even though humanitarians continue to be honestly convinced that they understand and respect the perceptions and ideas of the locals, at a more in-depth, symbolic level, this is not so. The reason is the powerful connection between humanitarians. The more

they reach out to each other for suggestions and advice, the stronger the symbolic connection between them, the weaker the connection with local actors. To avoid this from happening, humanitarians would need to bring to a conscious level the idea that they must disobey their natural inclinations to listen and follow other humanitarians and push themselves to develop institutional logics that are similar to those they are trying to help.

But humanitarians are not blind to this. Both practitioners and scholars have referred to this distance extensively. However, they seem to find it challenging to understand the real essence of the problem. The preferred counterstrategy to prevent this distance from increasing has been the enactment of policies and procedures that maximize diversity to guarantee a larger spectrum of views and ideas. Unfortunately, a big part of this pursued intensive multi-culturalism generally falls into an endless pit. By increasing the number of nationalities in volunteers and staff, and preventing discrimination based on gender, race, sexual orientation, and other commonly used variables, the processes to increase diversity, is reduced to a recruitment problem. Organizations fail to consider the power of symbolic attraction, which is an important characteristic of institutional logics that operate across and within organizations. The incorporation of new (diverse) elements to a department, for instance, is generally not enough to compensate for the strong bonds and consequent conventional interpretation that has solidified over time among the previous members of a team. Not only that, but the strength of these symbolic connections tends to overwhelm, gobble in a way, the institutional logics of the newly integrated member. Inevitably, the powerless interpretations of the new member will eventually merge with that of the majority.

Through continuous interaction, institutional logics come together through a kind of symbiotic process, and their exquisite diversity gets lost. The diversity in perceptions and understanding that is expected from multi-cultural personnel of humanitarian organizations is eclipsed by the uniformity pursued and desired (sometimes inadvertently) by their leaders. It is as if the institutional logics of the minorities or the powerless groups were ambushed and funneled through the lenses of decision-makers who unknowingly try to generate a more comfortable and friendlier environment for them to operate. But by doing so, they seek to be surrounded and followed mostly by those that conform.

Ironically, a similar effect can be found across organizations that collaborate extensively, such as humanitarian and local organizations. The distance that exists between them is, to a large extent, the outcome of the symbolic magnetism. But there is a power differential that puts the institutional system of the humanitarian in a preferred position that could explain why the humanitarian space continues to be agency-centric (as opposed to beneficiary-oriented) (Hammond and Vaughan-Lee 2012). Additionally, in the case of disasters that occurred in developing countries, this power differential materializes in the very often retracted attitude of the beneficiaries who hide their verisimilar fear that aid will stop from being delivered. What this means is that beneficiaries are aware of the inability of humanitarians to perceive this gap, but they choose not to speak up.

Probably as a consequence of the strength of this symbolic magnetism, and the perceived benefits of coordination that are already so ingrained in the minds of humanitarians, the humanitarian machine has growingly considered standard practices and out of the box strategies, as the better way to help people around the world. It has

also tended to appreciate standardized mechanisms to assess and evaluate the performance of those interventions. Having these results into consideration, it would be possible to argue that the assessment of the success or failure of interventions could be biased and even incorrect. This finding has considerable academic and policy implications. From the policy side of things, these findings suggest that intervention parties are not fully qualified to sensitively assess the many ways in which their own interpretation is different from that of the local populations. For people that have lived all their lives in poverty and that have additionally been hit by a disaster, their remaining belongings, the places where they spend their time, etc., represent something much more valuable than external humanitarians can comprehend, such as a linkage to family history. The disconnection that exists between the way humanitarians and local survivors make sense of the new reality (including the reception of that aid) helps explain why local survivors might prefer not to speak up and disclose their feelings.

8.4 Limitations of the Study

It is important to recognize that all studies have limits, including this one. To start with, the findings of this dissertation are not generalizable to the entire humanitarian sector, as they reflect the views and understanding of a very small and purposefully chosen number of humanitarian leaders and disaster victims. Consequently, the findings should be treated with caution.

The study focused mostly on the impact of institutional logics in the life of humanitarian decision-makers from the western/northern world. Additionally, even though the research focused on leaders from the largest humanitarian organizations, this strategy does not allow us to conclude what are the main logics that drive other

sectors of the western humanitarian space. The findings, consequently, are also not generalizable, nor are they representative of the entire humanitarian sector.

On a similar line of thought, this research only considered leaders from ‘traditional’ humanitarian organizations, which are by default those with many years of trajectory in the field, and it did not include other organizations that are growing in recognition and coverage of their work. The influence of the logics in other groups of experts, such as the private sector or the government, is still unclear.

Consequently, given that the sample was not randomly selected, it is possible that the findings may change, if the same analysis is performed using the data collected from a different group of participants. Nonetheless, the research was conducted until saturation was reached.

The research also suffers from the natural limitations of qualitative methods. To start with, it is heavily dependent on the researcher’s skills. In this particular case, for instance, the definition of how the attributes of each institutional logic (Thornton 2004) express themselves in the data was influenced by my interpretation, and other scholars might disagree with it.

Chapter six tried to follow the theoretical argument presented by Friedland and Alford (1991), that individuals, organizations, and society are three nested levels and analyzed the impact of institutional logics at the three levels. Due to time and resource constraints, the chapter discussed each level almost superficially. Much more work can and should be done to understand the full implications of institutional logics at each level. The chapter also focused mostly on the relational logic and how this logic relates to other logics. Consequently, it remains unclear how other logics operate at each level.

The data collected through the field trips, which were mostly used in chapter seven, also have some limitations. Due to time constraints and resource/logistical limitations, the trip was made in only a few weeks, and it was organized with the support of the International Federation of the Red Cross. Consequently, I was not able to visit as many communities and engage with the local population as extensively as I had wished. More work should also be done to understand the logics of those that have suffered the impact of a disaster.

8.5 Future Research

This dissertation has made several contributions, but more work still needs to be done. Below, I present a summary of the themes that I believe deserve special consideration and which I will most likely pursue soon. Besides those themes, I encourage other colleagues to consider the following. To start with, it would be beneficial to identify and/or develop research methods that allow us to detect with precision what logics tend to be used more, and under what circumstances. Similar qualitative approaches, for example, can be applied to a broader group of people, or study other dimensions of the humanitarian practice with individuals that share the traits of those that were interviewed for this research. Further research could alternatively take a different approach and use quantitative methods to understand the degree to which certain patterns are generalizable statistically across many groups of people.

I also encourage other scholars to use similar frameworks to investigate with more precision, how the cognitive structures of humanitarians, influence the number, format, and even the very nature of convergence. More research could attempt to study how convergence is distinctly affected by the symbolic constructions that exist at the

level of the individual, the organization, and the society at large. Studies that follow this line of thought would be useful to complement other studies that focus their attention on only one of the three levels, and because of this, do not capture the nuanced way in which symbolic constructions and cognitive schemas affect humanitarian-decisions.

8.5.1 The Impact of Logics on Coordination

One critical implication of the study is the possible negative consequences of humanitarian coordination, which could work to detriment of the survivors and beneficiaries. An exciting and essential area of study that emerges from this idea is if and to what extent coordination mechanisms such as the UN Cluster System are vulnerable to the impact of institutional logics. Using a combination of institutional logics and theories on group formation, the dynamics within this mechanism could help explore what the logics that drive interaction and inter-organizational decision are.

8.5.2 The Reprioritization of Logics

Chapter seven discussed the forces that affect both humanitarian workers as well as local victims, and it concluded that these forces affect the way that both groups prioritize their logics differently. The chapter, however, did not go deep enough to study the precise dynamic of this new reprioritization of logic. The data suggests that this reprioritization is led by the relational logic. What this means is that after a disaster, the way people interpret and make sense of those around them change, and this new sense-making, affect the value that is assigned to other logics. But this is still something that deserves additional attention.

8.5.3 Variations in the Hierarchy of Needs

One important idea that comes from this dissertation but that is not fully explored is the possibility that universal value assertions on humanity may be misguided. For decades, theories such as the Maslow hierarchy of needs have strongly influenced the perception that global humanitarianism has, about what the needs are. Even though it is not entirely clear, there is enough data in this dissertation to suggest that people that have always suffered structural poverty and that are constantly affected by high levels of criminality and instability, could have a different set of priorities than those that have people living in the developed world. In institutional words, following that the prioritization of logics is culturally and historically determined, the value of the Maslow pyramid and similar theories do not represent well what is meaningful for individuals in different contexts.

8.5.4 Other Instantiations of the Relational Logics

The dissertation worked on establishing how humanitarian workers relate to others within the humanitarian space. For this objective, I presented the humanitarian logic as one of the possible instantiations of the relational logic. But there are probably as many instantiations as relationships there exist. In each circumstance, we draw from various symbolic constructions to determine what those relationships mean to us. The analysis of these other variations of the relational logic was beyond the scope of this work, but they are critical to understanding the entire spectrum of human behavior. To empirically prove their existence and analyze the effects they have in cognition and action within the context of a post-disaster context still needs to be explored.

8.5.5 The Evolution of the Logics of Humanitarian Action

While there is no data, and there are no empirical studies about the leading logics that drove humanitarian action in the past, the evidence suggests that humanitarian action could be changing or continually evolving. At least in the western more developed world, humanitarian action is strongly driven by a humanitarian logic, but not to the degree that one might have expected. Other logics, such as the corporate and the market, have also proven to be extensively present. Exploring if this has always been like this or if this represents a tendency would bring substantial benefits. This new scenario, it appears, could be driven by an entirely new set of symbols, symbols that consider the local population to be much more potent than they are today and consequently being recipients of more levels of trust. From the data, it is difficult to know if these changes are related to a reprioritization of logics, or if it could be that the humanitarian logic is changing entirely.

8.6 Concluding Remarks

There are a few things to remark and recommendations to make.

To start with, standardization has won the battle and leads the current state of humanitarian practice. Under the flag of replicability and efficiency, humanitarian organizations have stand-by groups that can be deployed almost anywhere. One individual could be working in Venezuela one day, in Somalia the following and in China the week after. Even though this approach has merit, it does not consider individuality and supports a philosophical posture that underlies homogeneity in vision and action. This entire dissertation is essentially a call to question this posture and following the three nested levels presented by Friedland and Alford (1991), I would like to share the following: My most important suggestion is for fellow peer

humanitarians. If you honestly want the words of locals to be heard, you have the responsibility of acknowledging and understanding the power of this symbolic attraction and deliberately seek to connect with them more profoundly. You should strive to learn more about yourselves, your prejudices, and your shortcomings, as much as you must strive to recognize the individuality in the people you are trying to help. To go to more places, contrary to what you may think, does not allow you to get to know someone better. On the contrary, it distracts you.

For organizations, the suggestion is as follows. You must re-design your recruitment strategies to ensure the deployment of individuals that are most sensitive and have more substantial levels of awareness of how local communities perceive reality. This, to my understanding, is so much more important than deploying teams that can work in synchronicity with the rest of the converging actors.

My final remark is for the entire humanitarian space, for those in the United Nations, the political leaders, and top strategists at large humanitarian organizations. And it is about something that you all already know, but probably you do not know how much you know, for the simple reason that you do not spend much time thinking about this. You must see the developing world differently. Disasters change things, but most of the population living in the poorest countries in this world, are resilient to a level that nobody from the developed world could even imagine. They not only know a lot, but they are also fearless. Among the poorest nations in the world, some people go to bed not knowing if a bomb will drop from the sky during the nights and they can still sleep; you have people that are willing to cross entire oceans floating on a few logs tied up together with an old rope to put their kids to safety; you have people that every single day, they have to leave their homes not knowing if they will be kidnapped

or killed by someone trying to steal their shoes; you have people that can spend entire seasons without electricity or food. These are NOT people that need to learn to make systems, but that live their entire lives building systems, systems that you may not even know how to recognize, but systems that provide them with the essential things to make them smile when they are among their loved ones.

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Appendix A

LIST OF ORGANIZATIONS

The following list presents a list of all the organizations that were contacted during the research. It includes organizations where the interviewees worked at the moment of the interviewees, organizations where the interviewees were working during the time of the disaster that was discussed, as well as the organizations in which other experts that helped in other capacities, such as facilitating contacts to be interviewed.

- All Hands Volunteers
- American Red Cross
- Amnesty International
- Caritas Argentina Comisión Nacional
- Centro de Investigación en Gestión Integral de Riesgos
- Convoy of Hope
- Direct Relief
- Disaster Resilience Leadership Academy
- Episcopal Relief and Development
- Geneva Center for Education and Research in Humanitarian Action
- Global Emergency Group
- Ground Truth Solutions
- Habitat for Humanity
- Humanitarian Advisory Group
- Humanitarian Logistics Association
- Impact Pool
- Institute of Humanitarian Affairs
- Interaction
- International Association of Professionals in Humanitarian
- Lutheran Disaster Response
- Médecins Sans Frontiers
- Médecins Sans Frontiers Argentina
- Médecins Sans Frontiers Geneva
- Médecins Sans Frontiers New York
- Médecins Sans Frontiers Switzerland
- Mennonite Disaster Services
- Mexican Red Cross
- National Voluntary Organizations Active in Disasters
- Natural Hazards Center
- Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance
- Organization of American States
- Peace River Presbytery
- Save the Children
- The Global Alliance for Humanitarian Innovation
- The International Emergency Management Society
- The Salvation Army
- United Church of Christ Disaster

Assistance and Protection

- International Committee of the Red Cross
- International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
- International Humanitarian Studies Association
- International Orthodox Christian Charities
- Living Faith Alliance Church
- Logistics Learning Alliance

Ministries

- United Methodist Church at Odessa
- United Methodist Committee on Relief
- United Nations Development Program
- United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction
- United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
- United Nations Relief and Works Agency
- United Nations Volunteers

Appendix B

IRB APPROVAL LETTER

DATE: November 2, 2017
TO: Diego Fernandez Otegui
FROM: University of Delaware IRB
STUDY TITLE: [1130155-1] Ph.D. Dissertation Proposal
SUBMISSION TYPE: New Project
ACTION: APPROVED
APPROVAL DATE: November 2, 2017
EXPIRATION DATE: November 1, 2020
REVIEW TYPE: Exempt Review
REVIEW CATEGORY: Expedited review category # (3)
waiver of documentation of consent satisfied per 45 CFR 46.117(c)(2)

Thank you for your submission of New Project materials for this research study. The University of Delaware IRB has APPROVED your submission. This approval is based on an appropriate risk/benefit ratio and a study design wherein the risks have been minimized. All research must be conducted in accordance with this approved submission.

This submission has received Exempt Review based on the applicable federal regulation.

Please remember that informed consent is a process beginning with a description of the study and insurance of participant understanding, followed by a signed consent form. Informed consent must continue throughout the study via a dialogue between the researcher and research participant. Federal regulations require each participant receive a copy of the signed consent document.

Please note that any revision to previously approved materials must be approved by this office prior to initiation. Please use the appropriate revision forms for this procedure.

All SERIOUS and UNEXPECTED adverse events must be reported to this office. Please use the appropriate adverse event forms for this procedure. All sponsor reporting requirements should also be followed.

Please report all NON-COMPLIANCE issues or COMPLAINTS regarding this study to this office.

Please note that all research records must be retained for a minimum of three years.

Based on the risks, this project requires Continuing Review by this office on an annual basis. Please use the appropriate renewal forms for this procedure.

If you have any questions, please contact Nicole Farnese-McFarlane at (302) 831-1119 or nicolefm@udel.edu. Please include your study title and reference number in all correspondence with this office.

Appendix C

HUMAN SUBJECTS PROTOCOL

Protocol Title: **Post-Disaster Institutional Logics**

Principal Investigator

Name: Diego Fernandez Otegui
Contact Phone Number: 302-513-6972
Email Address: dotegui@udel.edu

Advisor (if student PI):

Name: Joseph Trainor
Department/Center: Disaster Research Center
Contact Phone Number: 0760
Email Address: jtrainor@udel.edu

Other Investigators:

Investigator Assurance:

By submitting this protocol, I acknowledge that this project will be conducted in strict accordance with the procedures described. I will not make any modifications to this protocol without prior approval by the IRB. Should any unanticipated problems involving risk to subjects occur during this project, including breaches of guaranteed confidentiality or departures from any procedures specified in approved study documents, I will report such events to the Chair, Institutional Review Board immediately.

1. Is this project externally funded? X YES NO

If so, please list the funding source:

The second part of the research will take place in the Dominican Republic and Puerto Rico. The funds for the field research trip come from a grant offered by the Graduate and Professional Education Office.

2. Research Site(s) (X) University of Delaware (X) Other (please list external study sites)

I will be conducting interviews mostly online from home and from the University of Delaware. Whenever possible, the interviews will be personal at a location considered convenient by the interviewee. Considering the large amount of organizations that have either their headquarters or offices in Washington and New York city, it is expected that several interviews will take place in these locations.

Additionally, a field research trip will take place from the 12 to the 19 of May 2018 to Dominican Republic and Puerto Rico to study the impact of Hurricanes Irma and Maria in 2017. In both locations, I will be visiting small communities that have been affected by the disasters

Is UD the study lead? (X) YES ☐ NO (If no, list the institution that is serving as the study lead)

The present research is the final requirement for achieving my doctoral degree in Disaster Science and Management

3. Project Staff

Please list all personnel, including students, who will be working with human subjects on this protocol (insert additional rows as needed):

NAME	ROLE	HS TRAINING COMPLETE?
Diego Fernandez Otegui	Data collection and analysis	Yes

Other researchers may be added. I will not work with researchers who have not yet completed HS training. I will request a copy of their certification for my files before they become involved.

4. Special Populations

Does this project involve any of the following?

Research on Children?

NO

Research with Prisoners?

NO.

If yes, complete the Prisoners in Research Form and upload to IRBNet as supporting documentation

Research with Pregnant Women?

NO.

Research with any other vulnerable population (e.g. cognitively impaired, economically disadvantaged, etc.)? please describe.

NO.

5. RESEARCH ABSTRACT

Please provide a brief description in LAY language (understandable to an 8th grade student) of the aims of this project.

The purpose of this research is to improve our understanding of the mobilization of people in the aftermath of a disaster. The part of this phenomenon that refers to the movement towards the actual physical location where the disaster hit, has been referred to in the literature as convergence. Following the institutional logics theory,

this research proposes that this mobilization is the outcome of specific material practices and symbolic constructions. These institutional forces affect the way that those involved in the decision to deploy personnel toward a disaster, process institutional messages and make sense of reality. Better understanding how these logics affect post-disaster decision making will shed light on several important aspects of post-disaster mobilization, including the scale, scope and composition of the converging groups. The research also builds on and expands the theoretical argument of convergence. The chosen data gathering methodology is a purposeful sampling of individuals that have been identified as decision makers in past disaster events. A total of approximately 30 decision makers will be interviewed using a semi-structured questionnaire. The interviews will be transcribed in full and analyzed using an inductive approach to test for the presence of the different institutional logics and the way the interviewees draw on them to make decisions. Qualitative data in the form of informal conversation and observations will be collected in the Dominican Republic and Puerto Rico to complement the responses of my interviewees.

6. PROCEDURES

Describe all procedures involving human subjects for this protocol. Include copies of all surveys and research measures.

Procedures include formal interviews with executives from different international humanitarian organizations and United Nations agencies. Additionally, I will be using the notes taken from the informal conversations and field observations generated during my trip to Mexico City as member of a reconnaissance team (UD IRB approval on September 27, 2017, Study Title: [1134830-1] Mexico Earthquake Post-Disaster Reconnaissance).

The interviews will concentrate around the following issues:

- Crisis decision making
- Types of emergent systems developed for response operations
- Ways organizations incorporated risk information into their response operations
- Collective decision making
- Interorganizational coordination of disaster management activities
- Broader social impacts of and responses to the event

This information will be expanded by informal interviews with officials, and informal conversations which may include disaster response participants and survivors, and field observation, all of which will take place in Dominican Republic and Puerto Rico from the 12 to the 19 of May 2018. In this trip, potential issues around which informal conversation will concentrate are:

- Crisis decision making
- Mass evacuation management in a complex catastrophe with multiple disaster agents
- Feasibility of evacuation as a protective measure for earthquakes events
- Effectiveness of warning messages and warning systems
- Types of emergent systems developed for response operations
- Ways organizations incorporated risk information into their response operations
- Ways organizations solved problems for which there was no or limited experience or procedures
- Behavior responses to warning mechanisms and disaster events

- Short- and long-term sheltering strategies, including for people with functional and access needs and families with companion animals
- Decision making in hospitals and nursing homes
- Interorganizational coordination of disaster management activities
- Differential impact of the disaster and disaster management
- Features of catastrophe and complexity of the event, and resulting impacts
- Resiliency of rural and urban areas
- Broader social impacts of and responses to the event
- Prevalence and nature of media coverage

7. STUDY POPULATION AND RECRUITMENT

Describe who and how many subjects will be invited to participate. Include age, gender and other pertinent information.

The first part of my research focuses on the interviews with officials, executives and decision makers are the main participants. All will be over 18 years of age. They will be referred to me by contacts.

The second part of my research will take place in Dominican Republic and Puerto Rico. Officials, response participants and survivors are among potential participants. All will be over 18 years of age. They will be referred to the team by local contacts or we may encounter them in response/recovery related activities. The purpose of the field work will be explained before conversations proceed.

Attach all recruitment fliers, letters, or other recruitment materials to be used. If verbal recruitment will be used, please attach a script.

Please, find attached the model of the letter that will be used to recruit the participants for the first part of my research.

The conversations with the people in my field trip to Puerto Rico and the Caribbean will be introduced with the following

“My name is XXXX, and I am a student at the Disaster Research Center at the University of Delaware. I am documenting different aspects of this emergency. May I talk with you....”

This script will vary depending on the exact conditions and where the conversation is taking place. The principal researcher is a native Spanish speaker and a Spanish version of the verbal recruitment will be used

Describe what exclusionary criteria, if any will be applied.

No person under 18 will be interviewed.

Describe what (if any) conditions will result in PI termination of subject participation.

If participant chooses not to participate.

8. RISKS AND BENEFITS

List all potential physical, psychological, social, financial or legal risks to subjects (risks listed here should be included on the consent form).

There are no risks for participation.

In your opinion, are risks listed above minimal* or more than minimal? If more than minimal, please justify why risks are reasonable in relation to anticipated direct or future benefits.

(*Minimal risk means the probability and magnitude of harm or discomfort anticipated in the research are not greater than those ordinarily encountered in daily life or during the performance of routine physical or psychological examinations or tests)

What steps will be taken to minimize risks?

No one under 18 will be questioned.

Conversations will be managed to minimize painful recollections of past disaster events.

Identifying information about the organization and/or individuals referred to in the conversation will be removed from the transcripts.

The purpose of the team's presence will be disclosed before questions are asked.

Describe any potential direct benefits to participants.

none

Describe any potential future benefits to this class of participants, others, or society.

Findings may inform policies implemented for disaster management in future incidents.

If there is a Data Monitoring Committee (DMC) in place for this project, please describe when and how often it meets.

9. COMPENSATION

Will participants be compensated for participation? If so, please include details.

No

10. DATA

Will subjects be anonymous to the researcher?

No, this research project involves face to face conversations.

If subjects are identifiable, will their identities be kept confidential? (If yes, please specify how)

In the case of the interviews of the first stage of the research the answer is Yes.

Identifying information will be removed from transcripts. In the interviews themselves

participants will only give as much identifying information as they feel comfortable revealing.

In the case of the second stage of my research in Puerto Rico and the Caribbean, the answer is as follows:

If photographed while documenting the present state of the disaster impact or response activities, images of citizens may be identifiable, however, no names will be used (or asked). I will not disclose whether the individuals photographed were also spoken with or if they were not included in the study and only appear in the photos.

Names will not be reported based on observations or conversations. Organization names may be identified. Names may be used in the reports if the report refers to a public or internal document, not the direct fieldwork, and information will not be reported linking this information to the field research.

How will data be stored and kept secure (specify data storage plans for both paper and electronic files. For guidance see

<http://www.udel.edu/research/preparing/datastorage.html>)

Notes, recordings and transcription data will be stored in an encrypted file on the PI's computer.

Photos and video will be stored on the PI's computer.

How long will data be stored?

N/A

Will data be destroyed?

☐ YES ☒ NO (if yes, please specify how the data will be destroyed)

Will the data be shared with anyone outside of the research team? ☐ YES ☒ NO
(if yes, please list the person(s), organization(s) and/or institution(s) and specify plans for secure data transfer)

How will data be analyzed and reported?

It is expected that analysis of the interviews will contribute to a number of presentations in scientific/professional forums and publications as book chapters and in peer-reviewed journals.

Pseudonyms will be used in any reports or presentations

11. CONFIDENTIALITY

Will participants be audiotaped, photographed or videotaped during this study?

Yes

How will subject identity be protected?

All participants will have their identifying information removed from typed transcripts of the interviews.

Not all people talked to will be photographed. Not all those photographed will be talked to.

Is there a Certificate of Confidentiality in place for this project? (If so, please provide a copy).

No

12. CONFLICT OF INTEREST

(For information on disclosure reporting see:

<http://www.udel.edu/research/preparing/conflict.html>)

Does this project involve a potential conflict of interest*?

** As defined in the University of Delaware's Policies and Procedures, a potential conflict of interest (COI) occurs when there is a divergence between an individual's private interests and his or her professional obligations, such that an independent observer might reasonably question whether the individual's professional judgment, commitment, actions, or decisions could be influenced by considerations of personal gain, financial or otherwise.*

If yes, please describe the nature of the interest:

NO

13. CONSENT and ASSENT

☒ Consent forms will be used and are attached for review (see Consent Template under Forms and Templates in IRBNet)

☐ Additionally, child assent forms will be used and are attached.

☐ Waiver of Documentation of Consent (attach a consent script/information sheet with the signature block removed).

☒ Waiver of Consent (Justify request for waiver)

For the first portion of my research that includes formal interviews, consent forms will be used.

For the second portion of the research that will take place in Dominican Republic and the Caribbean a consent form will not be used. Several research topics are being explored at once. Conversations will be brief. It would be disruptive to the response effort to use consent forms when observing the response efforts. Those individuals with whom we speak will be told the nature of our reconnaissance fieldwork effort and we will identify ourselves to them.

14. Other IRB Approval

Has this protocol been submitted to any other IRBs?

No

If so, please list along with protocol title, number, and expiration date.

15. Supporting Documentation

Please list all additional documents uploaded to IRBNet in support of this application.

- Interview Guide
- Interview Request Letter (Model)
- Statement of Informed Consent

Amendment Human Subjects Protocol

Appendix D
RECRUITMENT LETTER

21 April 2017

Mr. XXXXXXXX
Disaster Research Center
College of Arts and Sciences
University of Delaware

Dear Mr. XXXX

Allow me to introduce myself. My name is Diego Fernandez Otegui. I am currently pursuing my Ph.D. in Disaster Science and management at the University of Delaware.

I come to you to humbly request a few minutes of your time for an interview. I am certain that your knowledge and expertise will significantly enhance my research and enlighten some substantive aspects of the way international disaster response and humanitarian action is currently organized. Furthermore, I have a strong expectation that my findings will produce a theoretical framework that will improve future interventions and increase the possibilities for poor countries and impoverished societies to recover more rapidly and more humanely.

If you agree to meet with me, our conversation will be limited to approximately 60 minutes. Please, do have in mind that our interview will be governed by current national and state legislations and I will kindly request from you a signed consent that I will bring with me.

The purpose of my inquiry is to understand some personal, cultural and societal factors that might affect the decision to participate in the aftermath of an international disaster. Being you a recognized professional in the field, your input will be highly valuable. Find below two questions that I hope will serve as samples of the topics and tone that I will pursue during the interview.

1. Some individuals that participated in a post-disaster intervention might recall having had contradictory and conflicting ideas about the need, the purpose and even the pertinence of their participation. I would like to know if you experienced this and to understand better how the process evolved.
2. It would be possible to assume that your understanding of things could have been different to those of your colleagues and superiors. It would be interesting for me to know to what extent you perceived these discrepancies and if and how you decided to act upon them.

Kind regards,

Diego Fernández Otegui
Ph.D. Student

University of Delaware

Appendix E

INTERVIEW GUIDE

DISASTER

- The entire interview will be around one specific disaster event. So for the purpose of this interview, in which disaster event would you like to focus?
- Could you describe with some more detail what was the disaster about?
 - *In what **circumstances** did you learn about the disaster?*
 - *What were the **implication** of that disaster?*
 - *What did you know about that country/region back then?*
- What can you tell me about **your role** back then?
 - *Background training in disaster response or humanitarian relief?*
 - *Position and responsibilities (related to disasters)*

YOUR LIFE

- I would like to know about your life at the time of the disaster. So feel free to tell me whatever you want that you recall as important at that time. Maybe we can start by telling me what a normal day in your life was back then
 - *What about your **personal** life?*
 - *And your **professional** life?*
 - *What about **ideas or dreams** that you had back then?*

SUMMARY (3')

- Could you **summarize the process** that took place from the moment you learned about the disaster until the day of the deployment?
 - ***Important things at work?***
 - ***Important things at home?***
- What were your **responsibilities** related to the deployment?

BEGINNING (3')

- I would like to know more about what your **thoughts** when you learned about the disaster.
 - *Did you expect your organization would become involved?*
 - *Did you think you were going to be involved in the post-disaster stage in any way?*
 - *How did your knowledge about the context of the victims influenced your thoughts?*

END (3')

- What was the **final deployment like**? can you give me some details about who was sent, where they were sent and why?
 - *Were there other teams travelling to **other places**?*
 - *What about the **equipment** they brought with them?*
 - *Did the team/teams go through **briefings** before departure?*
 - *I am interested in knowing your **thoughts** about the final decision. I mean the shape and objective of the intervention.*
 - *Is there any **specific aspect** of the intervention that you were particularly happy or unhappy about?*

CONFLICT (10')

- Some individuals that participated in a post-disaster intervention might recall having had **contradictory and conflicting ideas** about the need, the purpose and even the pertinence of a disaster intervention.
 - *Do you remember any of these conflicting ideas be related to something specific like a meeting, a policy paper that you read, etc.?*
 - *Were there any specific changes in your mind about what the intervention should look like?*
 - *What was meaningful about that moment?*
 - *(if there were changes) What would you say were the major elements that contributed in these changes?*
- Who do you think were the most influential players? and why?
 - *Inside your organization*
 - *And what about outside?*
- Let's talk about critical moments, like meetings, new information, ideas, etc.

- *How did you receive the information?*
- *What was your reaction?*

Is there any other thing, like a moment, a memory or a meeting that you think was important in the sense that influenced or even changed the entire process and the final deployment?

Appendix F

INFORMED CONSENT FORM

Title of the Project: Post-Disaster Institutional Logics. Understanding its implications for international convergence

Principal Investigator(s): Diego Fernandez Otegui.

You are being invited to participate in a research study. This consent form tells you about the study including its purpose, what you will be asked to do if you decide to take part, and the risks and benefits of being in the study. Please read the information below and ask us any questions you may have.

PURPOSE / DESCRIPTION OF THE RESEARCH

Discussion of the purpose of the study

The research will be used as part of a student dissertation for a PhD program of study for the University of Delaware's School of Public Policy and Administration. The name of the program is Ph.D. in Disaster Science and Management.

The purpose of this research is to make a contribution to understandings of institutional logics in the aftermath of a disaster, by exploring the extent to which individual decision makers affect and are affected by specific material structures and symbolic constructions.

The management literature has consistently used institutional theory to study and explain social behavior. This theory has been constructed focusing on the idea that society can be segmented into a finite number of interconnected realms such as

politics, economy, community and religion, and that each realm has a certain logic that drives the action of its constitutive actors, both organizations and individuals.

Why you have been chosen to participate?

You are being asked to participate because you have been identified as someone that participated in a disaster situation in the past and that had at that time, certain amount of decision-making power about the deployment of personnel.

What you will be asked to do?

You will be one of approximately 30 participants in this study.

In this study, you will be asked to participate in a single interview with Mr. Diego Fernandez Otegui who is the main researcher and a Ph.D. candidate at the University of Delaware.

The interview will last approximately 1 hour and a half and will be recorded in full, if you agree to do so. During this time, several open-ended questions will be asked to you, which you will be able to respond freely. The following topics will be covered

- Differences between your initial perceptions about what was happening in the locality impacted by the disaster and the perceptions you had after sending people to that locality
- The way in which some specific aspects of your life (i.e. family, religion, job responsibilities, your own values and principles, etc.) played a role when making decisions
- The extent to which you believe the differences between these particular aspects of your individual life and those of others, influenced and/or affected the final decision about the deployment.

Should you accept to participate in this research study, you will be contacted by Mr. Fernandez Otegui to decide a time and place that better suits your needs and possibilities. Ideally, the interviews will take place somewhere between October 2017 and February 2018.

CONDITIONS OF SUBJECT PARTICIPATION

Confidentiality of information

The confidentiality of your records will be protected to the extent permitted by law. Your research records may be viewed by the University of Delaware Institutional Review Board, which is a committee formally designated to approve, monitor, and review biomedical and behavioral research involving humans.

The researcher will keep information learned about you confidential. Neither the recording of the interview or its transcription will be available for public use. It will be kept only for up to three years after the study has ended and then destroyed.

Instead of using personal information such as name and last name, participants will be assigned a code that will be affiliated with the code on all other documents (recordings, recording files, printed transcription and transcription digital files).

Additionally, paper data will be kept stored in a locked file cabinet or storage box accessible only to the researcher. Data entered into any software will be on a computer that has a user login and password only accessible to the researcher.

The findings of this research may be presented or published. The findings will report results as a group and no individual will be identified.

Use of data collected from you in future research

The research data we will be collecting from you during your participation in this study may be useful in other research studies in the future. Your choice about future use of your data will have no impact on your participation in this research study. Do I have your permission to use in future studies data collected from you? Please write your initials next to your preferred choice.

_____ YES _____ NO

Consequences of subject's decision to withdraw from research and procedures

There will be NO negative consequences if a research participant decides to withdraw from research and procedures. Please notify the principal investigator in writing of your decision to withdraw from the research study including your name and date.

RISKS AND BENEFITS

Risks or Discomforts

Possible risks of participating in this research study include:

- Some of the questions that you will be asked to respond as part of the study could increase your level of stress while thinking of the answers.
- The questions may address aspects of your work life, such as conflict situations you might have experienced or issues that created some level of discomfort while making a decision.
- Some questions may address aspects of your personal life as you might find frustrating such as problems that your intervention in this disaster might have caused in your family
- It is expected that along the interview the following topics might arise and be discussed: family, religion, business and money, political ideologies, ethnic and cultural background, etc.
- Have in mind that you have the right to refuse to answer any questions without negative consequence.

In the researcher's opinion, the risks listed above are minimal. Minimal risk means that the level of discomfort in the research are not likely not greater than those ordinarily encountered in daily life or during the performance of routine physical or psychological examinations or tests.

Benefits

You will not directly benefit from taking part in this research, however, the knowledge gained from this study may contribute to society's understanding of post disaster decision making and coordination.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

There are no costs to you, the research subject, associated with your participation in this study. There are no compensations to you, the research subject, associated with your participation in this study

SUBJECT'S ASSURANCES

Taking part in this research study is entirely voluntary. If you choose to take part, you have the right to stop at any time. If you decide not to participate or if you decide to stop taking part in the research at a later date, there will be no penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. Your decision to stop participation, or not to participate, will not influence current or future relationships with the University of Delaware or the researcher.

WHO SHOULD YOU CALL IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS?

If you have any questions about this study, please contact the Principal Investigator:
Diego Fernandez Otegui
(302) 513-6972

dotegui@udel.edu

You may also contact his advisor also by phone or by email

Joseph Trainor, Ph.D.

(302) 831-4203

jtrainor@udel.edu

If you have any questions or concerns about your rights as a research participant, you may contact the University of Delaware Institutional Review Board at hsrb-research@udel.edu or (302) 831-2137.

Your signature on this form means that:

- 1) you are at least 18 years old;
- 2) you have read and understand the information given in this form;
- 3) you have asked any questions you have about the research and the questions have been answered to your satisfaction; and
- 4) you accept the terms in the form and volunteer to participate in the study. You will be given a copy of this form to keep.

Printed Name of Participant Signature of Participant Date



Diego Fernandez Otegui

Person Obtaining Consent

(Printed Name)

Person Obtaining Consent

(Signature)

Date

Appendix G

INSTITUTIONAL LOGICS OF SOCIETAL SECTORS

Key Characteristics	Market	Corporation	Profession	State
Economic System	Market Capitalism	Managerial Capitalism	Personal Capitalism	Welfare Capitalism
Natural Effect of Symbolic Analogy	Market as Transaction	Corporation as Hierarchy	Profession as Relational Network	State as Redistribution Mechanism
Sources of Identity	Faceless	Bureaucratic Roles Quantity of Production	Personal Reputation Quality of Innovation	Social Class Political Ideology
Sources of Legitimacy	Share Price	Market Position of Firm	Personal Expertise	Democratic Participation
Sources of Authority	Shareholder Activism	Board of Directors Management	Professional Association	Bureaucratic Domination Political Parties
Basis of Norms	Self-Interest	Employment in Firm	Membership in Guild	Citizenship in Nation
Basis of Attention	Status Position in Market	Status Position in Hierarchy	Status Position in Network	Status Position of Interest Group
Basis of Strategy	Increase Efficiency of Transactions	Increase Size and Diversification of Firm	Increase Personal Reputation and Quality of Craft	Increase Community Good
Learning Mechanisms	Competition Prices	Competition Training and Routines Subunit of Firm	Cooperation Apprenticing Relational Network	Popular Opinion Leadership
Informal Control Mechanisms	Industry Analysts	Organization Culture	Celebrity Professional	Backroom Politics
Formal Control Mechanisms	Enforcement of Regulation	Board and Management Authority	Internal and External Peer Review	Enforcement of Legislation
Forms of Ownership	Public	Public	Private	Public
Organization Form	Marketplace	M-Form Organization	Network Organization	Legal Bureaucracy
Logic of Exchange	Immediate Best Bargain	Personal Career Advancement	Indebtedness and Reciprocity	Political Power
Logic of Investment	Capital Committed to Market	Capital Committed to Firm	Capital Committed to Nexus of Relationships	Capital Committed to Public Policy
Management Style	Self-Regulated / Gov. Intervention	Efficiency	Individual Skillset	Bureaucratic Processes
Main Motivation	Equilibrium	Money	Knowledge	Representation
Delivery	Equilibrium	Products & Services	Expertise & Values	Control

Extracted from Thornton 2004

Key Characteristics	Family	Religion	Humanitarian
Economic System	Personal Capitalism	Occidental Capitalism	Nonprofit Capitalism
Natural Effect of Symbolic Analogy	Family as Firm	Temple as Bank	Impacted Area as Service Delivery Area
Sources of Identity	Family Reputation Father-Son Relations	Occupational and Vocational Association with Deities	Commitment to Others and Willingness to Sacrifice
Sources of Legitimacy	Unconditional Loyalty	Importance of Magic in Economy	Presumed Knowledge of the Local
Sources of Authority	Patriarchal Domination	Personal Charisma of Prophet Power and Status of Priesthood	Humanitarian Space
Basis of Norms	Membership in Household	Membership in Congregation	Intervention Force
Basis of Attention	Communism of Household	Relation of Individual to Supernatural Forces	Position Relative to Someone in Need
Basis of Strategy	Increase Family Honor, Security and Solidarity	Increase Magical Symbolism of Natural Events	Increase Well-Being of the Other
Learning Mechanisms	Sponsorship	Analogy and Parable Formulae of Prayer Routinization of Preaching	Field Experience
Informal Control Mechanisms	Family Politics	Worship of Calling	Public Scrutiny
Formal Control Mechanisms	Rules of Inheritance and Succession	Rationalization of Usury & Norms of Taboos	Peer Accountability
Forms of Ownership	Private	Private	Public
Organization Form	Family Partnership	Religious Congregation Office Hierarchy	Network Organization
Logic of Exchange	Family Power	As Sign of God's Grace	Active Offering
Logic of Investment	Capital Committed to Household	Capital Committed to Enterprise of Salvation	Capital Committed to Visibility
Management Style	Informal Processes	Determined by Priesthood	Determined Locally
Main Motivation	Perpetuation	Guidance	Paternalism
Delivery	Love	Faith	Assistance