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"COLLABORATIVE EFFORTS TO IMPROVE LOGISTICS DURING HUMANITARIAN RELIEF OPERATIONS"

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"COLLABORATIVE EFFORTS TO IMPROVE LOGISTICS DURING HUMANITARIAN RELIEF OPERATIONS"

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"COLLABORATIVE EFFORTS TO IMPROVE LOGISTICS DURING HUMANITARIAN RELIEF OPERATIONS"

Coordination between civilian and military actors is essential during an emergency response. The increasing number and scale of humanitarian emergencies, in both natural disaster and conflict settings, has led to more situations where military forces and civilian relief agencies are operating in the same environment.[1]

~ Sir John Holmes, former Emergency Relief Coordinator and
United Nations Under-Secretary General for Humanitarian Affairs
January 2007 - September 2010

INTRODUCTION

Famines in Africa, the Boxing Day tsunami, hurricanes and earthquakes; have again conjured up images of people in need of humanitarian assistance. Every year some 125,000 people are reported killed and 300 million cumulatively affected by around 450 natural disasters, according to the database maintained by the Centre for Research on the Epidemiology of Disasters (CRED) at the University of Leuven, Belgium.[2] Add to these statistics man-made disasters such as the Kurds in Northern Iraq, Somalia, the Balkans and Afghanistan, and the magnitude of the relief effort becomes manifestly apparent. Humanitarian Relief Organisations (HROs) endeavour to reach out to all in need, persevering to provide disaster relief in the most effective manner. Increasingly benefactors are subjecting the HROs to greater scrutiny and emphasising the obligation to

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[1] United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, "Humanitarian Civil-Military," http://ochaonline.un.org/AboutOCHA/Organigramme/EmergencyServicesBranchESB/CivilMilitaryCoordinationSectionCMCS/tabid/1274/Default.aspx; Internet; accessed 10 December 2010.

[2] David Strömberg, "Natural Disasters, Economic Development, and Humanitarian Aid," *Journal of Economic Perspectives,* vol. 21, no. 3 (Summer 2007): 199.

ensure donations are efficiently and effectively utilised. Sponsors have become more interested in understanding how their money is spent and they expect accountability and transparency. Expenditure of the limited funds has therefore become a crucial issue. In most relief operations logistics accounts for about 80% of the financial effort. Ensuring that this element is as economical as possible is imperative. Until recently however humanitarian logistics was not at the forefront of planning and was given scant attention. Logistics skills within the various humanitarian organisations remained underdeveloped and uncoordinated.

In contrast, centuries of warfare have honed the art of military logistics. Maintaining supply lines, whilst disrupting those of the enemy has long been considered a crucial element of military strategy. The science of logistics and supply management has been a vital factor for ensuring victory on the battlefield. The military have continued to develop tools and techniques to improve their logistic endeavours, with noteworthy effort in 1959 by US retired Rear Admiral, Henry E. Eccles, to produce a theory of logistics.[3] Despite the importance of logistics, the primacy of operations has always remained paramount. Failure for the military has never been an option and consequently costs and economy of effort have often been a secondary consideration. The end of the Cold War, however, resulted in financial cutbacks and imposed restrictions on military spending as part of the peace dividend. Subsequent military operations and planning would need to be more cost-effective, and logisticians would be obliged to adopt lean processes and

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[3] Henry E. Eccles, *Logistics in the National Defense* (Mechanicsburg, Pennsylvania: The Stackpole Company, 1959).

implement more efficient methods.[4] The early 1990s was a period of intense military effort to seek and adopt improved logistic support theories, in order to enhance productivity and reduce overall costs.

The 1990s also experienced increased interaction between United Nations (UN) HROs, the multitude of Non-Government Organisations (NGOs) and the military. Relations during humanitarian operations were sometimes strained, but when there was proactive cooperation between the various parties, particularly in the field of logistics, it often led to economies of scale and mutually beneficial results. The escalating cost of logistics during humanitarian operations became increasingly important to the HROs and measures to reduce expenditure were sought. It soon became apparent that although collaboration had its benefits, there were significant areas of friction that constrained, not only, cooperation between the assorted civilian agencies, but also curtailed relations with the military. Over the next two decades efforts were made to address obstacles and improve collaboration, with varying success. More recently a new approach has been adopted, resulting in the formation of global and regional groupings responsible for specific areas of humanitarian operations. In 2006 the 'Cluster Approach' was formally approved, bringing together interested parties from the UN, government organisations and NGOs, in order to collectively seek methods for improving humanitarian relief operations.[5] Various clusters were formed, including the 'Logistics Cluster', led by the World Food Program (WFP). The collaborative nature of the cluster approach

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[4] Peter Tatham and David Worrell, "Lean Thinking in an Uncertain Environment: The Implications for UK Defence Acquisition," *International Journal of Defence Acquisition Management,* vol. 3 (2010): 2.

[5] Inter-Agency Steering Committee, *Guidance Note on Using the Cluster Approach to Strengthening Humanitarian Response* (IASC Working Group, 24 November 2006), 3.

acknowledged the significant expertise and experience each of the diverse organisations could bring to the grouping, and formalised the requirement to include the military. The development of the logistics cluster is still in the embryonic stage.

The collaborative efforts undertaken by Humanitarian Relief Organisations (HROs) to improve logistics, and to integrate the military into that process, should lead to closer cooperation, improved efficiency and enhance the ability of the HROs to save lives during disaster relief operations.

Methodology

The changing strategic environment progressively led the military to adopting a broader approach to operations. As the military became more involved in humanitarian assistance, interaction with the various HROs increased. Attempts at closer integration with the humanitarian agencies resulted in varying degrees of success. Logistics, however, was viewed as an area where collaboration could have substantial benefits.

The implementation of the 'Whole of Government' approach promoted the joint employment of diplomatic, defence, development, and commercial resources. It formalised the requirement for the military to integrate and operate with other agencies.[6] The military was faced by a plethora of humanitarian actors, officially categorised as

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[6] Andrew Leslie, Lt Gen., Peter Gizewski, and Michael Rostek, "Developing a Comprehensive Approach to Canadian Forces Operations," Canadian Military Journal vol. 9, no. 1 (Spring 2009): 1.

Intergovernmental Organisations, Single State organisations and NGOs.[7] The history of

humanitarian assistance lead to a greater understanding of how each institution evolved.

Within the various UN organisations the World Food Programme (WFP) emerged as

having the predominant logistic humanitarian role and was selected to lead the formation

of a global logistic forum. At this embryonic stage the WFP was only able to tentatively

draw on support from other UN HROs and the Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency

(MSB), a Single State organisation. The WFP endeavoured to reach out to the multitude

of NGOs, with only partial success. By necessity, attempts to increase logistic

collaboration with NGOs were limited to larger organisations such as the Red Cross,

Médecins Sans Frontières and World Vision International.

The multitude of humanitarian actors employed diverse modus operandi, resulting

in particular traits and idiosyncrasies. However, the majority of HROs believed aid should

be distributed according to needs and priorities, following the notions of humanity,

neutrality and impartiality. In addition the UN had to follow international protocol and

observe the sacrosanct principles of national sovereignty. Conversely NGOs had far less

bureaucratic processes and were able to react to humanitarian disasters in a relatively

faster manner. The speed of response, however, often resulted in NGOs deploying ill-

prepared and dependent on ad hoc logistical arrangements for support. The military, on

the other hand, exhausted considerable time planning for operations and had extensive

logistic assets at its disposal, but it was relatively inexperienced at providing HA.

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[7] North Atlantic Treaty Organisation, MC 411, *NATO Military Policy on Civil-Military Co-operation (*Belgium: NATO Standardisation Agency, 18 January 2002), 3-1.

Cultural, institutional and philosophical differences created obstacles to collaboration between the various HROs and military. Personal interpretations of the three guiding humanitarian principles played a significant role in distancing the various actors. Much of the friction was also generated by a fear of loss of autonomy and funding rivalry, which dissuaded NGOs from pursuing closer integration of their logistical effort. Conflicting agendas and ill-informed perceptions exasperated the situation. But, it was believed that much of this friction could be alleviated by opening up lines of communication between humanitarian logisticians, thereby leading to closer interaction.

A review of the international disaster relief system commenced in 2004 and resulted in the introduction of 'global clusters', each responsible for separate areas of humanitarian response. Based on previous experience, the WFP was confirmed as the global logistics cluster lead. The cluster brought together the various HROs and incorporated military logistic organisations into the process. The WFP strengthened by its enhanced leadership role, demonstrated excellent coordination during subsequent relief operations. Closer integration of the HROs began to improve interrelations and increased the exchange of ideas and information. The cluster approach facilitated joint training, enhanced mutual understanding and encouraged production of a common strategy. The improved logistic affiliations resulted in far greater synchronisation of the provision of logistics in the humanitarian environment. The ability to collect, analyse, disseminate and act on key data information has been fundamental to improving successful effective response. The military has been able to contribute considerably to this area of development.

The development of a strategy for increasing collaboration between the various HROs is still in its infancy, but has demonstrated considerable progress. The integration of HROs and the military has rapidly improved with the introduction of the logistics cluster. Much effort has been made to improve the humanitarian logistic response to disasters, in order to make the process more efficient and effective. The logistics cluster approach is not yet quintessential, but the concept has focused the various logistic organisations on the primary task of improving humanitarian response and ultimately saving lives through collectively drawing on strengths and good practice.

Terminology

Following the end of the Cold War, it was predominately Western military forces, using NATO doctrine, that were engaged in providing humanitarian assistance during disasters. The generic term 'the military' will be used to describe these forces. A disaster constitutes any unanticipated and often abrupt incident that causes great damage, destruction and human suffering.[8] Disasters can be either natural or man-made. Complex Humanitarian Emergencies (CHE) are disasters that, due to their nature, are beyond the mandate or capacity of any single HRO. Requiring an international response, CHE also necessitate the use of the military for purposes of civilian safety, security, or logistics expertise.[9] The use of the military may either be the last resort in a natural disaster or the

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[8] F. Vos, J. Rodriguez, R. Below, and D. Guha-Sapir D, *Annual Disaster Statistical Review 2009: The Numbers and Trends* (Brussels: Centre for Research on the Epidemiology of Disasters, CRED; 2010), 5.

first within a conflict scenario, but it is assumed that disasters will generate human activity likely to involve the military. NATO logistic and support concepts are grounded in joint doctrine publications.[10] This paper will detail the formation of the 'logistics cluster' led by the WFP, facilitating the production of policy guidance, the sharing of information, training, education and logistic partnerships. These will form the foundation for increasing the collaborative efforts and improving logistics during disaster relief operations.

THE MILITARY CONTEXT

Environment Change

Warfare and conflict are changing in nature. The notion of the well understood 20th century model of conventional warfare is fast disappearing and the focus on conventional state-on-state military conflicts has migrated to a more nebulous collection of uncertain threats.[11] The end of the 'great confrontation', the Cold War, released

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[9] United States Institute of Peace, "Taking It to the Next Level: Civil Military Cooperation in Complex Emergencies," http://www.refugeeresearch.net/sw/node/6359; Internet; accessed 12 December 2010.

[10] North Atlantic Treaty Organisation, AJP-4(A), *Allied Joint Logistics Doctrine* (Belgium: NATO Standardisation Agency, December 2003).

[11] David W. Barno, "Military Adaptation in Complex Operations," *Prism, vol. 1*, no. 1 (December 2009): 32.

antagonists who had been kept in place by the two superpowers and the consequence was a series of conflicts that were of an intra-state rather than inter-state nature.[12] The 'peace dividend' resulted in dramatic cuts to conventional forces and the end of the 'industrial army.'[13] Rather than preparing to fight a large-scale conventional war, many of the remaining military personnel were deployed in peacekeeping and peace enforcement roles, often providing humanitarian assistance. Much of the military doctrine to undertake these roles was outdated and needed to be revised urgently.

During the Cold War, Western military doctrine had emphasised the decisive use of overwhelming force.[14] Comprehensive operations were considered no more than how to best deploy combined arms, in order to defeat the Soviets on the European battlefield.[15] The proficiencies associated with stabilisation and reconstruction operations withered, as the military became increasingly adept at high intensity Net Centric Warfare.[16] Industrial war had its clear-cut strategic goals, and the military doctrine reflected the belief that political objectives could be attained through force. In contrast to these hard strategic aims and correlated conventional operations, the emerging irregular warfare and humanitarian assistance roles were far more complex and challenging in nature. The "war

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[12] Rupert Smith, *The Utility of Force: The Art of War in the Modern World* (London: Penguin, 2005), 267.

[13] *Ibid*.

[14] Hans Binnendijk and Patrick M. Cronin, "Through the Complex Operations," *Prism,* vol. 1, no. 1 (December 2009): 10; and James Dobbins, "Organizing for Victory," *Prism,* vol. 1, no. 1 (December 2009): 51.

[15] Barno, Military Adaptation in Complex Operations, 29; and Dobbins, Organizing for Victory, 53.

[16] Binnendijk, Through the Complex Operations..., 10.

amongst the people," as coined by British 1991 Gulf war veteran General Sir Rupert Smith, required the military to take a more holistic view of the 'battlefield', and consider political, economic and humanitarian aspects of the operation.[17] The predictability of the Cold War, from the military doctrinal perspective, had been replaced by a confusing global system in which the role of the military was no longer as well defined or structured.

Believing that a revolution in military affairs was underway, academics and policymakers began a process of revising military doctrine.[18] In addition to War-fighting, the secondary role of the military was considered by many to be that of keeping or enforcing the peace, particularly during comprehensive operations. Using the military to undertake post-conflict reconstruction or Humanitarian Assistance (HA) operations was considered inappropriate. Limited funds and resources were therefore allocated to conduct what became known as 'Phase IV' or post-conflict operations. Instead Western governments and the military relied on the UN humanitarian organisations and NGOs to undertake the task.[19] The American invasion of Panama in 1989, Operation JUST CAUSE, demonstrated that reliance on civilian organisations was not necessarily infallible. The operation was well-planned, carefully rehearsed and initially achieved a

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[17] Rupert Smith, *The Utility of Force*, 270.

[18] Canadian Forces College, "Into the Future: Emerging Operational Concepts" (Joint Command and Staff Program 37 C/DS/543/WAS/LD-06, 2011), 1.

[19] Richard G. Lugar, "Stabilization and Reconstruction: a Long Beginning," Prism, vol. 1, no. 1 (December 2009): 8.

decisive military success.[20] The US military planners failed, however, to take into consideration the second and third order effects of their operation. In particular the removal of the country's security forces resulted in widespread looting and the country spiralled into chaos. The military had achieved its operational objectives, but the political, social and humanitarian elements of the conflict had been overlooked. In the past military theorists had called such matters, "the fog of war," but clearly the military needed to focus more attention on these additional tasks.[21] Military doctrine needed to incorporate post-conflict operations and consideration for humanitarian assistance into the planning.

Following the 1991 Gulf War, the military became intimately involved in a post-conflict humanitarian operation. The government of Saddam Hussein put down a rebellion by the ethnic Kurds, resulting in over a million refugees fleeing to the remote mountain areas of northern Iraq and south-east Turkey. The UN was ill-prepared to orchestrate a response to the ensuing crisis. The coalition forces, led by the United States, mounted Operation PROVIDE COMFORT. This was the first significant combined military and humanitarian aid effort since the immense complex emergency that followed the end of World War II.[22] Military forces from 14 nations and HROs (made up of UN agencies, NGOs and government donors) from an excess of 30 countries, collaborated

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[20] David R. Hogg, Lt. Col. "Rapid Decisive Operations: The Search for the Holy Grail of Joint Warfighting." In Transformation Concepts for National Security in the 21st Century, edited by Williamson Murray. Carlisle, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, (2002): 389; http://www.dtic.mil/cgi-bin/GetTRDoc?Location=U2&doc=GetTRDoc.pdf&AD=ADA401661; Internet; accessed 1 January 2011.

[21] Vego, Milan N. "Systems versus Classical Approach to Warfare." *Joint Force Quarterly 52,* (1st Quarter 2009): 47.

[22] T. W. Sharp, and others, "Military Assistance in Complex Emergencies: What Have We Learned since the Kurdish Relief Effort?" Pre-Hospital and Disaster Magazine*, vol. 16, no. 4 (October-December 2001): 198;* http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/12090199; Internet; accessed 13 December 2010.

and cooperated to facilitate a successful relief effort. The military were not only essential

for security, but were instrumental in providing logistical infrastructure to deal effectively

with the emergency phase of the crisis. There seemed limited justification for distancing

the military from post-conflict political, social and humanitarian operations.[23] The

operation was regarded as a model of how military logistics could be incorporated into

efforts to assist HROs with CHE.

The successful co-operation between the military and HROs during the Kurdish

crisis was, however, not replicated in Somalia. Following the collapse of the Siad Barré

government in early 1991 the country plummeted into a state of violent chaos.[24] As the

security situation deteriorated, effective humanitarian relief for the more than 1 million

people threatened with starvation became impossible. The UN established a military task

force to undertake Operation RESTORE HOPE. The military presence initially improved

the security environment and provided substantial logistic support to the HROs. As the

operation continued the high level of cooperation and coordination, between the military

and civilian organisations, that had been generated in Northern Iraq was missing. The

military did not easily assimilate into the well established humanitarian effort and was

unable to coerce the warring factions into non-interference, as it had in Iraq.

Communications between the two parties began to deteriorate and the relationship

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[23] Major S.A. Hawley, "Is Greater Coordination between the Humanitarian Operations of the Military and Non-Government Organisations a Measure That Is Achievable, Will It Produce Benefits and How Could It Be Better Achieved?" (Shrivenham: British Advanced Command and Staff Course, May 2000), 18.

[24] Sharp, Military Assistance in Complex Emergencies...,199.

became acrimonious. Fewer joint logistic planning meetings meant the ensuing relief

efforts became disjointed. In 1993 the military mission changed to that of solely

providing security and enforcing the peace. Military logistic support to the humanitarian

operation was reduced and collaboration with the HROs withered. Consequently, lack of

clear military purpose and loss of political and public support for the multilateral relief

effort, particularly following the death of 18 servicemen, led to a disengagement policy

decision and the removal of US forces. Somalia subsequently spiralled into renewed

violence and the re-occurrence of the CHE which continues today.[25] The ad hoc

arrangements for providing military logistical support to HROs in Somalia proved

ineffective and counter-productive. From an operational perspective the military needed

to implement post-conflict strategies that would promote the peace process and enable

humanitarian efforts to be more effective.

Conducting Comprehensive Operations

The military began to develop the concept of Security Sector Review (SSR) as a

process for reforming and rebuilding a state's security sector in order to enforce the peace

and improve humanitarian assistance. In 1995, the NATO Implementation Force (IFOR)

deployed to Bosnia and Herzegovina and replaced the UN Protection Force

(UNPROFOR). The initial lack of security represented a decisive obstacle to the

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[25] Humanitarian News, "USAID-DCHA Somalia Complex Emergency Fact Sheet #1, Fiscal Year (FY) 2011," http://humanitariannews.org/20110125/usaid-dcha-somalia-complex-emergency-fact-sheet-1-fiscal-year-fy-2011; Internet; accessed 15 December 2000.

promotion of sustainable development, democracy and peace.[26] The military were

therefore used to assist HROs with moving logistical supplies forward to those needing

HA. As security was restored through force, subsequent reconstruction and logistical

efforts brought the military and HROs closer together, often in an uneasy alliance. The

corollary of collaborative efforts with civilian agencies began to demonstrate tangible

military benefits.[27] Restoration of the road network diminished the isolation of rural

areas.[28] Troops were able to move around more freely and react in a timely fashion to

instances of insurrection. Better roads reduced infrastructure reconstruction costs and

encouraged both commerce and improvements in productivity. Consequently, sustainable

economic growth created jobs, reduced poverty and began to provide the tax revenues

needed to maintain competent institutions of governance, enforce the rule of law and

sustain public services.[29] Jobs absorbed surplus labour that might otherwise have been

drawn into organised crime or militias. Focusing on security, governance and economic

development was seen to have substantial military advantages. Providing logistical

support directly or indirectly to HROs was viewed as a significant means of improving

the post conflict environment. It demonstrated the necessity for military planners to

address such issues and improve cooperation with HROs.

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[26] Natsios, Time Lag and Sequencing..., 70.

[27] Dolan, "The Defence Forces and the NGOs"..., 129.

[28] Natsios, Time Lag and Sequencing..., 75.

[29] *Ibid.*, 71.

The evolving theories and doctrine increasingly supported the view that a more comprehensive military approach was required for contemporary operations in complex environments.[30] This new approach would entail both traditional and non-traditional military activities being carried out collaboratively, within a broader systemic operational design.[31] In addition to the immediate military threat, a myriad of societal issues needed to be confronted. War-fighting, peacekeeping and HA could all take place simultaneously in the so-called 'Three Block War' environment, as described by US Marine General Charles Krulak.[32] As part of the collective effort the military would make logistical support to the humanitarian operation available. Addressing these challenges was identified as a crucial element to achieving peace and stability.[33] In the US, three presidential decision directives between 1994 and 2000 attempted to address the multifaceted problems associated with comprehensive operations.[34] Within the Pentagon, processes were rewritten to facilitate better working relationships with the various non-Department of Defence and non-state actors, who were increasingly involved in providing services in peacekeeping and humanitarian operations. The new international approach to regional crisis began to evolve and became known as humanitarian intervention.

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[30] Kilcullen, David J. "Strategy and Terrorism: Countering Global Insecurity," *The Journal of Strategic Studies,* vol. 28, no.4 (August 2005): 609, 615.

[31] Leslie, Lt Gen, *Developing a Comprehensive Approach…*, 11.

[32] Charles Krulak, "The Three Block War: Fighting in Urban Areas," *Vital Speeches of the Day*, vol. 64, iss. 5 (15 December 1997): 140.

[33] Leslie, Lt Gen, *Developing a Comprehensive Approach…*, 9.

[34] Elizabeth Sherwood-Randall, with Christina Briggs, and Anja Miller, "Managing the Pentagon's International Relations," Chap. 9 in *Keeping the Edge: Managing Defense for the Future (*Cambridge, Mass.: Preventive Defense Project, Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs, Harvard Kennedy School, September 2000), 256.

Gradually, the notion that the military had a role to play in providing HA, in order to save lives and alleviate suffering during complex operations, began to be tacitly accepted by most HROs. This recognition was based on the proviso that the military was used primarily when the severity of the security situation restricted civilian agencies from participation. In such circumstances it was emphasised that the military should act impartially and on the basis of need.[35] The HROs acknowledged that in certain circumstances they were unable to provide relief effort, and that the military were best placed to provide assistance and logistical support. Using military resources to achieve these goals, however, was not accepted by all. Some members of both the military and HROs continued to question the legitimacy and capability of the military to undertake such tasks. In 2000, during the US presidential campaign, Condoleezza Rice, George W Bush's senior foreign policy adviser, spoke dismissively of stability operations, declaring that "we don't need to have the 82nd Airborne escorting kids to kindergarten."[36] The inference was that the military should have a limited role in HA. Following the 2003 Gulf War, the most senior British officer with the US land forces stated that General Tommy Franks, the US coalition commander showed little interest in the post war period. "I am quite sure Franks did not want to take ownership of Phase IV," Major-General Albert Whitley dismissively wrote.[37] This lack of enthusiasm for military involvement in post

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[35] Oxfam International, "Quick Impact, Quick Collapse: The Dangers of Militarised Aid in Afghanistan," http://www.oxfam.org/en/policy/quick-impact-quick-collapse; Internet; accessed 12 December 2010.

[36] Peter van Ham, "Combating Terrorism," *NATO Review* (Autumn 2005); http://www.nato.int/docu/review/2005/issue3/english/analysis.html; Internet; accessed 12 February 2011.

[37] Ewen MacAskill, "US Post-War Iraq Strategy a Mess, Blair Was Told," The Guardian Newspaper (14 March 2006): http://www.guardian.co.uk/politics/2006/mar/14/uk.topstories31; Internet; accessed 1 February 2011.

conflict ensuing humanitarian relief effort, resulted in the limited provision of logistical

assets and contributed to prolonging the military's presence in Iraq.

Whole of Government Approach

Despite some reservations regarding the use of the military to provide logistical

support to humanitarian aid, the general principle of the 'comprehensive approach to

operations' increasingly began to be adopted by the military.[38] Derived from the 'Whole

of Government' terminology, the comprehensive approach envisaged the military working

in partnership with previously separate government and non-government agencies to

achieve policy objectives.[39] This meant that military logisticians began to work closely

with their counterparts in HROs. By 2007, in both Iraq and Afghanistan, the military

attempted to pursue elements of counterinsurgency doctrine that focused on public

security, local governance and economic growth.[40] The military increasingly embarked on

logistical humanitarian tasks, often in conjunction with civilian government agencies and,

occasionally, multinational partners including NGOs.[41] These new initiatives were

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[38] United States, Department of Defense, *Military Support to Stabilization, Security, Transition and Reconstruction Operations: Joint Operating Concept* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, vol. 2, December, 2006).

[39] Christopher M. Schnaubelt, "Complex Operations and Insurgency Operational Art," *Prism,* vol. 1, no. 1 (December 2009): 37.

[40] William M. Frej and David Hatch, "A New Approach to the Delivery of US Assistance to Afghanistan," *Prism, vol. 1*, no. 1 (December 2009): 89; and Dobbins, Organizing for Victory..., 55, 61.

[41] U.S., DoD, *Military Support to Stabilization...,* 2; and Hope, Winning the Firefight is Not Enough..., 12.

relatively successful, however, civil-military cooperation was not an invention of the

21st-century; delegates who attended the Hague peace conferences in 1899 and 1907

attempted to impose international controls on the conduct of war and within this

framework considered two strands: peacekeeping and humanitarian assistance.[42] The

collaborative logistical efforts in 2007, by HROs and the military, started to demonstrate

that both parties could work together to produce more efficient and effective relief effort.

Although civil-military cooperation was not a new concept, the Whole of

Government approach formalised the process and highlighted the need for the political,

economic and humanitarian actors to interact, cooperate and collaborate.[43] Despite

differences in approach and opinion, increased interaction during comprehensive

operations began to draw attention to areas of common ground, where both the military

and HROs could benefit from collaboration. The field of logistics was of particular

interest and both parties began to explore when and how closer cooperation could be

achieved. The military had long recognised that vital to the success of all major

operations were the critical factors of logistic support and sustainment. Failure to

establish reliable logistical organisations or guarantee the protection of lines of

communication would, invariably, lead to major setbacks and often to defeat. Logistics

had played a crucial role in the success or failure of military campaigns since ancient

times. Alexander the Great, Hannibal Barca, and the Duke of Wellington were all

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[42] Michael P. Dolan, "The Defence Forces and the NGOs: A Cultural Collision or a Meeting of Minds?" *The Quarterly Journal* vol. 2, no. 3 (September 2003): 129.

[43] Leslie, Lt Gen, *Developing a Comprehensive Approach…*, 13.

considered logistical geniuses.[44] Over the millennia the military had developed and

refined the art of logistics and had learnt that a balance needed to be struck between the

requirements for adequate logistic support and purely operational desires.[45] The subject of

logistics was an area of common interest between the military, UN and other HROs.

Military lessons learnt could be shared and developed with civilian counterparts and

collectively the parties could work towards improving the efficiency and effectiveness of

logistical support to disasters and other humanitarian operations.

From the end of the Cold War the military have increasingly undertaken various,

often markedly different, humanitarian assistance roles.[46] The operations transpired from

diverse political and social dynamics and were not always successful from an HA

perspective. In northern Iraq after 1991, the military was able to provide everything

logistically from medical care, sanitation, food and other emergency supplies and

services. In subsequent missions, such as the Balkans, the military focused on indirect

logistical support to HROs, and in Afghanistan it engaged in collaborative nation-building

and longer-term development projects. In each situation the relationship between the

military and HROs was rarely formalised and often ad hoc. Collaborations were often

marred by misunderstanding and sometimes mistrust. Improvements in logistic support

and the benefits of economies of scale were limited and coordination was sometimes

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[44] Milan N. Vego, "Operational Logistics," *Joint Operational Warfare,* ed. Naval War College (Newport, RI: Naval War College, 2007): VIII-75.

[45] *Ibid*., 79.

[46] Thomas G. Weiss, *What's Wrong with the United Nations and How to Fix It* (Cambridge: Polity press, 2009), 214.

ineffective. There were, however, sufficient successes to encourage both the military and HROs to explore further, how collaborative efforts might be utilised to improve logistic support during the disaster relief operations. The growing rate, at which the military served alongside and, increasingly, in partnership with various HROs, highlighted the requirement for formalising relations. When responding to natural or technological disasters, or to complex humanitarian emergencies, it was essential that the military and the various HROs had knowledge of each other's character and modus operandi. Acknowledging and comprehending the differences between the multitudes of actors, would make development of collaborative logistic effort far more achievable.

THE ACTORS

In humanitarian emergencies, the defining of the lines between man-made crisis and natural disaster makes no significant difference to the victims or responders. The "crisis and its effects, not the classification of its cause" is paramount.[47] In the same vein, the differences in philosophy and modus operandi between the various HROs and the military are of little consequence to those in need of assistance. In order, however, for the multitude of HROs logistic support functions to work together and to integrate the military into the process, it is necessary to define the actors. Military doctrine recognises

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[47] Peter Walker and Daniel Maxwell, *Shaping the Humanitarian World* (London. Coutledge Global Institutions, 2009), 13.

that the axiom 'civilian organisations' comprises many different groupings.[48] NATO

doctrine, "Civil-Military Cooperation", distinguishes between the three principal types of

civilian humanitarian agencies that the military will encounter: Intergovernmental

Organisation (IGO), Single State Organisation and NGO. Each of the agencies operates in

different manners and consists of numerous subdivisions. IGOs, sometimes called

International Organisations, such as the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)

and WFP, derive their mandate directly from the 192 member states.[49] Whereas the

Single State, national organisations like the United States Agency for International

Development (USAID), and the European Communities Humanitarian Aid Office are

directly controlled by their governments and funding is channelled through various

government mechanisms. Lastly the most diverse group, the plethora of NGOs, range

from large global organisations, such as the International Committee of the Red Cross

(ICRC), to a few individuals striving to provide humanitarian assistance. Each of these

actors plays a distinctive role in their capacity as an HRO. Understanding how each

evolved through history, enables a better understanding of the differences between the

HROs, their beliefs and methodologies.

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[48] NATO, MC 411, *NATO Military Policy* ..., 5; and Kristin M. Hauhevik and Benjamin de Carvalho, "Civil-Military Cooperation in Multinational and Interagency Operations," *NUPI Series on Security in Practice* no.2 (2007): 8.

[49] United Nations, "UN at a Glance," http://www.un.org/en/aboutun/index.shtml; Internet; accessed 11 November 2010.

Historic Perspective

Documented evidence of humanitarian assistance is apparent throughout history and can be traced back to at least the 23rd century B.C. in the form of the tomb inscriptions of Harkhuf, the governor of Aswan, Upper Egypt. He led several official journeys to Nubia. These trips were not just trade expeditions, but also military and diplomatic missions, bringing medicines to distant lands.[50] It was, however, the turn of the 19th century that saw the galvanisation of humanitarian aid and its rapid globalisation. Famine and war were the basis for the emergence of modern, internationally connected humanitarian actors. Action was shaped by the constantly competing agendas of compassion, political reform and the need for containment, in order to maintain security and stability.[51] It was the scene that greeted Swiss businessman, Jean Henri Dunant that cemented the fundamental ideals and methodologies of humanitarianism. On 24 June, 1859, Dunant witnessed the aftermath of the battle between the French and Austrian armies in northern Italy. He set about organising assistance for the 40,000 wounded and dying soldiers on both sides. His actions were unprejudiced and he sought volunteers from both sides to assist him in his endeavours. Many of Dunant's ideas would later underpin the formation of the Red Cross and Crescent movement in 1863 and codification of acceptable military behaviour in times of war, now collectively known as International

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[50] André Dollinger Reshafim, "Tomb Inscriptions of Harkhuf," http://www.reshafim.org.il/ad/egypt/texts/harkhuf.htm; Internet; accessed 10 December 2010.

[51] Walker, *Shaping the Humanitarian World...*, 21.

Humanitarian Law (IHL).[52] Historian John Hutchinson sees the rise of the Red Cross as part of the professionalism of military medicine and development of the medical logistic supply chain.[53] But much of Dunant's philosophy led the League of Nations to establish, in 1927, the International Relief Union (IRL), which was specifically set up to respond to assist victims of disasters.

UN HROs

After World War II, the creation of the UN provided a new home for international humanitarian organisations. One of the first UN agencies to take up tenure was the UN Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (UNRRA), which assisted in the repatriation of millions of people across Europe and ran displaced persons camps in Germany. Its multilateral and neutral stance succumbed to the realpolitik of the Cold War and it was replaced by the more politically driven Marshall Plan. The UNRRA ethos eventually migrated, in January 1951, to the formation of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). With the reduction of colonialism and the independence of Africa and Asian states from the 1950s, the UNHCR's operations continued to expand. Before its demise, the UNRRA also gave rise to the UN International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) and, in conjunction with the Marshall Plan, the Food and Agriculture

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[52] International Committee of the Red Cross, "About the International Committee of the Red Cross," http://www.icrc.org/eng/who-we-are/index.jsp; Internet; accessed 25 November 2010.

[53] John F Hutchinson, *Champions of Charity: War and the Rise of the Red Cross* (Boulder, Westview Press: 1996), 14.

Organisation (FAO). The FAO later subdivided to create the WFP. The WFP would subsequently become a key provider of logistic support to humanitarian operations.

During the 1960s the IRL generally proved ineffective at managing natural disasters. In response nation-states took up the mantle of providing humanitarian assistance independently. When necessary they were supported by the work of the League of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. Frustration with poor information fidelity and inadequate coordination of the provisioning of logistic supplies resulted in the UN setting up the Office of the Disaster Relief Coordinator (UNDRO) in 1972. It was, though, the graphic television pictures of the 1980s and in particular the famine in Ethiopia in 1985 that focused the world's attention on the plight and suffering of the people surviving in disaster areas. The UNDRO was logistically overwhelmed and unable to coordinate a robust response to the crisis. The UN Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali instigated a number of reforms that in 1992 resulted in the UNDRO ceasing to function as an organisation. The UNDRO was in due course replaced by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA).[54] This organisation was established as the UN Secretariat and was responsible for bringing together the various humanitarian actors within the UN, including those responsible for logistic support.

Numerous UN organisations were involved in the provision of various forms of humanitarian assistance during relief operations, but only a handful provided intrinsic

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[54] United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, "About OCHA," http://ochaonline.un.org/; Internet; accessed 10 December 2010.

logistic support. OCHA was tasked with identifying leaders for all functional areas of HA.[55] In doing so it identified the WFP as having the predominant logistic role, with other organisations having a vested interest. The WFP was the UN's frontline agency in the fight against global hunger. Its purpose was to prepare for and respond to emergencies, as well as plan to reduce chronic hunger and under-nutrition globally.[56] As the lead UN logistic agency it was responsible for managing the UN Humanitarian Response Depot (UNHRD) network from five strategically placed hubs, located in Ghana, United Arab Emirates, Malaysia, Panama and Italy. From these locations the WFP was able to provide other HROs with quick and efficient logistic support.[57] The WFP was the intuitive lead for heading a global logistic grouping, but other organisations would also play a pivotal role. The primary function of the UN International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) was to meet children's basic needs, to protect their rights and to help children reach their full potential in the given circumstances.[58] UNICEF was also able to offer its logistic response facilities to partner agencies, including access to emergency stockpiles in a Copenhagen warehouse.

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[55] John Kizler, René Reese, and Deborah Jacobs, "Humanitarian Supply Network: Multi-Agency Guide for Logistics Cooperation" (Prototype prepared in support of Adaptive Logistics Network/Multinational Experiment 6 Objective 4.5 Version 0.8, November 2010), 13; and http://ochaonline.un.org/.

[56] World Food Programme, "Fighting Hunger Worldwide," http://www.wfp.org/; Internet; accessed 10 December 2010.

[57] International Committee of the Red Cross, "History of the ICRC," http://www.unhrd.org/http://www.wfp.org/; Internet; accessed 25 November 2010.

[58] United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund, "About UNICEF," http://www.unicef.org/; Internet; accessed 10 December 2010.

With its considerable assets and logistic supply facilities, UNICEF also became a key partner of the WFP. In addition the WFP received direction and assistance from OCHA and the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), whose responsibility is to direct and coordinate international action to safeguard refugees and protect their rights worldwide.[59] Collectively the UN began to seek methods for improving logistics during humanitarian relief operations, but in those formative years the WFP could only tentatively reach out to other HROs, including Single State organisations and NGOs. To promote integration of the military, the UN established the Civil-Military Coordination Section (CMCS). This was responsible for providing guidance to the international humanitarian community on civil-military coordination. Although this did not align the logistic elements of the military into the WFP grouping, the CMCS endeavoured to detail the appropriate and needs-based use of Military and Civil Defence Assets (MCDA), in order to facilitate, assist and support humanitarian aid and disaster response operations.[60] Coordination of the logistic grouping was in an embryonic stage. These were the initial efforts of the WFP to formalise the logistic support relationships within the UN and with the military, but there was still limited coordination with Single State Organisations and NGOs.

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[59] United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, "The UN Refugee Agency," http://www.unhcr.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/home; Internet; accessed 12 December 2010.

[60] United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, "Civil-Military Coordination Section," http://ochaonline.un.org/AboutOCHA/Organigramme/EmergencyServicesBranchESB/CivilMilitaryCoordinationSectionCMCS/tabid/1274/Default.aspx; Internet; accessed 10 December 2010.

Single State Organisations

In addition to UN humanitarian organisations, individual governments can be major actors in their own right. Nations can directly provide humanitarian assistance or have a significant impact on relief efforts through implementation of their international commerce and trade arrangements. These Single State humanitarian agencies deliver aid through various means, including straight to the governments of developing countries, through international bodies and directly to charities and projects. Some governments and international bodies candidly use aid as a foreign policy tool. The Washington-based USAID and the London-based Department for International Development (DfID) both have their own humanitarian assistance programs.[61] Foreign aid and humanitarian support is used to advance the political and economic interests of the State. These national organisations are employed to project foreign policy in conflict zones, as well as through development assistance programs across the world. Many are intimately involved in supply and logistic activities but few are effectively engaged with the WFP logistic grouping. The Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) is the government's lead agency for development assistance. Augmented by the Stabilisation and Reconstruction Task Force (SRART), CIDA is designed to provide support to comprehensive operations and to coordinate the whole of government approach. However, CIDA concentrates on a group of 20 'countries of focus'.[62] It does not offer to

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[61] Department for International Development, "DFID, "http://www.dfid.gov.uk/; Internet; accessed 10 December 2010.

provide logistic support representation at the WFP logistic forums. Likewise the

European Commission Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection (ECHO) does not

contribute to the UN logistic support debates. This is despite ECHO's mandate being to

ensure the rapid distribution of goods and services directly to the victims of disaster or

armed conflict outside the European Union.[63] ECHO does not intervene directly on the

ground. The HA provided is mainly mobilised and implemented by its partners. The sole

significant Single State organisation that was willing to become involved, with the WFP

collaborative development of supply and logistics, was the Swedish Civil Contingencies

Agency (MSB). The task of the Swedish MSB is to develop societal capacity to prevent

and prepare for emergencies and disasters. It does not deploy, but supports the

stakeholders involved and collaborates, in order to learn from crises.[64] The MSB focuses

on the logistic response to relief efforts and was able to provide detailed analysis to the

embryonic WFP global logistic grouping.

NGOs

The third of the principal HROs actors, engaged in the provision of varying

degrees of supply and logistics support, are the NGOs. Professional associations,

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[62] Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada," Stabilisation and Reconstruction Task Force," http://international.gc.ca/start-gtsr/index.aspx?lang=eng; Internet; accessed 28 December 2010, and Kizler, Humanitarian Supply Network..., 14.

[63] European Commission Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection, "About ECHO," http://ec.europa.eu/echo/index_en.htm; Internet; accessed 28 December 2010.

[64] Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency, "About MSB," http://www.msb.se/en/; Internet; accessed 28 December 2010.

foundations, multinational businesses or simply groups with a common interest in

humanitarian assistance activities, NGOs come in all shapes and sizes.[65] Organisations

such as Save the Children Fund (formed in 1919) and Oxfam (1942) have steadily grown

in numbers since the 1950s. In 1971, a group of French doctors rebelled at the insistence

of the international community of the Red Cross (ICRC) on absolute public discretion and

left the organisation, founding Médecins Sans Frontières (Doctors without Borders).

Attempts to quantify and analyse the diversity of agencies are fraught with difficulties.[66]

In recent years a startling phenomenon has been the rapid growth in the number, size,

resources, and influence of NGOs. It is estimated that there are now an excess of 40,000

international NGOs and considerably more at the national level.[67] Currently, there are

3,051 recognised NGOs with consultative status within the UN Economic and Social

Council (ECOSOC).[68] From the smallest to the largest NGO, sustainment and provision

of supplies to disaster locations has proven to be a crucial activity. Movement of men and

materiel to disasters requires considerable planning, if the relief effort is to prove

effective and long-term. With such an array of NGOs, cooperation was a challenging

undertaking and initial collaborative efforts were restricted, by necessity, to larger

organisations, most likely to be deployed to disaster relief operations. The first of such

NGOs was the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), the oldest and largest

international HRO outside of the UN system. Founded on the Geneva Conventions of

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[65] Kizler, Humanitarian Supply Network..., 30.

[66] Dolan, "The Defence Forces and the NGOs"..., 126.

[67] *Ibid.*, 129.

[68] NGO Branch, United Nations Economic and Social Council, "NGO Related Frequently Asked Questions," http://www.un.org/esa/coordination/ngo/faq.htm; Internet; accessed 30 January 2011.

1949 and Jean Dunant's inaugural principles, it is a neutral and self-governing

organisation, whose proclaimed humanitarian mission is to guard the lives and dignity of

victims of armed conflict.[69] As with all NGOs it receives private and public contributions,

but the organisation is often considered in a category by itself. The ICRC claims specific

recognition in international humanitarian law, for which it is designated the custodian.[70]

Despite having considerable logistic infrastructure, the ICRC has historically been

reluctant to align itself with other organisations, including the WFP. Similarly, Médecins

Sans Frontières (MSF) has promoted its independence as an international medical relief

organisation. MSF offers assistance to populations in distress, to victims of natural or

man-made disasters and to victims of armed conflict, without discrimination and

irrespective of race, religion, creed or political affiliation.[71] Fiercely independent, the

MSF international headquarter in Geneva is disinclined to engage in collaborative efforts;

this is also the case for the MSF country / regional representatives, which act as

autonomous legal entities.

Several other large NGOs, with considerable interest in logistic operations, proved

more inclined to consider collaborative efforts to improve logistics during humanitarian

relief operations. The Cooperative for Assistance and Relief Everywhere (CARE) is one

of the world's largest private international humanitarian organisations. It is dedicated to

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[69] ICRC, About the International Committee of the Red Cross.

[70] Thomas G. Weiss, What's Wrong with the United Nations and How to Fix It (Cambridge: Polity press, 2009), 5.

[71]Médecins Sans Frontières, "About MSF," http://www.msf.ca/about-msf/; Internet; accessed 2 January 2011.

helping families in poor communities improve their lives and overcome poverty. Women are at the heart of CARE's community-based efforts.[72] CARE has demonstrated its commitment to enhancing supply processes and logistic support by its involvement in the WFP led global logistic forum. Other significant supporters of logistic reform are World Vision International (WVI) and Action Contre La Faim (Action against Hunger) (ACF). World Vision is a Christian relief, development and support organisation devoted to working with children, families and communities to overcome poverty and discrimination. World Vision undertakes community development, disaster relief and advocacy.[73] ACF is committed to ending world hunger and is a relatively new organisation, considered among the 'second-generation' of HROs. It focuses on the politics of humanitarian relief and seeks to influence international political actors and outcomes, not just mitigate atrocities on the ground. ACF is particularly influential in the fight against malnutrition.[74] These substantial NGOs have considerable logistic experience and expertise. They routinely move millions of tons of food and non-perishable items around the world. Collaboration between these organisations' logistical infrastructure and faculties could produce considerable economies of scale. However, many of these NGOs have dissimilar modus operandi and manage their logistic supply differently.

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[72] Cooperative for Assistance and Relief Everywhere, "Defending Dignity, Fighting Poverty," http://www.care.org/about/index.asp; Internet; accessed 10 December 2010.

[73] World Vision International, "Who We Are," http://www.wvi.org/wvi/wviweb.nsf; Internet; accessed 2 January 2011.

[74] Action Contre La Faim, "Action against Hunger," http://www.actioncontrelafaim.org/english/; Internet; accessed 2 January 2011.

The Concept of Operations

The plethora of civilian humanitarian agencies that the military is likely to encounter is equally matched by the multitude of differing concepts of operation employed by those actors. The history of HROs promotes an understanding of why things are the way they are, but it is also imperative to identify the actors' disparate mandates, specialisation, ethos and modus operandi. Blanket terms cannot realistically capture the tremendous depth and variety of actors, but it is permissible to generalise that fundamental to all civilian humanitarian organisations are the three basic principles of humanity, neutrality and impartiality.[75] HROs insist that help should be offered to everyone in need, wherever found. In times of suffering, those who are most vulnerable will receive particular attention, such as children, women and the elderly. The dignity and rights of all victims are to be respected and protected. Humanity is closely linked to neutrality, which often puts HROs at odds with UN and governmental organisations. Humanitarian assistance, HROs believe, must be offered without influencing the outcome of conflicts or disputes. Aid should not entail involvement in hostilities or engagement in contentious religious, political or ideological discord. This often makes HROs reluctant to work alongside military organisations. This is amplified by the requirement for impartiality, in which humanitarian assistance must not favour one group of beneficiaries over another. Relief efforts should not discriminate due to ethnic origin, gender, nationality, political opinions, race or religion. Aid should be distributed according to

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[75] United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, *Guidelines on the Use of Military and Civilian Defence Assets in Disaster Relief: "Oslo Guidelines",* (Geneva: Switzerland, November 2006), 7.

needs and priorities. The notion of humanity, neutrality and impartiality characterises the general ethos of all HROs.

UN - Modus Operandi

In addition to the three guiding principles adopted by HROs, the UN has supplementary regulations that must be observed. The issue of national sovereignty is crucial to the UN's concept of operations. The UN will only work in a country by invitation or if a specific UN Security Council resolution authorises entry to that country. The national sovereignty caveat applies even when the UN wishes to assist with a humanitarian relief operation. To provide humanitarian assistance, the UN must first seek the consent of the affected country or request a Security Council resolution to permit the violation of territorial integrity.[76] Seeking authorisation to enter a country can cause considerable delays to any relief effort. This can result in a disparity in response times from other HROs, making collaborative logistic efforts challenging. Working within its charter, the UN habitually selects to focus most of its assistance through the civil administration of host governments in each country, thus further complicating logistic coordination with other HROs.

When a conflict occurs, the UN will often attempt to negotiate on behalf of all HROs, including NGOs. It will work to gain access and exemption from customs for all

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[76] *Ibid.*

personnel and logistic relief supplies. By emphasising the three core principles of humanitarian aid, the UN will seek from the receiving government the guarantee of protection from violence for aid workers. This coordinating role at the national level is an essential UN task at which many NGOs have little experience or success.[77] The UN is, however, constrained from liaising with rebels or illegitimate antagonists, for fear they may legitimise them or their behaviour. This restricts the ability of the UN to negotiate directly or indirectly with all interested parties. This results in the UN being unable to engage in collaborative efforts with HROs who do not follow these guidelines.

Collectively UN organisations strive to uphold international conventions that prevent political and military actors from encroaching on the humanitarian space and impeding relief efforts. Sticking to humanitarian principles is often extremely difficult, particularly in an armed conflict. Recent comprehensive operations in Afghanistan and Iraq have resulted in a blurring of the lines between the military and HROs. Aid was perceived to have been used to secure victory over insurgents.[78] In such circumstances, UN humanitarian aid agencies have sought to disentangle themselves from the military in order to not be confused with the combatant military force. All UN military or civil defence assets that could be perceived as belligerents, or from forces actively engaged in combat in the affected area, will not be used to support UN humanitarian activities.[79] This

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[77] Major A. J. Duncan, "Is the Use of Military in Complex Humanitarian Aid Operations a Political Quick Fix, or Can It Be the Cornerstone That Leads to Long-Term Solutions?" (Shrivenham: British Advanced Command and Staff Course, May 1998), 7.

[78] Wassenhove, Humanitarian Aid Logistics..., 478.

[79] UN, *Oslo Guidelines...,* 7.

self-imposed constraint of working with the military results in the UN being reluctant to undertake collaborative efforts with military forces and complicates considerably the ability to integrate the military into logistic planning.

NGO - Modus Operandi

It is hard to generalise about the modus operandi of NGOs, as they constitute such a heterogeneous group. NGOs often describe themselves as sharing a common culture, despite the various ranges of sizes, ethos, organisational structures and funding bases.[80] With more than 40,000 NGOs working internationally and growing, it is almost impossible to draw general applicable conclusions. However, the hallmark of NGOs is that, by and large, their activities are predominantly at grass roots level. NGOs are often on the ground and committed to local environments for long periods of time. It can be said that they better understand the community and are therefore able to identify and respond quickly to a developing crisis. By implication they are able to implement aid in a manner to mitigate or reduce the possible negative impacts of developmental aid. Generally, NGOs are less bureaucratic than their UN counterparts, action orientated and consequently able to offer rapid and flexible responses to regional situations.[81] This does not necessarily translate to a more effective or coordinated management system.

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[80] Dolan, "The Defence Forces and the NGOs"..., 134.

[81] Chigas, Diana. "Capacities and Limits of NGOs as Conflict Managers." Chapter 31 from *Leashing the Dogs of War: Conflict Management in a Divided World,* edited by edited by Chester A. Crocker, Fen Osler Hampson, and Pamela R. Aall, 553. Washington, DC: United States Institute of peace press, 2008.

With limited bureaucratic processes, NGOs' internal structures tend to be egalitarian, with women usually well represented. In smaller organisations the flat management structures require relatively small amounts to be spent on administration. However, as organisations grow in size and the requirement for comprehensive accounting measures increases, the necessity to follow strict business lines drives up costs. Increased size and accounting procedures often results in a corporate hierarchy developing at the headquarters level. Generally, as independent non-state actors, NGOs are able to circumnavigate many of the restrictions placed upon their UN counterparts. Most NGOs need only apply for travel visas and fulfil any local restrictions, in order to undertake humanitarian relief operations. With the notable exception of the ICRC, the majority of NGOs are able to enter particular countries without recourse to international charters, sovereignty integrity concerns or restrictions as to whom they may conduct discussions with.[82] The ICRC conversely has clear and carefully detailed doctrine and its disciplined staff abides by them. The ICRC will only operate in international war zones and civil wars such as Somalia and Rwanda, and then only with the consent of warring factions.[83] Within the multitude of NGOs there are differing management structures and divergent restrictions on how and where the organisations can deploy. Internal rules and regulations diminish the ability of the NGOs to pool resources effectively.

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[82] Dolan, "The Defence Forces and the NGOs"..., 138.

[83] Thomas G. Weiss, *Military Civilian Interactions: Humanitarian Crisis and the Responsibility to Protect (Oxford:* Rowman & Littlefield Publishers Inc., edition 2, October 2004), 5-6.

Although the bureaucratic processes within NGOs are diverse, individuals

working for these organisations tend to be relatively homogeneous, in that they are goal

orientated, highly motivated, single-minded and morally guided. NGO members are

generally young, liberal and often characterised as non-combatant.[84] These personal

characteristics, combined with overarching purpose and approach, frequently result in an

institutional distrust of authoritarian organisations such as the UN and, particularly, the

military, which represent the anti-thesis. The members' personal traits also tend to

encourage the organisations to respond as rapidly as possible to humanitarian events.[85]

Concerted efforts to reach disaster areas swiftly can often be at the expense of ensuring

that a robust logistic plan is in place before deployment. The focus upon the immediate

response, and dealing with unexpected events, results in many members of NGOs with

smaller capacity, having to pull out of one disaster and then head off to the next.

Personnel working for NGOs frequently find themselves in difficult circumstances, with

limited resources. Staff are therefore often under considerable pressure, resulting in high

stress levels and rapid employee turnover.[86] According to the US Institute of Peace,

individuals typically only work 6 to 12 months for NGOs.[87] This turnover reduces the

opportunity to invest in learning and the time needed to identify lessons learnt. Supply

and logistics are frequently under-resourced, and the fire-fighting culture invariably

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[84] Cheryl Benard, "Strengthening the Partnership," Rand Corporation (February 2005); http://www.rand.org/commentary/2005/02/22/ITM.html; Internet; accessed 12 December 2010, 2.

[85] *Ibid*.

[86] Julia Streets, and others, *Cluster Approach Evaluation Two: Synthesis Report* (Inter-Agency Standing Committee, April 2010), 32.

[87] United States Institute of Peace, "Taking It to the Next Level: Civil Military Cooperation in Complex Emergencies," http://www.refugeeresearch.net/sw/node/6359; Internet; accessed 12 December 2010, appendix 1.

results in limited planning, preparation and poorly coordinated effect.[88] Development of

logistics has traditionally languished within NGOs, resulting in poor coordination during

relief efforts.

After the Great Lakes experience in Rwanda in 1994, many NGOs acknowledged

their lack of strategic planning and uncoordinated approach.[89] Lack of logistic

preparation and synchronization meant that most NGOs were obliged to rely on the

French, US and other military contingents to provide essential services. These included

security, logistics, information sharing and even direct delivery of aid assistance.

Subsequently the largest 200 humanitarian NGOs decided to begin the process of

increasing their planning capacity and implementing minimum acceptable standards of

medical care, food provision, sanitation, shelter and water supply for refugee support

tasks.[90] These NGOs began to implement more robust logistical support arrangements and

strove to be able to provide a guaranteed level of relief effort. Presently however, from

the multitude of NGOs, only a limited few are able to operate during comprehensive

operations and logistically sustain themselves for extended periods. In order to overcome

this challenge and have a significant impact on the ground, many NGOs resort to reliance

on other organisations and collaborative endeavours. These partnerships in the field allow

NGOs to use their combined resources and capabilities to execute programs equivalent in

size to much larger organisations, like World Vision International or CARE. Unplanned

or spontaneous cooperation often complicates further the humanitarian logistics process.

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[88] Wassenhove, Humanitarian Aid Logistics..., 482.

[89] Dolan, "The Defence Forces and the NGOs"..., 147.

[90] *Ibid.,* 140.

This activity reduces the effectiveness of the supply chain, which by necessity needs to be fast and agile when responding to sudden onset disasters. Managing the transition between steady state and surge situations, even when predetermined, remains a challenge for the humanitarian logisticians preparing and executing their organisations response. Without the rapid establishment of supply and distribution channels for aid resources, disasters will certainly be more protracted and damaging for the affected population.[91] Impromptu collaborative logistical systems are of limited benefit, if they do not provide protracted and efficient support. Predetermined and established logistical processes would introduce a far more effective and robust system that could provide preventative aid to stave off much worse disasters later. Having demonstrated that many NGOs are willing to work in partnership and establish joint ventures, in order to launch themselves into complex humanitarian relief environments, the challenge for the WFP is to encourage those NGOs to work alongside UN and military logistical organisations.

Military - Modus Operandi

In spite of provisions in several articles of the UN charter, the UN does not have a standing army. The soldiers who serve on UN operations remain part of the armed forces of their own country, with a critical relationship between authority, legitimacy and accountability that provides the functional backbone for their deployment.[92] Importantly

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[91] Graham Heaslip, "Supply Chain Management," http://business.nuim.ie/people/graham-heaslip; Internet; accessed 30 December 2010.

logistics remains a national responsibility for most military operations. As an organisation, the military is somewhat heterogeneous and forces retain their national characteristics. All militaries tend to exhibit highly centralised hierarchical management systems that are inherently conservative in nature. Military structures require the subordination of an individual into the group or community. This trait is somewhat out of step with contemporary social norms.[93] In most militaries the leadership is still predominantly male with a correlating age and rank that can make a 50-year-old officer the counterpart of an NGO country director half his age.[94] Studies have shown that military management has evolved to become 'conventional' in nature, centred on the principles of planning, organising, coordinating and controlling. Military management idiosyncrasies, however, remain. Implicit to military learning is the ability to command and control. Military literature from the turn of the 20th century assumed that the headquarters would invariably assume responsibility for providing effective humanitarian coordination.[95] Now considered as an unrealistic aspiration, the perception remains that the military would prefer to lead, and therefore control, whenever possible. Other military peculiarities include the propensity by individuals to adopt a seemingly contradictory communicative style when dealing with outside agencies (i.e. collaborative and assertive talking).[96] The military gives the impression of being cooperative, but is authoritative in

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[92] Dolan, "The Defence Forces and the NGOs"..., 136.

[93] Hawley, "Is Greater Coordination between the Humanitarian Operations"..., 18.

[94] Benard, Strengthening the Partnership.

[95] Hawley, "Is Greater Coordination between the Humanitarian Operations"..., 36.

[96] Delphine Resteigne and Joseph Soeters, "Managing Militarily," *Armed Forces and Society* vol. 35, no. 2 (2 January 2009): 327.

its demeanour. This trait can appear antagonistic to civilian counterparts, who find such a

stance abhorrent.

In general, the military possesses capabilities that are highly valuable in times of

humanitarian crisis; the most obvious being its physical resources in terms of equipment,

stores and skilled manpower. The military has the ability to move enormous volumes of

personnel, equipment and commodities over long distances, at short notice by means of

its air, sea and ground-based assets. Once in location the military can sustain itself for

extended periods of time, even in the most adverse of environments. In Rwanda in 1994,

23 Parachute Field Ambulance, Royal Army Medical Corps from the UK, deployed to the

south-west of the country during the bleakest period of the country's genocide. It

demonstrated the ability of the military to move into the most arduous of locations and

remain fully self sustained. This military self-contained surgical facility contained more

doctors, nurses and psychiatrists than all the combined deployed NGOs.[97] On most

operations, military logistics remains a national responsibility and this deployment

indicated the scale of logistical infrastructure that a military was able to provide at the

grass roots level. The unit was highly agile and able to react to the changing situation.

Crucial to the military capability in all such deployments is the 'chain of command,'

namely the line of authority and responsibility along which orders are passed. This

command and control tactic guarantees the provision of highly disciplined personnel

working to a common aim.[98] The combination of agility (creativity, improvisation and

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[97] Hawley, "Is Greater Coordination between the Humanitarian Operations"..., 36.

adaptability) and discipline (structure, doctrine and process) provides the foundation for a successful response to a crisis.[99] Humanitarian disasters require the responders to be fast and agile, and the military has shown that it is able to mobilise large logistic endeavours and deploy them to extreme environments for sustained periods of time. The experience the military has in this field could provide valuable lessons learnt to HROs. Implementation of military logistic processes and selective use of their logistic assets could greatly enhance a disaster relief operation.

The military may pride itself on its experience overseas and its ability to deploy to remote locations, but it invariably lacks the local knowledge of NGOs who may have been in an area for some time carrying out development projects. In the 1994 Rwandan refugee crisis, military engineers had to be prevented from piping water from a river three miles away to a holding tank, where it would be treated and used to supply the Kibeho refugee camp. Such an undertaking would have resulted in a dependency that could not be maintained after the military's departure.[100] This demonstrated the lack of experience within the military, when dealing with humanitarian disasters. The military was also unable to commit to long-term logistic support projects it undertook. A significant trait of the military is the requirement to undertake and bring missions to a successful and speedy conclusion. Maintaining a military force in the field is extremely expensive and this

[98] Duncan, "Is the Use of Military in Complex Humanitarian Aid"..., 3.

[99] John R. Harrald, "Agility and Discipline: Critical Success Factors for Disaster Response," The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science vol. 604, no. 1 (March 2006): 257; http://ann.sagepub.com/content/604/1/256.refs.html; Internet; accessed 22 November 2010.

[100] Dolan, "The Defence Forces and the NGOs"..., 148.

requires the commander to remain mission focused. The consequence is that the military

will often leave a humanitarian operation as soon as they can hand over to a civilian

organisation.[101]. The military may be able to deploy rapidly to a humanitarian disaster and

maintain considerable logistic assets in the field, but the military lacks experience in HA

and will depart as soon as viably possible. A balance therefore needs to be struck, if

collaborative logistic efforts with the military are to be undertaken.

In a humanitarian emergency, the ultimate aim for each of the assortment of

HROs will be to save life and reduce suffering. The methodology employed by the

multitude of actors will be as varied as the number of organisations involved. Collectively

there is a common objective, but each will adopt a different approach to provide logistic

support. When exercising force, the military can cause considerable civilian suffering

both directly and indirectly, but the military has also demonstrated that it is able to

contribute significantly to the field of HA. It has a considerable logistic capability and is

able to be self-sufficient in the most extreme conditions, providing significant resources,

including manpower and supplies. Each of the UN, Single State humanitarian

organisations, NGOs and the military have specific logistic modus operandi. Undertaking

collaborative efforts in the field would be a considerable challenge, but may be feasible

between the larger NGOs and UN HROs. Incorporating the military may prove more

problematic, as many of the humanitarian actors, particularly the NGOs, are cognisant

that the primary purpose of the military is not to provide humanitarian aid, but to be

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[101] Dr. Anthony Beresford and Dr Stephen Pettit, "Emergency Relief Logistics: Military and NGO Crisis Response," Cardiff Business School, Presentation in Bangkok (July 2006): Slide 12; http://www.bus.tu.ac.th/usr/ruth/Presentations/BangkokHumanitarian.pdf; Internet; accessed 1 December 2010.

prepared to fight and enforce political edict. The role of the military is seen as an anathema to many of the HROs, who hold the principles of humanity, neutrality and impartiality as sacrosanct. In attempting to integrate the various HROs and military into a collective logistic working group, the WFP faced many obstacles and challenges, which needed to be overcome, or at least acknowledged, before collaborative logistic efforts could begin to be truly beneficial.

Friction

Poor coordination and a lack of collaborative effort were cited as explanations for examples of well-intentioned, but ultimately counter-productive humanitarian relief efforts in the 1990s. The logistic support during the Rwandan Great Lakes refugee crisis was disorganised and ineffective. Many HROs ended up functioning independently in the same location, whilst other camps went unaided. Ineffective communication between the NGOs and UN HROs resulted in a poor understanding of the dynamics of the political situation, and short-term HA objectives were achieved at the expense of long-term stability.[102] There was a failure to prevent the genocide, but in many cases the perpetrators were provided succour. The commitment to saving lives and relieving suffering had the unintended consequence of inciting conflict, aggravating the political situation and eroding the long-term coping capacity of target societies. Problems of coordination amongst the multitude of actors were consistently identified as the cause. Criticism was levelled equally at the UN, military forces and NGOs. Impediments to military - civilian interaction and cooperation are well documented and debated. Thomas

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[102] Dolan, "The Defence Forces and the NGOs"..., 148.

G. Weiss, in his book *Military Civilian Interactions,* and Walker and Maxwell's *Shaping the Humanitarian World*, catalogued the numerous points of friction that served as obstacles to closer integration of the various HROs and military. Differences in cultural, institutional, and philosophical methodology were cited as the primary impediment to closer coordination.[103] Distrust and cynicism were not a foundation upon which to build effective relationships. The initial challenge appeared to be a lack of mutual understanding. The civilian actors and members of the military knew little of one another's history, organisational structures or fundamental identities, which may have expunged some misconceptions. Stereotyping and prejudices were perpetuated due to lack of knowledge and information. Familiarity would not necessarily lead to acceptance, and may even reinforce contempt, but efforts were made to improve communications between the logistic components of all parties. Open discussion and dialogue, it was hoped, would reduce some of the friction between the various organisations.

One of the foremost challenges to promoting cooperation between the UN, NGOs and military, was their individual interpretation and implementation of the three humanitarian principles: humanity, neutrality and impartiality. Sharing the humanitarian space conceptually, physically and most definitely collaboratively with the military conflicted in principle with many HROs.[104] It was argued that combining political, military and humanitarian efforts together within the same space and framework risked

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[103] Walker, *Shaping the Humanitarian World*..., Chapter 6.

[104] Wassenhove, Humanitarian Aid Logistics..., 478.

compromising humanitarian objectives and principles.[105] Relationships were particularly

strained when relief efforts coincided with armed conflict. When necessary, it was

challenging for the military to combine coercive efforts and, simultaneously, appear to

impartially provide HA. The military's overriding priority in such circumstances remained

that of providing a secure environment in which humanitarian agencies would be able to

deliver aid without hindrance. The NGOs argued that if an HRO member of staff worked

with the military, even indirectly, the humanitarian organisation would be tainted by

association. Cheryl Benard, a senior political scientist at the non profit RAND

Corporation (a defence think tank), argued that increased military-civilian cooperation

could lead to a blurring of lines between the military and civilian organisations providing

HA.[106] The fear for NGOs was that they could easily become targets of local aggression

and lose their 'neutral' status. Recently, this notion has been challenged by the general

tendency of Islamic radicals, particularly in Afghanistan and Iraq, to kidnap, terrorise and

murder unarmed and unaffiliated members of purely humanitarian organisations. Andrew

Natsios, a former NGO humanitarian manager and head of USAID, noted that

justification for the neutrality debate was losing validity.[107] The inference was that the

neutrality of Western lead organisations was diminished and that NGOs continued to

cling to the romantic notion of impunity from belligerent action.

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[105] Major P.N. Williams, "Crossing the NGO-Military Divide" (Shrivenham: British Advanced Command and Staff Course, May 2009), 1.

[106] Benard, Strengthening the Partnership.

[107] Weiss, *Military Civilian Interactions...*, 211.

The deployment of Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs) in Afghanistan from 2002 further antagonised many NGOs. Military controlled units, consisting of soldiers and civilian development personnel, including doctors and engineers, provided reconstruction and civilian aid as part of the official coalition military effort. This co-opted the work of private civilian NGOs and treaded on their preserve; all in favour of state sanction (directed) aid. This type of HA was perceived merely as a method to win the hearts and minds of the indigenous population, in order to facilitate defeating the insurgents.[108] This exploitation of aid was abhorrent to many HROs. Military-led assistance, it was argued, created perverse incentives and forced those requiring help to make an impossible choice between aid and security. Forcing the population to choose sides was counter-productive, the NGOs argued, as ulterior motives would affect the long-term outcomes. Moreover, the NGOs contended, the military lacked the capacity to manage development initiatives effectively, even when civilians were inserted into the structures. The military, they asserted, were unable to achieve the level of trust, engagement and community ownership required to achieve positive lasting improvements.[109] The PRTs, however, were welcomed by the Afghanistan government and coalition partners, who argued they were able to deploy robust logistic assets deep into unstable areas, where NGOs refused or were unable to venture. Much to the consternation of NGOs, the PRT concept signified the embryonic attitude of the international political community and the developing 'Whole of Government' approach to

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[108] Oxfam International, "Quick Impact, Quick Collapse: The Dangers of Militarised Aid in Afghanistan," http://www.oxfam.org/en/policy/quick-impact-quick-collapse; Internet; accessed 12 December 2010.

[109] *Ibid*.

comprehensive operations. The second order effect of the introduction of PRTs was that it generated further impetus for the HROs to include the military in their collaborative logistic working groups. Implicit was the notion that if the military could not be integrated into the UN HRO and NGO community, Western governments may choose to place the military in the lead of specific humanitarian operations, potentially denuding the HROs of funding and influence.

Combining the logistic efforts of HROs and the military would require considerable coordination. Secondary only to the obstacles related to the interpretations of 'humanity, neutrality and impartiality', coordination of the humanitarian effort is the next most contentious concern. Historically this issue has proven most decisive amongst the HRO actors, because many organisations appear to associate coordination with control. The reluctance to cede managerial or program autonomy in order to achieve the goal of greater strategic coherence, could be cited as the single prevalent flaw of HROs.[110] Natsios, in his previous capacity as vice president of World Vision (U.S.) in 1995, stated that "coordination is perhaps the most abused and ill-defined word in the disaster response vocabulary."[111] Many of the HROs, particularly NGOs harboured concern that the WFP, in its capacity as the lead for the global humanitarian logistic forum, would adopt a controlling vice coordination mandate. Coordination, namely the act of making different people or processes work together for a common goal, is an activity that could be applied at many levels; it could be at the global level exclusively

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[110] Duncan, "Is the Use of Military in Complex Humanitarian Aid"..., 10.

[111] Andrew S. Natsios, "NGOs and the UN System in Complex Humanitarian Emergencies: Conflict or Cooperation?" *Third World Quarterly,* vol. 16, no. 1 (1995), 417.

between the hierarchy of the UN, NGOs and military, or permeate all the way down through the various organisations to the individuals in the field.[112]This array of coordination was bewildering and it was acknowledged that coordination of humanitarian logistic effort would be a time-consuming and somewhat difficult process.[113] It was imperative that logisticians from each of the organisations involved understood that coordination not control would be the primary aim of the WFP.

Better coordination, enabling people and processes to work together, in theory would generate the advantages of increased efficiency and synchronized logistical effort. Some NGOs still refused to consider any form of collaboration, stating that they would rather retain their independence than submit to what they perceived as empire building.[114] Proponents of closer integration accused these NGOs of lacking the will or self-discipline to surrender some autonomy and combine their work with others.[115] Significant to the reluctance of some NGOs was the overarching requirement to remain independent in order to continue receiving public funding. Rivalry amongst agencies was a clear obstacle to cooperation, particularly when each was in competition against the other to raise funds.[116] This can be observed when disparate NGOs appeal for public donations to assist the same population affected by a disaster, i.e. Oxfam and the Red Cross following the

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[112] Hawley, "Is Greater Coordination between the Humanitarian Operations"..., 24.

[113] Erick de Mul, "Coordination of Humanitarian Aid: a UN Perspective," *The Lancet*, vol. 360, iss. 9329 (London, 27 July 2002): 335.

[114] Duncan, "Is the Use of Military in Complex Humanitarian Aid"..., 20.

[115] Hawley, "Is Greater Coordination between the Humanitarian Operations"..., 24.

[116] *Ibid.*, 33.

Haiti earthquake of 2010. Many NGOs also find themselves unable to redistribute donations earmarked for specific relief operations. This can manifest itself as a restriction preventing NGOs from using public funds to undertake training, or invest in preparedness strategies between disasters. Independence and funding issues continued to be impediments to closer logistical cooperation.

In addition to the obstacles already cited, derogatory and critical comments amplified the difference between the various HROs and military. The UN was occasionally disparaging of NGOs accusing them of ostensibly concentrating their efforts on specific isolated occurrences, whilst ignoring wider national problems. Rather than tackle the endemic challenges of security, governance and economic development, NGOs were attributed with producing "patches of green in a barren landscape; patches which are small, fragile and usually unconnected."[117] This, however, was the way grassroots groups worked; trying to solve a single issue and attempting to alleviate a particular concern, rather than trying to solve the world's problems. The implication, from the UN, was that NGOs should adopt a far broader view of humanitarian response and widen their remit. NGOs countered by stating that their raison d'être was at the grassroots level and that any dilution of their effort would be equally counter-productive. A lack of understanding between the HROs of one another's motivation and modus operandi continued to be divisive and constrain closer cooperation between the organisations' logistic elements.

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[117] Duncan, "Is the Use of Military in Complex Humanitarian Aid"..., 10.

The friction between the HROs and military was often cultivated from the contrasting character traits of each organisation. Tensions habitually manifested from erroneous expectations and inaccurate perceptions. The military, in particular, was often disparaged. It was thought to be neither approachable, nor open to allowing others to take the lead. The military's highly centralised hierarchical management system was supported by very strong power distance traits that NGOs found difficult to deal with. Emblems, rituals and rank were reinforced by the adherence to a chain of command that was based on perception that wisdom comes with age and experience (vice enthusiasm and strength of commitment).[118] Civilian humanitarian fieldworkers, who were typically younger and proportionately more female than their military counterparts, found the environment alien to their flat structured organisations and their concepts of sexual equality. From the NGOs perspective, the military's attitude towards humanitarian aid workers was that of treating them as "immature, anti-military, self-righteous, incompetent and lacking appreciation of security needs."[119] This may well have been the case, but it did not change the fact that NGOs championed a particular cause from a specific perspective. Perceptions and misconceptions needed to change if the organisations were to work together to improve logistics support to the humanitarian relief efforts.

The different cultural dimensions were evidently the greatest disparity between the military and HROs, but the discrete missions and end states of each were also significant causes of friction. Aid agencies believed that striving to meet the humanitarian

[118] Dolan, "The Defence Forces and the NGOs"..., 147.

[119] *Ibid.,* 134.

needs of the people was an imperative. They accused the military of working towards the political goals of their masters, with the secondary objective of a quick exit as one of the key attributes of success. The military expended considerable time and effort to diminish uncertainty and risk before each mission, rather than rapidly getting on with the task. Reducing to an absolute minimum, what Clausewitz called, operational 'friction' appeared to be a military obsession. The military's rigid attention to detail conflicted with the NGOs' more flexible, multitasking and tolerant working environment. Conversely, the military loathed the laissez-faire attitude towards security and the apparent lack of logistical planning demonstrated by the humanitarian organisations. The working practices of the diverse organisations appeared very different. The nature of the NGOs' organisational structures did not permit the luxury of sufficient personnel to plan to the same detail, nor allow for operational redundancy, which enabled the military the capacity to react to the unexpected. NGOs regarded the manpower as excessive and extensive resources wasteful. Accusations of waste were equally levelled against all involved in humanitarian operations. In 1995, the UNHCR attempted to reduce the duplicative nature of NGO activity in Bosnia. It was apparent that there was significant duplication and much wasted effort. Despite considerable reorganisation the UNHCR only managed to restrict the number of UN recognised NGOs to 279.[120] This indicated the resistance by NGOs to be controlled or coordinated by other organisations. There was limited success in harmonising the logistic effort and many of the organisations continued to work independently, without significant interaction with other relief organisations.

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[120] Hawley, "Is Greater Coordination between the Humanitarian Operations"..., 24.

The remaining major source of tension between the various organisations was perpetuated by poor communication and insufficient information exchange among and between the civilian and military organisations. Invariably, face-to-face meetings only took place at the time of crisis, when the situation was highly volatile and demanding. There was limited interaction among the organisations between disasters. Poor communication perpetuated the lack of understanding of the logistic function and purpose each performed. The paucity of clearly articulated responsibilities manifested itself into considerable hostility. Logistic data, such as port facilities and transportation assets, was rarely shared and, when it was made available, it was restricted to specific groups. Planning details and lessons identified from previous humanitarian operations were poorly publicised and were rarely learnt. The military, in particular, was resistant to providing HROs with the statistics and post-operational analysis that had been produced. Military logisticians generated a rich source of data and country statistics, which could have been valuable to civilian counterparts, but was often withheld due to perceived security considerations.[121] Civilian agencies reciprocated by demonstrating a reluctance to provide the military with local knowledge and information on emerging trends, conditions and ongoing HRO initiatives. The failure to develop processes and procedures that encouraged interaction between the organisations before, during and after humanitarian operations resulted in reduced communications and an unwillingness to share logistic information.

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[121] Beresford, Emergency Relief Logistics..., Slide 4.

Cultural, institutional and philosophical differences have undoubtedly been obstacles to collaboration between the various HROs and military. Personal interpretations of the three guiding humanitarian principles played a significant role in distancing the various actors. Much of the friction was generated by a fear of loss of autonomy and funding rivalry, which dissuaded HROs from pursuing closer integration of their logistical effort. A lack of mutual understanding and inaccurate perceptions were exasperated by a lack of communication. It was assumed that humanitarian logisticians would benefit greatly from closer interaction, which may open up lines of discussion and could ultimately lead to improved logistic processes and practices being implemented. The challenge was to encourage the various actors to work together.

WORKING TOGETHER

The Philosophy of the Log Cluster

At the start of this millennium century, the UN participated in an increasing number of humanitarian operations. The necessity for a combined and coordinated logistic effort during emergencies grew substantially. Over several years, the UN established a number of inter-agency sector-based coordination systems, in order to synchronise the response to emergencies. These coordinating groups included the UN Joint Logistics Centre (UNJLC). This ad hoc logistic organisation would form up as required, under the custodianship of the WFP. It evolved from an initiative to share

logistic assets during the eastern Zaire crisis in 1996.[122] Over the next five years, the concept was modified and enhanced and was officially endorsed by the UN in 2001. The WFP provided mainly administrative and financial support to the UNJLC and collaborative efforts with NGOs were limited. The initiative was generally successful and was utilised in numerous relief operations, including during the Liberia civil war (1999-2003), earthquakes in Gujarat (2001) and Kashmir (2005), and in response to the Indian Ocean tsunami (2004). The UNJLC was a fledgling inter-agency organisation and was starting the process of getting the logistic humanitarian community to speak with one another. During disaster relief operations it had some success with coordinating the logistic effort of UN organisations and the military, but there was limited collaboration with the escalating number of NGOs. The ad hoc nature of the UNJLC tended to result in uninspiring leadership, with teams being thrown together only during emergencies. The sporadic nature of the UNJLC meant that limited joint logistic planning and preparation was undertaken.

In 2004, the UN Undersecretary General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator, Jan Egeland, commissioned a review of the international humanitarian system. In collaboration with the Inter-Agency Steering Committee (IASC), the lead UN organisation responsible for managing the inter-agency coordination cells, major gaps in areas of humanitarian response were identified.[123] In order to broaden its perspective, the review committee was established using personnel representing both UN

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[122] Inter-Agency Steering Committee, *Outcomes of the Global Logistics Cluster Meeting* (IASC 63rd Working Group, November 2005), 1.

[123] Streets, *Cluster Approach Evaluation Two...,17*.

and non-UN humanitarian organisations. In addition to the key UN agencies, also present were OCHA, the World Bank, ICRC, the International Council of Voluntary Agencies (ICVA) (represented by World Vision) and the Steering Committee for Humanitarian Response (SCHR) (represented by Oxfam).[124] Collectively this unique forum identified the need to make humanitarian assistance more effective, by strengthening the system of sector-based coordination mechanisms and establishing designated lead organisations. Building upon the logistic UNJLC concept, the proposed restructuring would entail reform of four principal pillars: humanitarian financing, the humanitarian coordinator system, partnership among all humanitarian actors and the introduction of the cluster approach.[125] In September 2005, the reforms were agreed and in March 2006 the UN launched a $39 million appeal to help implement the ambitious strategy.[126] The reorganisation would greatly enhance the opportunities to collaborate with other HROs and would enable the WFP to formalise its logistic coordination role with NGOs.

The global cluster approach committee placed great emphasis on the process being inclusive. Representatives from various HROs were invited to comment on the proposals. From the responses it was apparent that the previous sector base coordination systems lacked clearly defined leadership roles. The IASC committee therefore decided to

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[124] Logistics Cluster, "About the Logistics Cluster," http://www.logcluster.org/about/logistics-cluster; Internet; accessed 10 December 2010.

[125] Streets, *Cluster Approach Evaluation Two...*, *17*.

[126] Inter-Agency Steering Committee, *Guidance Note on Using the Cluster Approach to Strengthening Humanitarian Response* (IASC Working Group, 24 November 2006), 3.

formally designate global 'cluster leads' for each of the major areas of humanitarian response.[127] Cluster leads would be made responsible for organising coordination at both the global and country level; strengthening global response; developing global guidance; and acting as the provider of last resort. At the global level the lead organisation would be accountable to the Emergency Relief Coordinator (ERC) for ensuring "predictable and effective interagency preparedness and response within the concerned areas of activity".[128] Global cluster leaders would also provide representation at the field (country) level, but in exceptional circumstances another field cluster lead agency could be allocated the responsibility.

The concept of 'provider of last resort' was deemed critical to the cluster approach. It represented a commitment by the sector leaders to do their utmost to ensure adequate and appropriate response. If the gaps were not addressed, depending on the urgency, the sector lead would need to commit itself to filling the gap as 'provider of last resort'.[129] It was acknowledged that the function of provider of last resort was reliant on unimpeded access, security and availability of funding. However it was broadly agreed that where critical gaps in humanitarian response were identified, it should be the responsibility of the sector leads to call on all relevant humanitarian partners to address the issues.

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[127] OneResponse, "Global Cluster Leads."

[128] Logistics Cluster, About the Logistics Cluster.

[129] Inter-Agency Steering Committee, *Outcomes of the Global Logistics Cluster Meeting* (IASC Working Group, October 2008), 6.

The concept of the cluster approach was generally well received by the HRO community. The objective was to ensure robust leadership and accountability in each of the humanitarian sectors, and thereby increase preparation and technical capacity to respond to humanitarian emergencies. OCHA, in cooperation with cluster lead agencies, developed a 'logic model' which identified the predicted 'outputs', following the introduction of cluster leads.[130] It was assessed that by accentuating the leadership role, the cluster approach would improve the ability of the cluster leads to coordinate collective responses to disasters and thereby increase efficiency and effectiveness. Sector ownership would increase the sense of responsibility, resulting in filling of gaps in humanitarian response and increased global coverage.[131] OCHA also began to establish agreed humanitarian response standards and envisaged improved overall humanitarian conditions and well-being of the beneficiary populations, as the long-term impact of cluster activities. In November 2006 the IASC working group formally agreed that the cluster approach would be implemented at the global level for future contingency planning and would be introduced into all countries with humanitarian coordinators.

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[130] Streets, *Cluster Approach Evaluation Two...,24*.

[131] *Ibid.*

Global "Cluster Leads"

Sector or Area of Activity	Designation	Global Cluster Lead	Emblem	
Response Cluster				
1. Agricultural		FAO		
2. Camp Coord / Management	IDPs (Conflict-induced). Disaster situations.	UNHCR IOM		
3. Early Recovery		UNDP		
4. Education		UNICEF Save the Children (Co-lead)		
5. Emergency Shelter	IDPs (Conflict-induced). Disaster situations.	UNHCR IFRC (Convener)		
6. Health		WHO		
7. Nutrition		UNICEF Save the Children (Co-lead)		
8. Protection	IDPs (Conflict-induced). Disasters/civilians affected by conflict (other than IDPs).	UNHCR UNHCR/OHCHR/UNICEF		
9. WASH (Water/sanitation)		UNICEF		
Service Clusters				
1. Emergency Telecommunications		OCHA/WFP		
2. Logistics		WFP		
Crosscutting Issues				
1. Age		HelpAge International		
2. Environment		UNEP		
3. Gender		UNFPA / WHO		
4. HIV/AIDS		UNAIDS		

Figure 1 – Global "Cluster Leads".
Source: The IASC. Principals designated global cluster leads. December 2005.

Clusters were established for nine areas of response and for two service areas. In addition four clusters were identified that cut across the various humanitarian sectors.[132] As seen in Figure 1, the cluster leaders included UN and NGOs. The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Cross Societies (IFRC) provided leadership to the broader humanitarian community in Emergency Shelter in disaster situations. The IFRC has committed to being a „convener' rather than a „cluster lead'; thereby overcoming some of the obstacles and friction that previously restricted closer collaboration. A memorandum of understanding was agreed between IFRC and OCHA, in that the IFRC will not accept accountability beyond those defined in its constitutions and policies. As such it is not committed to being a 'provider of last resort', nor is it accountable to any part of the UN system. Some of the sectors were also broken down further to sub clusters. The Protection cluster for example included a range of specific areas of responsibility with designated focal point agencies. In such circumstances the sub clusters are required to consult closely under the overall leadership of the cluster lead, thereby retaining the structural integrity of the cluster. In the case of the Emergency Telecommunications, the service cluster was designated as a co-lead cluster, with the OCHA taking the lead on process, and the WFP concentrating on data and security communications.

The service clusters differed from the response clusters in that they provided services and support to other humanitarian organisations, rather than affected population. The two service clusters had a stronger focus on global preparedness activities and, where necessary, would act as the main service provider rather than only as the provider of last

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[132] Streets, *Cluster Approach Evaluation Two..., 25*.

resort.[133] Based on the success of the UNJLC, it was agreed that the WFP should continue to lead the logistics grouping and become the logistics cluster lead. The WFP was made responsible for coordinating logistics support for the humanitarian community in emergencies and improving the delivery of humanitarian relief to areas affected by disasters and conflict. The WFP was given clear terms of reference and obligations which included advocacy and fund raising on behalf of all partners.[134] As the provider of last resort, the WFP needed to be prepared to be called upon to provide common transport services to enable humanitarian organisations to implement relief programmes, where this would otherwise not be possible.

Hosted at the logistics division of the WFP HQ in Rome, the logistics cluster comprised of a multi-disciplined group of logisticians, with representation from other UN agencies (UNHCR and UNICEF), from a Single State organisation (MSB) and from several NGOs (CARE, WVI and ACF). The WFP logistics cluster aspired to mobilise surge capacity to provide logistics support and plan with regional authorities to produce system-wide preparedness and contingency strategies. The global logistics cluster would take on responsibility for providing strategic logistic guidance and policy, in order to broaden knowledge and improve decision-making within the humanitarian logistician field. In conjunction with its resources and budget responsibilities, the WFP intended to design and execute emergency response simulation training for logisticians. The training of logistics officers would be consolidated into a single and cost efficient program. It

[133] OneResponse, "Global Cluster Leads."

[134] ISAC, *Outcomes of the Global Logistics Cluster Meeting ...*, 5.

would incorporate all relevant UN deliverables and therefore eliminate the need for additional types of humanitarian logistic training.

The global logistics cluster proved extremely successful in reaching out to all operational partners, including the military. Communications between the various organisations began to increase. During the logistics cluster's embryonic stages of development, the cluster responded to an unprecedented number of natural disasters, including the earthquake in Kashmir and Hurricane Katrina. The military involvement in these relief operations prompted the WFP to initiate an update to the UN civil-military cooperation guidelines. The Civil Military Coordination Section (CMCS) was tasked with revising the 1994 'Oslo Guidelines' on the use of Military and Civil Defence Assets (MCDA) following natural, technological and environmental emergencies in times of peace. The CMCS also updated the MCDA guidelines which outlined the use of MCDA to support UN humanitarian activities in complex emergencies. The MCDA guidelines covered the doctrine, methods and procedures concerning military forces participating in peacekeeping operations or the delivery of humanitarian assistance in situations of armed conflict. Both documents were revised and on 27 November 2006. The updated 'Oslo Guidelines' were released to reflect current terminology and organisational changes.[135] The purpose of the guidelines was to "establish a basic framework for formalising and improving the effectiveness and efficiency of the use of MCDA in international disaster

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[135] Relief Web, "Guidelines On: The Use of Military and Civil Defence Assets in Disaster Relief – Oslo Guidelines," http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/lib.nsf/db900SID/AMMF-6VXJVG?OpenDocument; Internet; accessed 15 December 2010.

relief operations".[136] The WFP logistics cluster was able to utilise both the Oslo and MCDA guidelines to inform on civil-military architecture, provide guidance and to shape the principles and operating concepts that would be collectively adopted by the various logistic organisations. The guidelines established a basic framework for formalising and improving the effective and efficient use of military and civilian defence assets in international relief operations.

By retaining the well-respected WFP as the logistics cluster lead, the ISAC ensured that continuity was maintained and that the WFP was able to reinforce its leadership position and build upon experience already gained. Across the spectrum of humanitarian operations, the development of the cluster approach was one of evolution, not revolution. Many of the various HRO actors continued to hold diverse opinions concerning the benefits of the new arrangement; they questioned the rationale and intentions of the cluster leads. The cluster approach, however, continued to evolve and by January 2011 the arrangement had been implemented in 27 of the 29 countries with humanitarian coordinators.[137] The WFP continued to develop and expand the logistic global cluster. By virtue of its clearly designated and accepted cluster leadership role, the logistics cluster was able to successfully implement collaborative efforts to improve logistics during disaster relief operations, and integrate the military into that process.

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[136] OCHA, "Disaster Response Preparedness Toolkit," http://ocha.unog.ch/drptoolkit/PNormativeGuidanceSpecificIssues.html; Internet; accessed 15 December 2010.

[137] OneResponse, "Field level implementation," http://oneresponse.info/COORDINATION/CLUSTERAPPROACH/Pages/Fieldlevelimplementation.aspx; Internet; accessed 2 February 2011.

How The Log Cluster Works

Five years after the implementation of the cluster approach, the trend for the military to embark on comprehensive operations and assume humanitarian roles has become more embedded. The requirement for the military to work alongside and in cooperation with HROs has increased. There has also been greater collaboration and division of tasks between the humanitarian actors. The existence of a clearly designated and accepted logistics cluster leader, responsible for organising coordination, has been a critical factor in making coordination work. The leadership role of the WFP has frequently been cited by humanitarian actors as one of the most important outcomes of the new system.[138] The introduction of the cluster approach has managed to strengthen the predictability and degree of leadership, particularly within the sphere of logistics. Most of the major logistic organisations have accepted the WFP global cluster leadership role and have provided resources and full-time and part-time coordinators. In addition to the UNHCR, UNICEF, MSB, CARE, ACF and WVI, other NGOs at country level have broadly accepted and appreciated the leadership role exercised by the WFP and co-leads. The WFP has been well represented at the field and country level, and has continued to operate within its core area of competence, demonstrating a capacity for dynamic leadership.[139] The initial scepticism of many NGOs has receded within the logistics cluster and they are more willing to participate in logistic forums and consider closer cooperation.

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[138] Streets, *Cluster Approach Evaluation Two..., 28.*

[139] *Ibid., 29.*

The general introduction of the cluster approach has resulted in strengthening partnerships between UN agencies and international NGOs, as well as improving relations amongst NGOs.[140] The risk to these associations is most fragile where the cluster lead adopts a dictatorial position on deciding the allocation of resources, and where the cluster is too associated with peacekeeping forces or political actors. The key to the successful implementation of the logistics cluster has been that of the WFP achieving effective coordination, without distancing associate members. The military's natural tendency to dominate has been curtailed and the custodianship of the WFP accepted and acknowledged. The reluctance of many NGOs to submit to external control has required the WFP to exercise influence by a variety of methods. The WFP has learnt from experience about the inevitability of having to control the logistics cluster by surreptitious employment of 'coordination by command', 'coordination by consensus' and 'coordination by default', depending on the situation.[141] During operations the WFP has made best use of the various management techniques and has thereby continued to be accepted as the cluster lead.

During the initial ramp up phase of any operation, the WFP has needed to demonstrate 'coordination by command.'[142] Time is then of the essence and logistic bottlenecks need to be cleared quickly in order to enable the relevant HROs to deploy rapidly. Rather than numerous NGOs negotiating with governments to obtain visas and

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[140] *Ibid., 42.*

[141] Weiss, *Military Civilian Interactions...*, 17.

[142] Wassenhove, Humanitarian Aid Logistics..., 483.

customs clearances, signing agreements on accessible corridors and other coordinating

activities, the WFP as the cluster lead has undertaken this task. The importance of this

role was demonstrated during the Mozambique floods of early 2000. Cyclone Connie

caused extensive flooding to three of the country's provinces, affecting over 900,000

people. With road and rail links cut, the only way to reach the victims was by helicopter

and boat, both of which were in short supply. National humanitarian organisations such

as the U.S. Office for Disaster Assistance (OFDA) and the UK's DIFID provided funding

to charter commercial aircraft. 58 aircraft and more than 200 boats were leased to support

the relief effort. In this pre-cluster example, the UNJLC was deployed to Maputo. The

WFP was appointed the lead coordinating agency and assumed control of not only

prioritisation of the helicopters and boats, but also operational command. In an

exceptional move even the Mozambique military accepted coordination by the UNJLC.

The strong 'coordination by command' demonstrated by the WFP, resulted in 10,000

flying hours without incident and over 16,000 people rescued.[143] The Mozambique floods

confirmed the requirement for centralised coordination and agreement on responsibilities

and objectives prior to the crisis unfolding.

As the humanitarian relief operation progress, the initial logistic surge subsides,

bottlenecks begin to clear and the relief effort focus shifts to sustainment. Coordination

by command is no longer accepted by many HROs. However, logistic issues remain that

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[143] Wilfred Debrouwer, "The UN Joint Logistics Operation in Mozambique," *Humanitarian Exchange Magazine*, iss. 17 (October 2000); http://www.odihpn.org/report.asp?id=2217; Internet; accessed 21 January 2011.

are too large or complicated to be undertaken by individual organisations. 'Coordination by consensus' then becomes the adopted tenet. In Afghanistan in 2002, it was decided that food and fuel should be pre-positioned in the central mountains and southern villages, in order to support the indigenous population over the winter period. This would avert supply shortages and thereby dissuade the villagers from travelling to the cities and potentially aggravating the rising insurgency. In order to avoid a humanitarian crisis, a colossal logistical operation needed to be undertaken. The winterisation campaign highlighted how an effective operation could be coordinated by consensus. It required close collaboration with governmental agencies, the military and the multitude of HROs, as well as good planning and execution. The UNJLC, again under the WFP, was able to propose a solution and plan the coordination. Individual HROs continued to work under their own mandate, but the successful logistic operation was completed through coordination by consensus.

At the end of a relief operation, NGOs invariably begin to depart, but the coordination effort continues. The remaining HROs carry on interacting with the same vein as they had previously and 'coordination by default' becomes the norm. This form of coordination includes routine contact among logistic desk officers and discussions between civil-military operations centres. Before the introduction of the cluster approach, the military and HROs primarily used this ad hoc method of interaction.[144] The WFP, as the cluster lead, has maintained its coordinating role in disaster relief zones after the vast

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[144] Wassenhove, Humanitarian Aid Logistics..., 484.

majority of HROs have departed, by retaining personnel continuing to coordinate the

logistic activities by default.

The WFP has not only learnt from the successes of the past, but also from failure

to implement robust coordination. The impact of undertaking a relief operation with

ineffective coordination was confirmed following the events of 26 December 2004. The

Indian Ocean tsunami killed an estimated 280,000 people in 14 countries.[145] It was one of

the deadliest natural disasters in recent recorded history and could have been much worse.

Indonesia was the hardest hit, followed by Sri Lanka, India and Thailand. The sheer

magnitude of the Sumatra tsunami and massive media attention resulted in an inordinate

public response and intense HRO activity. The Indonesian government allowed visa free

entry into areas that had previously been heavily restricted; a big concession by a military

government. Numerous NGOs and ad hoc organisations arrived on the scene and

coordination was limited. Too many organisations, with too much money to spend and

limited experience overwhelmed the Indonesian government, who were unable to

undertake a comprehensive coordinating role. In the ensuing chaos, the local military

commanders imposed their own restriction on logistic support and supplies. Subsequently

the UN arrived late with insufficient resources and was also unable to take control of the

situation. Five months after the disaster, about one third of the containers with relief items

were still impounded in customs. The Sumatra tsunami relief effort demonstrated the

requirement for rapid and robust logistic coordination during disaster relief operations.

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[145] Thomas G. Weiss, *What's Wrong with the United Nations and How to Fix It* (Cambridge: Polity press, 2009), 174.

The lack of logistic control was an impediment to timely assistance and highlighted to the WFP the need to plan and be able to respond in an appropriate manner.

Successful execution of the logistics cluster concept during the relief efforts in Pakistan in late 2010, showed how much had been learned. The heaviest monsoon rains in recent history resulted in widespread flooding, significant displacement of the population and an estimated 1,984 deaths.[146] The WFP demonstrated in this major disaster, strong leadership and cluster coordination. The country logistics cluster cell in Islamabad coordinated the activity of the humanitarian logistic response, including 200 UN staff and military assets. By February 2011, 3800 metric tons of non-food items and 26,000 passengers had been moved by air. The cluster coordinated the efforts of the UN Humanitarian Air Service consisting of 25 Soviet-built heavy lift helicopters, three Chinook helicopters and more than fifty landing zones, facilitating the transportation of relief supplies and workers to inaccessible areas in Peshawar (KPK Province). [147] The logistics cluster utilised the UNJLC and directed the processing and prioritisation of movement of cargo and 100 trucks. Concurrently, the WFP managed inauguration of five strategic logistic warehouses, as a preparedness and mitigation measure for future emergencies. After six months, the relief operation was stabilised, but the need for effective coordination remained. The operation is ongoing and provision of the services

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[146] Pakistan Logistics Cluster, "Concept of Operations: Pakistan," http://www.logcluster.org/ops/pak09a/concept_of_operations_110129; Internet; accessed 14 January 2011.

[147] Logistics Cluster, "The Logistics Cluster General Overview," PowerPoint presentation (November 2009); http://www.logcluster.org/about/logistics-cluster/background-information/general_overview/view?searchterm=What%20does%20the%20Logistics%20Cluster%20do?; Internet; accessed 11 November 2010.

offered by the WFP logistics cluster will either diminish or be extended, depending on the situation on the ground, the operational needs and funding available.

Robust coordination of humanitarian logistics has been demonstrated to be crucial to successful operations. Relief efforts often take place in areas far from the main sources of supply and communication. A well coordinated initial logistic response will often set the parameters for successful follow-on sustainment development and will ultimately lead to saving more lives. The WFP global logistics cluster continues to develop a relevant, efficient and flexible emergency logistics and transport network comprised of key humanitarian actors, including the military.[148] The global humanitarian community must come to understand that effective and efficient coordination of capabilities and capacities provided by each of the contributing agencies and organisations, during all phases of assistance efforts, directly contributes to the outcome of the operation. The military has become an integral part of the process, but is not the lead humanitarian actor. Coordination itself is not a magic bullet for improving emergency relief response. It is an organisational change process that requires upfront investment and generates benefits over time. The immediate financial costs of coordination may well be borne by donors and agencies, but the price resulting from the absence of coordination would be imposed on affected countries and populations.

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[148] Logistics Cluster, About the Logistics Cluster.

Taking the Log Cluster Forward

The WFP role as coordinator of the logistics cluster has increasingly been accepted by HROs at both the global and country level. This acceptance has been reflected by the relatively high overall participation and commitment to regular cluster meetings and organised events. NGOs have been well represented, including observers from MSF and ICRC. The bringing together of the various professional humanitarian agencies has improved interrelations and increased the exchange of information. The global logistics cluster has provided centralised training, education and guidance in the field of logistics. These services have facilitated discussions on the synchronisation of logistics in the humanitarian environment.[149] Efforts to integrate the HROs have resulted in collaborative planning effort being undertaken and premeditated joint logistic activities being proposed.

Since formation, the logistics cluster has taken a comprehensive view of humanitarian assistance and sought to heed lessons from previous disasters. There has been a realisation that hard work is required not only during, but also between disasters.[150] The logistics cluster has endeavoured to optimise their performance by ensuring they are better prepared. The critical factor has been to try and ensure that HROs acknowledge that logistics is an intrinsic element of any relief operation. The obvious difficulty has been that the organisations do not have accurate information regarding the

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[149] Andrea Binder and François Grünewald, *IASC Cluster Approach Evaluation, 2nd Phase Country Study: Haiti* (Inter-Agency Standing Committee, April 2010), 38.

[150] Wassenhove, Humanitarian Aid Logistics..., 481.

timing, location or type of disaster that they might next encounter, nor the number of

people that will require assistance. Despite the lack of basic facts required to set up an

efficient supply chain, the integration of logistic operators from key HROs and the

military has amplified the knowledge base. Timely and accurate information has been

recognised as integral to humanitarian action in both natural disasters and complex

emergencies. The ability to collect, analyse, disseminate and act on key information is

fundamental to effective response. The military has been able to contribute considerably

to this area of development, providing logistical data information that was previously

needlessly withheld for security reasons. Greater collaboration and coordination has

rapidly led to the development of a logistics cluster website containing relevant

humanitarian information, software tools and services, and provision of training.[151] The

website has made access to this information far easier and has encouraged further

integration of the humanitarian logistic actors.

The logistics cluster website has enabled humanitarian agencies to establish and

build channels of communication and increase information sharing between relief supply

chains. The site included the introduction of Logistic Capacity Assessments (LCAS).

These are individual country reports that detail previous humanitarian logistics

operations, and in-country facilities. The LCAS are operational documents and are

continually updated. The data provides detailed infrastructure information, including

points of entry (land, sea and air), handling equipment and storage facilities, and

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[151] Logistics Cluster, "Logistics Cluster," http://www.logcluster.org/; Internet; accessed 10 December 2010.

transportation networks. It also offers guidance on customs issues and local logistic suppliers, highlighting transporters, suppliers of goods and services, and rough indication of market and labour rates.[152] Particular attention is given to describing local conditions and specific characteristics, identifying any physical or material shortcomings, which may result in bottlenecks in the delivery pipeline.[153] The global logistics cluster HQ in Rome has been able to share information and provide guidance to field level logistics clusters. The HQ relies heavily on the field logistics cluster operators for information and they are expected to collate data for the global cluster support cell. In particular, the field clusters are required to identify logistic information to populate the website, to prioritise logistics interventions and investments and coordinate port and corridor movements to reduce congestion.

The WFP's experience gained through management of the UNJLC and employment of the Humanitarian Supply Management System (SUMA) has enabled the logistics cluster to rapidly build its information database. Software tools and common services are made available, which are designed to facilitate logistics coordination. The WFP Logistics Coordination Unit (LCU) provides relevant and timely logistics services and utilises the Logistic Support System (LSS) software. The LSS is an inventory control tool for smaller agencies, unable to afford the cost and human resources required to run larger commodity tracking systems. The inventory tools are presently being incorporated into the Commodity Movement Processing and Analysis System (COMPAS), which will

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[152] Logistics Cluster, About the Logistics Cluster.

[153] http://oneresponse.info/Disasters/Haiti/Logistics/publicdocuments/LCA%20Guidelines.pdf

handle the tracking of all humanitarian food and Non-Food Items (NFI). This innovation

is no small task, as the WFP currently shifts millions of metric tons of goods per year.[154]

Much work has been done to streamline the process and the WFP has worked with

partners to establish common NFI pipelines and warehouse storage facilities.[155] Relevant

and reliable data is now rapidly disseminated and shared in order to enable the planning

and management of humanitarian interventions.

The WFP provides logistic training and professional development within the

humanitarian field. Training is organised centrally or by distance learning. The training

enables members of all HRO and the military to receive guidance and education towards

improving the effectiveness of humanitarian relief programs. The Centre for International

Humanitarian Cooperation (CIHC) runs a six-day course, designed to be flexible enough

to accommodate humanitarian aid professionals working in the field, whilst also

remaining academically rigorous.[156] The training process not only selects and trains

people who are capable of planning, coordinating, acting and intervening in logistics

when necessary, but also improves communication and integration between humanitarian

actors. It also acts to provide a common understanding of the basic principles of

humanitarian aid and relevant terminology. The global cluster training enables regional

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[154] Heaslip, Graham. "Supply Chain Management." http://business.nuim.ie/people/graham-heaslip; Internet; accessed 30 December 2010.

[155] Logistics Cluster, "About WFP-LCU Logistics Coordination and Common Services," http://www.logcluster.org/ops/sudan/about-wfp-lcu-logistics-coordination-and-common-services; Internet; accessed 22 February 2011

[156] Centre for International Humanitarian Cooperation, "Humanitarian Logistics," http://www.cihc.org/humanitarian_logistics; Internet; accessed 22 February 2011.

clusters to send locals to upgrade their skills, in order for countries to help themselves to the maximum level possible.

Logisticians from the HROs and the military are able to use the training sessions to learn much from each other and develop a deeper understanding of the others roles. The military has contributed considerably to the training environment. Progressively, the WFP is harnessing the tools and techniques used by the military. Training is being developed to enhance the core principles of agility and adaptability, enabling logistic supply chains to be quickly established in difficult conditions.[157] Professional training can also lead to a deeper understanding of the workings of humanitarian logistics. The logistics cluster website provides links to professional logistical organisations, private foundations and institutes that focus on humanitarian issues. Professional organisation such as the Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport in the UK and the Humanitarian Logistic Association provide members with support forums and access to training, best practices, standard tools and techniques. Professional associations bring together members of the humanitarian community, military and civilian logistic organisations that may otherwise not have the opportunity to communicate and exchange ideas. This arrangement has expanded the collaborative efforts undertaken by HROs to improve logistics, by including not only the military into the process but also professional civilian logistic organisations that were previously not associated with disaster relief operations.

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[157] Wassenhove, Humanitarian Aid Logistics..., 486.

The leadership demonstrated by the WFP and the inclusive nature of the logistics cluster, has positively enhanced credibility among NGOs. The global logistics cluster has been able to generate a more equal footing between UN and non-UN community.[158] The cluster approach was an organisational change process and not merely a technical issue. Resistance to the approach was therefore expected, but was not as ferociously opposed as might have been expected. Within the logistic community, the new process has rapidly become the norm and the way to do business.[159] Questions concerning the limit of integration, particularly between the HROs, the military and other government organisations still remain. These important issues should not be dealt with by operational clusters at the country or local level. The global logistics cluster lead must provide guidance on these issues and address remaining reservations. Concrete, context sensitive guidelines on the linkages between the cluster approach and comprehensive operations will have to be developed. These guidelines will need to state that because of the multifaceted nature of comprehensive operations and complex humanitarian crisis coordination, it is improbable that the military will want or be able to coordinate the activities of HROs, particularly NGOs. The military will need to conform to this perception and plan and prepare accordingly. Military doctrine will need to be changed to reflect the nature of comprehensive and disaster relief operations based on the logistics cluster guidelines. The military policies will need to facilitate greater coordination with the HRO community and enable the military deployment to be better conceived.[160] The

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[158] ISAC, *Outcomes of the Global Logistics Cluster Meeting ...*, 6.

[159] Streets, *Cluster Approach Evaluation Two..., 78*.

logistic benefits will include the improved use of resources, more effective delivery and a healthier understanding of military and HRO activities, with the potential to reduce overall costs. The cluster approach must not become the all important element, but should refocus the cluster on its fundamental undertaking of improving humanitarian response and ultimately saving lives, through collectively drawing on strengths and good practice.

CONCLUSION

The development of a strategy for increasing collaboration between the various humanitarian relief organisations is still in its infancy, but has demonstrated considerable progress. The integration of HROs and the military has rapidly improved with the introduction of the logistics cluster. Much effort has been made to improve the humanitarian logistic response to disasters in order to make the process more efficient and effective.

The end of the Cold War witnessed a changing strategic environment that progressively convinced the military to adopt a more coordinated and comprehensive approach to operations. After the debacle of Panama, there followed a highly successful collaborative humanitarian relief operation in northern Iraq. Military forces from 14 nations and NGOs, IGOs and government donors from an excess of 30 countries,

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[160] Major S.A. Hawley, "Is Greater Coordination between the Humanitarian Operations of the Military and Non-Government Organisations a Measure that is Achievable? Will It Produce Benefits and How Could It Be Better Achieved?" (Shrivenham: British Advanced Command and Staff Course, May 2000), 40.

coordinated their logistic effort to bring relief to more than 1 million Kurds. In the subsequent years, the various humanitarian logistic organisations were unable to guarantee replication of the successful cooperation. Operations were dissimilar in nature and transpired from diverse political and social dynamics. Consequently, the range of humanitarian assistance activities was markedly different, resulting in an uneasy alliance between the HROs and military. As peacekeeping missions became more forceful in nature, the Whole of Government approach accentuated the requirement for the multitude of political, social and humanitarian agencies to interact more with the military.

Logistics continued to play a substantial and decisive function in humanitarian operations. It had been crucial to the success or failure of military campaigns since ancient times, and was regarded as an operational art. Many logisticians in both the military and the various HROs were in agreement that logistics was an area of common interest, where mutual benefits could be achieved from drawing on the collective strengths, capabilities and experience of others. However, coordination of the logistic effort was in reality a difficult task to implement. The three principles of humanity, neutrality and impartiality, were fundamental to each of the multitude of civilian humanitarian organisations. But thereafter, the heterogeneous nature of the HROs manifested into a diverse set of ideologies, ethics and concepts of operation. The UN organisations strove to uphold international conventions and were bureaucratic in nature. The UN discouraged the military from engaging in active involvement in humanitarian aid, particularly when concurrently undertaking security operations. This restriction on the use of the military constrained the opportunities to provide logistic support collaboratively at field level. The multitude of NGOs were characterised as less

bureaucratic and more egalitarian than the UN and military. Individuals working for the NGOs tended to be young, liberal and goal orientated, with an institutional distrust of authoritarian organisations. Their strong motivation and sense of overarching purpose tended to result in a rush to respond to humanitarian events, often at the expense of ensuring that a robust logistic plan was in place before deployment. Autonomy and a reliance on raising public funding, together with a distrust of authority, habitually dissuaded NGOs from seeking collaboration with other HROs. NGOs did not desire to be subject to humanitarian logistic planning coordination. The military conversely tended to exhibit highly centralised hierarchical management systems and was considered risk adverse when preparing logistics. Its reliance on exhaustive planning, strict discipline and a rigid command structure was anathema to HROs. The military's propensity to assume authority projected the impression that the organisation was unaccommodating and reluctant to relinquish control. Collectively, the characteristics and traits of the multitude of organisations resulted in obstacles to coordinating the logistic humanitarian response.

Friction between the UN, NGOs and military continued to be generated by disparate organisational structures, mandates, and modus operandi, but also by prejudices and uneducated stereotyping. Contradictory interpretation and implementation of the humanitarian principles reduced the opportunities to share logistic capabilities and capacities. The military's humanitarian role was the focus for considerable criticism from the HROs. Military-led assistance, it was argued, created perverse incentives and forced those requiring help to make an impossible choice between aid and security. The involvement of the military was said to adversely affect the neutrality of the HROs. The reluctance of the NGOs to seed managerial autonomy and the continued antagonism

towards the military persisted as reasons to avoid collaborative efforts. As a consequence, humanitarian relief efforts during the 1990s were relatively ineffective and duplication of effort made the supply and sustainment chains inefficient.

In 2004, the UN instigated a reorganisation of their HROs, in order to draw on the strengths of the various humanitarian actors. The cluster approach was adopted for each of the nine spheres of humanitarian response and for two service areas. The logistics cluster was established from the nucleus of the UNJLC and was hosted by the WFP, based in Rome. The aim of the logistics cluster was to mobilise surge capacity to provide logistics support and plan with regional authorities to produce system wide preparedness and contingency strategies. The global logistics cluster would take on responsibility for designing and executing emergency response training for humanitarian logisticians; for providing strategic guidance and disseminating policies to broaden knowledge and improve decision-making within humanitarian logistics. The global cluster model proved extremely successful in bringing together the various HROs. It also incorporated the military logistic organisations into the process, updating the Oslo and MCDA guidelines. These revised guidelines informed on civil-military architecture, principles and operating concepts. This enabled HROs to understand more clearly how and when the military logistic assets could be best utilised during humanitarian relief operations.

Introduction of the UN cluster approach strengthened the predictability and degree of leadership, particularly within the sphere of logistics. The majority of principal HROs welcomed and accepted the WFP as the global logistics cluster leader. Many of those with particular logistic interests provided resources and appropriate coordinators to the

cluster HQ in Rome. The WFP has demonstrated that it is capable of controlling the logistics cluster by surreptitious employment of coordination by command, consensus and default. The global cluster continues to develop a relevant, efficient and flexible emergency logistics and transportation network, comprised of key humanitarian actors, including the military. The closer integration of the various HROs and incorporation of the military has improved interrelations and increased the exchange of ideas and information. The cluster approach has facilitated joint training, improved mutual educational understanding and encouraged production of a common strategy. The enhanced logistic affiliations have resulted in a far greater synchronisation of the provision of logistics in the humanitarian environment. The ability to collect, analyse, disseminate and act on key information has been fundamental to improving successful effective response. The military has been able to contribute considerably to this area of development, without having a coordinating role. The logistics cluster approach is not yet quintessential, but the concept has focused the various logistic organisations on the primary task of improving humanitarian response and ultimately saving lives through collectively drawing on strengths and good practice.

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