

**Exploring Supplier Integration Implementation
within the Humanitarian Supply Chain Context**

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By

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Abstract

This thesis explores the relationships between an international humanitarian organisation (IHO) and their suppliers, and supplier integration within the humanitarian context. Although in business studies integration has been considered to foster supply chain management excellence, supplier integration studies from the humanitarian perspective remain under-explored.

Due to this lack of research regarding humanitarian supplier integration, in the first phase an exploratory study was employed using expert interviews, in order to validate the significance of the research topic, refine research questions and inform the research direction. This small-scale exploratory study provided useful guidelines for the main case study, suggested potential theoretical lenses, and identified influencing factors surrounding the relationships between an IHO and its suppliers.

The research followed a qualitative and abductive approach based on critical realism principles. It adopted a single case study research design with 8 nested sub-cases under a focal organisation. For data collection methods, semi-structured interviews and document analysis were used, and data analysis was conducted based on iteration between the data and theory and conducted through three rounds of data analysis.

The findings are presented in two parts. The first chapter concerns the descriptive findings focused on contextual and situational factors; the scoping of suppliers from the humanitarian perspective; and discusses the adaptable working structure of the IHO according to the type of suppliers. A detailed description regarding donor influences, which tend to be through regulative and normative processes, is provided. Further, the regional contexts in which the IHO operates, which face ongoing emergency situations, is discussed.

The second findings chapter assesses the influences of the theoretical elements of power, trust commitment on supplier integration practices between the IHO and its suppliers. Four typologies of supplier relationships in the humanitarian sector are identified: potential partnership; win-win integration; contractual relationship; and supplier-driven relationship are analysed. It is shown that all three paradigms are meaningful with a particular emphasis on trust and commitment in categorising relationships.

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List of Abbreviations

Abbreviations	Full Words
CI	Customer Integration
CR	Critical Realism
EI	External Integration
ERP	Enterprise Resource Planning
GO	Governmental Organisation
HFN	Hastily Formed Networks
HL	Humanitarian Logistics
HO	Humanitarian Organisation
HSCI	Humanitarian Supply Chain Integration
HSCM	Humanitarian Supply Chain Management
HQ	Headquarters
IHO	International Humanitarian Organisation
II	Internal Integration
INGO	International Non-Governmental Organisation
MOU	Memorandum Of Understanding
MRT	Middle-Range Theorizing
NFI	Non-Food-Items
NFP	Not-For-Profit
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NPO	Non-Profit Organisation
OCHA	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
SC	Supply Chain
SCI	Supply Chain Integration
SI	Supplier Integration
SCM	Supply Chain Management
SRM	Supplier Relationship Management
3Cs	Cooperation, Coordination and Collaboration
UN	United Nations
UNDRO	Officer of the United Nations Disaster Relief Coordinator
UNISDR	United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNHRD	United Nation Humanitarian Response Depot
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
WFP	United Nations World Food Programme

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Chapter 1 Introduction

1.1. Background and Motivation

Today, the world is facing numerous severe humanitarian issues. The past decade has seen an increase in the number of medium- to high-impact disasters in which the poorest regions with the weakest economies are most vulnerable (Blecken 2010). Furthermore, the number of both natural and man-made disasters continues to be expected to increase dramatically in a foreseeable future (Thomas and Kopczak 2005). These disasters have considerable impact on the economy in general and on people's lives in the affected areas in particular (Van Wassenhove 2006). In this context, developing effective and efficient supply chain management (SCM) is critical, particularly to reduce uncertainty and relieve suffering because this can make “the difference between life and death” and can enable to serve more victims (Larson 2012, p. 3).

In this regard, the field of humanitarian SCM (HSCM) has experienced immense growth over the last two decades: publications with a wealth of scholarship have been increasing (Kunz and Reiner 2012); however, many techniques and theories from SCM have not been implemented in the humanitarian context (Kovács and Spens 2007). Moreover, knowledge on how to transfer the existing SCM theories and techniques from the commercial sector to the humanitarian sector is inadequate (Leiras *et al.* 2014). In particular, the understanding of how supply chain integration (SCI) is manifested in the humanitarian context is still limited, although SCI is at the core of SCM and therefore has been broadly explored in the business sector (Richey *et al.* 2009). In the humanitarian context, SCI has been under-researched, and there is a

shortage of literature regarding this topic. Empirical research has paid minimal attention to humanitarian organisations (HOs)—supplier relations and their implications for humanitarian SCM. Some studies have illustrated the need for an integrative approach and partnerships in the humanitarian context using diverse concepts such as cooperation, coordination, collaboration, partnerships and sharing information (i.e., Fawcett and Fawcett 2013; Kovács and Spens 2009; Tatham and Pettit 2010; Tatham and Spens 2011; Whybark et al. 2010). However, the relationships and partnerships among supply chain (SC) partners in the humanitarian context have not been investigated through the lens of SCI. The lack of research in this area reflects the structural and operational complexity of the situations faced by humanitarian organisations.

Prior to this research, a study about SCI in the horizontal relationships across different types of aid actors was conducted from the humanitarian perspective in the context of natural disasters through the author's previous master's dissertation (Kim, 2015). It was found that studies about vertical integration in the humanitarian sector were lacking. Thus, for further study, an investigation of SCI in vertical relationships was recommended. Because the type of SCI can influence the effectiveness of collective efforts, it is essential that organisations become more knowledgeable about the role and types of integration approaches in achieving improved SC performance (Kamal and Irani 2014).

1.2. Research Objections and Questions

The main aim of this thesis is to investigate SCI for humanitarian SCM that can express the relationships between international humanitarian organisations (IHOs) and their suppliers. As addressed above, despite the criticality of SCI, the exploration of

integration along humanitarian practical activities has not been conducted from a humanitarian perspective. Thus, more empirical research on this topic is needed, along with the appropriate identification and analysis of humanitarian SCI. It is of strategic importance for an organisation to understand the implementation and operation of SCI, particularly in dyadic relationships of humanitarian SCs. Cooper et al. (1997) suggest four possible means of managing SCI: dyadic, channel integrator, analytic optimisation and keiretsu. A dyadic approach focuses on one level up or one level down in SC relationships and can be the basis for developing an integrated SC. As such, research based on dyadic relationships with suppliers can be the basis for further extended SCI when applying this new concept to the humanitarian sector. This study focuses on the diverse patterns of relationships that one humanitarian organisation has with its suppliers by investigating them to provide a basis for future research on this subject. For this, a single case study is adopted with several embedded units, which allows a researcher to obtain deeper understandings of the subject and to make more rigorous investigation (Dyer and Wilkins 1991).

This study did not start with a precisely determined topic; it only began with a draft and rudimentary question: “Why are SCI studies in the humanitarian sector lacking despite SCI being regarded as the essence of the SCM concept?” Determining a precise research direction without establishing a detailed research topic and research questions was difficult owing to a lack of existing research pertinent to humanitarian SCI. Thus, the research questions were developed and elaborated throughout the processes of conducting the exploratory study and literature review.

The findings from the exploratory study led to two main research questions: one about the supplier integration (SI) implementation context and the other about understanding the relationships between an IHO and its suppliers on integration. The research enquiry,

therefore, can be divided into two main questions. The first set of research questions is associated with the implementation context and is applied in Chapter 5. The following is the first set of research questions:

RQ1. How do the relationships between an IHO and its suppliers operate in a humanitarian context?

RQ2. How is the organisational structure of an IHO related to the different types of suppliers?

RQ3. How do donors influence the relationships between an IHO and their suppliers?

RQ4. Which aspects of context matter depending on where the case is situated, such as disaster type, regional location, etc?

The second set of research questions focuses on the understanding of the influences of theoretical attributes on the relationships between an IHO and its suppliers and the pattern of SI practices.

RQ5. How does an IHO work with its different suppliers from the perspective of SI?

RQ5a. How are the supplier relationships of an IHO influenced by power/trust/commitment?

RQ5b. How are the SCs integrated between an IHO and its key suppliers?

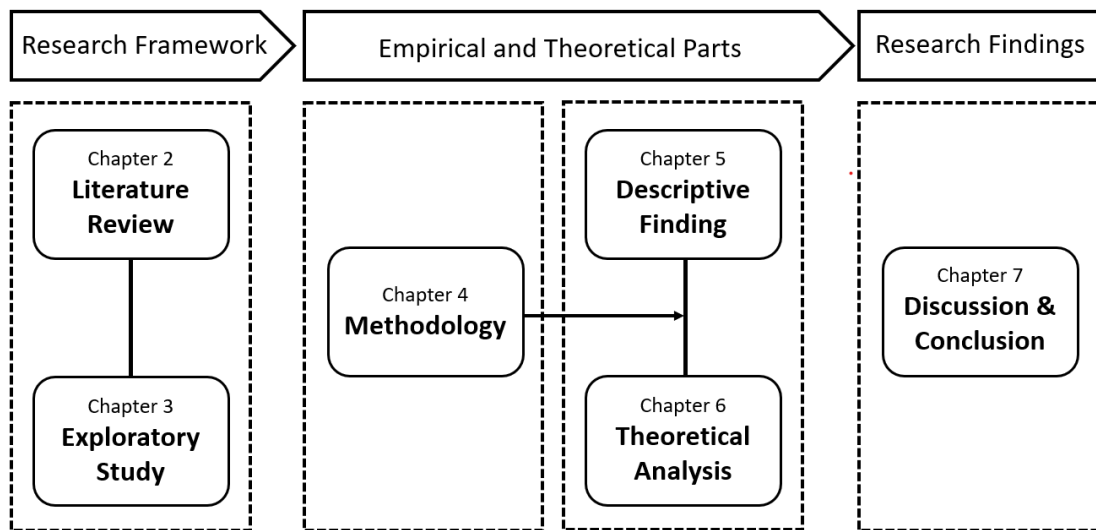
RQ5c. How does power/trust/commitment influence the SI practices of an IHO?

1.3. Thesis Structure

This thesis is divided into three sections comprising seven chapters, as illustrated in Figure 1-1. The first section includes Chapters 1 – 3. Following the present introductory chapter, in Chapter 2, the literature review broadly explains the location of this study and humanitarian SCM perspective. First, an overview of SCM and SCI is presented, with particular emphasis on the multilateral aspects of SCI. Next, an overview of humanitarian SCM, focusing on its unique characteristics and partnership

topics in the humanitarian context, is provided. Chapter 3 presents an exploratory study conducted using expert interviews aimed at validating the significance of the research as well as exploring the context of humanitarian SCI. This chapter informs the research direction and scope and provides theoretical and contextual assumptions for the research framework.

Figure 1-1. Thesis layout



Source: The researcher

The second section of this thesis comprises Chapter 4 – 6. Chapter 4 explains the philosophical stance, methodological approaches, research design and process employed in this study. After defining the overall research design, the data collection and analysis techniques are described in detail. Chapter 5 details descriptive findings about the contexts and organisational situations of the main focal case. First, the focal organisation and nested sub-cases are introduced, and key suppliers are categorised. Next, the situational factors, including organisational structure, donor influence and regional contexts, are discussed. Chapter 6 extends the power/trust/commitment theories established in business and organisational studies and links these with the supplier relationships in the humanitarian sector by examining the relationships

between power, trust, and relationship commitment and the integration between the focal IHO and its key suppliers. Finally, the SI practice patterns of the focal organisation and SI typologies are highlighted from the humanitarian perspective.

The third section of this thesis includes Chapter 7. This final chapter first discusses the research findings and summarises the answers to the research questions. Next, the study is concluded by explaining the new insights obtained in this thesis, along with the research limitations and recommendations for future study.

Chapter 2 Literature review

2.1. Positioning the research – SCM

The words ‘logistics’ and ‘supply chain management’ have been used in a mixed and overlapping way in the humanitarian area, for instance, ‘humanitarian logistics’, ‘humanitarian supply chain management’, ‘humanitarian logistics and supply chain management’, ‘humanitarian and disaster relief supply chain management’ (Day *et al.* 2012) and so on. To investigate and clarify the relationships between logistics and Supply Chain Management (SCM) is “a challenging task” (Makepeace *et al.* 2017, p. 30). Further, the differences between them have not been clearly identified in the humanitarian studies (Day *et al.* 2012). Many do not distinguish the words: ‘logistics’ and ‘SCM’ and consider them as synonyms in writing (Cooper *et al.* 1997). Furthermore, there is a lack of consensus about the relationships between the two fields (Larson and Halldórsson 2004). However, a clear understanding of SCM is essential in implementing this on the ground or in studies (Mentzer *et al.* 2001). Hence, prior to discussing about Supply Chain Integration (SCI), the essence of SCM, there is a need to look into the concept of SCM and the differences between logistics and SCM.

The two words have different development histories. The word ‘logistics’ was used by Antonie-Henri Jomini for the first time for military purposes, in particular, for supplies during wars (Spiegel *et al.* 2014). The concept of ‘logistics’ had been mainly developed in the context of wars until the World Wars (Spiegel *et al.* 2014). “The word ‘logistics’ comes literally from the medieval Latin ‘logisticus’ of calculation from Greek ‘logistikos’, *skilled in calculating*, from ‘logizesthai’, *to calculate*, from ‘logos’, *reckoning, reason*” (Van Wassenhove 2006, p. 476). The knowledge of logistics has

begun to be transferred to other sectors, particularly, the concept of logistics has been spread out from the 1970s and strengthened since the 1980s due to an increase in globalisation processes and the use of computers (Spiegel *et al.* 2014).

On the other hand, SCM is a relatively new term that appeared first in the literature regarding inventory reduction around 1982 (Cooper and Ellram 1993; Cooper *et al.* 1997). This first appearance was in the practitioner literature in 1982 by Oliver and Weber (Ellram and Cooper 2014), although fundamental research that involves SCM such as channel or systems integration research started in the 1960's (Cooper *et al.* 1997). Then, this topic was mainly studied by consultants (e.g., Houlihan 1985; Stevens 1989) in the earlier period, and around 1990 academic research began to lead SCM studies by making theoretical viewpoints and differentiating it from existing approaches (Ellram and Cooper 2014). Despite their effort to adopt a complex and extensive concept, it has been a very difficult task to fully describe the complicated nature of SCs in academic research (Ellram 1991).

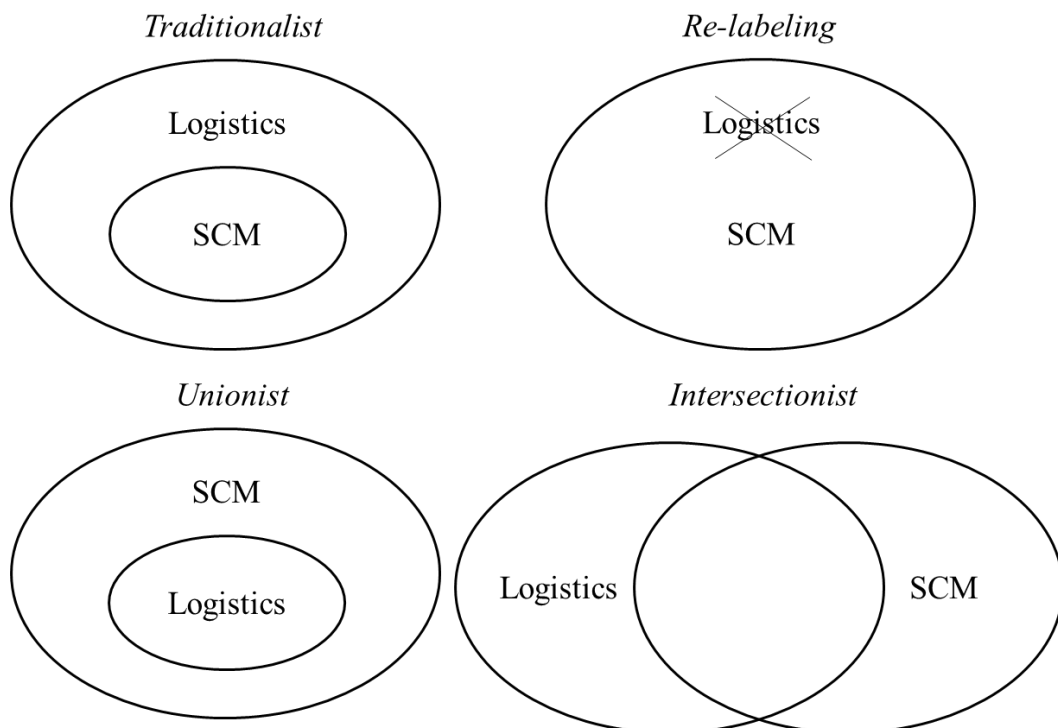
2.1.1. Definitions

The meaning of SCM has not been clearly defined and there is still confusion about the meaning of this term (Mentzer *et al.* 2001; Skjøtt-Larsen 1999; Giannakis and Croom 2004). As Makepeace *et al.* (2017) point out that 50 definitions of SCM were founded by Bechtel and Jayaram (1997) and only twelve years later 166 alternatives were suggested (Stock and Boyer 2009). As logistics and SCM have been evolved together (Bechtel and Jayaram 1997; Gammelgaard and Larson 2001), it would be helpful to understand SCM by clarifying the relations between them. The diversity of relations between these two terms can be categorised into four stances: traditionalist,

re-labelling, unionist and inter-sectionist (Larson and Halldórsson 2004), as shown Figure 2-1.

Traditionalists conceive SCM as a small part of logistics and reduce this to “a special type of logistics, external or inter-organisational logistics” (Larson and Halldórsson 2004, p. 19). This stance would support broader scopes of logistics functions and pay more attention to “logistics problems and opportunities in an inter-organisational context” (Halldórsson *et al.* 2008, p. 128). The re-labelling perspective shows a plain way of understanding two fields by renaming logistics to SCM (Larson and Halldorsson 2004). Still, this stance keeps SCM in a narrow scope because SCM cannot be beyond the scope of logistics (Halldórsson *et al.* 2008). Some researchers treat these two terms as synonyms and do not distinguish between them (e.g., Simchi-Levi *et al.* 2008).

Figure 2-1. Perspectives on Logistics versus Supply Chain Management



Source: Larson and Halldorsson 2004; Halldórsson *et al.* 2008

Unionists assert that SCM completely subsumes logistics and, in an extreme sense, embraces ‘traditional business fields such as logistics, marketing, operations, management and purchasing’ (Larson and Halldórsson 2004, p. 20). In this perspective, a top SC manager may have a lot of common responsibilities with CEO due to a widest spectrum of SCM (Larson and Halldórsson 2004). The inter-sectionists assert that “SCM is strategic, not tactical” (Larson and Halldórsson 2004, p. 21). For instance, a strategic element such as negotiating a long-term deal is included in the domain of SCM, while a tactical element such as a decision for field practices on the ground is excluded (Halldórsson *et al.* 2008). This perspective admits both common aspects between two concepts and the unique function of SCM such as “research, intelligence and consulting support” (Halldórsson *et al.* 2008, p. 129).

Among the four perspectives, the unionist seems the most popular perspective followed by the intersectionist, while the re-labelling was selected by the least number of professionals (Halldórsson *et al.* 2008). Gammelgaard and Larson (2001) also argue that a large group of responses in the field considers SC managers involved not only with logistics but also with diverse business sections such as procurement, manufacturing, sales, customer service across an extended enterprise. However, there is a limitation that many practitioners do not recognise differences between the activities of SC managers as those of logistics managers (Gammelgaard and Larson 2001).

Still, many authors have tried to demarcate between them. Larson and Rogers (1998, p. 1) clarify the difference as follows: “the focus of logistics is often intra-organisational, while SCM is inherently inter-organisation”. Christopher (2011, p. 2) views ‘logistics’ as “a planning orientation and framework that seeks to create a single plan for the flow of products and information through a business”. On the other hand,

SCM is developed further from this framework and “seeks to achieve linkage and co-ordination between the processes of other entities in the pipeline, i.e. suppliers and customers, and the organisation itself” (Christopher 2011, pp. 2-3). This means that SCM is a more extended notion than logistics. SCM is usually more than just organising supply, which can include aspects such as supplier performance verification, and intervention where necessary. Cooper *et al.* (1997) also emphasise a need to expand and reconceptualise the concept of SCM. This view indicates that SCM ideally encompasses all processes throughout the whole SC from the starting point to the final consumers.

As such, SCM is characterised by a boundary-spanning activity (Bowersox *et al.* 1999). In the field for top management, SCM is generally perceived as a broader concept than logistics (Copper *et al.* 1997; Giunipero and Brand 1996). Further, Mentzer *et al.* (2001) show three degrees of SC complexity: a direct SC, an extended SC, and an ultimate SC through the definition of SCM. Evolving from a direct SC to an ultimate SC, Mentzer *et al.* (2008, p. 31) assert that “SCM is not owned by any one discipline or department, but rather is a phenomenon that touches nearly all areas of business”. Stevens (1989) also develop and expanded the scope of SC embracing suppliers and customers externally. This change led into customer-orientation from product-orientation by changing the relationships between entities in the channel and “ensuring that the company is attuned to the customer’s requirements” (Cooper *et al.* 1997, p. 3). Indeed, there is prevalent acceptance of a holistic view about SCs by identifying SCM as “an inter-disciplinary concept (Larson and Halldórsson, 2004; Klaus 2009) that evolves around a cross-functional (Ellram and Cooper 2014) and integrative approach (Ellram and Cooper 1993) to the management of activities and flow within and across the boundaries of the firm” Halldórsson *et al.* (2015, p. 574). This view supports a

broader scope of SCM, which may be strongly associated with its increasingly complex concept.

In the humanitarian sector, logistics and SCM have not yet been distinguished from each other (Day *et al.* 2012) and there seems no formal definition of SCM agreed among humanitarians. This sector can be described as “at a pre-SCM stage” (Makepeace *et al.* 2017, p. 46). Firstly, in the humanitarian academics, SCM and logistics have been applied interchangeably (Makepeace *et al.* 2017), which means the re-labelling perspective was commonly adopted (Larson *et al.* 2007). Makepeace *et al.* (2017) found that most research that offered a formal definition of humanitarian logistics (HL) are directly or indirectly based on the definition that Thomas and Kopczak (2005, p. 2) provided as follows.

“Humanitarian logistics is defined as the process of planning, implementing and controlling the efficient, cost-effective flow and storage of goods and materials, as well as related information, from the point of origin to the point of consumption for the purpose of alleviating the suffering of vulnerable people”.

Their approach is close to the re-labelling perspective among the four conceptual perspectives on logistics and SCM that Larson and Halldórsson (2004) demonstrated. Unlike the academics, according to the empirical study of Makepeace *et al.* (2017), for the humanitarian practitioners in international non-governmental organisations, the relations between logistics and SCM are more perceived grounded on the traditionalist and unionist perspectives. The other two perspectives such as re-labeller and intersectionist were not very popularly chosen by the humanitarian practitioners.

Their paper explains that the narrow viewpoint in defining SCM is unlikely to encompass diverse stakeholders and particularly beneficiary-side activities. Thus, the broad viewpoint about SCM helps to reconcile with fundamentally beneficiary-focused processes covering both humanitarian and development modes in

International Humanitarian Organisations (IHOs). The broader concept of SCM can fill out the gaps between internal teams and external stakeholders and strengthen the beneficiary oriented SCs in the end. As such, Makepeace *et al.* (2017) strongly argue that the unionist viewpoint is appropriate perception about SCM in the humanitarian context. In order to deal with all the cyclical disaster relief span and to include both emergencies and development work, a unionist perspective of SCM is useful and effective particularly in the context surrounding Humanitarian Organisations (HOs) (Makepeace *et al.* 2017). While disaster response provides for emergency relief provision in the short term, development aid is a longer-term approach designed to be more preventative in nature, allowing communities to develop a more resilient approach, allowing them to be less vulnerable to unforeseen events (Pedraza-Martinez and Van Wassenhove 2016). This unionist approach enables for HOs enhancing collaboration between two departments, programmes and logistics/support teams (Makepeace *et al.* 2017).

2.1.2. Characteristics

Regardless of the different types of SCM perspectives, for practitioners, it is slower, and more difficult to implement SCM than they expected (Halldórsson *et al.* 2008). In terms of academics, ‘understanding the true dynamics of SCM is far more complex than most of their studies have shown’ (Chen and Paulraj 2004, p. 151). As such, SCM has a problem of “a conceptual slack” (Halldórsson *et al.* 2015, p. 574) where there are broad scopes of concepts, theories and methods. Since its first introduction in the 1980s, the concept of SCM has been significantly modified and expanded and a range of definitions have been suggested by scholars (Stock *et al.* 2010). Given this, it can be assumed that unifying definitions and finding commonality within SCM are not

easy in both academic research and the field. Indeed, there is a lack of commonality in SCM (Klaus 2009; Stock *et al.* 2010) that bring about “hampering the progression of SCM” (Ellram and Cooper 2014, p. 8). However, Mentzer *et al.* (2008, p. 32) suggest some commonalities of SCM definitions as follows: “coordination/collaboration with suppliers and customers; demand and supply side matching; and a flow perspective”. Cooper *et al.* (1997, p. 4) also summarise commonalities in the concepts of SCM: ‘evolving through several stages of integration and coordination by spanning multiple tiers of SC networks’; ‘involving many different organisations’; ‘managing both intra- and inter organisational relationships’; ‘Including the bidirectional flow of products and information’; ‘fulfilling the goals of achieving high customer value and competitive chain advantages.’

Due to this conceptual slack within SCM definitions, understanding the term through elements or dimensions inside the term has become more important in the study of SCM. As Larson and Rogers (1998) point out, the definitions of SCM can be categorised in two groups. Firstly, some scholars define SCM by focusing on “supply chain actors or institutions such as suppliers and customers”. A second group of scholars emphasises SCM activities in diverse areas such as “procurement, production scheduling, order processing, inventory management, transportation, warehousing, and customer service” (Larson and Rogers 1998, p. 1). Nguyen *et al.* (2017) also classify the SC functions into five dimensions: procurement; manufacturing; logistics/transportation; warehousing; and demand management. Ellram and Cooper (2014) categorise the component parts of SCM as follows: supply networks; demand chain management; and seamless demand pipelines. They regarded SCs as a more complex concept made up of diverse networks and more focused on the customer stance.

Furthermore, Stock *et al.* (2010) identify major themes and perspectives as follows: activities; benefits; and constituents/components. Their research shows that component parts are the most popularly used for defining SCM in more than three-quarters of all definitions. As such, SCM is explained through “a multitude of constituencies, systems and functions” (Stock *et al.* 2010, p. 35). Additionally, SCM is defined through the theme of activities such as flows of materials/information in 69% and networks of relationships in 71% of the SCM definitions. Cooper *et al.* (1997, p. 2) categorise the scope of the supply chain as “inter-organisational integration; objectives; and the evolution toward an integrated supply chain”. Burgess (1998) divide the approach of SCM into two components: integrating the SC and applying lean manufacturing techniques. This approach indicates that SCM can be understood by its multidimensional scopes and integration is considered as the core part of SCM.

2.1.3. SCM excellence

Integration was considered as a fundamental principle of SCM (Bechtel and Jayaram, 1997; Cooper *et al.*, 1997; Mabert and Venkataramanan, 1998; Tan *et al.*, 1998). The term, ‘supply chain management’ was born from a need for “the integration of business operations in the SC that goes beyond logistics both within organisations and across the SCs” (Cooper *et al.* 1997, p. 1). Accordingly, to many academic researchers, the definition of SCM is essentially connected with the SCI concept (Alfalla-Luque *et al.* 2013). “The integrative philosophy” has been essentially included in ‘managing the whole flow of a distribution channel from the initial supplier to the end user’ (Ellram and Cooper 1990, p. 2). Thus, SCM considers the whole channel as a coordinated team, which is the major benefit and distinction of SCM (Cooper and Ellram 1993). Given this, the term, SCM, connotes the concept, integration (Pagell 2004), and the concept

of SCI is of crucial importance in the SCM research area (Danes 2013). In addition, the notion of SCI has been considered as SCM excellence and a core factor of business success (New 1996; Childerhouse and Towill 2011). Fawcett *et al.* (2008) equate ‘efficient SCM’ with SCI on their survey questions. Also, SCI is often understood as strategic SCs (Kamal and Irani 2014). As such, ‘integration’ itself is the essence of SCM and, therefore, understanding ‘integration’ is a must in the studies and implementation of SCM.

In addition, the concept of SCs contains ‘a continuous dynamic reconfiguration by interacting with partners, pursuing new value creation’ (Spiegel *et al.* 2014, p. 13). As such, SCs themselves have the nature of interaction with SC partners, which may be the distinction between SCM and logistics. Halldórsson *et al.* (2007) clarify the key aspects of SCM as “the design of a SC structure and the management of such a structure through inter-organisational relationships”. Furthermore, Cooper *et al.* (1997) point out that the uniqueness of SCM from logistics is functions being more integrated in SCs across inter-organisational boundaries. As such, the ideas behind SCM represent the interactions and integrative processes which deal with the diverse relationships within SC networks and aim to add value to them.

2.2. Supply Chain Integration

2.2.1. Background

SCI is relatively new research area (Flynn *et al.* 2010) and there has been a consistent increase in publications in SCI since 1990s (Spiegel *et al.* 2014; Alfalla-Luque and Medina-López, 2009; Alfalla-Luque *et al.* 2013). Kamal and Irani (2014) found that there was an increasing trend in the number of research papers published in

the SCI area, highlighting the growing significance of SCI. Further, new attempts have continued to deepen consideration in SCI studies (Teng and Tsinopoulos 2021; Yu *et al.* 2021).

There is no doubt that research in the manufacturing sector has been leading the development of SCI research, amounting to 50.17% of publication between 2000 and 2013 (frequency: 147 articles out of 293) (Kamal and Irani 2014). Further, they indicate that except for 27 papers based on a general view of SCI literature, most papers addressing SCI were applied to specific sectors, i.e. automotive, food, retail, construction, electronics, transport and logistics, seaports, etc. There were also a few studies that applied SCI to other sectors such as healthcare, education, government and large multinational organisations. There was no research considering SCI based on the humanitarian sector until 2013. These statistics show that most SCI research was primarily developed from manufacturing perspectives and SCI theories, and processes have been likely reapplied and reformed in the manufacturing context. Spiegel *et al.* (2014, p. 16) also point out that over 61% of the total number of researches published between 1962 and 2013 was from engineering and computer science-based studies, which means “a concentration of researches in the areas of technical and technological knowledge”. Hence, although there are a number of studies on SCI, implementing and extending the SCI concept across a wide range of sectors is still required.

After this concept was adopted into the business area in the early 1980s, it has been developed and enriched, and considered as an effective method in reducing costs and making business processes efficient (Lambert and Cooper 2000; Zhao *et al.* 2008). The previous studies have consistently discovered that SCI plays a role in enhancing firm performance and achieving competitive advantages (Stevens 1989; Frohlich and Westbrook 2001; Vickery *et al.* 2003; Farooq and O’Brien 2012). Van der Vaart and

van Dong (2008) indicate that most of the survey-based research in SCI concluded a positive impact of SCI on performance. Further, many authors assert that the higher organisations achieved SCI, the better they can make their performance (Yu *et al.*, 2001; Van Der Vaart and Van Donk 2008; Flynn *et al.* 2010; He and Lai 2012). Aryee *et al.* (2008) also illustrate that the increasing levels of SC process integration brings about performance benefits for the organisations. Some authors illustrate the impact of integration by demonstrating disadvantages of its absence and scrutinising problems caused by non-integration between firms (e.g., Lee and Billington 1992; Hammel and Kopczak 1993; Frohlich and Westbrook 2001).

2.2.2. Definitions

There are a number of definitions suggested for SCI, and a consensus on the meaning of this term has not been achieved (Lummus *et al.* 2008; Palomero and Chalmeta 2014). There is, accordingly, fuzziness in definitions, dimensions and variability of the term SCI (Alfalla-Luque *et al.* 2013). A dearth of clear understanding is also observed among practitioners. Fawcett *et al.* (2008, p. 44) say that “several managers stated that top management either lacks a clear vision of SC integration or fails to articulate a vision that other employees can relate to”. It seems that there is neither clear understanding of SCI nor consensus of definition about SCI in the field. This leads to obstacles to implementing the principle of SCI into both practice and academia, and, therefore, understanding its definition is important for this study.

The concept of SCI has stemmed from a systems perspective (Parnaby 1979) that considered ‘the optimisation of the whole system more effective in achieving better outcomes than a set of optimised sub-system’ (Christopher 2011, p. 229). To understand the origin of this term, there is a need to look at the preconditions of

achieving more desirable performance, that it should be the optimised whole system. In other words, this condition contains whole SCs, that make the most effective use of all the resources of SCs in organisations. This meaning of SCI is also confirmed through the dictionary definition. For instance, Merriam-Webster (2017) define 'integration' as follows:

“The act or process or an instance of integrating: such as (a) incorporation as equals into society or an organisation of individuals of different groups (such as races); or (b) coordination of mental processes into a normal effective personality or with the environment.”

Reflecting the dictionary meaning of integration, SCI can be understood as the inclusion of attributes or elements on SCs as a part of the whole SCs. That is to say, all the factors, relationships or flows on the SCs are merged under the concept of SCI. The other point from the dictionary definition shows that SCI is related to the organisations of different parts or elements of the whole SC body to enable them to work together efficiently and smoothly.

Where SCI has been defined in academic papers, several synonyms have been used to explain SCI such as cooperation, coordination, collaboration and interaction, possibly creating confusion. There are three different views about SCI definitions. First, some scholars view SCI as a broader concept encompassing similar concepts. For instance, some studies include coordination or collaboration, or both, when using the word SCI in their studies (e.g., Frolich and Westbrook 2001; Krajewskis and Wei 2001; Narasimhan and Kim 2001). Kahn and McDonough (1997) and Kahn and Mentzer (1998) include interaction and collaboration in the meaning of SCI. Pagell (2004) also define SCI through two key words, namely, interaction and collaboration. Cooperation has also been widely used to explain the meaning of SCI. Eriksson (2010) emphasise the vital importance of cooperative relationships among the SC partners because this

is an essential element that facilitates integrating diverse SC actors' capabilities and performances for joint problem-solving. Thus, in this perspective, several synonyms- cooperation, coordination, collaboration and interaction- were used in defining SCI, or these words were subsumed inside the SCI concept.

Secondly, SCI tends to be used interchangeably with collaboration and in practice closely associated with it. Mintzberg *et al.* (1998) consider collaboration to be equivalent to integration. In this view, SCI is used as a substitute for collaboration and vice versa. Lastly, in some cases, SCI is understood as a sub-concept under collaboration. In this view, SCI is regarded as a technical and functional concept or prerequisite to complete collaboration. Speckman *et al.* (1998) look at SCI as an integral part and an essential construct of collaboration which is the highest level of partnership with trust and commitment. In this perspective, several concepts of partnerships have evolved from open market negotiations to collaboration. There are key transitions which are located at different levels of partnerships such as open market negotiation, cooperation, coordination, and collaboration. Contrarily, collaboration is considered as a subset of integration. Kahn and Mentzer (1998) categorise two tiers of integration such as an interaction perspective involving communication behaviours and a collaboration perspective being linked to resources and goal sharing performances. In summary, by definitions integration represents one of the ways to interconnect systems of SCs and a core element composing of the complex relationships of SC networks.

These definitions have been developed mainly based on manufacturing perspectives. This would be related to the fact that manufacturing studies have predominately taken the lead in SCI research. Zhao *et al.* (2008, p. 374) defined SCI as:

[. . .] “the degree to which an organisation strategically collaborates with its SC partners and manages intra- and inter-organisation processes to achieve effective and efficient flow of products, services, information, money, and decisions, with the objective of providing maximum value to its customers.”

Flynn *et al.* (2010, p. 59) applied this into manufacturing context and provided a typical and representative definition based on the manufacturing industry as follows:

“to the degree to which a manufacturer strategically collaborates with its supply chain partners and collaboratively manages intra- and inter- organisational process in order to achieve effective and efficient flow of products, services, information, funds and decisions in order to provide maximum value to the customer at low cost and high speed.”

However, this definition about SCI cannot be universally applied in other areas because this view is based on the manufacturing and production context and focusing more on the manufacturer’s and commercial customer’s perspective. This definition on SCI is not applicable to other sectors such as service, public or humanitarian sectors. Particularly, the nature of SCs in the humanitarian context is clearly different from that in the manufacturing industrial context. Therefore, different approaches to SCI are essential so as to better implement this concept in a new area. Palomero and Chalmeta (2014, p. 375) identify SCI as below:

“a continuous process of improvement of the interactions and collaborations among supply chain network members to improve their ability to work together to reach mutually acceptable outcomes for their organisation.”

In this definition, the relationships are extended from manufacturer-partner relationships to network members and, hence, this allows exploring a wider range of members within the whole SCs, not just emphasizing the relationships between manufacturers and their partners. In a humanitarian context, the best outcomes of such improvements extend to populations affected by disasters. Further, this view encompasses the diverse views of SC members in equal measure. The former looks at the relationships from the manufacturer-centred view, while the latter does not make

any specific centred-stances and considers the relationships between members more mutual and interactive. Additionally, this definition does not limit relationships to a certain category, and rather includes a broader range of relationships within the SC network.

On the other hand, there are a few studies that provide detailed definitions of SCI (Alfalla-Luque *et al.* 2013). Romano (2003) focus on the mechanism to support business processes across the SC network among the characteristics of integration, which is deeply related to overcoming intra- and inter organisational boundaries. Likewise, Cagliano *et al.* (2006) understand that SCI is strongly related to coordination mechanisms and involves business processes streamlined and interconnected both, inside and outside company boundaries. Bagchi *et al.* (2005, p. 278) define SCI “as the comprehensive collaboration among SC network members in strategic, tactical and operational decision-making”. Kamal and Irani (2014, p. 540) clarify the SCI phenomenon as “a means for integrated coordination of material and seamless flow of information between and among the SC partners”. These definitions focus on what to integrate or how to integrate in different levels or degrees.

2.2.3. Multidimensionality

The definition and dimensions of SCI have been evolved through its academic and practitioners’ research (Van der Vaart and Van Donk 2008). SCI has been developed through the constant progression and development of its definitions and dimensions. This means that the constant progressions of its definitions and dimensions play key roles in developing the SCI area. Hence, despite a diverse range of definitions, SCI cannot be fully clarified without explaining its multidimensional characteristics. It is evident that SCI is a multifaceted concept that requires thorough empirical analysis

(Campbell and Sankaran 2005). Studying SCI entails great attention to detail in analysis due to its multidimensionality. This multidimensionality can play a role in bridging a gap from ambiguous definitions of SCI. There are two types of dimensions in SCI: popularly used, traditional dimensions; and content-based dimensions. The traditional classification generally deals with the scope of SCI, while the new classification of dimensions is formed by the content of SCI (Wang *et al.* 2016). Depending on the context in integration SCs, different types of dimensions can be applied.

Scope-based SCI dimensions are traditionally popular and more dominant in previous studies of SCI (Wang *et al.* 2016) and thus the significance and scope of SCI has been widely studied (Kamal and Irani 2014). According to Kamal and Irani (2014), most topics in the SCI publications predominantly fall into these traditional types of SCI dimensions. From a traditional perspective on SCI dimensions, the dimensions can be generally grouped into two main categories: internal integration (II) and external integration (EI) (Swink *et al.* 2007; Vijayasathy, 2010; Yu *et al.* 2013). Then, SCI eventually divided into three main dimensions, namely CI (customer integration), SI (supplier integration) and II. (Flynn *et al.* 2010; Lau *et al.* 2010; Huo 2012). Halldórsson *et al.* (2008) asserted that organisations should place emphasis first on II and then move their focus to EI, namely from functional integration within the organisation into inter-organisational integration with other outside entities. This means that internal integration can accelerate external integration. Also, internal integration can be considered as a prerequisite for external integration.

II can be understood as inter-functional and inter-departmental integration, which means coordination, collaboration and integration of organisational operations across the departments and functions through its interrelated process within the organisation.

(Braunscheidel and Suresh 2009; Yu *et al.* 2013). Likewise, II is also described as a “cross-functional process within the firm” (Fawcett and Magnan 2002, p. 344) or as “integration across various parts of a single organisation” (Pagell 2004, p. 460). II “builds on the premise that various departments and functions within a company should work collaboratively and function as a single entity” (Bernon *et al.* 2013, p. 588). Further, II is considered as a fundamental basis for extending integration across SC (Fawcett and Magnan 2002; Sridharan *et al.* 2005; Cagliano *et al.* 2006).

On the other hand, EI involves integration that arises between organisations (Pagell 2004), not within an organisation. External SCI functions as a key strategy to obtain competitive advantage in a complex and uncertain context like the current e-global environment where electronic platform has been increasingly used in a wide range of context (Quesada *et al.* 2008). EI contains the twofold dimensions such as SI and CI (Vickery *et al.* 2003). The background of this division is strongly related to the direction of integration. SI is regarded as upstream integration (Ragatz *et al.* 1997; Vickery *et al.* 2003) or ‘backward integration with valued first-tier suppliers’ and is the most common form of SCI (Fawcett and Magnan 2002, p. 344). On the other side, CI is called as downstream integration (Vickery *et al.* 2003) or ‘forward integration with valued first-tier customer’ (Fawcett and Magnan 2002, p. 344).

Most remaining studies on SCI predominately deal with the traditional SCI dimensions by using EI and II approaches (Alfalla-Luque *et al.* 2013) and both EI and II are necessary to discuss the entire SC as a single entity (Poirier and Bauer 2001; Pagell 2004). Scope-based dimensions focus more on segmentation of SC relationships, which does not show the content or detail in SCs. Hence, another type of dimension based on SC contents can make up for a weak point of the scope-based dimensions (Wang *et al.* 2016). Further, new avenues on SCI themes keep emerging because SCI

studies are ongoing (Kamal and Irani 2014; i.e. Wang et al. 2018; Ganbold et al. 2020). Thus, an attempt to ascertain dimensions and variables and evolve a conceptual framework is essential in the SCI studies (Alfalla-Luques *et al.* 2013). In this sense, content-based dimensions can provide a very good domain where researchers can find a wide range of unexplored new themes of SCI.

Content-based dimensions facilitate understanding SCI better from diverse aspects through flow management in SCs such as decision flows and information/process flows (Wang *et al.* 2016). Nonetheless, there are only a few studies that research content-based SCI dimensions (Wang *et al.* 2016). Among contents that were adopted in SCI studies, two topics, process integration and information and material flows integration, were likely the most popular dimensions (Quesada *et al.* 2008; Halley and Beaulieu 2009). According to Kamal and Irani (2014), the majority of literature in SCI involved scope-based dimensions such as SI, II, CI, EI, and vertical integration. Following these top five dimensions used in the SCI studies, information integration and process integration were the most popularly used dimensions among content-based ones. These two dimensions were dominant elements and most highlighted in content-based dimensions. Most studies focus more on the operational perspectives, particularly, material and information flows. Wang *et al.* (2016) divide SCI into two perspectives such as strategic perspective-strategic alliance and the operational perspective-information sharing and process coordination. The latter is related to treating information and materials as two main process resources.

2.2.4. Levels and degrees

Diverse ways to measure **levels of SCI** have been introduced. Stevens (1989) introduces the developing model of SCI aiming to solve the conflicts arising from

functional attitudes and goals. Christopher (2011) also asserts that functional bases in conventional organisations' systems hamper restructuring the organisations and progressing towards efficiency and changes, which lead to inhibition of SCI implementation in them. Therefore, Stevens (1989) shows four steps in the process of developing from no integration to functional integration, internal integration and lastly to external integration. Stevens (1989) argues that the traditional perspectives primarily focus on the operational and planning levels and this approach can bring about conflicts between different functional entities. Accordingly, the development model established by Steven (1989) adopts three different levels such as strategic, tactical and operational to view the management of material flow. Among three levels, the focus of extant studies on SCI primarily lies on the two low levels from the bottom. Kamal and Irani (2014) adopt three SCI levels: the operations management level; the planning and controlling level; and the strategic management level. Among the twenty-one research papers, they found the majority of studies focused on integration at the operations level and the planning and controlling level, nine and ten respectively. Only two research works approached SCI through all three levels including the strategic management level.

There are different perspectives regarding the implementation of these three levels. Sanders (2008) emphasises the need of all three levels because strategic management can produce both operational and strategic benefits, but operational management is limited to operational benefits. On the contrary, flexibility in implementing different levels of SCI is highlighted by considering the context and conditions where SCI is applied. Different levels of partnerships or different types of relationships need to be selected depending on circumstances and particular links because it is necessary to have all links throughout integrated SCs (Cooper *et al.* 1997). Mouritsen *et al.* (2003)

delineate that it is essential to investigate the circumstances and situational factors where SCI can be more advantageous because equivalent benefits cannot be guaranteed under the different context. Following the same logic, Van Donk and Van der Vaart (2005) report that a low level of integration could be a pertinent approach in specific situations, for example, under a low level of uncertainty in volume and specification of products. These studies show that the levels of SCI should be determined depending on contextual circumstances where the SC participants locate in order to maximise the benefits and development in implementing SCI.

On the other hand, there are some authors who classify the SCI management levels in different way. Pagell (2004) make classification for level of integration based on the degree of integration: full internal integration; some internal integration; and no internal integration. Full integration means “the majority of the time manufacturing, logistics and purchasing interact, collaborate and work to arrive at mutually accepted outcomes” (Pagell 2004, p. 467), while no integration means the majority do not. Petersen *et al.* (2005) group SI practices into three levels such as white, grey and black boxes, which are conceptualised based on level of responsibility and involvement into new product development. For instance, black boxes mean suppliers have complete responsibility and highest level of involvement in new product development. Further, Koufteros *et al.* (2007) adopt two forms of supplier integration in product development such as grey and black boxes.

The degrees of integration or extent of integration have been relatively under-researched while the levels of integration have been widely adopted in the SCI studies. As a representative work, Frohlich and Westbrook (2001) linked the degree of integration to concerns about the vertical relationships towards customers and suppliers and found that the greatest degrees of SI and CI had the largest positive

impact on performance. Particularly, they developed the SCI studies in further detail and elaborated influence of degrees of integration on performance by diversifying the arcs of integration in five types. Childerhouse and Towill (2011) took a further step of developing the arcs of SCI towards the vision of providing clear guidance through simple models that facilitate implementation of SCI in the field.

Prior to these studies, Harrigan (1984) developed dimensions of vertical integration through diverse spectrums such as degree of integration, breadth of integration, stages of integrated activity, and form of ownership. In particular, the degree of integration referred to the extent of a resource transferred in-house and, therefore, full integration indicated transferring certain service or materials internally. Thus, the internal transfers of firms decided the standard of measuring dimensions. This standard of integration degree is clearly different from the meaning of integration degrees in later studies because generally the degree of integration signifies degree of relationships, partnership, or interaction.

2.2.5. Influencing factors on SCI

SCI influencing factors have been relatively under-researched, while the dimensions and scope have been more widely highlighted in the SCI studies. Kamal and Irani (2014) argue that there are very few studies examining factors of SCI comprehensively and, further, lack of agreement on factors driving and inhibiting SCI practices. Driving and inhibiting factors are primary criteria alongside enablers and barriers or critical successful factors and challenges. Among these, there are more driving factors explored than the inhibiting factors (Kamal and Irani 2014).

The most cited driving factors were selected as follows: improving firm performance; effective coordination and communication; facilitating information sharing;

operational efficiency and performance; improved financial performance; effective customer service and responsiveness; improved product quality; management and delivery; and SC agility, flexibility and visibility (Kamal and Irani 2014). Pagell (2004) also found critical drivers of integration such as structure, culture and communication by using data from 11 different plants. Particularly, when discussing communication as a driving factor, Pagell (2004) emphasise the importance of face-to-face interaction more than information systems, and the benefits of informal or real-time communication. On the other hand, So and Sun (2011) highlight the usefulness of advanced information systems in the manufacturing industrial context as a key enabler of organisation integration (II) and SI which requires thoroughly automated information process in terms of speed and quality.

Kamal and Irani (2014) articulate four critical inhibiting factors such as lack of unified IT infrastructure; lack of technical resources, skills and knowledge on integration; resistance to change; and lack of cross-trained experienced workforce. Additionally, a lot of evidence supports that a lack of communication inhibits integration (Pagell 2004). Opportunistic culture can be an inhibiting factor to SCI (Cox 1999). Fawcett *et al.* (2008) show that rankings of barriers to SCI vary depending on responders' positions in the SCs such as purchasing, logistics and manufacturing perspectives. Nonetheless, there are four top barriers in common among three different perspectives: inadequate information systems; lack clear alliance guidelines; inconsistent operating goals; and a lack of shared risks and rewards. Given this, it can be assumed that communication, information sharing, and IT systems play a critical role for both driving and inhibiting factors.

The factors can be discussed in terms of macro and micro levels. Wang *et al.* (2016) divide enabling factors of SCI into two groups: a macro interorganisational level and

a micro individual level suggesting that traditionally the former has been more explored in SCI studies. Given this, they sought to enlarge the discussion of SCI enablers to behaviours of SC actors in interpersonal relationships, resulting in a deeper grasp of behavioural influences as organisational resources. In a similar sense, Cao *et al.* (2015) view a wider range of classifications of influencing factors on SCI and clarify three principal groups of SCI antecedents derived from the remaining SCI studies: environmental factors such as uncertainties of environment, technology and demand; inter-organisational factors such as trust, power and commitment; and firm-level factors such as strategy or information technology. In addition to this, Cao *et al.* (2015) contributed to expansion of SCI antecedents by adding cultural factors such as development, group and rational cultures that positively affect SCI. The interorganisational factors such as power, trust and relationship commitment have been relatively more investigated in the SCI studies because they were deemed the important attributes and factors which decisively affects SC excellence (Zhao et al. 2008; Zhang and Huo 2013) and the underlying basis of SCM (Lee and Billington 1992; Kumar 1996).

These interorganisational factors are also influential and important in diverse relationships in humanitarian SCs. For example, Siawsh et al. (2021) emphasise the role of power in the humanitarian context, as an imbalance of power among diverse stakeholders in humanitarian SCs can lead to breaking the ethics and standards in the decision-making process. In addition, Van Wassenhove (2006, p. 486) points out that there is “a general lack of trust” between HOs and they are reluctant to collaborate with private businesses, which hinder effective operations in the humanitarian context. Also, Moshtari and Vanpoucke (2021) suggest that a long-term commitment in the relationships between humanitarian NGOs and private businesses is needed for those

successful relationships. Seybolt (2009) also asserts that coordinating aid efforts among diverse humanitarian aid actors is constrained by resource dependency on donor institutions that may have strong political interests or a lack of trust. As such, it can be assumed the interorganisational factors (i.e., power, trust and commitment) are related to diverse humanitarian aid entities.

2.3. What is ‘a disaster’?

In general, by a disaster, people might accept the meaning of this term only for natural disasters as Gunn (2003, cited in Caunhye *et al.* 2012, p.4) emphasises “a vast ecological breakdown” in defining a disaster (see Table 2-1). Van Wassenhove (2006) extends the meaning further by defining a disaster as a physical disruption bringing about malfunction of a system. United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UNISDR) (2009) provides a more detailed and extensive meaning of a disaster by encompassing physical, psychological, social and environmental aspects of its impact as shown in Table 2-1. From these definitions, it is assumed that the size and impacts of disasters are too enormous and huge to handle them within the members of the affected area. Naturally, a variety of relief providers are involved in disaster relief operations as domestic capabilities are not sufficient to respond efficiently to the devastating disasters. Hence, for example, in the context of Long and Wood’s (1995, p. 213) definition of disaster relief, the occurrence of disasters is commonly associated with “foreign intervention into a society with the intention of helping local citizens”. In this study, devastating disasters that go beyond coping ability of the affected society and therefore require international assistance are more focused on.

Table 2-1. Definitions for disasters

Authors	Definitions
Gunn (2003) cited in Caunhye <i>et al.</i> (2012, p.4)	“the result of a vast ecological breakdown in the relations between man and his environment”
UNISDR (2009, p. 9)	“A serious disruption of the functioning of a community or a society involving widespread human, material, economic or environmental losses and impacts, which exceeds the ability of the affected community or society to cope using its own resources”
Van Wassenhove (2006, p. 476)	“a disruption that physically affects a system as a whole and threatens its priorities and goals”

2.3.1. Types of disasters

Disasters can be expounded to embody several types of disasters, and, therefore, suitable management skills and activities should be considered according to each disaster type. Many authors have tried to categorise the types of disasters depending on the cause of disaster and their predictability (Yadav and Barve 2015). According to their causes, disasters can be divided into two categories: natural and man-made disasters, and each type splits into slow onset and sudden onset disaster brackets (Van Wassenhove 2006). In this perspective, there are four cases in the division of disaster types as described in Figure 2-2. In particular, the operations for man-made type of disasters particularly account for 97% of those for the whole disaster relief aid between 1982 and 1994, while natural disasters consist of only 3% of the humanitarian aid operations (Van Wassenhove 2006). The man-made disaster type contains incidents caused by political sources “such as terrorism, war, and ethnic cleansing or social factors, including racism, exclusion and religious persecution” (Maon *et al.* 2009, p. 150).

Figure 2-2. Classification of disasters

	Sudden-onset	Slow-onset
Natural Disaster	Earthquake Tsunami Volcanic eruption Landslide Flood Tropical storm	Epidemics Drought Famine Extreme temperature Coastal erosion Under-development/Poverty
Man-made Disaster	War Technological accidents Train/Boat/Bus accidents Stampeding Bush/Industrial fire Water pollution Terrorist attack Chemical leak	Environmental pollution Desertification Deforestation Crises (Political/Refugees) Returnees

Source: Adapted from Van Wassenhove 2006; Kovács and Spens 2009; Yadav and

Barve 2015

Nonetheless, doubts can arise regarding the clear classification of disaster types, and they are not often clearly divided into the types of disaster shown in Figure 2-2. In addition, disasters in effect create the conditions by which their resolution is made more difficult. Disasters thus often involve disruption to power, communications and other core social infrastructures that are needed to instigate recovery. Such definitions are of course always limited in their extent. Other definitions could extend to include aspects such as localisation or the intensity of the disaster. In the case of famine, it can fall into two basic types: “environmental and political” (Long and Wood 1995, p. 214). This means that famine can be related not only to natural disasters such as drought or floods, but also to man-made disasters caused by political conflicts, environmental pollution, etc, or both. Hence, categorizing disasters is not easy or simple because a disaster itself is surrounded by very complicated and complex phenomena.

There can be different issues between sudden-onset and slow-onset disasters. Long and Wood (1995) assert that the logistics of slow-onset natural disasters such as famine can be different from other types of disasters because they tend to occur in underdeveloped regions, which do not have sufficient infrastructures and are not connected to primary traffic lanes. In a long-term view, it seems there are concerns about the free distribution of aid items such as food because such relief activities can damage the local agriculture or other industries and result in “delaying their development and postponing the area’s becoming self-sufficient” (Long and Wood 1995, p. 213). Perhaps, slow-onset disasters might require longer-term perspectives and relief plans as the disasters sometimes last for a long period.

2.3.2. Phases of disaster relief

Likewise, different requirements are needed at different times of disaster relief management (Kovács and Spens 2007). There are a range of approaches to identifying the phases of disaster relief management in responding to disasters depending on the scholars. In light of these approaches there are therefore phases to the types of help provided, and how they are prioritised, e.g. shelter first, then clean water provision, followed by sanitation, food, medical, clothing. Depending on the circumstances prevailing and the priorities of aid organisations there may be a slight variation in the order these are provided (Nisha de Silva 2001). Priorities are likely to be determined once the on-the-ground situation is understood. There are a range of different views in separating the disaster relief aid process into several parts for a better understanding of the humanitarian aid process and efficient disaster relief management.

At first, division of different phases originated in the recommendation of the National Governors Association (1979, cited in Maon *et al.* 2009) which suggests a four-step

process model of disaster relief such as preparedness, response, recovery and mitigation. Some authors adopt simply two stages. Long (1997) categorises two phases of disaster relief management such as strategic planning to prepare for emergency project and actual project planning when disaster strikes. Adopting a similar principle, Chakravarty (2011, p.4) also tries to take both proactive and reactive approaches to disaster relief based on “the idea of two sources of capacity – one before and one after the disasters” A proactive approach involves investment in a sturdy infrastructure and particularly construction of a suitable level of inventory and storage facilities (Chakravarty 2011). In this stage, humanitarian organisations and aid providers offer development or improvement plans for shelter, food, medicine, blankets and other essential requirements, and the domestic government supplies support workforce and necessary apparatus in anticipation (Chakravarty 2011). On the other hand, in the phase of the real-time response, a different approach is required such as agile and flexible reactions (Chakravarty 2011). Kelly (1999) transforms the basic relief phase model into a linear sequence of prevention, disaster and post-event. Further, Safran (2003) forms a concept of a cyclical disaster management model where four phases such as prevention, disaster, emergency response and recovery are intimately linked and moving round. Of course, in the case of the Safran model prevention implies that there should be a fifth phase prefacing prevention, which is that a disaster needs to be predicted. Some attempt has been made to take this approach, see for example, Nikolopoulos *et al.* (2020).

There are many authors who simply divide the phases of disaster relief management into three specified periods, namely pre-disaster, disaster and post-disaster (Lee and Zbinden 2003; Kovács and Spens 2007; Perry 2007; Kumar and Havey 2013). Cottrill (2002) subdivides the pre-disaster period into three subgroups such as planning,

mitigation and detection, and Kumar and Havey (2013) adds mitigation and preparedness in the pre-disaster timeframe and recovery and rebuild in the post-disaster timeframe.

Each phase of disaster relief management requires different response plans and activities. First, UNISDR (2004) explains preparedness as “activities and measures taken in advance to ensure effective response to the impact of hazards, including the issuance of timely and effective early warnings and the temporary evacuation of people and property from threatened locations”. Hence, this period requires a large number of preparatory activities. For instance, collection of reliable data and information is an essential and fundamental starting point through forecasting, monitoring and assessing risk factors and vulnerability. Subsequently, making mitigation planning and establishing networks and trust with other aid actors are carried on based on the accumulated data. Also, the linkage between all the possible stages from forecasting, warning, mitigation, response and recovery to resilience can be visualised and mapped in advance for efficient disaster response. This is very similar to contingency planning in commercial SCM in terms of preparing a recovery strategy during the pre-disruption stage (Pavlov *et al.* 2019). Additionally, strategic planning and preparatory works are organised at this time with regard to infrastructure, policy making, capacity building, pre-positioning logistics and response, simulation programmes, empowerment of local communities and encouragement of improvisation in chaotic scenarios (Long 1997; Perry 2007; Kumar and Havey 2013). From a broader and strategic perspective, there is a need to put efforts into estimating and allocating adequate funding in each stage of disaster relief management and checking if relevant policies and programmes accord with overall national strategies (Safran, 2003; Perry, 2007; Kumar and Harvey, 2013)

The primary activities during the response phase are focused on “the provision of assistance or intervention during or immediately after a disaster to meet the life preservation and basic subsistence needs of those people affected” (UNISDR 2004). In the phase of immediate response, humanitarian SCs can need a completely different design with swiftly responding abilities and an innovative and creative supplier-led solution (Gattorna 2006). During the response phase, rapid aid response is considered the most important. Bacik and Beamon (2008) suggest that the humanitarian relief SC aims at rapidly providing relief aid such as emergency food, water, medicine, shelter and supplies to the affected areas in large-scale emergencies. As such, speedy access to the affected area and minimising hardship are prioritised in this time, and consequently there is a tendency that mistakes are generously accepted, and risks are readily taken (Maon *et al.* 2009). This is perhaps a different requirement to a commercial supply chain where decisions are made on a much more predictable set of conditions and predictions. Particularly, sudden-onset disasters require both agility and flexibility in managing humanitarian SCs that need develop from immediate response in the beginning of disaster strike into continuing recovery operations (Gattorna 2006).

Lastly, the recovery operations are defined as “decisions and actions taken after a disaster with a view to restoring or improving the pre-disaster living conditions of the stricken community, while encouraging and facilitating necessary adjustments to reduce disaster risk” (UNISDR 2004). Recovery including both rehabilitation and reconstruction steps provides an opportunity to take an action for disaster risk reduction (UNISDR 2004). In the time of ongoing reconstruction operations, aid actors usually establish aid programmes in a more planned basis and their SCs are more likely to pursue more traditional way of buying through the local market (Maon *et al.* 2009).

The amount of capacity in proactive and reactive modes can vary depending on the disaster intensity and frequency (Chakravarty 2011; Choi *et al.* 2010). In this argument, the ideal balance level of investment between before and after disaster strikes is not fixed, which sounds neutral. However, the studies in the preparedness phase are more focused through the topic of pre-positioning stocks and deciding facility location. Preparatory activities in the preparedness phase are regarded as a crucial factor to improve humanitarian organisations performances and responses to disasters in the immediate phase. Regarding this, Balcik and Beamon (2008) emphasise the importance of ‘pre-positioning critical relief supplies in strategic locations around the world to deliver sufficient relief aid within a relatively short timeframe’. In the commercial sector, better investment in the preparedness stage diminishes costs. In the same sense, more funding invested in the pre-disaster preparatory phase can lead to great reduction of the overall cost in the response phase (Jahre and Heigh 2008). Tatham and Pettit (2010) also emphasise the importance of preparedness because more investment in this phase result in lower cost of the response process. Indeed, better preparedness is the key factor so that a more efficient and agile response can be achieved through optimised aid performance (Van Wassenhove 2006).

However, there is a lack of donations for the preparedness phase. Even though many HOs want to prepare the assets in advance, they are available from the aftermath phase. Hence, a means of dealing with prospective disaster risk reduction and preparedness is intensely embedded in the principle of “local self-sufficiency” (Alexander 2006, p. 12) rather than using a broader national or international network. Jahre and Heigh (2008) state that donors including both governmental and organisational types are comparatively reluctant to pay for an insurance policy in preparation for uncertainty. They point out that this leads to small-scale funding designated for the planning and

prevention activities and a lack of preparedness. Finally, humanitarian organisations are often situated in high and costly competition striving to gain essential assets for aid assistance (Thomas and Kopczak 2005).

2.3.3. Dominating characteristics of the context

The humanitarian context is often typified by complexity and uncertainty. Particularly, when comparing with its business counterparts, HSCM is typically situated in a more extreme and unpredictable context. This context may be similar with that of the military logistics in a critical situation, particularly war, in terms of requiring urgent responses (McGinnis 1992). These dynamic environments can be characterised as “a lack of stability, greater complexity, and special challenges in matching multiple sources of supply with shifting recipient (or customer) [beneficiary] demand” (Larson 2012, p. 3). The complex and unpredictable contexts generally produce a wide variety of challenges that are caused by the “additional uncertainties; complex communication and coordination; inefficient and untimely delivery; and limited resources” (Caunhye *et al.* 2012, p. 4). Also, this chaotic environment can provoke a range of issues resulting in reducing control and malfunctioning, such as scarcity of reliable information, short lead times and scattered resources over a wide area (Fawcett and Fawcett 2013). These extreme and unique environments in the humanitarian context can greatly affect the implementation of HSCM. Indeed, there are ‘the unique characteristics of the disaster relief context’ that affect the SCM (Thomas and Kopczak 2005; Van Wassenhove 2006; Balcik and Beamon 2008). Hence, it is crucial to understand the key characteristics of the context that leads to challenges and difficulties in HSCM.

In this context, beneficiary needs (demand) are difficult to foresee and tend to increase rapidly and fluctuate. There are unpredictability and uncertainties of needs (demand)

from beneficiaries in terms of timing, location, type and size because it is very difficult to predict disasters in advance (Balcik and Beamon 2008; Chakravarty 2011). Additionally, there is a demand in surge, that means “suddenly-occurring demand in very large amounts and short lead times for a wide variety of supplies” (Balcik and Beamon 2008, p. 102). Most of the disasters result in enormous demand of resources like medicine, shelters, water etc. Hence, it is essential to deal successfully with this surge in demand for vital aid products, equipment and diverse aid actors in an unstable market (Chakravarty 2014). However, it is difficult to procure and deliver required amounts of supplies to the affected area with well-timed relief efforts due to uncertainties in demand and inadequate or delayed deliveries of supplies (Chakravarty 2011). As such, the nature of demand in HSCM is different from that in business SCM.

Next, there are huge disruptions and difficulties in communication that have an effect on tracking, expediting, transactions and SC coordination. (Chakravarty 2011). Additionally, it is common to experience scarce resources in the humanitarian context. There is a lack of resources such as “supply, people, technology, transportation capacity, and money” (Balcik and Beamon 2008, p. 102). In this unpredictable and devastating context, there must be issues such as insufficient reliable information, short lead times and scattered resources that can trigger a sudden malfunction and diminishing control (Fawcett and Fawcett 2013). Further, time and cost have become very crucial aspects of humanitarian SC due to the unpredictable context of disaster relief operations (Yadav and Barve 2015). Hence, it is very difficult to suggest one unified solution in responding to disasters as the context of each disaster may differ from another. This might be one of the most challenging points from the academic perspective because resolution from one research perspective may not be applicable in different cases. Humanitarians in academia need to consider the detailed conditions of

diverse types of disasters and diverse stances of different aid actors. These unique characteristics of the disaster relief context have affected forming the characteristics of HSCM.

2.4. Characteristics of HSCM

The unique characteristics of the disaster relief context lead to distinct and different features of HSCM from those of SCM. It was only from the turn of the millennium that humanitarian relief organisations began to realise the importance of HSCM to be successful in relief operations (Van Wassenhove 2006). Therefore, the skill and techniques of HSCM relatively fall behind the commercial counterpart (Larson 2012). Basically, there must be some similarities between the private sector and humanitarian sector in terms of managing and understanding supply chains (Van Wassenhove 2006). Shifting advanced knowledge of SCM that is established in the business sector to the humanitarian sector is anticipated to be positive and significant (Maon *et al.* 2009; Tomasini and Van Wassenhove 2009). Swanson and Smith (2013) point out the fundamental similarity with commercial logistics in terms of the goals and objectives fulfilling demand for needed products and services. HSCM already contains strong elements of SCM (Day *et al.* 2012). Given these, it is possible and valuable to transfer well-established knowledge of the commercial SCM to the area of the humanitarian SCM based on the fundamentally similar principle of SCM and advanced techniques of the commercial one.

Nonetheless, it is inevitable to consider the unique features and contexts that humanitarian SCM demonstrates. Table 2-2 illustrates the contrast between business and humanitarian SCs, which is explained in detail in the following sections. This comparison does not mean that humanitarian SCs are always temporary in interrupted

environments and commercial SCs are always stable in uninterrupted environments. While business logistics and SCM is generally situated in uninterrupted environments, risk management deals with SC interruptions and risk strategies (McLachlin et al. 2009). In contrast, humanitarian SCs are normally situated in interrupted environments, however, HOs tend to operate development aid projects when interruption diminishes and situations become more stable (McLachlin et al. 2009).

Table 2-2. Comparison between Commercial and Humanitarian SCs

Category	Commercial SCs	Humanitarian SCs
Motivation/Purpose	For-profit/Economic profit	Not-for-profit/Social impact
Source of Funds	Paying customers	Donors
Context	Normally uninterrupted -Reasonably stable conditions in terms of political and economic conditions; infrastructure in place; and critical actors (e.g., customers, suppliers, service providers and employees) on stage	High levels of interruption -Unpredictability -Emergency conditions -Disruptions to normal activities -Issues in matching multiple resources with a surge of needs
Representative characteristics	Stable SCs -Regular and repetitive routine -Procedures & capital investment valued	Unstable SCs -Non-routine activities -Networks with diverse organisations from different countries, established in a short time -Actual time communications and transportations assets focused on

Source: Adapted from Kleindorfer and Saad (2005); Larson (2012); Long and Wood (1995); McLachlin et al. (2009); Tatham and Kovács (2010)

Swanson and Smith (2013) also address several different features serving to define disaster response. Firstly, this has different characteristics from other forms of logistics. Also, its consumers are not traditional ones and its contexts show different attributes, for instance, where infrastructures are damaged or non-existent. Additionally, there are a variety of stakeholders and aid actors in disaster response such as donor organisations, government agencies and NGOs. Balcik and Beamon (2008, p. 102) contend that humanitarian supply chains differ from their commercial counterpart

particularly from the perspectives of “strategic goals, customers and demand characteristics and environmental factors”. Additionally, for the environmental factors, the political environment in HSCM makes differences from commercial SCM (Long and Wood 1995).

2.4.1. Definitions

The research area of HSCM was recently introduced in academia (Kovács and Spens 2007) and a general agreement on its definition and boundaries has not been precisely agreed by scholars or practitioners (Tomasini 2012). In humanitarian research, the perspectives of logistics have been more adopted than those of SCM by around three times as much in the number of referred articles (Day *et al.* 2012). Thomas and Mizushima from Fritz Institute (2005, cited in Van Wassenhove 2006, p. 476) stated the meaning of humanitarian logistics “as the process of planning implementing and controlling the efficient, cost-effective flow of and storage of goods and materials as well as related information, from point of origin to point of consumption for the purpose of meeting the end beneficiary’s requirements”. This approach seems based more on the definition of SCM rather than that of logistics (Tatham and Spens 2011) although it tries to define logistics. As such, the boundary between them tends to be blurred. However, there must be a difference between these two concepts, and these differences are also applicable to the humanitarian sector (Day *et al.* 2012).

In general, HSCM is a wider concept encompassing short-term to long-term perspectives and often spatially specific disasters whereas humanitarian logistics involves short-term movements of goods (Day *et al.* 2012). Van Wassenhove (2006, p. 476) defines humanitarian logistics as “the process and systems involved in mobilising people, resources, skills and knowledge to help vulnerable people affected

by disaster”. Humanitarian logistics pertains to operational and tactical pursuits, while HSCM involves decisions regarding SC pre-planning, external SCI and SC terminations (Day *et al.* 2012). This approach of HSCM allows dealing with the entirety of SC and its context and considering the complex organic connection with intra- or inter- unities in the unpredictable and disrupted humanitarian working environment.

Compared to the categories suggested by Larson and Halldorsson (2004) in the previous section, the identification about HL (Humanitarian Logistics) and HSCM that Day *et al.* (2012) make is more associated with the Unionist perspective out of four classifications of relationships between logistics and SCM. The definition of humanitarian and disaster relief SCM is as follows (Day *et al.* 2012, p. 28):

The system that is responsible for designing, deploying and managing the processes necessary for dealing with not only current but also future humanitarian/disaster events and for managing the coordination and interaction of its processes with those of supply chains that may be competitive/complementary. It is also responsible for identifying, implementing and monitoring the achievement of the desired outcomes that its processes are intended to achieve. Finally, it is responsible for evaluating, integrating and coordinating the activities of the various parties that emerge to deal with these events.

As shown in the definition, Day *et al.* (2012) try to cover the entire cyclical phases of HSCM from planning SC processes in the preparatory period to evaluating aid performances for future events. Makepeace *et al.* (2017, p. 46) point out that Day *et al.* (2012) do not discuss “the internal cross-functional implications of the adoption of such a unionist perspective”. Makepeace *et al.* (2017, p. 46) particularly emphasise that “a definition of SCM which adequately serves this sector must encompass both humanitarian and development modes” and focused on beneficiaries. Based on this emphasis, Makepeace *et al.* (2017, p. 46-7) further develop the definition of Day *et al.* (2012) as follows:

The system that supports the delivery of both humanitarian relief and development programmes through the identification and strategic management of all interfaces involved in the provision of goods and services, in order to optimise service quality to beneficiaries, and by extension, to donors. It includes the strategic development of global supply chain capacity and the identification of competing and complementary supply chains and the organisation's strategic response to them.

Makepeace *et al.* (2017) reflect “emerging commercial SCM trends”, which is a transition from a narrow meaning to a broader and more strategic roles.

2.4.2. Not For Profit motivation

Despite similarities in managing SCs between the private sector and the humanitarian sector, there are unique features belonging typically to HSCM, which are divergent from commercial SCM. HSCM can be demarcated by Not-For-Profit (NFP) motivation in interrupted environments while commercial SCM is characterised by pursuing profit motivation in uninterrupted environments (McLachlin *et al.* 2009). NFP organisations give more value to social objectives rather than economic ones and humanitarian organisations seek to attain social impact rather than financial gains (Larson 2012). “Unlike a commercial SC, humanitarian relief must cope with a huge social cost of victims perishing from the combined effects of shortages and delivery delays” (Chakravarty 2014, p. 146). As Day *et al.* (2012, p. 27) assert, HSCM is linked “the differences between life and death of the disaster victims”, whereas commercial SCM is situated “between profit and loss”. Although the principle of SCM is similar between humanitarian and private sectors, the aims and consequences are different from each other.

Due to the nature of the financial resources of NFP organisations, caring about donor desires and budget boundary is critical (Larson 2012) and, competing for limited common donors is usual in the NFP sector (Van Wassenhove 2006). This competition between aid organisations has been intensifying (Thomas and Kopczak 2005).

Additionally, donors anticipate higher level of impact and performance of aid organisations that they donate to (Thomas and Kopczak 2005). Donors are of crucial importance as a decision maker in the humanitarian SCs, which can function as an obstacle against a high level of collaboration among humanitarian organisations (Fawcett and Fawcett 2013).

2.4.3. Beneficiaries

One of the biggest differences from commercial SCM is the range or type of customers in HSCM. De Leeuw (2010, p. 183) suggest three main customers of humanitarian organisations: “donors, intermediaries such as government or implementing partners, and beneficiaries”. Larson and McLachlin (2011) divide customers into two types: beneficiaries or recipients; and donors. Tomasini (2012) also mentions two types of customers in the humanitarian sector such as donors and beneficiaries, which are situated in the other ends of humanitarian SCs. Humanitarian practitioners may have different perceptions about customers. According to the empirical study conducted by Makepeace *et al.* (2017), practitioners perceived beneficiaries to be the non-paying customer of HOs. The gaps between two categories between beneficiary and donor were about over 75% as the per cent of the number of international non-governmental organisation (INGO) staffs selecting ‘beneficiary’ was over 85%. Thus, on the ground, the staff of HOs can perceive beneficiaries as their primary customer. Further, the concept of consumers in HSCM cannot be understood as such customers in the traditional sense of commercial SCM, rather particularly refers to victims who need great social supports (Chakravarty 2014). The relationships with beneficiaries are “the non-commercial customer-relationship” (Makepeace *et al.* 2017, p. 29) in the humanitarian context. The business concepts such as customers and

demand-management can be difficult to apply to emergency aid, which should be converted into humanitarian concepts according to the unique context of HSCM. Indeed, there is no financial transaction, redress, or expectation of reciprocation for recipients (beneficiaries) as aid products/services are priceless for them, which can be regarded as an extreme case of the gift economy (Swamy 2017). Additionally, products/services are given the recipients do not have choices, which keeps business customers and humanitarian recipients distinct. Nonetheless, the ultimate goal of humanitarian SCM is to aid vulnerable people and mitigate their suffering (Van Wassenhove 2006). Recipients' needs and situations are crucial in humanitarian SCs and affect determining the quantity of aid products/service. As such, it is undeniable that recipients are a part of end-users of aid products/services and humanitarian SC networks. Thus, these two types of customers have very different features and roles in HSCM, although there is a common point that HOs should care for the needs of both types.

The situations of victims as consumers are deeply related to the rapidly changing demand in the humanitarian context. They are “in need of food, material and services” (Larson and McLachlin 2011, p. 318) and thus the level of demand is clearly depending on the status of victims. The nature of demand for aid supplies can vanish in the same rate of demand-declining with decreasing rate of victims' survival because some of them may not remain alive and their lives are not protected in the emergent conditions (Chakravarty 2014). Further, the unique characteristics of customers in the humanitarian sector can be regarded as one of causes adding to uncertainty for HOs since donations can fluctuate and status of beneficiaries are unstable during the disaster relief operations (Tomasini 2012).

2.4.4. Temporary SCs

The humanitarian SCs are not operated in the normal, regular and repetitive routines as the commercial counterparts are. The humanitarian SC is a typical example of temporary SCs (Fawcett and Fawcett 2013) and situated in emergency conditions for non-routine activities that are unpredictable (Long 1997). Humanitarian SC tends to be established and maintained for a short time, which leads to unpredictability and turbulence of humanitarian SC and needs flexibility at the same time (Oloruntoba and Gray 2006). In temporary SCs, hastily formed networks (HFN) are presented among aid actors (Tatham and Kovács 2010). HFN is featured as follows: rapidly established networks; coming from different communities such as different organisations, countries and cultures; working together in a shared conversation space with a need to co-ordinate their activities; plan, commit to, and execute actions; and fulfilling a large urgent mission (Tatham and Kovács 2010). When the relief operation is conducted in an emergency, its SCs should be formed quickly and HSCM puts more focus on actual time communications and transportations assets (Long and Wood 1995). On the other hand, the commercial counterpart regards procedures and capital investments as more important (Long and Wood 1995). These characteristics are linked to the issue of trust. Humanitarian SC system is hurriedly set up, and in this situation high level of trust is scarcely achieved among aid actors (Tatham and Kovács 2010). Due to the nature that disaster relief networks are established in haste, there is an issue of a lack of trust (Tatham and Kovács 2010). In this respect traditional SCM can learn from HSCM as everyday life is becoming less structured and predictable and trust becomes more important.

2.4.5. Complexity in stakeholder relationships

HSCM is characterised by its complex context and a variety of stakeholders surrounding humanitarian organisations such as great numbers of donors, the media, government organisations, the military and the final beneficiaries (Van Wassenhove 2006). Chakravarty (2011) adds NGOs, retailers and logistics service providers in addition to donors, media, governments, and military as primary players that make disaster relief efforts. Tatham and Kovács (2010) also emphasise that disaster relief aid should be provided rapidly and be simultaneously coordinated through a wider network of aid actors. Therefore, humanitarian SCs are engaged with a multilateral approach through international agencies and relief aid organisations including governments and NGOs (Yadav and Barve 2015).

“Humanitarian relief environments engage various stakeholders like international relief organisations, host governments, the military, local and regional relief organisations and private sector companies, each of which may have different interests, mandates, capacity, and logistics expertise” (Yadav and Barve 2015, p. 217). Depending on the types of organisations among humanitarian relief providers, they have different organisational objectives, structures, organisational cultures, different ways of operating (Larson 2012; Long and Wood 1995). Thus, different disasters will require a different mix of aid providers, for example the International Federation of the Red Cross will be represented by either the Red Cross or Red Crescent depending on the location of the disaster. Also, each type of organisation might have widely differing features in terms of agendas, religious beliefs, capabilities, fund-availability, and the need for media attention. (Chakravarty 2011). In order to work together among these dissimilar organisations, great efforts on coordination are strongly required by

coordinating their plans and sharing limited resources (Long and Wood 1995). Hence, due to different perspectives about issues in humanitarian relief operations among them, the academic studies naturally reflect their differences.

Table 2-3 shows the list of involved aid actors, which can be summarised into 5 major aid providers: NGOs; UN; governmental organisations (GOs); military; and the private business such as suppliers or logistics service providers. This indicates that the types of aid actors have been categorised in a range of ways depending on where the emphasis is put on.

Table 2-3. Major aid actors

Authors	Involved aid actors
Seaman (1999)	UN; Non-Governmental Organisations or private voluntary organisations (NGOs); and governmental donors
Kaatrud et al. (2003)	UN; military; host governments; neighbouring country governments; other humanitarian organisations; donors; and logistics service providers
Pettit and Beresford (2005)	A number of governments; a wide range of NGOs; UN bodies; ICRC; and military players
Van Wassenhove (2006)	Humanitarian organisations; the military; governments; and private business
Kovács and Spens (2007)	Aid agencies; NGOs; governments; military; logistics providers; and donors
Larson (2012)	NGOs; UN; military; and commercial service providers

Source: Developed by the researcher

Chakravarty (2011) includes three parties such as buyer (relief provider), retailer, and infrastructure provider in the rigorous model for the infrastructure repair. A relief provider is regarded as a buyer and can be divided into government and non-government within this term (Chakravarty 2011). Given this, whether the type is governmental or not can be sometimes a critical point to distinguish a range of stakeholders. GOs in the humanitarian context can be categorised into two groups: host and neighbouring governments. Host governments generally function as a regulator “by controlling the entry and managing or coordinating the intervention” (Van

Wassenhove 2006, p. 486). They are considered as political actors that have a significant influence on managing aid stocks and delivery activities of IHOs (Long and Wood 1995; Dube et al. 2016). In this sense, Dube et al. (2016) point out that an understanding of the heterogeneity of host governments in dealing with IHOs is very important for improving IHO's performance and humanitarian operations. The responses and attitudes of host governments towards disaster relief management are different from one another. Some governments try to offer a favourable environment for aid participants by proclaiming a state of crisis and lenient regulations, whereas some other host governments are not helpful, putting restrictions in place that hinder aid performance (Long and Wood 1995; Toole and Waldman 1997; McLachlin et al. 2009.; Menkhaus 2010; Pettit and Beresford 2005). As such, it seems difficult to identify the typical role of host governments because depending on the conditions and status of host governments, their attitude and the operations type can vary in dealing with IHOs.

GOs from neighbouring countries are generally regarded as donors and major financial resources for international NGOs and the UN agencies as they are not obliged to respond to emergencies in another countries (Seaman 1999). Further, they can be very political and opportunistic in nature. They tend to provide aid products "primarily to support diplomatic goals" or might use the event "to dispose of excess food resulting from subsidised farming" (Long and Wood 1995, p. 216). On the other hand, Kaatrud et al. (2003) consider GOs from neighbouring countries as one of key aid actors to be coordinated with. This means that depending on individual circumstances, neighbouring GOs play as either/both donors or/and aid actors. As such, even among GOs each organisation has its own motivation for providing aid and relief.

Thompson (2010) divides the humanitarian realm into two perspectives of the civilian community and military leadership. In this categorisation, military organisations are separated from its counterpart of civilian relief organisation. First of all, the military organisations have a different stance in the perspective that they can enter an affected area through official invitation from a host nation (Thompson 2010). Also, military presents a contrast to civilian terminology and there are sensitive issues concerning the engagement of military forces (Thompson 2010). Due to these issues working with the military, NGOs tend to stand in a neutral position without military protection as the best form of defence (Pettit and Beresford 2005). Some aid actors may be afraid of the presence of a military force that can take full control of the disaster relief operations (Bello 2006). Hence, Thompson (2010) recommends taking into account the history of the military and its relationship with the nationals in the host country when moving the military into the disaster area. There is a need to be careful in deploying military forces and deciding the role of military organisations in disaster relief operations.

Another distinction lies in the goals that a military force pursues differing from humanitarian ones (Thompson 2010). Military forces have distinct goals and different understandings when they conduct the disaster relief aid. They are particularly obliged to reduce their impact and time passing in the disaster area to the smallest possible amount and to give support to local authorities and communities which enables local leaderships to carry on recovery activities quickly (Thompson 2010). In addition, the military is distinguished mainly by its distinct roles from other civilian relief organisation. Overall, military forces play a wider range of roles spanning from mere suppliers of transportation service for aid items or workers to active participants engaged in mass disasters relief (Thompson 2010). The military often undertakes “potentially hazardous operations” (Long and Wood 1995, p. 216). In the context of

insecure and risky disaster conditions, there must be further action in terms of solving difficult issues, in addition to providing aid and designing aftermath phase. Hence, the military pays particular attention to ensuring safety and being free from danger or threat on top of supplying relief aid (Thompson 2010). Given this, their role is understood as securing the state of being free from danger or threat that is a fundamental requirement in this emergent situation. Bryman et al. (2000) also emphasise that military forces do not regard disaster relief aid as their primary job because they account it as one of the main responsibilities that humanitarian organisations take. As such, the military more narrowly focuses on their tasks in assisting and supporting humanitarian organisations such as providing humanitarian assistance; protecting humanitarian assistance; assisting refugees and displaced persons; enforcing a peace agreement; and restoring order (Bryman et al. 2000; Pettit and Beresford 2005).

Also, these aid actors can be divided depending on whether a organisation's type is a private or non-profit organisation (NPO). In the humanitarian context, products suppliers on procurement or logistics service providers are generally private businesses (Van Wassenhove 2006). Private businesses tend to pursue economic objects such as earning a profit, increasing shareholder wealth, and focus more on operational performance measures, for instance on-time delivery and stock-out rate (McLachlin et al. 2009). They play an important role to support NGOs and governments by carrying out tasks in the areas of procurement, warehousing and transportation management for other aid actors (Vega and Roussat 2015). Besides this role, private businesses can contribute humanitarian aid in diverse methods. Collaboration with private businesses can offer for humanitarian NGOs "access to financial donations and in-kind supplies or services such as technical expertise in

logistics, supply, packaging, warehousing, and improving SC capabilities or processes like needs assessment, quality management, tracking and tracing and fleet management systems” (Moshtari and Vanpoucke 2021, pp. 106-7). Therefore, building good relationships with businesses is essential to leverage resources to improve aid performance for HOs by interacting and collaborating with them (Nurmala et al. 2018; Tomasini and Van Wassenhove 2009).

Among a number of relief providers during events, it seems that the roles of NGOs and UN agencies are critically important. Particularly, a range of NGOs play a vital role in and dominate the aid operations (Seaman 1999; Kovacs and Spens 2007). The capability of NGOs is decisive in the success of disaster relief aid and achievement of accurate aid activities (Celik and Gumus 2016). At the boundary of NGOs, there are many forms of organisations including local and regional relief organisations to international relief organisations (Yadav and Barve 2015). Among diverse NGO types, an international NGO (INGO) is “a large, global aid organisation” based on “a donor-funded model” (Makepeace 2017, p. 34). They tend to respond in all UN relief sectors, cover a broad geographic range, and mostly adopt a dual mandate approach of emergency response and long-term development (Makepeace 2017). As such, they are affected by both laws of host countries in affected areas and of the country where they are headquartered (Seaman 1999). Although the most of INGOs’ income is estimated to be used up for logistics activities ranging from 60 to 80 per cent (Tatham and Pettit 2010), they cannot be regarded as a logistics organisation (Makepeace 2017). They function as a service provider and implement projects to donors, through humanitarian response to disaster or development projects (Makepeace 2017). Each NGO usually has different rules and expertise (i.e., food, shelter, or medical care), which can lead to

challenges to be coordinated or reluctance in cooperating with each other (Kovács and Spens 2011; Tatham and Kovács 2010).

In this aspect, the UN's role becomes very important in coordinating the efforts with diverse NGOs and other humanitarian actors. If the UN arrives late on the ground, this makes a chaotic relief operation more difficult and results in no effective coordination on the scene (Van Wassenhove 2006). As such, although neither the UN or NGOs have authority over one another (Seaman 1999), the coordinating role of the UN is crucial to improve efficiency of aid performance by avoiding duplication of aid activities and enabling effective communication and sharing information (Tatham and Pettit 2010). Their role can be described as "a more normative, coordinating and very loose regulatory role" (Kent 2006, p. 224). The UN is considered as "the world's foremost multinational organisation" (Kent 2004, p. 223), which presumably accredits the UN for this coordinating role. Expectation of the UN's humanitarian role and responsibilities started greatly increasing from the mid-1980s, although the Officer of the United Nations Disaster Relief Coordinator (UNDRO) was established in 1972 in order to mobilise, direct and coordinate disaster relief activities given by various UN agencies, GOs and NGOs (Kent 2004). This trend also resulted in the UN playing a proactive role as a humanitarian actor in development and humanitarian action (Kent 2004). Therefore, diverse agencies of the UN system are involved in humanitarian response and development aid.

As a successor of UNDRO, the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) was established in 1991, particularly for convening humanitarian partners at the global, regional and country levels and coordinating humanitarian assistance to crisis-affected people (OCHA 2021). The United Nations Humanitarian Response Depot (UNHRD), inaugurated in 2000, tries to network inside- and outside-

partners to deliver humanitarian relief items and to provide core services such as warehousing, inspection and managing prepositioned items for a rapid response worldwide within 24-48 hours (Schulz and Blecken 2010; UNHRD 2021). Its network started with 5 organisations and has now evolved to working with 90 partners (UNHRD 2021). It provides storage and logistics support and services to UN's humanitarian agencies such as the UN World Food Programme (WFP), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), etc., and governmental and non-governmental organisations (Schulz and Blecken 2010; UNHRD 2021). In particular, the UN's WFP acts as a service provider for other organisations within the network and furthermore conducts procurement on behalf of other partners resulting in economies of scale (Schulz and Blecken 2010). As such, the UN's role has been expanded and evolved, not simply being limited in the coordinating role.

These aid actors are also referred to as 'a humanitarian organisation' (HO). There are different views on understanding the term HO. Blecken (2010) focuses on the nature of tasks and activities of organisations whether they are closely related to humanitarian aid. Therefore, Blecken (2010, p. 56) defines HOs as "non-profit organisations (NPOs) which are involved in conducting humanitarian operations", including political, governmental and charitable NPOs. This is a task-oriented definition of HOs. Jahre et al. (2016, p. 57) narrows down the range of HOs by including the "International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), World Food Program (WFP), Cooperative for Assistance and Relief Everywhere (CARE), and United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)" in a group of large humanitarian organisations. As such, the range of HOs can range from humanitarian INGOs to UN agencies dedicated to humanitarian aid.

These HOs usually deal with “multiple interventions on a global scale and, often, concurrently” (Van Wassenhove 2006, p. 480). Among these diverse types of IHOs, this thesis focuses on IHOs, which are in a type of humanitarian INGO, dealing with disaster relief and development programmes at the global level.

Table 2-4. Categorisation of IHOs

Categories		Examples of IHOs
Non-sectarian organisations		CARE International; Humanity and Inclusion; Oxfam; Relief International
Faith-based organisations		CAFORD; Catholic Relief Service; Christian Aid; Dorcas; Islamic Relief; Muslim-Aid; Tearfund; Trocaire; World Jewish Relief; World Vision
By types of beneficiaries	Children	Plan International; Save the Children; War Child
	Women/Gender	Action Aid
	Women & Children	Care International
	Older people	Age International
By types of aid expertise	Healthcare/Medical assistance	Doctor of the World; Medaire; International Medical Corps
	Food	Welthungerhilfe; Action Against Hunger

Source: Developed by the researcher

Table 2-4 displays the categories of IHOs which closely work with UK Aid through Start Network (startnetwork.org). The type of IHOs was classified according to the identities each IHO declares on its own website. Start Network is a successor of the Consortium of British Humanitarian Agencies (CBHA) which was inaugurated in 2010 to promote collaboration amongst humanitarian NGOs, share funding opportunities and strengthen humanitarian SC systems for effective humanitarian action (Start Network 2021). It started with 15 representative UK-based IHOs and expanded to 55 organisations including regional NGOs of Asia and Africa. The details of the 31 IHOs excluding regional NGOs are summarised in Appendix 7, which shows their annual budget is over one million pounds except for a couple of organisations. The focal case of the main data collection in this study is also one of the Start Network members.

2.5. Partnerships in HSCM

Unlike a private SC, a humanitarian SC is situated in extremely unpredictable and unstable contexts with many reasons such as a surge in demand, disrupted infrastructures, etc. Furthermore, the humanitarian sector is characterised by very complex relationships among a wide range of stakeholders. They often compete for the limited financial resources and media attention against other humanitarian aid actors (Van Wassenhove 2006; Thompson 2010). Although effective partnerships are strongly required in this humanitarian context, those conditions can impede integration of SCs. It can be hard to find the achievement of actual integration in the humanitarian SCs. As such, there are relatively less studies about integration from the humanitarian perspectives compared to other partnership topics such as cooperation, coordination and collaboration (3Cs).

2.5.1. Cooperation, coordination and collaboration

Discussing SC relationships in the humanitarian sector, the three terms (cooperation, coordination and collaboration – 3Cs) have been often mentioned (Heaslip *et al.* 2012). Further, Heaslip and Barber (2014) indicate that each organisation has different understandings about 3Cs, which leads to a challenge in reaching a consensus of the definitions about 3Cs among diverse participants in the humanitarian disaster relief context. In the business studies, the 3Cs have been “often used more or less interchangeably for describing integrative efforts among partners to improve the overall efficiency of the SC” (Prajogo and Olhager 2012, p. 514). On the contrary, Spekman *et. al.* (1998) clearly show the relationships of these three terms as transitional concepts from cooperation to collaboration. Cooperation is considered as “the starting point for SCM” and “the next level of intensity is coordination” (Spekman

et al. 1998, p. 55) which shows more active exchange of workflow and information. As a final stage, collaboration is viewed as the highest level of partnership by integrating SCs and sharing a vision (Spekman *et al.* 1998). Spekman *et al.* (1998) argue that these three concepts should be carefully applied in practices according to the strategic importance of the SC counterpart. For example, when dealing with a very important SC partner, the attitude of collaboration can be adopted in managing the relationship.

Table 2-5 displays the list of journal articles related to 3Cs in the view of humanitarian SCM. There are very few articles regarding SCI written from the humanitarian perspective as discussed in Section 2.5.2. Instead, 3Cs in the humanitarian context were searched in this section. The papers were collected through one of major electronic databases: Scopus (www.scopus.com) and cross-checked with Google Scholar. Searching terms and filtering terms were used within titles, abstracts or key words: 'cooperation' OR 'coordination' OR 'collaboration' AND 'humanitarian' OR 'disaster' OR 'relief' AND 'supply' OR 'logistics'. They were limited to English-language, peer-reviewed journals only. 20 papers were finally identified, including 1 paper about cooperation, 15 papers about coordination and 4 papers about collaboration. It can be assumed that the majority of the papers are under the topic of coordination, while the topic of cooperation has received relatively less attention from academia in the HSCM studies. There are 46 authors in total who involved in these papers. Except for five authors who participated in two to three papers, respectively, the other 41 authors were involved with one article each. There are no authors notably dedicated to a specific topic.

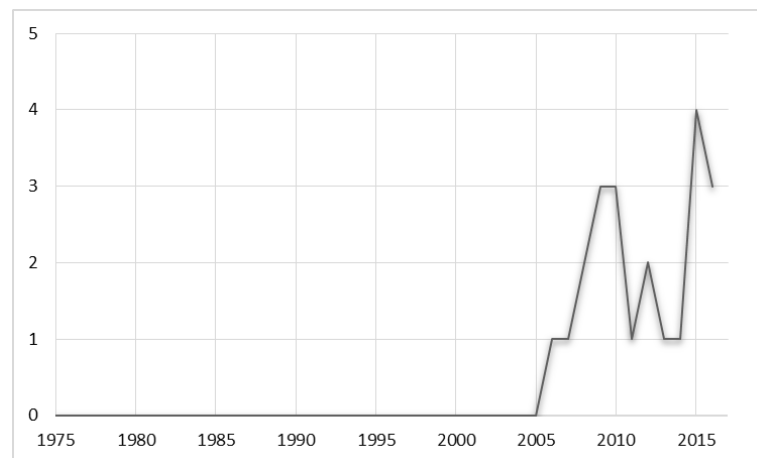
Table 2-5. The list of papers regarding 3Cs in HSCM

Reviewed Papers	Aim/main topic
Topic 1: Cooperation (1)	
Schulz, S. F. and Blecken, A. (2010)	Understanding the benefits and impediments of horizontal cooperation in disaster relief logistics
Topic 2: Coordination (15)	
Akhtar, P., et al. (2012)	Identifying chain coordinators and exploring their roles
Balcik, B., et al. (2010)	Reviewing various coordination mechanisms practiced in commercial SCs that may be applicable to relief chain
Charles, A. and Lauras M. (2011)	Developing quantitative models in a relief chain context with a particular focus on coordination aspects
Davis, L. B., et al. (2013)	Addressing inventory management decision through a programming model
Fikar, C., et al. (2016)	Modelling coordinated disaster relief distribution based decision-support system
Jahre, M. and Jensen L. M. (2010)	Understanding the potential of cluster concepts using SC coordination and inter-cluster coordination.
Jahre, M., et al. (2009)	Developing theory and dimensions for HL based on logistics and organisation theories
Jensen, L. M. (2012)	Identifying how to apply lessons from a 4PL to the cluster leads' challenges in the humanitarian system
Kabra, G. and Ramesh A. (2015)	Exploring the barriers to coordination and proposing solutions in the Indian context.
Kabra, G., et al. (2015)	Exploring and prioritising the coordination barriers in the Indian context
Krejci, C. C. (2015)	Proposing a conceptual framework through a hybrid simulation model for HL actors' decision making
Tatham, P. and Spens, K. (2016)	Discuss how the approach of the urban search and rescue (USAR) might be applied to the of HL agencies
Van der Laan, E. A., et al. (2009)	Assessing current practice of intra-organisational logistics information and knowledge management in HA organisations
Van Wassenhove, L. N. (2006)	Partnership between humanitarians, businesses and academics
Yi, W. and Özdamar, L. (2007)	Minimising delay in providing prioritised commodity and health care service
Topic 3: Collaboration (4)	
Bealt, J. et al. (2016)	Analysing the interactions between HOs and LSPs
Ergun, O., et al. (2014)	Introducing a cooperative game theory model to study the fair distribution of costs or benefits from coordination
Maon, F., et al. (2009)	Providing insights into corporate achievements and detailing how they might help disaster agencies
Sheu, J. B. (2015)	Addressing the issue of imbalanced relief supply-demand impact for EL operations

Source: Kim *et al.* 2016

Figure 2-3 presents the distribution of the papers by year, which shows that the partnership studies regarding the topics of 3Cs were under-researched until 2005. It seems that these studies gradually emerged from 2005 and had been published annually, ranging from one to four papers per year between 2006 and 2016. Regarding the research strategies, overall, the empirical studies are more dominant than the conceptual studies by the ratio of 3:2. In the case of conceptual studies, they are all conceptual-structured ones consisting of simulation, experiment and mathematical modelling. The empirical-qualitative case study is the most highly used as a research analysis in the seven papers. In contrast, the empirical-quantitative approaches were relatively less conducted: one paper using survey and two papers using literature reviews.

Figure 2-3. Year of publication



Source: Kim *et al.* (2016)

Table 2-6 displays the list of 15 academic journals that contributed to the 3Cs topic. The *Journal of Humanitarian Logistics and Supply Chain Management* illustrates the largest number of publications with 4 papers, while the other 14 journals published one or two articles respectively.

Table 2-6. Distribution over journals

Journals	No. of papers
Journal of Humanitarian Logistics and Supply Chain Management	4
International Journal of Physical Distribution and Logistics Management	2
International Journal of Production Economics	2
International Journal of Disaster Risk Reduction	1
Benchmarking: An International Journal	1
Disasters	1
European Journal of Operational Research	1
Expert Systems with Applications	1
International Journal of Services, Technology and Management	1
Journal of the Operational Research Society	1
Management Research News	1
OR Spectrum	1
Production and Operations Management	1
Supply Chain Management	1
Transportmetrica A: Transport Science	1
Total	20

Source: Adapted from Kim *et al.* 2016

Thirteen papers out of the twenty articles study the perspective of logistics. Six papers among these logistics domain focus on detailed categories: procurement, warehousing, transportation, distribution, information management, planning, tracking and tracing and the cluster system. Another 6 papers investigate coordination and collaboration under SCM, whilst 1 paper study coordination under the domain of inventory. Regarding the scope of relationships within partnerships, thirteen papers do not explicitly clarify their scope as either external (vertical/horizontal relationships) or as internal. Four papers clearly identify the scope of relationships as being either vertical or horizontal partnerships. These papers could not be analysed by the analytic categories because its relationships seem more complex and multi-dimensional. For instance, Akhtar *et al.* (2012) attempt to investigate both sides by including media in the vertical side and emphasising the role of an umbrella organisation in the horizontal side. The analysis of these cases from the real world required detailed sub-categories as each case had different partners and contexts. On the other hand, there is very little attention to the internal scope of 3Cs. There is only one paper which has dealt with the

internal side of organisations. Regarding the disaster relief management phases, the response phase is covered by 12 papers, followed by the preparedness phase in 8 papers (see Table 2-7). Overall, from the papers reviewed across all journal types, the aftermath phase was relatively under-researched.

Table 2-7. Disaster relief management phases in the 3C studies

Disaster Relief Management Phases	Papers	Cooperation	Coordination	Collaboration
Preparedness phase	2	1	1	
Preparedness & Response phases	5		4	1
Response phase	5		4	1
Response & Aftermath phases	1			1
Mitigation, Preparedness, Response & Aftermath	1			1
Transitions between permanent and temporary SCs	1		1	
Undefined	5		5	

Source: Kim *et al.* 2016

Table 2-8 shows the definitions made about cooperation and coordination. As Akhtar *et al.* (2012) point out, it is not easy to define these terms because there is no consensus definition due to the different natures of organisations and perceptions. Particularly, in the case of coordination, half of the listed papers (i.e., Ergun *et al.* 2014; Fikar *et al.* 2016; Yi and Özdamar 2007) in Table 2-8 interpret it as an optimised decision for an effective and efficient method of alignment. In the other papers, relationships and interactions among participants are more emphasised.

Instead of generalising the definition of the terms, another six papers try to explain 3Cs through a variety of criteria that comprise of them. For example, Schulz and Blecken (2010) understand cooperation through detailed activities in procurement, storage and transportation. Further, coordination consists of resource and information sharing, better planning regarding resources, centralized decision-making, conducting joint projects, regional division of tasks, or a cluster-based system (Balcik *et al.* 2010; Davis *et al.* 2013). In the case of Akhtar *et al.* (2012), the main coordinated functions

are considered as planning, organising, leading and controlling. Some papers explain coordination through multi-dimensional aspects such as vertical and horizontal lines (Balcik *et al.* 2010; Jahre and Jensen 2010; Jahre *et al.* 2009). Sheu (2015) understands collaboration through attributed criteria such as incentive alignment, resource, and information sharing.

Table 2-8. Definitions of cooperation and coordination

Authors (Year)	Topic	Definitions
Schulz and Blecken (2010)	Cooperation	Embraces all possible forms of inter-organizational interaction that are rooted in common intentions and lead, via negotiations, to agreements whereby the partners are and remain, legally, and with certain restrictions, economically independent
Akhtar et al. (2012)	Coordination	A process whereby the activities of interdependent organizations are brought together to achieve certain objectives
Balcik, B., et al. (2010)	Coordination	The relationships and interactions among different actors operating within the relief environment
Ergun et al. (2014)	Coordination	Refers to alignment of the operational activities of a group organization in a way that increase efficiency or effectiveness. Also, refers to the tools (e.g. incentives or mechanisms) used to manage this alignment (Cf. Collaboration: describes the relationships between organizations whose operations are coordinated)
Fikar et al. (2016)	Coordination	Vehicle routes, the selection of transfer points and scheduling of requests are optimised (trying to choose the best options for the most efficient ways by considering many other conditions)
Van Wassenhove (2006)	Coordination	Three forms: 1. Coordination by command where there is central coordination; 2. Coordination by Consensus where organizations have access to compatible or shared communications equipment, liaison and interagency meetings and pre-mission assessment; 3. Coordination by default includes routine contact between desk officers and civil military operations centres
Yi and Özdamar (2007)	Coordination	Logistics coordination in disasters involves the selection of sites that result in maximum coverage of need in affected areas

Source: Kim *et al.* 2016

On the other hand, Maon *et al.* (2009) highlight a different perspective towards collaboration between private corporations and disaster relief agencies. This term means sharing expertise and access to required resources for private corporations and providing not only material and financial support but also exposure to SCM and technical expertise, innovations and cost-efficient capabilities for aid agencies. In brief, it seems there is no common understanding about the definitions of 3Cs. These three terms have been used interchangeably in the papers as some studies (i.e., Balcik *et al.* 2010; Jahre and Jensen 2010; Tatham and Spens 2016) also point out.

2.5.2. SCI in HSCM

As explained in the previous chapter, SCI is the essence, where the SCM concept was originated. SCI is the fundamental initiative that SCM started and therefore SCM cannot be explained without SCI. In this sense, SCI studies in the humanitarian sector are also needed to saturate the HSCM studies. McLachlin *et al.* (2009) said that “integration via partnerships enhances performance, across a wide variety of measures, tied to both social and economic objectives” in not-for-profit supply chains. However, there are very few studies that investigate SCI from the perspectives of humanitarian and disaster relief. Integration has not been studied even in the genuine meaning of the SCI term in HSCM. In addition, as shown above, the relationships with up-stream or down-stream in the HSCM studies about partnership have been under-researched.

Table 2-9 shows the list of articles that adopt integration in the humanitarian context. None of them genuinely focus on SCI in a traditional way of understanding integration. For instance, Afshar and Haghani (2012) use integration as integrating manners in managing SCs. Their model includes interaction between different components of the SC, which is a decision of all interrelated factors such as facility location, supply delivery, and vehicle routing etc. Further, integration consequently means centralising operational plans through a comprehensive model and results in optimised allocation of resources such as vehicle routing and delivery schedules and optimal location of temporary facilities. Finally, in the integrated SC system, the model pursues that all the information is synthesised.

In a same sense, Jahre *et al.* (2016) use the term integration in integrating factors for joint prepositioning through decision-support tools. This research demonstrates a warehouse location model that integrates short and long-term operations. Contextual

factors such as hardship, security, pilferage, co-location, and accessibility are considered in determining best joint prepositioning warehouse locations. They suggest that their model helps reduce cost and response time.

Table 2-9. List of H-SCI articles

No	Authors (Year)	Case	Context
1	Thompson (2010)	the 2005 Kashmir earthquake	the 2005 Kashmir earthquake, Sudden-onset natural disaster
2	Larson and McLachlin (2011)	Food aid organisation in collaboration with more than 300 neighbouring agencies throughout the city of Winnipeg and the Province of Manitoba (Canada)	food aid in North America, uninterrupted environment
3	Afshar and Haghani (2012)	Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)	primary organization responsible for preparedness and response to federal level disasters in the US, that has a very complex logistics structure
4	Tatham and Rietjens (2016)	Conceptual paper through an extensive literature regarding the practice of civil-military logistics networks	several settings including the Southeast Asia tsunami of 2004, the 2005 earthquake and the 2010 flooding in Pakistan and the Haiti earthquake of 2010.
5	Jahre <i>et al.</i> (2016)	United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR)	Joint prepositioning for both emergency response and ongoing operations
6	Makepeace <i>et al.</i> (2017)	A single case study of a leading international non-governmental organisation	Staffs involved two departments: Programmes + Logistics or support

In the most of papers, integration is used without clearly defining the term. In the case of Thompson (2010)'s paper, integration is interchangeably used with 'interaction' but is clearly distinct integration from coordination. Larson and McLachlin (2011) implicitly adopt the term integration in the meaning of closer SC relationships with SC partners, although they do not define integration accurately in their paper. In the Tatham and Rietjens (2016) research, integration is neither defined clearly nor primarily researched. They use integration, coordination and cooperation together without clear definition. Although the research of Makepeace *et al.* (2017) is relatively

more related to the traditional meaning of integration, the concept of integration is rather understood as collaboration at a strategic level. Also, they treat integration as a meaning of better SCM.

Nonetheless, some of studies make meaningful outputs for SCI studies in the humanitarian sector. Thompson (2010) demonstrates that working relationships vary depending on types of partners. The research of Thompson (2010) shows that humanitarian aid actors can have different working relationships and partnerships with other relief actors. Thompson (2010) uses the concept of coordination with NGOs and civilian relief organisations. In this study, unlike other relationships that Task Force army teams had, the teams set an example of full integration with the host nation, which many other organisations followed. There is a limitation that this research does not explain what full integration is. Also, the higher level of collaboration results in an increase of safety and efficiency of relief operations by sharing information such as frequencies, route and zone structure and aircraft landing zone names (Thompson 2010). Thus, it demonstrates the importance of higher level of partnerships in the humanitarian context.

Larson and McLachlin (2011) focus on operations in the uninterrupted environment. In particular, they deal with chaos that emerged in the upstream relationships with a wide range of aid item providers. This poses challenges and obstacles against SCI. The upstream SC is described as push system as the arrivals are often unscheduled and unexpected. These shipments usually come from three main sources such as donations, a regional food bank and purchase from wholesalers. In contrast, the downstream SC with small retail food banks is based on pull system because orders are delivered to their partners on an as-needed basis (Larson and McLachlin 2011). Given this, diverse factors in the unstable emergency situations can have a great influence on

implementation of SCI, which must be precisely considered in the humanitarian studies.

Afshar and Haghani (2012) develop a comprehensive model for a centralised and integrated logistics operations in responding to natural disasters. Its model helps to find “an optimal allocation of scarce resources” through efficient vehicle routing and delivery schedules and also the optimal location for temporary facilities by developing “a system of computer and mathematical models” (Afshar and Haghani 2012, p. 338). This research particularly focuses on the operational level of problems through mathematical modelling. Jahre *et al.* (2016, p. 58) suggest a decision model integrating factors such as “hardship, security, pilferage, co-location and accessibility” for the best choice of joint prepositioning warehouse location in order to serve “both short- and long-term operations”. The concept of SCI used in Jahre *et al.* (2016)’s study focus more on solutions to consider all the factors for decision making of warehouse location. From both research perspectives, SCI is not used as a traditional meaning of integrating SCs with external partners or with internal functioning departments. Both of these studies pay attention to optimise the resource allocation and the location of facilities in the context of emergency situations. Hence, in these studies, integration has been used in a partial way by emphasising optimisation. These do not include either the relational or partnership aspects of SCI or the wider range of SCI activities of/between humanitarian aid actors.

In brief, there are several articles which use the concept of ‘integration’ in the areas of logistics and supply chain management. Most of them use the term integration in different way far away from the traditional meaning of business studies. There are very few articles that use the genuine meaning of SCI. Instead, they usually use the term integration as integrating values, concepts or factors. They do not bring constructs or

factors of SCI that developed in the commercial view. As such, the SCI studies in the humanitarian area have not been deepened into internal or external integration or not defined integration and its role. Here is the research gap of this study.

2.6. Summary

This chapter has discussed how SCI is the essence of SCM and reflected on the development of the terminology, logistics, and SCM formation process. Further, the review has shown that SCI is a necessity to achieve SC success and SCM excellence in the business sector. Hence, since it emerged in early 1980s, SCI has been widely studied from the business perspective in relation to enhancing business performance. On the other hand, this review revealed that SCI studies in the humanitarian field still remain under-explored. Additionally, there has been little academic attention paid to vertical relationships in humanitarian SCs, as more focus has been given to horizontal relationships in respect of the 3Cs. Given this, the clear gap identified in this chapter tends to be under researched in the humanitarian sector and specific problems have not been clearly identified. Therefore, the following chapter will attempt to validate SCI as a key issue from the humanitarian perspective, develop specific research questions and a research framework.

Chapter 3 Exploratory study and research framework

3.1. Introduction

As explained in Chapter 2, SCI has been under-researched in the humanitarian sector. This leads to difficulties in deciding on the research framework, theories, factors, dimensions, and scopes of SCI from the humanitarian perspectives. Additionally, the humanitarian context is different from that of business and, hence, there is a need to consider different forms of implementation of SCI in the humanitarian context. The valid elements in the business sector may not be valid in the humanitarian sector. Therefore, for the inductive stage of the research, an exploratory study was conducted by using expert interviews, that aimed at validating the significance of the research, as well as, determining the research questions and research scope. Further, the goal of this chapter is to inform the conceptual framework and theoretical basis for the main empirical study of this research.

The objectives of this chapter are to:

- a. Discuss the perception about humanitarian SCI
- b. Identify key elements in examining the supplier relationships of IHOs
- c. Explore the unique humanitarian context where some challenges and differences are expected in adopting SCI from the commercial sector
- d. Narrow down the research scope and clarify research questions and theoretical aspects for the remainder of this thesis.

3.2. Exploratory study methodology

Semi-structured interviews were the primary source of data in the exploratory study and these tend to have characteristics of elite interviews, that is interviews targeted to experts in the field. This project required informants who have rich experience and expertise in the humanitarian sector. Expert interviewees can also provide a view of the bigger picture and in-depth information for the start of research (Marshall and Rossman 1989). Considering the exploratory stage, there is a need to manage the interview process flexibly creating a conversational atmosphere, however, at the same time the interviews need to be controlled to some extent in order to achieve the main objectives. Semi-structured interviews meet these requirements by providing a structure approach of interviews but also more leeway for the interviewer to expand the discussion (Rubin and Rubin 2012). A set of interview agendas and research questions were prepared to guide these exploratory interviews (Appendix 1).

This small-scale study is a type of unstructured exploration, which is very useful in the early stage of research. The reason is because it enables researcher “both to revise the research topic and also to determine more precisely what is needed to secure answers to likely research questions” (Saunders and Lewis 1997, p. 290). Conducting a literature review and discussion with academics or professionals leads to robust research in the initial stages (Saunders and Lewis 1997). An unstructured exploration can consist of discussion with experts or informal discussion with stakeholders (Emory and Cooper 1991). Hence, this project adopts non-probability sampling, which is often used in the exploratory stages of research projects. There are no rules for non-probability sampling techniques and samples can be selected based on the researcher’s subjective judgement (Saunders *et al.* 2009). Nonetheless, to mitigate potential

drawback to relying on such subjective judgement when selecting candidates, experts for the exploratory interviewees were carefully selected considering the length of their career, job positions, reputation of affiliated organisation and their dedication to the humanitarian sector.

Table 3-1. The interviewees for the exploratory data collection

Data	Jobs		No of interviewees
Interviews Organised as broad discussion around the themes of key suppliers, supplier relationships with IHOs, and SCI in the humanitarian context.	Academics		3 interviewees
	Field-focused	IHOs	2 interviewees
		Consultant	2 interviewees

Source: Developed by the researcher

For expert interviews, participants ideally consist of academics and practitioners who have rich experience and long careers in the humanitarian sector. Seven semi-structured interviews were conducted with 7 respondents across both groups, so that both perspectives from academics and field can be combined. The academic experts were selected depending on their main research area, such as whether their research area is relevant to supply chain integration or humanitarian partnerships. The conditions to select academic experts are dependent on their research topics based on publications. The field experts were selected from the international humanitarian organisations and their positions in the organisations would be at the managerial level or higher. The field experts were divided into two groups, namely IHOs and consultants. In total there were 7 respondents (R#1 to R#7) from various backgrounds and with 6.5 to 27 years (mean 15.5 years) of work experience. For anonymity, the number marked for each interviewee is not specified in Table 3-1. Time spent with a respondent ranged between 26 and 85 min (mean 45.6 min). Hence, the age and gender

of the participants vary as they were selected based on their work and career positions as shown Table 3-1.

The discussions and interviews with academic and field experts facilitated defining the research area more precisely. These interviews allowed the researcher to learn from their perspectives and to identify issues about supplier relationships and integration between IHOs and its context. This stage of the research was crucial in building confidence before the main data collection, and it served to design an initial research framework and theoretical directions.

3.3. The results from the exploratory study

This exploratory project started with a broad focus on the relationships between IHOs and their suppliers to adopt SCI into the humanitarian context. Adopting an SCI concept in the supplier relationships has not been conducted in the humanitarian research. Hence, this exploratory phase is very important to develop the research idea, gain confidence about the topic and decide the direction and domain for the latter main empirical stage.

The interviews clearly indicated the importance of supplier relationships for HOs and several interviewees emphasised the role of supplier relationship management (SRM), however, its absence. SRM is considered as “the process of engaging in activities of setting up, developing, stabilising and dissolving relationships with existing suppliers as well as the observation of prospective suppliers.” (Moeller et al. 2006, 73). This means that SRM involves the whole process of managing suppliers including potential ones. The relationships between IHOs and their suppliers cannot be ignored as managing supplier relationships is ‘one of the key aspects’ for successful humanitarian supply chain management (R#7). There are many challenges and difficulties in the

supplier relationships (R#1, 2, 6), and “a lot of humanitarian organisations struggle with suppliers” (R#2). However, they do not have the framework of SRM because they have not had enough opportunities to amass experience and know-how of managing supplier relationships (R#1). Also, SRM is important for IHOs, particularly based on managing and monitoring suppliers’ performance (R#5). Given this, supplier relationships need to be investigated from a SCI perspective since many HOs consider this issue critical, but do not have experience or action plans on SRM.

3.3.1. Perception of humanitarian SCI

From a broad perspective, there is not a huge conceptual gap regarding SCI between the commercial and humanitarian areas. Some of respondents were clear that there is no difference in defining SCI between commercial and humanitarian contexts (R#2, R#7). Also, the perception is that the benefits that HOs can gain from SCI are very similar to the commercial environment (R#2). Thus, the principle of SCI as seen in a commercial context can in essence be applied to the humanitarian field.

It seems that the term SCI is not clear to humanitarian actors due to the abstract nature of the concept. The concept SCI is regarded as “a big word” and a very conceptual idea that “no one has been able to achieve” (R#1). Hence, there is a need to define the concept of SCI in the humanitarian context, and then give a shape for the implementation in the field. In addition, the term SCI is generally seen like other approaches such as coordination or collaboration. Many authors do not distinguish integration from collaboration and use the terms interchangeably (R#2). One of interviewees suggested that humanitarian SCI could be accepted as ‘well-coordinated efforts among different people, different units, different organisations for humanitarian SCs’ (R#3). Given this, it seems that SCI is explained as coordination and

collaboration, and these comprehensive characteristics that the term SCI contains can add unnecessary complexity and vagueness to definition.

The narrow view of SCs can usually be understood as up-stream and down-stream flows (Frohlich and Westbrook 2001). However, in the humanitarian sector, coordination between humanitarian actors has been dealt with more frequently, than from up-stream and down-stream perspectives (R#2). That is to say, horizontal relationships across the diverse type of aid actors have received more attention than vertical relationships in HSCM. As such, dyadic relationships and vertical integration are under-researched in the humanitarian sector.

In respect of inventory, technical integration is observed, particularly, among large HOs through their enterprise resource planning (ERP) systems. “So that type of technical integration is the one that the most prevalent already now.” (R#2). Thus, it seems that technical integration through the system between IHOs and their suppliers is quite popular and common to see among large international humanitarian organisations.

Lastly, there are difficulties in implementing SCI in the humanitarian sector. This is because HOs have a problem which is consistent with the commercial sector due to its broad and abstract concept of SCI (R#1). Furthermore, it will be more difficult to implement SCI for the HOs because the nature and philosophy of the organisations are very different from those of commercial sector (R#1). Therefore, there is a need to fully understand both the characteristics of the humanitarian context and the nature of HOs.

As such, several gaps in the area of humanitarian SCI can be summarised as follows:

- a need of SCI adoption from the commercial concept
- a need of clear understanding of H-SCI
- a need of attention to vertical relationship studies
- a need of explore a wider range of parts, not only for technical integration
- and a need of understanding difficulties in implementing SCI due to unique humanitarian context.

3.3.2. Characteristics of suppliers

Table 3-2 briefly explains the characteristics of supplier relationships in the humanitarian context. There are many different types of suppliers that HOs are involved with. First, there are ‘donor type’ and ‘seller type’ of suppliers (R#3, 5). The former offers ‘in-kind support’ that includes products or services (R#3, 5). Sometimes, their offers do not meet the needs of beneficiaries and are useless in the affected area (R#3). The latter is “the commercial market suppliers” that are major suppliers for HOs (R#5). Secondly, the seller type of suppliers can be divided into two groups depending on whether it is specialised on the humanitarian business or not, as R#7 mentioned. Lastly, according to the contract span the relationships can be divided into one-off and longer-term contracts. It seems that there are more one-off contracts rather than maintaining longer-term relationships with suppliers (R#5). Some respondents (R#5, 6) considered the locations of suppliers important. The distance between the HOs and their suppliers can decide the method and frequency of communication and interactions between them (R#5). Also, the distance between the location of suppliers and the affected area is an important factor in responding effectively to disasters (R#6).

Table 3-2. Characteristics of SR in the humanitarian context

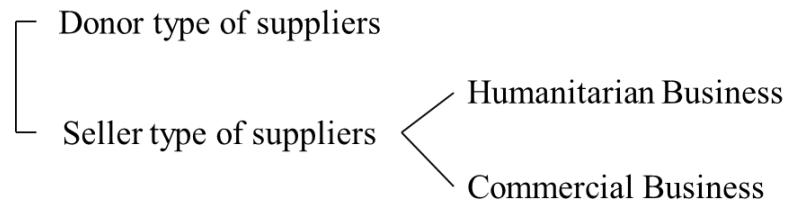
Codes	Description
Donor/seller types of suppliers	Donor type / seller type of suppliers
	The problem of donor supplier: donating in-kind products/services: sometimes their products/services not matched with beneficiaries needs
Specialised on humanitarian or not	Two types of suppliers: 1. specialised on humanitarian business 2. typical commercial supplier, one-off transaction with humanitarians
One-off contract dominating	Much more one-off procurement than longer-term contract
The importance of location of suppliers	Depend on the location of suppliers for interaction and collaboration
	Long distance with suppliers deciding the way of communication or information collection
	Long distance from the location of suppliers, the nearer the better to the affected area

Source: Developed by the researcher

Figure 3-1 further describes about two types of suppliers: donors and sellers (R#5). This can be also called ‘donor supplier and traditional supplier’ (R#3). One of respondents (R#5) say that its organisation often receives offers of in-kind donation from suppliers or donors “free of charge”. This donor type of suppliers usually provide “what they have” although they are not needed (R#3). However, they mainly use suppliers in the commercial market (R#5). This traditional type is similar to traditional professional suppliers in the business sector (R#3). Among the commercial concept of suppliers, they can be divided into two groups. One group is for the suppliers that “have very much dedicated [their work] to humanitarian business”, while the other group is for the suppliers that “is typically coming from the commercial world” (R#7). The former is specialised on humanitarian aid supplies (for example, Better Shelter and Nutriset Group). The latter usually deals with commercial sector business and occasionally deals with the humanitarian side (R#7). For instance, the Dantherm Group provides their products for both humanitarian and commercial sectors. There may be some differences between these two types of suppliers (R#7). As such, it is

necessary to consider the donor type of suppliers when dealing with the humanitarian SCs.

Figure 3-1. Categories of suppliers of IHOs



Source: Developed by the researcher

3.3.3. The key elements

3.3.3.1. *Theoretical aspects*

It is evident that **power dynamics** exist between stakeholders in the humanitarian sector such as IHOs, their suppliers and donors. R#6 emphasised that the most important issue is ‘power’ in the relationships between IHOs and their suppliers. Power is considered for practitioners as an omnipresent of everyday business, particularly in the supply chain relationships (Maloni and Benton 2000, p. 51). The interviews in this study also show that the power issue is unavoidable when looking into the SC relationships in the humanitarian sector. In some cases, they recognise they hold power consciously, on the other hand, they sometimes do not realise that they hold power and abuse it (R#6). Respondent 6 illustrated that no self-awareness about power abuse was the worst thing. This imbalance of power in the supplier relationships influence the counterpart in setting up relationships (R#6, 7).

Firstly, financial resources can generate power asymmetry in the relationships. R#6 considered “the money power” as a key resource of power although this is not the only

resource of power, describing as follows: “More often than not, it’s about where the money is. It’s the first thing about power. But it’s not always the only thing.” This money power clearly affects the performance or decisions of the counterpart. For instance, IHOs may “have pressures they have to achieve things, they end up using the power to achieve the thing” through their financial power (R#6).

Secondly, the networking that organisations have can elevate the degree of power. When it is not money power, many organisations do not recognise they have their own power resources. Local organisations or small organisations particularly do not realise their own power and strengths, which are not money power (R#6). They are more likely to have ‘relational power’ or networking power. For example, it can be easier for these organisations to access to local authorities through the network they have maintained in the local area (R#6). However, many organisations “do not leverage the right relationships” due to a lack of self-awareness regarding their own power and ability (R#6). This networking is also important in other ways. As R#5 said, how well SCs are integrated depends on how quickly the network (contacts) are formed to respond to disasters. Thus, evaluating where the appropriate programmes are and whom need to be contacted should be decided in a shorter time decides the level of integration. This can mean that the ability to establish network shortly is an asset for organisations in the disaster relief situations.

Lastly, scarcity of aid commodities or services can lead to an imbalance of power between SC partners. It is quite common to see opportunistic behaviour in suppliers through the pricing activities in emergent situations. R#7 explained how the scarcity of products can create power dynamics by playing with prices in a monopolistic situation: “There are suppliers who exploit the situation, where there is just one

supplier for certain commodity available”. In this situation, there are not many options to choose for IHOs except for following the supplier’s suggestions (R#7).

This power asymmetry has more influences on SCI than mutual interactions with suppliers (Maloni and Benton 2000). As such, SCI is intimately linked with the issue of power and power asymmetry heavily affects supplier relationships. It can be assumed that power asymmetry has a great influence on the integration with suppliers. Reflecting the interviews in this research, this phenomenon can be also applied in the humanitarian sector.

In the humanitarian context, **trust** is also critical issues between HOs and their suppliers. R#2 said that in the contractual relationships between HOs and their suppliers, “it is very difficult to develop trust-based relationships”. IHOs overall recognise that the integrity is needed in the supplier relationships, nonetheless, they are not used to working closely with their suppliers (R#1). Additionally, there is another aspect in developing such relationships as they can only be developed based on the frequency of transactions and the quantity of supplies, which is only possible for large organisations with global suppliers. However, it is not easy to keep the frequency and the quantity high enough to develop the trust-based relationships for small organisations and local suppliers (R#2).

In many studies, trust is regarded as central to relational exchanges (Morgan and Hunt 1994). Morgan and Hunt (1994) suggested that “cooperation is the only outcome posited to be influenced directly by both relationship commitment and trust”. Referring to Anderson and Narus (1990), cooperation stems from the Latin word which means “work together”: ‘co’- “together” and ‘operari’- “to work, and different entities working together to achieve mutual goals (Morgan and Hunt 1994, p. 26). In this sense,

this ‘togetherness’ of cooperation can be replaced with the concept of ‘integration’ and, therefore, it can be assumed that integration is the outcome posited to be influenced directly both relationship commitment and trust. Thus, it can be assumed that the degree of trust in the relationship can affect integration between IHOs and their suppliers and in their activities with the affected communities in which they work.

Lastly, when discussing inter-organisational relationships, **commitment** plays a critical role (Anderson and Weitz 1992). The core of commitment is considered as stability and sacrifice (Wu *et al.* 2004). This means that SC members try to pursue longer-term and stable relationships albeit short-term sacrifice, which means relationship commitment.

Many interviewees (R#1, R#2, R#3, R#5) commonly described the phenomenon that there are few long-term relationships between IHOs and their suppliers, while there are many ‘one-off procurement’ or ‘ad hoc one-off contracts’ (R#5). This can be called ‘emergency procurement’ and generally occurs outside of the normal public procurement approach (R#2). This often happens in the military realm and was most recently seen in the procurement practices of the covid 19 pandemic. Such activities can lead to cronyism and other unethical practices which may not result in the most effective outcome (Sian and Smyth 2021). First of all, maintaining long-term relationships is not prioritised in the range of activities related to supplier relationships management. IHOs tend not to ‘spend a lot of energy on maintaining supplier relationships so long term’ and rather focus on practical activities such as ‘a regular supplier meeting, supplier management and supplier performance management’ (R#5). Thus, as a result of short-term supplier relationships or one-off contracts, IHOs seem to lose the opportunities to improve the efficiency of SCs by helping their suppliers to build capacities: “They do not help suppliers to become more capable. Just ask

suppliers to be able to do perform according to term of reference, according to their amount of money that they have....” (R#1).

In this situation, these less-committed relationships clearly have an impact on efficient SCM as there are usually short-term relationships and IHOs want their suppliers just follow the regulations rather helping them improve the performance quality. There is less interest in putting more effort into supplier relationships improvement. One of participant (R#5) said that “we don’t spend a lot of energy on maintaining supplier relationships so long term.” HOs, therefore, are less flexible in being able to tailor specific relationships with their suppliers (R#1). Given this, long-term relationships with suppliers are not prioritised and HOs do not try to adopt suitable SRM for different types of suppliers. Thus, it can be understood that they do not want to spend much time or put efforts for their suppliers to pursue longer-term relationships.

On the other side, commitment is also related to power and trust. The scarcity of aid commodities can lead to power imbalances between IHOs and their suppliers. Also, it can create ethical issues since suppliers can demand high market prices in emergency situations. Many suppliers often exploit disaster circumstances, and in such situations IHOs do not have many choices and “are forced to just go with it” (R#7). IHOs are unwillingly driven to use the supplier that exploits the emergent situations as there is no alternative. These relationships become emergency procurement or ad-hoc procurement and therefore cannot be developed to a long-term relationship. Thus, it can be assumed that power asymmetry can have influences on relationship commitment.

When it comes to trust, it is quite common to see ‘swift-trust’ formed between IHOs and their suppliers. Respondent #3 described ‘swift-trusted’ relationships with

suppliers in the humanitarian context as follows: “Swift-trust like things have to happen so quick, so they might have their relationship but there might not be steady stable orders helping it.” Probably, this type of trust is fostered due to the humanitarian context that cannot guarantee regular demands and clearly influences the span of relationships between IHOs and the supplier. Based the interviews above, it can be clearly said that: (1) commitment is affected by power dynamics and trust; and (2) commitment directly impacts on supplier integration.

3.3.3.2. *Situational factors*

HOs are not the traditional type of customers for their suppliers. R#3 described a traditional customer as the one who could request stable demands with consistent volume and make payment on time. However, in the humanitarian context, HOs used to have “unstable, sudden and erratic requirements” (R#3). This is the point where HOs may evoke problems in supplier relationships. It is, therefore, difficult to meet Just In Time because the demand is not constant rather there are many one-off demands in this sector (R#6). Additionally, many HOs do not maintain the certain level of frequency and quantity of transactions for suppliers (R#2). Especially, for small organisations it is more difficult to produce the frequency and the quantity of transactions (R#2). It seems that this issue is related to the nature of emergency contexts where HOs should go through. R#7 well described the relations of emergency context and demand: “when you operate in the emergency context, it is hard to predict when and where the next disaster will actually happen and what’s gonna be demand needed.” In this difficult situation, it is very challenging to have supply chains ready to respond to sudden influx of demands (R#5). Supply chains heavily influence on the whole response (R#5). This unpredictable demand and incapable SCs can be regarded

as a problem. However, this feature is inevitable in the disaster circumstances as it is very challenging to forecast disaster strikes.

On the other hand, the role of local community or community organisations is more emphasised. In general, community organisations know the local conditions and have their structure already (R#6). Also, they are usually the first responders to the disasters and are the key enablers for the speedy response of providing relief support (R#6). It can be assumed that IHOs rather respond to disasters through these local communities or local organisations which can access affected areas quickly and easily. Further, as a result of this unstable and irregular demand, maintaining longer-term relationships with suppliers is hindered. One of the reasons for short-term relationships is ‘in the sense of meeting the needs for any given disasters’ (R#3). Short term relationships or one-off contracts may arise in the course of responding immediately to unpredicted disasters and the subsequent circumstances. As such, **unstable circumstances** are one of key contextual factors surrounding the supplier relationships of HOs.

The factor that distinguishes IHOs from the commercial sector is the ‘funds flow’ of IHOs because they mostly rely on donations for their resources. Thus, one of the biggest differences is that the role of donors is crucial for IHOs, as “that is where the money comes from” (R#7), whether it is from individuals, companies, or government bodies. This means that they can have a lot of influences on IHOs’ decisions and performance. This aspect can lead to “probably one of the biggest challenges” as R#1 pointed out. IHOs “are spending too much effort” on satisfying their donors and also “have to be accountable to their donors” through their process (R#1). Given this, donors take a significant role as financial resources to IHOs and at the same time may provide great challenges to IHOs to meet their requirements whatever the circumstances are during disasters. It can be assumed that donors can influence on the

direction of IHOs' activities and the relationships they have. Indeed, on the ground, geopolitical agendas that donors pursue are often prioritised over the humanitarian imperative and ultimate purpose to protect the vulnerable from disasters, as Bailey (2013) reports.

The relationships between IHOs and their suppliers can be identified as 'contractual relationships' as Respondents 2 and 4 mentioned. The **public procurement regulations** indirectly influence the agreements they make. One of interviewees (R#2) explained about the public procurement regulations that are very different contextually in the humanitarian sector from the private sector. The procurement regulations of each IHO are "very similar to one another" and also to those of public health care and government agencies. In the humanitarian sector, public procurement regulations prohibit having long-term relationships by regulating the frequency of tender audit process, the number of bidders and the choice of the lowest bidding (R#2).

Under this context of procurement regulation, it seems that IHOs and their suppliers should bear with a long procurement process. In general cases, suppliers must go through the bidding process, sometimes for each project or programme and it usually takes a lot of time (R#4, 7). There is also a difficulty incurred in completing administrative work such as providing financial documentary evidence, particularly when purchasing products with other departments or other offices in different countries through centralised procurement system of higher level of organisations (R#4). Additionally, one of interviewees (R#7) illustrated the tendering process as follows: "...you need to get to your tendering, then usually the rule in most NGOs to have the three steps, you need to have three offers, three quotes and places." This shows that the procurement in the humanitarian area has certain rules and regulations to control the HOs. Probably, it can be linked to the thoughts that 'they have to be

accountable to donors’ as R#1 mentioned. As a result of this, the procurement process can be delayed (R#7) and leads to delays in aid delivery or urgent requirements, influencing aid projects (R#2, 4). Further, R#1 pointed out the procurement process as one of reasons to bring about procuring at higher prices, particularly, in the case of global procurement. Also, tender audit processes every two or three years can prohibit the long-term relationships between them (R#2, R#5).

Table 3-3. Unique contexts of HOs

Categories	Coding for context	Resp.
Two types of aid contexts	Differences between 1. disaster relief and 2. development aid	R#3
Diverse types of IHOs and stakeholders	The relationships between IHOs and suppliers vary depending on which organisations	R#1
	Due to more stakeholder, more challenges in integration compared to business sector	R#3
	procurement strategies highly dependent on types of organisations	R#7
Types of disasters	1. Development aid project: usually scheduled in advance and quite predictable, easier to be a supplier 2. Slow-onset disasters: where there's offering some advanced planning 3. Sudden-onset disasters: a need to quickly supply	R#3
Scale of disasters	Disaster Category 1, 2, 3 1. Category 1: disasters that the domestic national government can manage 2. Category 2: disaster level that regional office should be involved in 3. Category 3: disaster level that global aid support should be involved	R#4
Phases of disaster management	Length of aid period: 7 days, 90 days Responses and aid changes depending on the length, if it is 7 days or 90 days after the occurrence of disaster, within 7 days, we use global warehouse from global centre but in the long-term aid, we encourage to the use of the local market	R#4
Different characteristics of regions	Different characteristics of Regions: 1. Asia: the most natural disasters, developed local market, logistics transportation & airport more developed 2. Middle East: military conflicts, less developed local market 3. Africa: the more long-term ongoing crisis conflicts as per as natural ones, less developed local market	R#7

Source: Developed by the researcher

Additionally, there are basic contextual factors in the humanitarian studies that should be considered as circumstances where the relationships between the IHOs and their suppliers are situated. Table 3-3 explains the basic understandings of humanitarian contexts that several participants suggested.

3.3.3.3. *Organisational factors*

In humanitarian studies, it is difficult to develop one optimised model because HOs usually have different organisational structures and unique decision making and financial processes to each other. Also, even in the IHOs, their style of decision making or structures is very different from one another. So, it is very difficult to develop one theory and apply the same theory to the whole group of IHOs in the academic research. Thus, it is very difficult to find or unify one model (R#2) because each organisation has its own uniqueness. Even among the group of organisations in the same type of large IHOs, each IHO has different organisational structure and different practices of work (R#2). Some IHOs are more central-structured, while some are not (R#2). These characteristics whether centralised or decentralised depends on IHOs' decision-making process and financial system (R#2, 5). The reasons why many HOs have a centralised finance or procurement system are that they can guard against potential corruption and achieve economy of scale (R#2). Therefore, from the perspectives of the whole organisation, it is cost-effective and very efficient to procure through mass contracts (R#4) which lead to economies of scale.

Nonetheless, from the perspectives of each programme or local office, it is time-consuming to produce a financial report for funders (donors) (R#4). In addition, this centralised system is not flexible enough to localise and customise for each project and local office (R#4). Unlike a centralised structure in finance and procurement, in the

decentralised structure HOs are not controlled or are less controlled by a higher organisation or umbrella organisation (R#5). For instance, if they have decentralised structures, they have more leeway in purchasing aid items or developing their own supplier relationships (R#2).

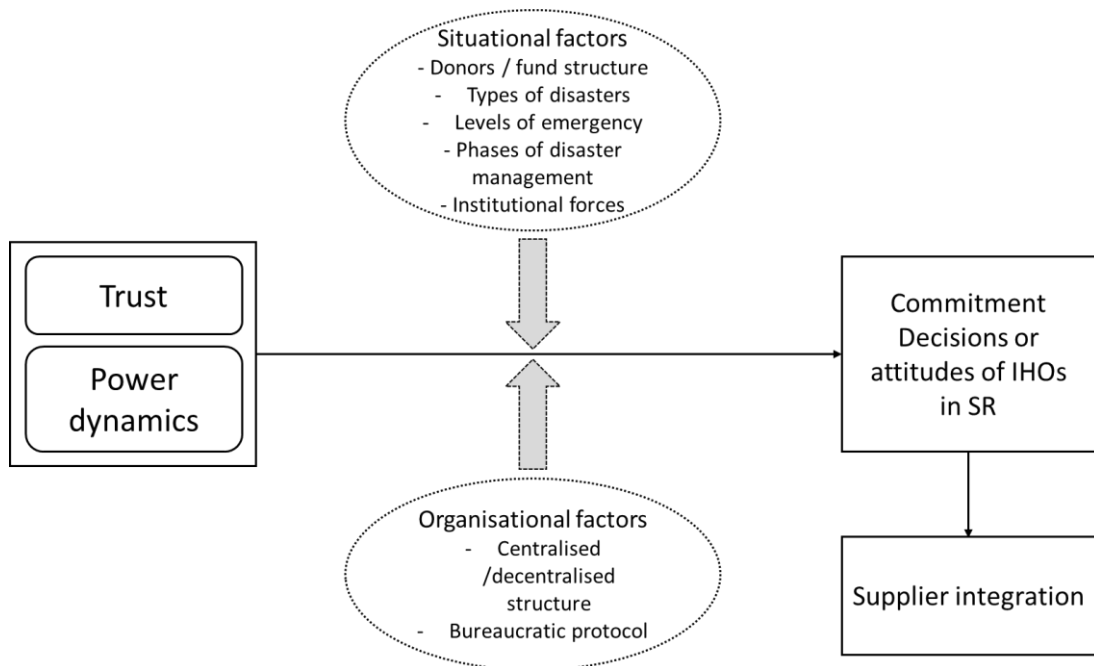
Given these, the differences in structuring procurement and finance can also affect the supplier relationships. It can be assumed that each organisation establishes their own characteristics of relationships with suppliers. Thus, demarcating or identifying the characteristics of the organisations and their context will be important in the humanitarian research.

3.3.4. Reflections

3.3.4.1. *Conceptual framework*

Drawing from the exploratory interviews, the initial research framework is established as shown in Figure 3-2. From the result of the exploratory studies, there are three mechanisms that affect supplier relationships and integration: power, trust and commitment. The assumption of the research framework established through the exploratory project is that successful SI implementation requires commitment to the relationship between an IHO and its suppliers, and trust and power play a critical role in influencing commitment.

Figure 3-2. Initial research framework



Source: Developed by the researcher

This research framework was purely extracted from the expert interviews in the exploratory study. However, the elements of the framework are also related to the existing theories. The theoretical support for the framework is offered in the finding chapters. Also, there are unique contexts where all these flows happen in the humanitarian sector. Depending on situational factors such as donor, types of disasters, phase of disaster management and institutional forces, IHOs' decision, strategies and attitudes can be changed. As explained above, the factor of centralised or decentralised structure can make some differences.

3.3.4.2. Research questions

These findings enabled the researcher to articulate an initial overarching research question and sub-questions that would guide the subsequent investigation and empirical stage in the later part. There are basically assumptions and expectations that the potential impact of integration in the HSCM is positive and needed particularly in

the dyadic relationship between IHOs and suppliers. Nonetheless, it can be difficult to investigate the up-stream relationships between IHOs and their suppliers through the lens of SCI due to a lack of existing research. Indeed, studies pertinent to “upstream collaboration” are rare (Prasanna and Haavisto 2018, p. 5611), presumably due to difficult access to suppliers. Also, there are a lot of factors to take into account as IHOs locate in very unique contexts. It seems that it is not easy to merge to one theory, as diversity and complexity in organisational issues were found.

In qualitative research, researcher can either “start with a research question which guides design”, or “evolve and refine a research question as a study progresses” (Braun and Clarke 2013, p. 44). Thus, this thesis started with an overall research question and broad parts of sub-questions that were formed from the initial exploratory study. Some of detailed sub research questions were also developed and evolved in the later part of the empirical research phase. Considering both practical concerns from professionals and academic needs from academic experts, the research question emerged as a result of both problematising and gap-spotting approaches (Alvesson and Sandberg 2013). Thus, the research project addresses the following overarching research question:

How can SCI be facilitated in the relationships between an international humanitarian organisation and its key suppliers in the humanitarian context?

A summary of two divisions and the research questions is presented in Table 3-4. As described in the research framework, the relationships between IHOs and suppliers are important themselves and at the same time there is inevitably a need to investigate the contexts where SI is implemented. The research is largely divided into two parts: the supplier relationships and integration and its context.

Table 3-4. Research questions in the thesis

Part 1. SI Implementation contexts
1. How do the relationships between an IHO and its suppliers operate in a humanitarian context?
2. How is the organisational structure of an IHO related to the different type of suppliers?
3. How do donors influence the relationships between an IHO and its suppliers?
4. Which aspects of context matter depending on where the case is situated, such as disaster type, regional location, etc?
Part 2. Understanding the relationships between an IHO and its suppliers on SI
5. How does an IHO work with its different suppliers from the perspective of SI?
5a. How are the supplier relationships of an IHO influenced by power, trust and commitment?
5b. How are SCs integrated between an IHO and its key suppliers?
5c. How do power, trust and commitment influence the SI practices of an IHO?

Source: Developed by the researcher

3.4. Summary

As discussed in Chapter 2, there is very little research regarding humanitarian SI. Hence there was a need to validate the significance of the topic of this research, refine research questions and a research framework. By conducting expert interviews with a range of professionals in the humanitarian sector the basic theoretical assumptions were derived, and this chapter provides and informs the research direction and scope. Further, influencing factors such as the contexts surrounding the supplier relationships were extracted by exploring the unique context of the humanitarian sector. As such, this small-scale exploratory study offers valuable guidelines for the main empirical part of the thesis. The next chapter presents how the main case study was conducted in detail.

Chapter 4 Methodological considerations and research design

4.1. Introduction

In this chapter, details about the methodology and research design employed in this study are presented. The comprehensive aim of this chapter is to provide an overview of the research process and explain the rationale behind the methodological choices. This can be divided into six specific objectives for this chapter:

- e. Secure the transparency of the research logic that has led this whole research project
- f. Explain the methodological logic linking from philosophical background to the methodological choice and techniques/procedures
- g. Present considerations about the way in which to approach to theory development and how they are applied in the research process
- h. Provide a justification for adopting a case study research design, data collection methods and analysis methods and process
- i. Describe the practical application of a single case with a structure of embedding several sub-cases associated with the single case
- j. Address ensuring quality and ethicality of the research

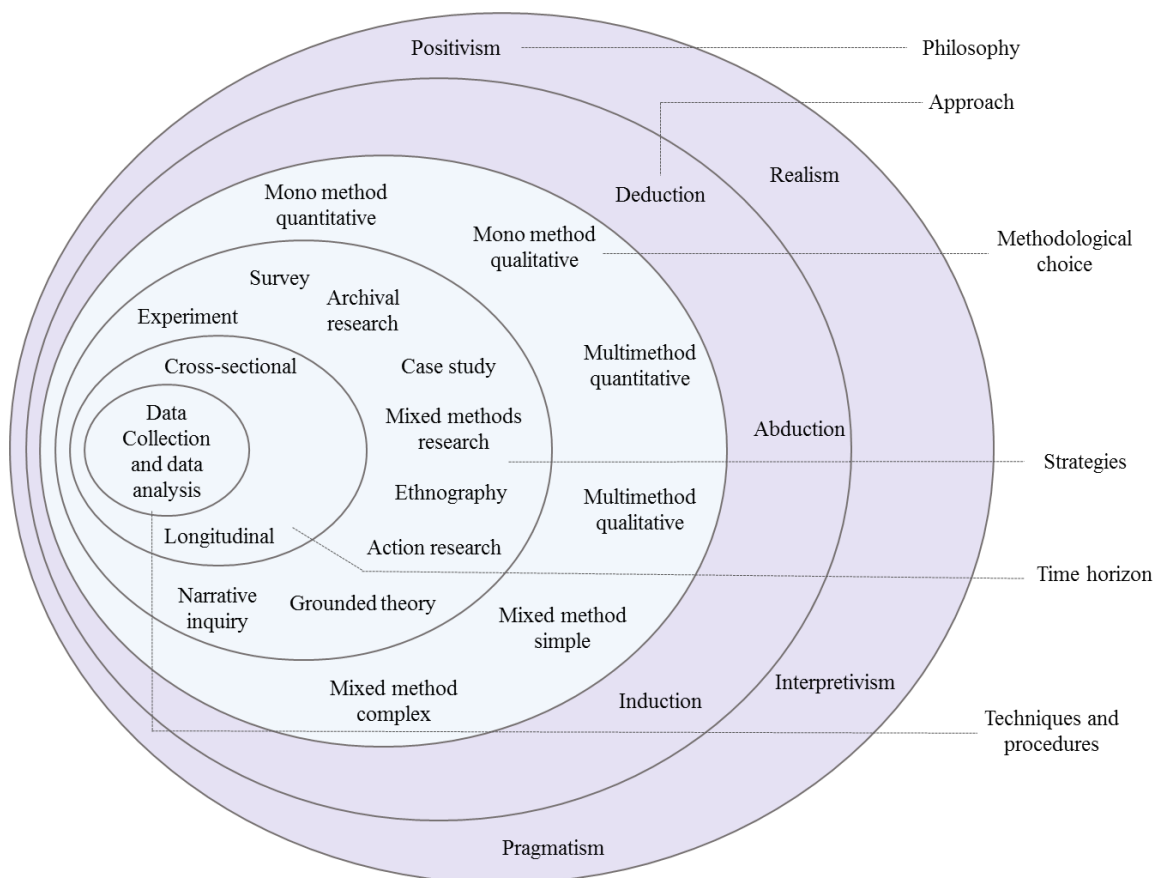
4.2. Philosophical consideration: critical realism

4.2.1. Background

“The term research philosophy refers to a system of belief and assumptions about the development of knowledge” (Saunders *et al.* 2016, p. 124). Research philosophy

shows the purpose of the research naturally by looking into the way of viewing the world and reality, and through which researchers can approach to the reality, and what they consider important. All of these are implied in the philosophical considerations and this section shows what this research pursues and intends. The philosophical background plays implicitly or explicitly an important role in academic research regardless of whether researchers are aware of this. Its role is not limited as a mere philosophy separated from the empirical research design (Johnson and Clark 2006 cited in Saunders *et al.* 2016, p. 125). The philosophical paradigms inform a research approach and processes and are linked to the choice of practical methods (Clough and Nutbrown 2012, p. 31).

Figure 4-1. The research ‘onion’



Source: Saunders *et al.* 2012, p. 128

Sapsford (2006, p. 176) also asserts that research philosophy is closely related to the choice of methods. Research philosophies offer grounds for employing a particular research design and methods (Clough and Nutbrown 2012, p. 25). The research ‘onion’ shown in Figure 4-1 successfully visualise the sequence of methodological choices beginning from research philosophy and leading up to data collection and analysis methods. Saunders *et al.* (2016, pp. 124-125) clearly show through this diagram how philosophical assumptions can sequentially form the basis for research approaches, methodological choices, strategy and data collection techniques and analysis procedures. As such, this research tried to pursue the consistency from the philosophical assumptions to the actual practice of the empirical stage.

4.2.2. Ontological assumptions

“Ontology refers to assumptions about the nature of reality” (Saunders *et al.* 2016, p. 127). Despite this ontological stance does not seem directly relevant to empirical research projects, the ontological assumptions determine how researchers see the world of their research area, what to research and how to study their research objects (Saunders *et al.* 2016, p. 127). Thus, positioning the ontological stance of research is important to understand the overall flow of the research logic.

This thesis has been developed based on the philosophical foundations of critical realism (CR) although it could not accommodate all elements of the CR principles. CR is a relatively new philosophical consideration in approaching to ontological, epistemological and axiological aspects (Easton 2010, p. 119). The philosophical assumptions of CR stemmed from the work of Roy Bhaskar (1975) in the late twentieth century (Wynn Jr. and Williams 2012, p. 787) as a response to positivism/direct realism and postmodernism/nominalism (Reed 2005; Saunders *et al.* 2016, p. 138).

Thus, modern CR has been accepted as an alternative to positivism and interpretivism and borrowed components of both paradigms, which entails the position of CR locating in a middle ground between these two philosophical stances (Sayer 1992; Reed 2005; Wynn Jr. and Williams 2012). Further, Steinmetz (1998, p. 171) evaluates CR as “the most defensible” philosophy for the social sciences generally on ontological and epistemological aspects.

In the ontological level of assumptions, CR is to be counterposed to social constructionism (Reed 2005) and support an existence of an independent reality (Wynn Jr. and Williams 2012). Critical realists understand that ‘the independent reality’ exists and the theories or research can revolve around the reality that comprises the world. At the same time, they admit the limitations of human capacity that humans including researcher cannot fully understand or observe the reality (Wynn Jr. and Williams 2012, p. 789). In other words, critical realists understand the world and entities that comprise reality actually exist, apart from ‘human knowledge or ability to understand them’. The world cannot be reducible or limited to human’s perceptions and experiences (Wynn and Williams 2012, p. 790). Hence, objective and independent reality exist ‘out there’, however, it is very difficult to scrutinise, define, clarify, measure, and characterise the reality because humans can only experience just some part of the world and entities that constitute the reality. (Wynn and Williams 2012, p. 790). That is to say, from a critical realist view, although the objective reality exist, humans cannot fully observe or experience it.

Understanding ‘reality’ is the core part of philosophical consideration in the CR paradigm, which is characterised by a structured, layered, and transformational ontology (Fleetwood 2005; Reed 2005). The stratified reality is the unique characteristic of ontological assumptions that critical realism has, which contrasts with

those of positivism and interpretivism (Wynn and Williams 2012). Positivists perceive that there is only “one true reality” (Saunders *et al.* 2016, p. 136) based on “a flat ontology” (Wynn and Williams 2012, p. 790) that seldom considers the existence of mechanisms (Joseph 1998). Interpretivists understand that the nature of reality is ‘complex, rich and socially constructed through culture and language’ (Saunders *et al.* 2016, p. 136). Unlike these two assumptions, critical realists emphasise the existence of general elements such as some structures and mechanisms in an independent reality, although they are not directly accessed through our observation and knowledge of them (Wynn and Williams 2012 p. 790; Saunders *et al.* 2016).

In understanding the reality from the CR perspectives, the stratified ontology is the unique characteristics of CR, differentiating from the ontological assumptions of positivism and interpretivism (Wynn and Williams 2012). As shown Table 4-1, Bhaskar (2008) stratifies reality into three nested domains: real, actual and empirical domains. The level of the real refers to “the entities and structures of reality and the causal powers inherent to them as they independently exist” (Wynn and Williams 2012 p. 790). The domain of the actual is “a subset of the real that includes the events that occur when the causal powers of structures and entities are enacted, regardless of whether or not these are observed by humans” (Wynn and Williams 2012 p. 790). The domain of the empirical is “a subset of the actual and consists of those events” which can be experienced through perception or measurement (Wynn and Williams 2012 p. 790).

In addition to this type of ontological stratification, the domain of real is stratified into two categories: lower- and higher- level mechanisms. In any level of this, there might be a multitude of mechanisms such as “economic, political, and cultural structures coexist within the social structure” (Steinmetz 1998, p. 179).

Table 4-1. Stratified ontology of CR

	Domain of Real	Domain of Actual	Domain of Empirical
Mechanisms	√		
Events	√	√	
Experiences	√	√	√

Source: Bhaskar 2008, p. 47

Sayer (1992) divides the relationships into two groups between the abstract and the concrete: structure and mechanisms in the abstract group and events in the concrete group as effects. Their relationships between structures, mechanisms and events are located in a complex system. Matches between mechanisms and events can vary depending on the conditions, for instance, one particular mechanism can produce several different events, whilst the same sort of event may have distinct causes. Research objects can be analysed “in terms of their constitutive structures, as parts of wider structures and in terms of their causal powers”, which are combined and melted into social research (Sayer 1992, p. 116).

In summary, CR accepts that the reality exists independently “out there”, although due to the limitations of knowledge of human beings it is very difficult to observe the reality directly through the stratified reality. Hence, CR accepts that the reality exist independently, but still is socially constructed as actors cannot directly access the reality. In addition, the constructed view towards the reality constructed by actors can be incorrect or different from the independent reality. Given this, from the critical realist views, social theory can be established through the journey of identifying the domain of real, underlying structure and social research will be an attempt of exploring the mechanism which produce actual social life (Reed and Harvey 1992).

Burgess *et al.* (2006) say that most of SCM studies have used the functionalist paradigm that is aligned with positivism by ninety-seven percent whereas philosophical paradigms that are anti-positivist in nature were employed in only a small proportion of articles in the SCM research. In terms of a methodological gap, it is meaningful to adopt critical the realism stance to expand philosophical diversity and deepen the insight in the SCM studies.

4.2.3. Epistemological assumptions

Epistemological assumptions are about “the grounds of knowledge” such as how the world can be understood, what kinds of knowledge can be generated, how to communicate this as knowledge to fellows and how to sort out valid and legitimate knowledge (Burrell and Morgan 1979, p. 1). The distinctive feature between ontology and epistemology has become clearer by elaborating the concepts of intransitive and transitive (Joseph 1998; Bhaskar 2008). For critical realists, the ontological level is involved with “the intransitive objects of knowledge” (Bhaskar 2008, p. 12) that are never changing, exist independently of us and the real things, namely structures, mechanisms, and processes (Joseph 1998). In contrast to this, the epistemological process is related to transitive knowledge that is used to create new knowledge, such as extant theories, technologies, models, methods, social practices and so on (Joseph 1998; Bhaskar 2008). In addition, researchers’ observations are included as well as established theories about the independent reality that have been evolved as the outcome of scientific inquiry (Collier 1994). Nonetheless, critical realists admit that theories cannot perfectly describe reality, leading to a base of knowledge that is possibly wrong (Wynn and Williams 2012).

Critical realists understand that social and organisational structures can change over time through in-depth historical analysis (Reed 2005; Saunders *et al.* 2016). At least within this perspective, they accept epistemological relativism (Reed 2005) that is a subjective approach to knowledge to a slight extent (Saunders *et al.* 2016). In the epistemological relativism realm, knowledge is regarded as an output of its time and specific historical situations (Bhaskar 1989) and “social facts are social constructions agreed on by people rather than existing independently” (Saunders *et al.* 2016, p. 140). Bhaskar fully accepts the view of “epistemic relativity” (Bhaskar 1979, p. 73) and admits “fallibilism” (Steinmetz 1998, p. 174), which supports that “all beliefs are socially produced, so that all knowledge is transient” (Bhaskar 1979, p. 73). Given this, causality in the CR perspectives cannot be limited to statistical correlations and quantitative methods, which lead to accommodating a wide range of methods in the CR studies (Reed 2005).

In summary, the CR perspectives are the combination of realists’ ontology and interpretivists’ epistemology (Sayer 2000). In this view, a reality world exists out there, but the knowledge of it is socially constructed, which also can be selective and fallible (Bygstad 2010; Easton 2010; Wynn and Williams 2012). Bygstad (2010, p. 167) says that the findings from a CR case study are associated to searching “the mechanism of the objects of research”, rather to discovering “the regularities of events”. As such, the CR approach is greatly suitable for this research that seeks to explore fundamental paradigms such as power, trust and commitment behind the relationships with supplier in the humanitarian organisation. In other words, this research is not restricted to analysis of the regularity in the behaviours of SI, pursuing the in-depth exploration of mechanisms beyond the direct and visible evidence. However, there is a limitation that these proposed mechanisms remain as candidate mechanisms until they are examined

and validated through further studies (Bygstad 2010). This constraint is also applicable to this research that the suggested mechanisms of this research retain the status of propositional mechanisms and need to be investigated and validated in the future research.

4.3. Approach to theory development

4.3.1. Application of CR principles

The main principle of CR is the causal language in describing the world (Easton 2010). Critical realists, therefore, try to explain “more detailed causal explanations of a given set of phenomena or events” through “both the actors’ interpretations and the structures and mechanisms” (Wynn Jr. and Williams 2012, pp. 787-8). They also concentrate on what the underlying components and interactions in a real world are assumed so that the happenings of a given set of events or phenomena can be explained (Bhaskar 1975). This results in historical narratives in which it is assumed events can be explained as the outcomes have been observed (post-hoc rationalisation). Causality is not out of touch with actualities. Causal languages are used in both daily life and social science (Sayer 2000). They are unconsciously used in everyday life and CR reflects the causal languages and procedures that have been used in everyday life (Easton 2010). That is to say, critical realists support for the conscious use of causal languages. Causality in the CR studies does not necessarily need to be grounded on regular series of events or a correlational assessment of regularities (Sayer 2000). According to Wynn and Williams (2012, p. 789), there are two ways of describing causality for researchers as follows: (1) to “explain a phenomenon by postulating a relationship between conceptual entities”; and (2) to “generate explanations of how actors understand and interpret their roles in a particular social setting, and how

subjective meanings are developed and sustained.” This research is close to the former as supplier relationships of the IHO are explained through assumptions about the relationships amongst power, trust, commitment, and SI.

There have been consistent efforts to standardise the process of CR research. Joseph (1998, p. 81) particularly addresses about essential methodological process of CR as follows: “(1) the causal analysis of an event; (2) a theoretical re-description of the component causes; (3) a process of reproduction from the re-described component events or states to the antecedent processes that might have produced them; and (4) an elimination of alternative causes”. Particularly, checking the theory empirically is significant in this process (Norris 1999; Sayer 2000). Further, there are primary practices in discovering underlying mechanisms theoretically, that are called the DREI(C) model which can be summarised as follows: (1) “**D**escription of some empirical regularity or pattern”; (2) **R**etroduction by ‘imaginatively conceiving of mechanisms’; (3) “**E**liminate the imagined mechanisms through further empirical analyses”; (4) **I**dentify remanent mechanisms as real; and (5) “**C**orrection of previous theories” (Isaksen 2016, p. 249). This schema is useful to find out new mechanisms. Further, the RRREI or RRREIC model is recommended by Bhaskar (1986). This six-stage plan is more applicable to the research whose goal is to “understand which mechanisms are functioning in an open system to create some event” (Isaksen 2016, p. 249). The open system is close to natural social conditions more like social reality or generally outside laboratories (Isaksen 2016). The RRREI(C) schema suggests the six stages of explaining particular concrete phenomena in open systems as follows: (1) **R**esolve the complex reality into several components that generate the observed outcomes; (2) **R**edescribe these components theoretically from abstract to specific; (3) **R**etrodiction to possible mechanisms involved in the events; (4) **E**liminate some of

candidate mechanisms through empirical processes; (5) Identify the generative components that can provide a coherent explanation; and (6) Corrective work by going back to the initial observed outcomes through the spectrum of the underlying components. (Bhaska 1986; Steimetz 1998; Isaksen 2016).

In spite of these efforts to establish scientific models of CR studies, it is impossible to set up a closed system to enable true experimentation in the social science studies (Steinmetz 1998) because the social conditions cannot be usually controlled in a closed system like a laboratory. Strict application of these models might be infeasible in the social sciences. As such, there is a need to apply these models in a flexible way. Collier (1994) also suggests a blend of these models for practicability and viability due to a doubt about the applicability of one single model to the social sciences. In this sense, these models were applied in an adjustable and flexible way to this research, which is explained in the research process section in detail.

4.3.2. Qualitative research

Although the debate about comparative benefits of quantitative versus qualitative data has continued for a long time (Bernard and Ryan 2010), it is clear that every methodological approach has its own merits to offer (Boyer and Swink 2008). Qualitative data is involved with people's thoughts, behaviours, emotions, artifacts, and environments in the type of sounds, words, or pictures, while quantitative data is the result of reducing these to numbers (Bernard and Ryan 2010, pp. 5-6). Qualitative research adopts text as empirical materials instead of numbers and considers the perspectives of participants very important (Flick 2007). Qualitative data can, hence, better explain a behavioural process, whereas quantitative data can enable measurements of behaviours (Bernard and Ryan 2010).

Between these two opposite approaches, the SCM studies are clearly quantitative method skewed (Burgess *et al.* 2006), particularly, survey-based research has been dominant in the SCM and logistics areas (Keller *et al.* 2002, cited in Stock *et al.* 2010). There is a limitation to discover attributes of research objects by using large survey (Goffin *et al.* 2012) that extant SC research regarding relationships primarily depend on (Saxton 1997). Therefore, more attempts to employ a wider range of methodological stances are required in a balanced way (Burgess *et al.* 2006). At a more recent time, qualitative methods have become employed in the SCM research (Mentzer and Kahn 1995, cited in Stock *et al.* 2010). Greater engagement with non-positivist methods such as qualitative one is necessary for faster progress in terms of the theoretical development in SCM (New 1997; Näslund 2002; Voss *et al.* 2002). Diverse qualitative approaches can be more useful to bring rich insights and explore the hidden aspects when dealing with newer topics or areas (Stock *et al.* 2010). As such, the qualitative approach fits to this research that seeks to develop theory building in a very new research area of humanitarian supplier integration.

Acknowledgement of the need for various alternative approaches in producing knowledge triggered the qualitative tradition against the positivism-dominated academic tradition (O’Leary 2014). Nonetheless, qualitative research cannot be simply defined as the opposite of quantitative research since it has built up its own characteristics (Flick 2007). Qualitative research entails the value of depth that is useful for investigations of social complexities by understanding ‘the interactions, processes, lived experiences, or belief systems that are a part of individuals, institutions, cultural groups or even the everyday’ (O’Leary 2014, p. 130). Additionally, qualitative approaches foreground exploration of diversity gained from perceptions and experiences rather than quantification through measurement (Kumar

2014). For this reason, the qualitative approach was applied in this research so as to gain in-depth knowledge by delving into complex inter-organisational interactions between the IHO and its key suppliers.

4.3.3. Research process

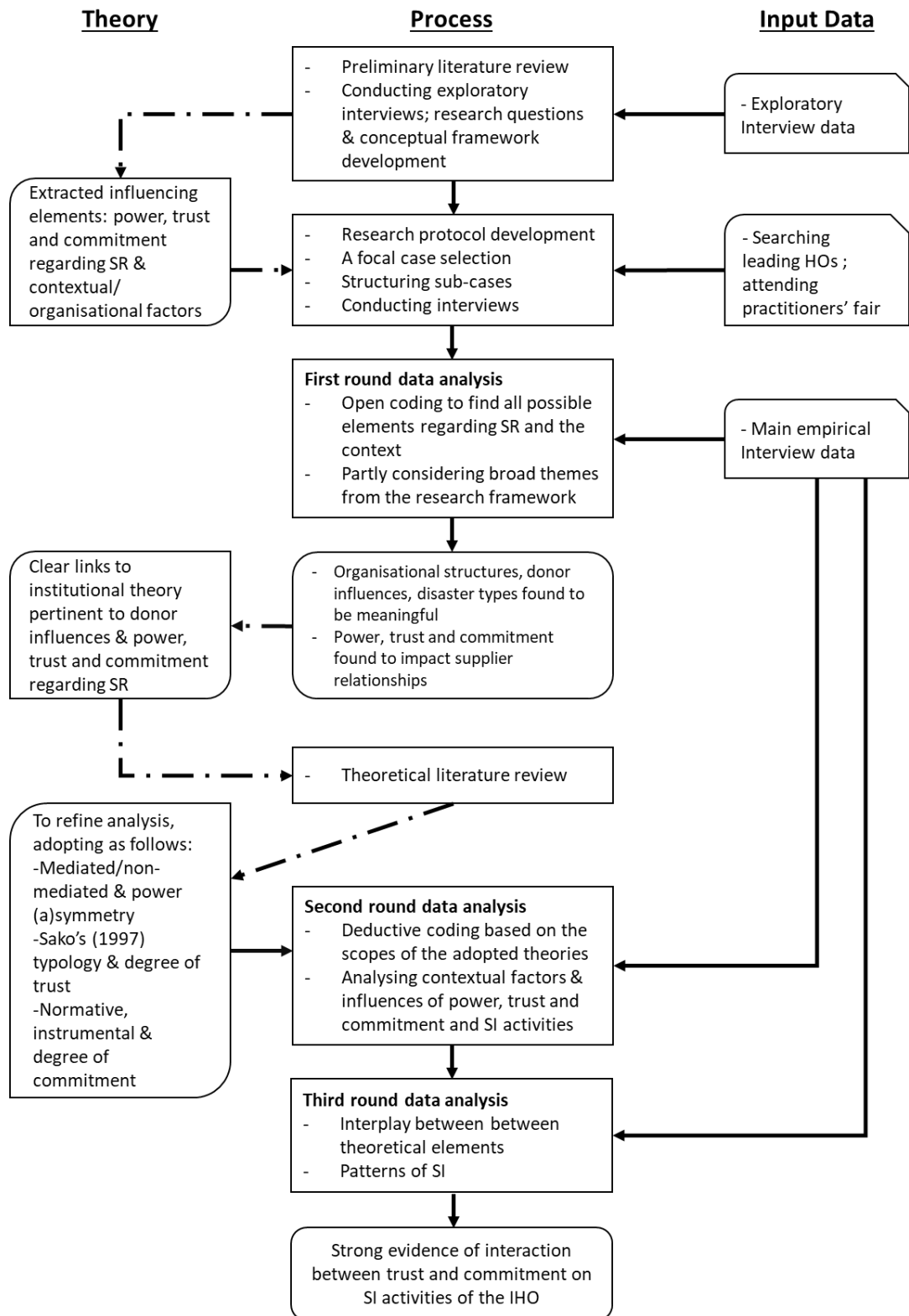
This research is motivated by middle-range theorizing (MRT). Namely, this research does apply to a specific domain of humanitarian SCM, not to the general context. Although a starting point of applying MRT is the knowledge that have been obtained in a specific domain, a general theory can be also required (Kim *et al.* 2009). Stank *et al.* (2017, p. 7) also assert that the knowledge can be drawn from studies based on general theories or from “inductive, qualitative observations of practice”. For this research, the basic knowledge was grounded primarily from an inductive and qualitative exploratory study where dynamic factors were found in the relationships between IHOs and their suppliers such as power, trust, commitment, and supplier integration. These outcomes from the early-stage observations were already related to existing general theories. As such, both approaches to search the knowledge were used in this study in the end. This research pursues the application of SI within the specific domain of humanitarian SCM by adopting the IHO case as a focal organisation. Additionally, it focuses on the relationships with the 1st tier primary suppliers, rather than the whole SC partners broadly. MRT is very useful in terms of providing frames and processes to understand contexts and mechanisms within a specific domain (Stank *et al.* 2017). Hence, this approach would be very helpful to find mechanisms that affect SI and to drive relevant outcomes of SI within the humanitarian context.

This research is inclined to use an abductive approach. It is not common to see purely inductive or purely deductive research, instead they are described as “a mostly

inductive or a mostly deductive approach” (Bernard and Ryan 2010, p. 265). Bernard and Ryan (2010) assert that inductive research is needed “in the exploratory phase of any research project” and deductive research is needed “in the confirmatory stage of any research project, irrespective of whether the data are qualitative or quantitative” (Bernard and Ryan 2010, pp. 256-6). As Kovács and Spens (2005) assert, abductive research is particularly needed in the deductive research-dominated area in order to understand new phenomena and to suggest new theory. In the early phase of this research, an inductive approach was adopted by using the exploratory study where the preconception of the research could be minimised. In the case when a research topic is less revealed, an inductive approach is much more useful than a deductive approach (Bernard and Ryan 2010). As explained in Chapter 2, there are very few studies of SCI in the humanitarian area and therefore its research problems have not been clearly identified. From this initial inductive study, research questions were formulated, and the research framework was developed. The key influencing elements found in this phase were reflected in the research protocol for the main empirical study. This alternate use of inductive and deductive approaches was repeated in the whole research process as shown in Figure 4-2.

The research process of this project was inspired by that of Dube *et al.*'s (2016) study. Broadly, the process can be divided into two phases: the exploratory study phase and the main empirical research phase. The data also were collected through two different collecting processes, but intimately linked. The research process illustrated in Figure 4-2 reveals where the theoretical elements initially have emerged and demonstrate the interplay between theory and practices.

Figure 4-2. Research process



Source: Developed by the researcher

4.4. Research Strategies

4.4.1. Case study research design

The **Case study research design** has been popularly used in many social science disciplines and it has been used in a range of research types (Verschuren 2003). This research design can be used under a wide range of epistemological assumptions (Mitchell 1983) and adopt different research methods such as both qualitative and quantitative methods (Verschuren 2003). The methodological position of a case study is not still firmly unified and may be referent to diverse epistemological stances (Mitchell 1983). In practice, the case study is not applied with strict rules and fixed principles (Gerring, 2004 p.346). Despite ambiguous application of case studies, there are their own characteristics and principles (Easton 2010).

Robson and McCartan (2016, p. 150) define case studies as “a strategy for doing research which involves an empirical investigation of a particular contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context using multiple sources of evidence”. A case study particularly fits for a qualitative approach in an empirical project because this research design enables researchers to investigate cases comprehensively and thoroughly in real-life settings (Stake 1995; Yin 2003). In this sense, case studies concern both organisation and management studies as they allow exploration of the dynamics within single contexts (Eisenhardt 1989). This attribute of case studies could be particularly relevant to cross-disciplinary research like this project because humanitarian SCM exists at the intersection of two branches of knowledge, the humanitarian aid and disaster relief study and the SCM business study, that interact in producing idiosyncratic academic outcomes.

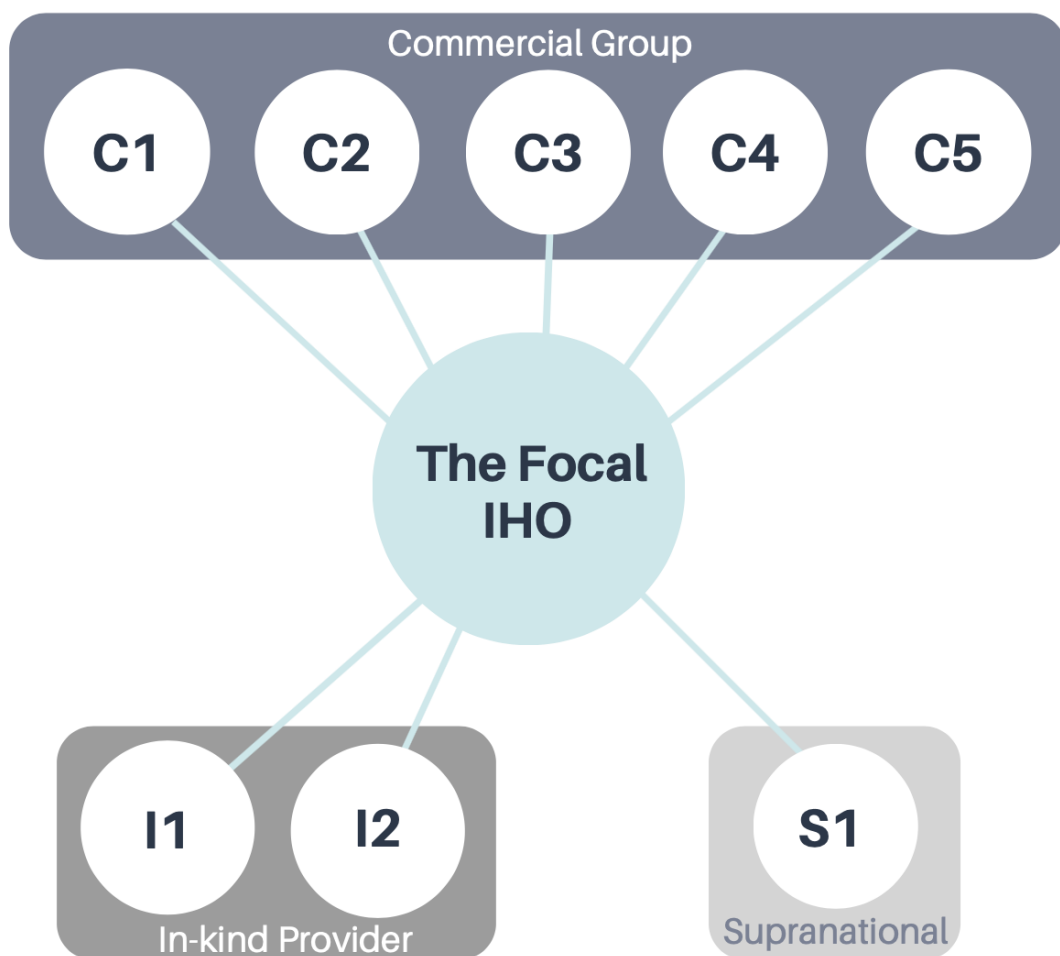
In addition, the case study research design is suitable for answering how and why questions or delineating phenomena and the natural context where they happened (De Massis and Kotlar 2014). “This is because such questions deal with operational links needing to be traced over time, rather than mere frequency or incidence” (Yin, 2003, p.6). This project attempts to broaden and apply the extant theory in the area of HSCM and supplier relationships of an IHO by investigating how SI can be implemented in the humanitarian context. Hence, the use of a case study research design is appropriate to answer the how question of this project.

Case or field-based studies are very useful to gain in-depth knowledge of a phenomena particularly when the phenomena were unexplored or just emerging (Boyer and Swink 2008, pp. 340-1). Indeed, case studies are considered as “end-product of field-oriented research” (Wolcott 1992, p. 36). This means that a case study is majorly useful to listen to real voice from the fields and to access actual problems and phenomenon. Further, a case study allows researchers the opportunities and flexibility to play around diverse factors and relationships in certain settings and to move back and forth through iterative processes (Verschuren 2003). As such, a case study research design is very useful to cope with complexity of relationships or phenomenon and enable a researcher to explore both cases and their contexts by providing rich information and knowledge.

This flexible character of case studies also generates their diverse types of study (Hakim 2000). Case studies can be classified by the type of target cases such as “individual case histories, community studies, studies of social groups, studies of organisations and institutions, and those concerned with specific events, roles, relationships and interactions” (Hakim 2000, p. 63). In this study, **the choice of one focal case organisation** can be categorised as the type of studies of organisation while the eight sub-cases involve specific relationships and interactions with the focal case

as shown Figure 4-3. As such, this project adopted a single case study that enabled the research to obtain in-depth understanding about the subject and to make a more scrupulous study (Dyer and Wilkins 1991), although there are constraints to generalise from the findings (Yin 2003). Within this one focal case, there were comparison of “nested elements” (Thomas and Myers 2015, p. p. 63), which are the relationships with the eight suppliers in this project.

Figure 4-3. The structure of the single case study with nested sub-cases



Source: Developed by the researcher

In order to choose the focal case organisation, the non-random sampling technique was adopted in this project. This technique is appropriate when there is a need “to undertake an in-depth study that focuses on a small, perhaps one, case selected for a

particular purpose” (Saunders *et al.* 2009, p. 233). Further, this type of sample can provide “an information-rich case study” that is useful to “gain theoretical insights” (Saunders *et al.* 2009, p. 233). In detail, purposive sampling was used in this study among the five non-random sampling techniques: quota, purposive, snowball, self-selection and convenience that Patton (2002) suggests. Neuman (2014) say that this type of sample is often used for case study research with very small samples and for selecting very informative cases to answer research questions.

Table 4-2. The key attributes of candidate IHOs

IHO	No.of employees	Turnover (2018)	Expenditure (2018)
A	15,000	£872m	£855m
B	24,000	£303m	£315m
C	34,000	£287m	£281m
D	2,500	£140m	£140m
E	2,000	£127m	£128m

Source: Developed by the researcher

Accessibility was one of primary issues when selecting the main case as it was extremely difficult to gain access to HOs without networks. Further, the supplier relationships may contain sensitive information that requires confidentiality for HOs. This made gaining access to them more difficult for the researcher. The reputation, main performance and size of IHOs were searched through diverse routes and particularly the researcher attended one of practitioners’ big events where diverse experts and professionals in humanitarian aid and development can be contacted. There were opportunities for the researcher to contact many leading HOs and to informally have discussion about the topic of this project. Five reputable international NGOs in Asia and Europe, which have experienced the global level of SCM, were

contacted to check availability of access (see Table 4-2 for a comparison of the key attributes of each organisation). However, only one organisation permitted access for field visits and interviews and this organisation was a relatively smaller one among 5 candidates. This whole process of selection of a focal case was guided through the discussion with the supervisors and the researcher obtained ethical approval from the School Research Ethics Committee for the main case study (Appendix 2).

Yin (2009) categorises five types of cases depending on the rationales for choosing cases: the critical case; the extreme or unique case, the representative or typical case; the revelatory case; and the longitudinal case. Some case studies can involve a combination of these types (Bryman 2012). In the case of this project, the focal case can be viewed as the representative or typical case and partly as the revelatory case. The focal case in the primary data collection is an IHO that provides both humanitarian relief and development programmes around the world. One of university library websites defines this IHO as a humanitarian and development organisation according to its main tasks. This focal case can be also described as one of leading international NGOs. Its head office and headquarters are based in the UK and it has many offices in nearly forty countries around the world. These local offices in many other countries have different roles and legal status and operation style, for instance, field operations, funding partnerships, implementing partners, etc. The details of this focal case cannot be fully displayed in order to maintain anonymity of the data. Instead of informing the details of the IHO, its strengths and weaknesses will be explained to grasp the nature of this focal organisation better in Chapter 5.

The unit of analysis in this study is the relationships between an IHO and its suppliers based on the SI perspective. The unit of analysis is the subject to be analysed in a case study research design (Baxter and Jack 2008). This project reflects on the IHO's

perspectives about the relationship with its key suppliers. It is evident that dyadic data collected from both the IHO and its suppliers would have been desirable. However, the strict regulations and confidentiality about sharing information and details about its suppliers necessitated focusing on one side of the dyad. It was not allowed for the researcher to access the suppliers. The information and details about the suppliers were confidentially secured by the IHO and were anonymously dealt with during the data collection. Thus, the data in this research were collected from the IHO's side regarding their key suppliers.

Although there are no specific rules about an ideal number of cases, a number between four and ten cases is recommended for theory building research (Eisenhardt 1989). There were lots of suppliers on their vendor lists for a variety of projects that the IHO has been dealing with. Among these relationships, all supplier relationships cannot be discussed from the SI perspective. To look into integration, there is a need to find long-term strategies among SC partners (Wang *et al.* 2016). In other words, it may be difficult to find SI among short-term relationships. Hence, the most common and important suppliers have been chosen in the relevant department perspectives. The regional context of this research lies on the middle eastern region. The suppliers in this empirical project are related to the disaster relief programmes in two areas where devastating events have occurred continuously. To preserve anonymity, the affected areas are called in the research as 'Region X' and 'Region Y' or 'the region' altogether. This research finally included the eight key suppliers of the focal IHO as sub-cases, which possibly have SI activities in the relationships and involves the aid projects of the region. As shown Figure 4-3, these key suppliers are grouped into three categories: a commercial group, and in-kind providers and a supranational organisation.

Due to the nature of the environment in which the IHO operates information about their suppliers and procurement is considered by them to be confidential for external parties. Therefore, this decision meant that access to the suppliers was dependent on the approval of the IHO's relevant staff because of the high confidentiality about information of their suppliers. On the process of selecting cases, the identities of cases were not revealed to the researcher because of data sensitivity. However, there were discussion between the staff and the researcher to clarify the standards to select sub-cases. First, cases were selected on the basis of the size of transactions for the last one year. Secondly, a relatively long span of relationships was considered. Thirdly, the further variation among cases was ensured by selection based on importance of humanitarian aid activities that cases were involved. Lastly, the aid projects that the cases involved were operated in a certain area, which meant that the common contexts could be applied to all relationships.

4.4.2. Data collection methods

There are six main sources of evidence that are the most commonly adopted in carrying out case study research: documentation, archival records, physical artefacts, direct observation, participant-observation, and interviews (Yin 2014, p. 105). Information about the relationships between the IHO and its key suppliers and its contextual features was collected through three methods such as internal documents, the organisation's website and interviews in the main data collection. Particularly, the primary source of information consisted in the interviews that are considered as "the most reactive of the data collection methods" (Bernard and Ryan 2010, p. 27). The internal document regarding the procurement process was not physically or

electronically shared with the researcher. Instead, the participants explained the details verbally or let the researcher briefly read them on the spot only.

Hence, the main data collection method was **semi-structured depth interviews**.

Bryman (2012, p. 201) defines this type of interview as follows:

“...It typically refers to context in which the interviewer has a series of questions that are in the general form of an interview guide but is able to vary the sequence of questions. The questions are frequently somewhat more general in their frame of reference than the questions typically found in a structured interview schedule. Also, the interviewer usually has some latitude to ask further questions in response to what are seen as significant replies.”

This interview type tends to be designed “to encourage a conversation” (Jones *et al.* 2010, p. 108) and allows in-depth interaction in conversational and informal atmosphere (Bryman 2012, pp. 471-2). Semi-structured interviews let respondents express their own opinions openly in their own terms, but also make certain of systematically examining the data for patterns of social phenomena, social process, and behavioural process (Bernard and Ryan 2010).

On the other hand, it is often misunderstood that this method is seen easier “in some not very clear way” (Wengraf 2006, p. 5), as it is less structured approach to data collection “reflecting the open-ended nature of the research questions” (Bryman 2016, p. 10). However, as defined above, to be successful, semi-structured interviews require “an interview guide such as a list of questions and topics that have to be covered” (Bernard and Ryan 2010, p. 29). Therefore, the researcher needs to understand the topic in advance in order to be able to have a ‘conversation’ with the interviewee. Semi-structured interviews should be “fully planned and prepared” through improvisation in a careful and theorised way (Wengraf 2006, p. 5). Eisenhardt (1989) also emphasises that a data collection protocol should be prepared in advance of entering the field. The themes that were broadly extracted from the exploratory study

in Chapter 3 were identified in the literature as shown in Table 4-3. Based on these, a **semi-structured interview protocol** was developed for the site visits and the full interview protocol is available in Appendix 3.

Table 4-3. The interview protocol development

Power		
Criticality	If the partner is critical to an actor's future performance, the actor become more dependent on this partner. If the relationship with critical partners are discontinued, the actor would have difficulties in maintaining operations in its area.	Ganesan 1994; Casciaro and Piskorski 2005; He <i>et al.</i> 2013
Scarcity	One of power indicator is the availability of alternative suppliers. The less the number of potential alternatives the IHO has, the more dependent the IHO is on the supplier.	Hardwick and Ford 1986; Ganesan 1994; Casciaro and Piskorski 2005; He <i>et al.</i> 2013
Ability to withdraw	If one party has less ability to withdraw oneself from the partner than the other, the power between parties of inter-organisational relationship is imbalanced.	Hunt and Nevin 1974; Brown, Lusch and Nicholson 1995; Cheng 2011
Trust		
Reliability	The level of confidence on the part of the trusting party. The belief about the reliability and integrity of the trustworthy party is an indication of the level of trust in the relationships.	Dywer and LaGace 1986; Morgan and Hunt 1994; So and Sculli 2002; Wu <i>et al.</i> 2004
Expectations for fulfilment of obligation	Trust between inter-organisations is indicated by one party's expectation that the other party usually keeps the promises, can be relied on to fulfil obligations, behave in a predictable manner and act fairly.	Mayer <i>et al.</i> 1995; Kwon and Suh 2005; Cai <i>et al.</i> 2010; Wu <i>et al.</i> 2014
Commitment		
Durability	Higher anticipation of an environment that will encourage continued effective exchange between parties can enable higher commitment to the relationships. Based on these expectations for a relational continuity, the parties can carry on continued investment in the relation and make stronger bond themselves.	Scanzoni 1979; Dywer <i>et al.</i> 1987; Moorman <i>et al.</i> 1992; Anderson and Weitz 1992; Morgan and Hunt 1994; Kwon and Suh 2005; Zhao <i>et al.</i> 2011
Importance	Committed relationships can occur based on a positive valuation of a relationship, in other words, only when the relationships is perceived important. When maintaining the relationship is considered more important, entities will be more committed to the relationship.	Moorman <i>et al.</i> 1992; Morgan and Hunt 1994; Zhao <i>et al.</i> 2011
efforts/Inputs	Relationship-specific effort and inputs are reflections of commitment. Spending a higher amount of time and effort and providing a higher level of inputs to the relationships means relatively high levels of commitment to the relationships with SC partners.	Blau 1964; Scanzoni 1979; Dywer <i>et al.</i> 1987; Zhao <i>et al.</i> 2011; Wu <i>et al.</i> 2014

Consistency	High relationship commitment exists when one party perceives that the other's input levels endure and do not change often. Consistent efforts put in the relationship let the partner predict the outcomes from transactions or exchange. Inconsistency of inputs or efforts indicates lower commitment and results in diminishing reliance on the counterpart.	Scanzoni 1979; Dywer <i>et al.</i> 1987; Moorman <i>et al.</i> 1992; Zhao <i>et al.</i> 2011
Supplier Integration		
Information sharing	Intensive information sharing is considered as a basis of establishing SI. This interactive communication behaviour involves the exchange of critical information between SC members such as sharing project plans, demand forecasts, inventory levels, etc. For this, a diverse range of media can be used such as the internet, e-mail, fax, telephone, face-to-face meetings.	Mohr and Spekman 1994; Swink <i>et al.</i> 2007; Yeung <i>et al.</i> 2009; Wong <i>et al.</i> 2011
Participation in decision	The extent of coordinating decisions between SC partners is one of essential criteria to measure SI. Participation in decision can refer to involvement in collaborative planning/scheduling or joint goal setting and specifying roles and responsibilities	Mohr and Spekman 1994; Cai <i>et al.</i> 2010; Wong <i>et al.</i> 2011
Conflict resolution techniques	Joint problem solving is a primary practice of SI as conflict resolution techniques. The extent of engagement in collaborative problem resolution the way of achieving conflict resolution can be the indicator of partnership with suppliers.	Mohr and Spekman 1994; Stuart and McCutcheon 1995; Mohr <i>et al.</i> 1996; Das <i>et al.</i> 2006

After the focal IHO was invited for interview participation (Appendix 4) and the interview protocol was developed, field visits for this case study data collection had been made six times. Data collection took place the HQ site of the IHO as a face-to-face interview type except for one participant who was not available in the office and with whom the interview was conducted through an online video call separately. An email invitation letter was sent to each participant Considering the situations of the focal case, the researcher initially contacted with a small group of informants who were clearly related to this research topic and then broaden contacts with others based on this initial contact, which was “snowball sampling” (Bryman 2012, p. 188). Further, when gradually establishing contacts with more informants, their common features and

similarity were considered, which was related “homogeneous sampling” (Saunders *et al.* 2012, p. 240). For instance, the **interview participants** had experience working with the key suppliers or deeper understandings about the regional contexts, field situations, processes, donor organisations, etc. During an interview, informants often tried to find another relevant staff who can better answer the topic of questions. In a qualitative study, it is crucial for a researcher to make sure data saturation (Goffin *et al.* 2012, p. 816). As there was initially no target number of interviewees, broadening contacts with relevant informants had continued until no more informants were recommended by the participants and all the interview questions were fully answered.

A total of 22 interviews were conducted with 15 informants between June and August in 2018. Some of them were interviewed more than once because they had rich knowledge of specific suppliers, the interviews had to be split due to hectic schedules, or follow-up interviews were conducted for unresolved questions. The informants had various backgrounds in terms of job positions, job descriptions and affiliated departments within the organisation. Number of years the interview participants had worked for the focal IHO ranged from 8 months to 19 years and their job positions encompassed from a graduate trainee to directors of departments. In this study, the result of the primary data collection was over 17 hours of transcripts about 132,421 words.

In semi-structured interviews, “everyone may be asked about the same topics but not be asked the exact same questions.” (Bernard and Ryan 2010, p. 47). As such, interview questions can be flexibly adapted to the unexpected situations on the site by considering each informant’s experience and knowledge. In this main study, the questions were adapted for two groups: one that directly involved and worked with the key suppliers and the other that was indirectly involved with the key suppliers but had

in-depth understandings about the field and organisation's contexts. All questions were asked to the former group, while the latter was asked with relevant questions regarding the focal organisation, procurement process and structure, and the context of the disaster that this research focuses on. The former group of informants included 7 interviewees and one of them had first-hand knowledge of all three supplier types: commercial, in-kind and supranational. Hence, three participants were interviewed for each type.

4.4.3. Data analysis

As a broad way of processing the data, the data analysis was conducted according to the loop of the data analysis spiral: managing and organising the data – reading and memoing emergent ideas – describing and classifying codes into themes – developing and accessing interpretations – representing and visualising the data (Creswell and Poth 2018, pp. 185 – 198). Overall, template analysis was applied throughout the whole data analysis process, by combining “a deductive and an inductive approach to qualitative analysis in the sense that codes can be predetermined and then amended or added to” (Saunders *et al.* 2009, p. 505).

Firstly, the Interviews were transcribed, printed out and read, which let the researcher familiar with the data. It is recommended to read the texts repeatedly not to miss themes in the data (Ryan 1999). As an initial step of coding, cutting and sorting were conducted through the Nvivo qualitative data analysis software to identify quotes and expressions of participants. These were arranged into piles of quotes that go together as Lincoln and Guba (1985) suggested. The analysis methods were not limited to theory-related themes and were mixed approaches of a priori approach and a ground theory coding approach. Prior to entering the field work for the case study, the

researcher had some ideas and expectation as the exploratory study had briefly suggested overarching themes that were developed by forming the interview protocol for the main case study. Nonetheless, finding emergent codes were not limited to the suggested themes from the exploratory study. The researcher followed the process of ground analytic coding, which involve “line-by-line coding reading between lines, identifying concepts and thinking about all of each concept’s possible meanings as a way of breaking open the text, recording what is learned in both codes and memos” (Bazeley and Jackson 2013, p. 72). The researcher tried to find most possible nodes and codes from the data, not restricted to the suggested themes, through this detailed and reflective exploration of data. Codebooks were built up with a combination of approaches both from data in the inductive approach and from theory in the deductive approach, as Dey (1993) has long advocated.

In the second stage of coding analysis, subcategories or categories were fine-grained from codes and developed into themes that were a higher-level of concept (Saldaña 2016). In this second-round data analysis, the preliminary set of themes has become detailed through a theoretical literature review for further analysis, which involved deductive coding analysis (Bernard and Ryan 2010, p. 55). In this round, “broad-brush coding” (Bazeley and Jackson 2013, p. 72) from NVIVO were moved to excel spreadsheets and precisely analysed according to the priori scopes of theories. Through these profile matrices (Bernard and Ryan 2010, p. 111), possible links or connections among the codes, patterns, categories, and themes were reflected and analysed (Saldaña 2016). As such, the whole analysis process is very iterative by moving back and forth between the qualitative data and theoretical elements.

Bernard and Ryan (2010, p. 155) suggest three levels of aggregation for comparisons among the units of analysis, which are very useful to find patterns emerging: “pairwise,

within-group, and cross-group”. Among these levels, this study adopted intragroup and intergroup comparisons in Chapters 5 and 6. For instance, the five key commercial suppliers were compared within the commercial group and also with other groups of suppliers. On the other hand, there are also three types of analysis by focusing on attributes and features: “univariate analysis, bivariate analysis, and multivariate analysis” (Bernard and Ryan 2010, p. 148-150). This project attempted to use a multivariate analysis approach by analysing the relationships between the focal IHO and its key suppliers based on several elements extracted from power, trust and commitment in Chapter 6.

4.4.4. Ensuring research quality

To assure research quality, the importance of validity and reliability is stressed in qualitative research (Yin 2009; Miles and Huberman 2014). Further, construct validity, internal validity, external validity and reliability are conventionally used as quality criteria to evaluate research rigor (Goffin *et al.* 2012). On the other hand, there is a need to evaluate research quality in the line with the methodological paradigm considering its roots (Healy and Perry 2000). As such, Guba and Lincoln (1989) suggest four criteria specialised in evaluating qualitative research: credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability.

Firstly, the purpose of testing **credibility** lies on demonstrating that research is conducted “in a credible way” (Goffin *et al.* 2012, p. 806). For this, research findings can be verified by informants or peers as interpreting social reality through multiple accounts is emphasised in this criterion (Bryman 2012, p. 384). Particularly, “respondent validation” (Bryman 2012, p. 385) is popularly used in qualitative research. As another technique to test credibility, triangulation is also recommended

(Guba and Lincoln 1989). Triangulation is regarded as “a valuable and widely used strategy involving the use of multiple sources to enhance the rigour of the research” (Robson and McCartan 2016, p. 171). Drawing on Denzin (1988), Robson and McCartan (2016) categorise four types of triangulation as follows: data, observer, methodological, and theory triangulation. For instance, credibility of research can be reinforced by using more than one data collection method or adopting multiple theories.

Transferability indicates “the degree to which the understanding obtained in one study can be transferred to explain phenomena observed in other contexts” (Goffin *et al.* 2012, 806). Compared to quantitative studies, qualitative research is characterised by its unique contexts and a smaller number of participants (Bryman 2012). The transferability of findings in a certain context to other contexts or subjects can be increased by “a thick description” (Bryman 2012, p. 384). Although any research cannot be fully generalised in other settings, detailed descriptions can provide more opportunities to make comparison about similarities and differences in other contexts (Goffin *et al.* 2012).

Dependability is also called as reliability and to enhance this criterion “an audit approach” should be adopted for qualitative researchers (Bryman 2012, p. 384). Assessing dependability involves all steps of research processes ranging from problem formulation to data analysis (Bryman 2012). Hence, for a higher level of reliability, details throughout the whole research processes need to be displayed in an accessible and accurate manner (Goffin *et al.* 2012).

As a parallel to objectivity, **confirmability** refers to maintaining “relative neutrality and reasonable freedom from unacknowledged researcher biases at the minimum” (Miles *et al.* 2014, p. 305). Although achieving complete objectivity is impossible,

researchers should try to not to reflect “personal values or theoretical inclinations to sway the conduct of the research and the findings” (Bryman 2012, p. 386). Hence, researchers should make sure a clear link between data and findings (Goffin *et al.* 2012).

Table 4-4 describes how these quality criteria were applied in this project.

Table 4-4. Ensuring qualitative research quality

Quality criteria	Tactics applied in this research
Credibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research framework adoption of theoretical elements identified in the exploratory study and literature. • Choice of leading humanitarian NGO. • Purposive selection of participants to ensure experience of international humanitarian disaster relief management. • Multiple visits for follow-up interviews. • Multiple informants. • Triangulation of data sources.
Transferability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing a detailed description of the contexts to maximise chance of transferability. • Describing the participating organisation, the sub-cases, their context and research settings in detail. • Comparing outcomes across diverse suppliers within the same type and cross different types of suppliers.
Dependability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear research questions established. • Purposive selection of sub-cases to ensure a range of supplier types are included. • Assuring confidentiality of participants’ and suppliers’ information. • Collecting data among a range of participants from diverse background in terms of roles, job positions, affiliated departments. • Links between literature review and analytical findings
Confirmability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Case study interview protocol. • Careful selection of interview participants. • Careful recording and storing of digital data. • Repeatedly and thoroughly checking codes.

Source: Developed by the researcher

4.5. Summary

This chapter has provided justification for the methodological choices in this study. To start, the ontological and epistemological assumptions of CR were explained as the philosophical foundations underlying this research. Then, the research process was delineated in pursuit of theory development based on CR principles, qualitative and abductive approaches. The process of organising a single case study research design with nested sub-cases was described in detail. Detailed methods for data collection and data analysis was also clearly justified. Finally, the application of research quality criteria in this research was summarised. In the following two chapters, the results extracted from this main case study are presented, particularly the next chapter focuses on the situational and contextual factors surrounding the supplier relationships of the IHO.

Chapter 5 Descriptive findings: understanding the case and its context

5.1. Introduction

5.1.1. Objectives

Having developed an initial understanding of the importance of supplier relationships for IHOs and built a research framework adapted to the humanitarian sector, a deeper exploration of the issues is now undertaken. At the end of Chapter 3, the overarching research question emerged from the exploratory study, which has served to guide the entire research project:

How can SCI be facilitated in the relationships between an IHO and its key suppliers in the humanitarian context?

Prior to presenting the theoretical analysis in Chapter 6, there is a need to understand the single case and sub-cases of the primary data and to identify the conditions and contexts that surround these cases. As shown in the research framework, the specific boundaries and contexts that revolve around the interplay between theoretical paradigms in the supplier relationships of the IHO cannot be ignored. Therefore, this chapter presents the descriptive findings and analysis of both the case and the context, which consists in developing an understanding of:

- a. the choice of the focal single case and sub-cases linked to the single case.
- b. the importance of supplier relationships from the humanitarian perspectives.

c. how the situational factors and contexts surrounding the cases inform the supplier relationships of the IHO.

5.1.2. Sub-research questions

In order to be able to provide a reasonable and useful answer to this question at the end of the research process, additional questions are needed to be asked. The most striking features regarding the context extracted from Chapter 3 were the themes of organisational structure, institutional forces, disaster type, etc. The role of these situational factors will be further explored in this chapter. The following research questions have guided the analysis in this chapter:

RQ1. How do the relationships between an IHO and its suppliers operate in a humanitarian context?

RQ2. How is the organisational structure of an IHO related to the different type of suppliers?

RQ3. How do donors influence the relationships between an IHO and its suppliers?

RQ4. Which aspects of context matter depending on where the case is situated, such as disaster type, regional location, etc?

As explained in Chapter 4, the interview data from all fifteen participants across diverse departments and different level of positions at the HQs of the focal organisation were used in this chapter.

5.2. Introduction of the focal case

5.2.1. Strengths

Figure 5-1 clearly depicts three major strengths that the IHO has, which was extracted based on the perceptions of the participants. The details of codes are displayed in Appendix 5-1.

Figure 5-1. Strengths of the focal organisation



Source: Developed by the researcher

Firstly, the focal IHO has developed its own way of working in the humanitarian and development aid as follows:

- a. An innovative method based on a high level of adaptability to different events:
It seems that the IHO has a value to try its best to adapt to a different society by using a flexible deployment system and quickly shifting personnel to the affected area. This results in accelerating its adaptability and finding an innovative way to adjust to new conditions depending on the affected area.

- b. Efficient way of formation in a new country: To provide rapid response in a new country where the IHO is not present, this IHO excogitates an agile and flexible strategy that personnel are sent off from local offices nearby the affected area. Still, this programme is arranged and gets started by the HQ office. Despite its absence in the affected local area, a new team is quickly formed in this way at the field level.
- c. Trying and testing a new/different method: Throughout its own history, the focal IHO has pursued tests and trials of different ways in providing humanitarian and development aid. It has put efforts into improving and optimising its working processes based around high quality personnel.
- d. Creating unique business models: The IHO is relatively unspecialised in a particular subject, rather, deals with a general sphere of response. Nonetheless, the focal IHO has attempted to develop its own business model, for example, adopting a funding structure based on a strong network supported by public donors and using a microcredit strategy (providing small loans (microloans) to borrowers who lack for example, financial collateral or steady employment) which is effective and unlike others.

Another strength is distinguished on the ground with their localisation ability and in-depth understanding about different societies, cultures, and local communities.

- a. In-depth cultural understanding: The IHO has a strength in accessing the affected area with thorough understanding its own culture of the local area. Seven participants (P1, P6, P7, P8, P9, P10, P14) commonly emphasised the importance of in-depth cultural understanding and maintaining staff who can genuinely comprehend the local communities, political situations, local languages/dialects, and local networks. This capacity enables the IHO to be a

more active actor in the field and have more opportunities of cooperating with the affected county.

- b. Sensible approaches to different cultures: The IHO has been trying to adjust its approaches depending on different cultures of beneficiaries or affected areas. It is, therefore, essential for the IHO to engage staff who can speak for the IHO in native languages of the affected areas.
- c. Robust practices of localisation: The IHO has internally emphasised the localisation strategies. This localisation policy has been practically implemented in the field. For instance, there is a much higher number of local personnel in the local offices than that of expats. Further, sometimes the IHO facilitates remote management between the management team with expats and the programme team in the local area by using virtual calls and enhancing coordination between two. The team that has actually implemented the projects is the local one that presents in that area. This strategy enables the IHO to have greater access to lots of places.
- d. Local/field teams-focused: This focal organisation is designed in the way that the role of field offices is considered very important, and they have been highly supported financially. As a result of this high level of support, the IHO could have strong local teams with competent staff who are devoted, expert, and skilled. Thus, these local personnel lead the projects, by designing the projects, making key networks with other organisations or local entities, and meeting beneficiaries.

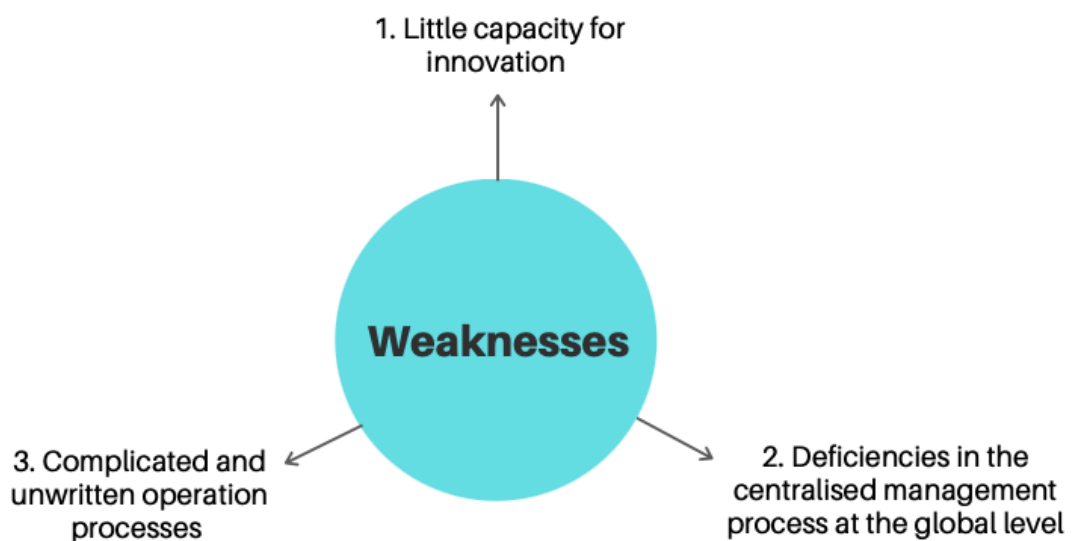
Lastly, the strength of the focal IHO lies on cooperative relationships with other bodies and their transparent processes. The focal organisation is strong at cooperating with peer groups through a strong network and has a strong links with local communities.

- a. Strong cooperation with peer groups through powerful networks: The IHO has a wide range of complementary methods in cooperating with other peer organisations. First of all, the IHO established collaborative partnerships with some organisations so that there is mutual dependence between them in certain places where one of them cannot access and others can. The IHO could provide aid items or aid services to an affected area they could not access by using other peer groups based on this complementary cooperation. Also, the IHO takes part in diverse networks at a global level. Through these international networks, the IHO shares information such as needs on the ground, financial capacity or aid strategy with a number of members of networks. Further, the IHO can channel its funding through other members that are available in the affected area where the IHO cannot present immediately. In reverse, the IHO can directly operate with financial supports or donations from other members if other members cannot access the affected area. Lastly, the IHO actively interacts with other aid actors through both UN-organised mechanisms and informal mechanisms of sharing information. Based on this interaction, they try to find a gap on the ground to avoid duplication of aid resources with other aid actors.
- b. Close links with local communities: The focal IHO has established strong links with local communities in the field based on high accessibility and experienced personnel. This strength enables the IHO to access conflict areas and to assist beneficiaries who are not easily reachable.
- c. Working basis of transparency: Strong cooperation could be achieved because of its transparent approaches to relevant entities such as local organisations, governmental organisations, peer groups, donor organisations and financial institutions.

5.2.2. Weaknesses

In contrast to the strengths described in section 5.2.1, several weaknesses in the IHO's processes were identified as shown in Figure 5.2 and discussed in further detail. Three aspects of weaknesses of the focal IHO were induced from the interview data with the participants, and the full coding analysis is available in Appendix 5-2.

Figure 5-2. Weaknesses of the focal organisation



Source: Developed by the researcher

- a. Little capacity for innovation: Many participants (P 7, P8, P9, P14, P15) pointed out a lack of diverse resources and the impact of this shortage. First of all, there is a dearth of capacity for innovation, because innovation in an organisation generally requires abundant resources such as financial supports, time, and personnel. Therefore, the activities primarily tend to repeat typical ways of aid performance, rather innovating them. Further, as shown in Section 4.4.1 and Table 4-2, the IHO is relatively small compared to other INGOs and tends to have few chances of face-to-face meetings with stakeholders. However, in order to innovate, a more effective method is to hold face-to-face meetings

with personnel who are responsible for carrying out tasks to identify potential improvements. Additionally, the focal IHO runs on a donor-driven basis as donors are critical for their aid performance in circumstances of resource deficit. It is difficult for the IHO to ignore the suggestions of donors and push ahead with its own plans, although the donors do not understand the needs in the field. Lastly, sometimes one department provides several roles throughout the whole disaster span from emergency outbreak to rehabilitation and development. This has an advantage of better connectivity between different disaster phases. However, immediate response and development aid need respectively different processes, skills, and different types of personnel.

- b. Deficiencies in the centralised management process at the global level: It seems the IHO could not greatly improve its centralised management process at the global level. For instance, in a new emergency, a SCM expert cannot be sent from the HQs to the new team to manage logistics and SCs in a new country. The IHO cannot maintain a big team with a big number of personnel and technical supports in HQs due to a lack of resources to support international disaster relief and development aid that the IHO usually responds to. This means that it is difficult to control the global level of operations in a centralised manner.
- c. Complicated and unwritten operation processes: The IHO tends to have a complicated operation process, which is not clearly written and shared internally. Although there are general guidelines and frameworks, specific principles or rules for different tasks have not been sharply defined, which can lead to loosen working process and being stuck in a rut in aid performance wise.

5.3. Understanding of suppliers in the humanitarian context

5.3.1. Perception about supplier relationships

This section is related to general understanding about supplier relationships based on the perceptions of participants. The relevant codes are displayed in Appendix 5-3. There was a general agreement that supplier relationships are very critical for the IHO in delivering aid. But there are slightly different grounds to support the criticality of supplier relationships, which are grouped into three subcategories as illustrated in Figure 5-3.

Figure 5-3. Grounds of supporting criticality of supplier relationships.

Basic methods in disaster response	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To maintain good quality and prices of aid items• To achieve on time delivery, right quantity and quality meeting the standard of the HQ• Fundamental relationships to provide aid items and services
Improving efficiency of aid performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To respond to disasters quickly• To avoid inefficiencies of aid performance• To maximise efficiency and effectiveness of what the IHO has such as limited money and time and help more beneficiaries
Enhancing transparency and sustainability of aid	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Increasing standard and demands of information about supply chain in the humanitarian sector• To avoid causing political issues and problems on the conflict areas

Source: Developed by the researcher

- a. Basic methods in disaster responses: There is no doubt about the criticality of supplier relationships for the IHO. Disaster response was, historically, associated with delivering something essential for beneficiaries as soon as possible such as distributing food, providing shelter materials, etc. Hence, maintaining good relationships with suppliers is decisive in the success of providing aid items and services by ensuring on-time delivery, the right quantity and quality and reasonable prices that meet the standard of the IHO (Prasanna and Haavisto 2018). Delay or

failure of aid supplies greatly affects the aid projects and performance of the focal organisation.

- b. Improving efficiency of aid performance: Supplier relationships are considered very important and are closely related to efficiency of aid performance. One of the departments not only recognises the importance of managing supplier relationships, but also has operated a project for better supplier relationships management and local partnerships (Prasanna and Haavisto 2018). Better supplier relationships management can lead to rapid response to emergent situations. Above all, 70 percent of aid performance (budget) consists of procurement and logistics in this IHO. Thus, supplier relationships are completely critical to maximise the utility of given money and time for reaching more beneficiaries.
- c. Enhancing transparency and sustainability of aid: Sharing information of SCs has become more important nowadays for sustainable aid performance in the humanitarian sector. Donor organisations now want more detailed information about supply chains in order to know how their funding was spent. A higher level of accountability and transparency is demanded particularly by the institutional donor group (Quak, E. 2020). Thus, there is a need for the IHO to chase down the chain and to map the whole supply chain. Further, when the affected areas are involved with political conflicts or sensitive issues, the choice of suppliers should be made more astutely by searching for the origins of the supplies through the SC. If it is found that the 2nd tier or 3rd tier of suppliers have a politically conflicting status against the affected area, this can give rise to serious incidents on the ground. Therefore, managing supplier relationships is also very critical for the IHO to carry out persistent and steady aid activities in a long-term perspective, for not just for responding to emergencies.

5.3.2. Introduction to key suppliers

Eight key suppliers were chosen based on the discussion and conversation with the relevant personnel in the managerial levels, as most information regarding suppliers was not directly accessible to the researcher. Table 5-1 briefly introduces the features of eight key suppliers that are grouped into three categories such as commercial suppliers, in-kind providers, and a supranational organisation.

The five primary suppliers in the commercial group were chosen based on the discussion with the senior manager of procurement team, which directly deal with commercial suppliers of the IHO. Particularly, at that present time, these were the largest suppliers that the IHO had transactions with. The chosen sub-cases are the primary suppliers and the most common suppliers for the IHO. They have ability and availability to supply and support the IHO with aid products and service, that are enough to meet the needs of the IHO. All these suppliers have common strengths: a. competitive prices; b. good reputation; and c. big capacity.

The two in-kind suppliers were also chosen through discussion with senior managers who are directly involved with them, according to the degree of their criticality and the volume of their supplies. In the same manner, during the field work, the names of these suppliers were not shared with the researcher for the confidentiality of supplier information and were just shared between relevant participants.

In the process of conducting interviews, it was found that the IHO has been operating a big project in Region Y through Supplier S1. Based on the further discussion with relevant senior managers, Supplier S1 was included as a key supplier of the IHO as it has played a very critical role in running the project for the disasters in Regions X and Y.

Table 5-1. Details of key suppliers

	Commercial suppliers					In-kind providers		Supranational organisation
Categories	Supplier C1	Supplier C2	Supplier C3	Supplier C4	Supplier C5	Supplier I1	Supplier I2	Supplier S1
Location	Asia	Asia	Asia	Asia	Asia	USA	Central America	Several places
Delivery to	Region X	Region X	Region X	Region X	Region X	Region X	Region X	Region X and Y
Ownership	Privately-owned	Privately-owned	Privately-owned	Privately-owned	Privately-owned	Private company, incl. charitable division	Privately-owned, manufacturer	Supranational organisation
Products	Food items: food packs or flour	Medical items: complex medical equipment	Medical items: complex medical equipment and medicines	Medical items: medical equipment and medicines	Medical items and non-food items	Pharmaceutical and medical and hygiene products	Clothing items	Food items and non-food items
Amount of supplies (GBP)	> 2 million (2017)	> 400,000 (2017)	> 2 million (2017)	< 400,000 (2017)	< 1 million (2017)	Approximately amounting to 15 million	Approximately amounting to 230,000	Roughly 31 million
Frequency of agreement	17 (2017)	2 (2017)	6 (2017)	6 (2017)	4 (2017)	Twice to three times per year	Once or twice per year	Twice or three times renewal of agreement per year

Source: Developed by the researcher

5.3.2.1. Commercial suppliers (C1-5)

These five suppliers are open to the commercial sector, not particularly charity specific. They are privately-owned general traders that might have some experience previously dealing with HOs. All the commercial suppliers provide their products to Region X. They are all located in Asia, which facilitates delivering the goods into Region X. Their location allows convenient access to the affected area.

The IHO deals with largely medical items and medical kits/equipment including non-food items (NFI) or blankets for the medical assistance treating patients in Region X. Hence, except for Supplier C1, the other commercial suppliers are all related to medical items. Although Suppliers C2-5 are all categorised as suppliers dealing with medical items, there are differences between them in terms of details of items they supply.

Supplier C1 is a very large organisation and provides the largest portion of relief aid of the focal IHO for responding to the disaster in Region X. The IHO usually purchases food items from Supplier C1 such as food packs or flours. The food packs usually contain lentils, oil, rice, oats, jam, cake, biscuits, pasta, etc. Flour is provided to the local bakery and bread can be distributed to the beneficiaries. Supplier C2 deals with complex medical items such as blood pressure machine, pressure steam autoclave, centrifuge, automated analysers, spectrophotometers, etc., that are usually operated by specialists in hospitals. Supplier C3 also provides complex medical machines as Supplier C2 does and additionally deals with medicines. Supplier C4 deals with medical equipment, medicines, and essential drugs for primary health care. It is difficult to differentiate Suppliers C3 and 4 in terms of products they can deal with. Both are generally able to get the medical items, it just depends on the time and cost

to meet the requirements of the tender. Supplier C5 supplies medical items, medicine and additionally NFI such as hygiene kits, disposal items, mobile vehicle surgery units, etc.

The size or the total revenue of the sub-cases cannot be revealed because the information of suppliers should be confidentially dealt with by the IHO. The names of these companies were only shared among the participants and were treated anonymously by the author during the field work. Hence, very limited descriptions about the suppliers will be presented in this research. Instead, the amount of procurement with each supplier is provided in general terms. Suppliers C1-3 were in the highest group of procurement amount with the IHO, over two million pounds in the financial year of 2017, whilst Suppliers C2-4 were in the lowest group, each amounting around 400,000 pounds per year in 2017. The amount of supplies from Supplier C5 was between these two groups.

The frequency of agreement per year was assumed based on the number of payments to the suppliers from the finance team of the IHO. The frequency of agreements with Supplier C1 is the highest among five commercial suppliers while the rest are between two and six for the frequency of contracts made in 2017. Relatively, food is lower value financially and health items are more costly, when comparing the total amount of supplies and its frequencies of agreement of Suppliers C1-3.

5.3.2.2. *In-kind suppliers (I 1&2)*

Supplier I1 is not a manufacturer. This in-kind supplier is closer to the organisation type of distributor or retailer. This supplier has two divisions of both a private company and a charitable organisation. This is basically a private company, but they also have

a charitable organisation themselves. They make money through the private one and at the same time they provide charitable donations through their charity division.

Supplier I1 provides pharmaceutical items, and medical hygiene products such as plastic gloves for surgery, bandages, etc. These items are used to respond to the disasters in Region X through the regional health authorities. The authority decides where to distribute these items within the affected area. In general, hospitals need them the most, in the types of primary care facilities or secondary facilities in Region X.

When these in-kind items are converted to monetary values, it will be roughly fifteen million pounds per year. Averagely, 45-50 containers are provided per year, and one container is worth around \$500,000. This consists of 40% of the whole in-kind donation. As, for one order, 20-25 containers are requested on average and, per year, 45-50 containers are delivered to the destination from Supplier I1. Thus, the transactions are approximately conducted twice to three times per year.

Supplier I2 is a private company and a manufacturer of clothing that is located in Central America. It provides both in-kind items and financial donations, trying to provide what the beneficiaries need on the ground. However, it depends on their business conditions and the local economy. Thus, their in-kind supplies and donations are affected by the economy and their business conditions. This leads to irregular transactions between the IHO and Supplier I2.

Supplier I2 provides winter specific clothing and blankets which are new, not second-hand. Their products were used for relief aid in Region X. Supplier I2 used to send two or three containers of clothing products on average per year. One container is assumed to be worth of 150,000 USD in the open market. In total, it was roughly

230,000 GBP in a year. It is not conducted on a regular basis, maybe once or twice per year.

5.3.2.3. *Supranational organisations (S1)*

Supplier S1 can be categorised as a supranational organisation, which has several offices around the world. It has a wide range of modalities in delivering aid such as in-kind funding, cash distribution programmes or a mixture of several methods depending on the situations of affected areas. Regarding in-kind supplies, S1 provides both food packets and NFI.

The type of aid provided by Supplier S1 is called ‘in-kind funding’, which means Supplier S1 provides aid items and the IHO is in charge of distribution. The aid type varies depending on the areas. In Region Y, food distribution was the primary type and the majority was in-kind providing. Supplier S1 has changed the aid types according to the changing situations. There are two different modalities. The first is to provide the nutrition supplements such as nutrition packs and high energy biscuits. The second is a general food distribution method by providing food packs according to sphere standards and the needs on the ground. The food items can differ depending on the location, but usually contain rice, wheat, oil, beans, dates, etc.

There are some fluctuations depending on the changing circumstances of a crisis and escalated demand of each country because supplies have shifted to different areas depending on changing demand. But, estimating the food aid roughly in financial amount, it is approximately between 30 and 50 million USD. When calculating the value of the food in metric tonnes, it is worth around forty million USD. It depends on how often Supplier S1 can bring the food supplies in the area because the area can be blocked sometimes. Thus, it can be less or more depending on the regional rules. But,

averagely, the actual value of the food supplies would be around 40 million USD. Roughly it is 31 million GBP, converting currency to pounds.

There is a short-term agreement between the IHO and Supplier S1, which ranges from three months to nine months depending on the changing situations. The distribution projects can be extended for up to 3 months. This short-term agreement can be continuously extended in this affected area. The agreement includes the details about responsibilities of both sides, such as who is in charge of delivering to the port or warehouse, setting up distribution points, registering beneficiaries, and verifying and distributing the aid items.

5.3.3. Categorisation of key suppliers

This research found that for the humanitarian organisations the term ‘supplier’ can be used in a different way from a traditional concept in the commercial sector, as was explained in the exploratory study. There are two taxonomic standards in classifying types of suppliers from the humanitarian perspective: international vs local suppliers; and commercial vs non-commercial suppliers.

5.3.3.1. *International vs Local*

Firstly, suppliers can be simply divided into local supplier and international suppliers according to their location. One of participants involved with aid programmes said that local suppliers would be from the national region whilst international suppliers come from different countries outside of the affected nation and operate across international borders.

From the procurement point of view, ‘local supplier’ may have a slightly different meaning. In general, there are three types of open tender: open tender, local open

tender, and international open tender. As the term clearly says, open tender is that any supplier organisation can apply for the tender, either local or international. But, when it comes to local open tender, international suppliers are excluded. In this sense, local suppliers are meant to be suppliers that were selected through the local tender process, and so are international suppliers through their own process. Thus, when the IHO advertise the bid, they clearly state which type of tender it is for.

In terms of procurement processes, local suppliers are those that are selected through local open tender in the local office, or open tender for which any organisation can apply. In the case of local open tender, the open tender is advertised locally where the demanded aid products or services are awaited to be delivered. Thus, this tender is available only for the suppliers that are based within the local area. Or the procurement officer and local office relevant staff can use their discretion in advertising the tender in neighbouring areas or countries that have an advantage of a cost-effective secure delivery. As such, suppliers that were chosen from procuring in neighbouring countries can be regarded as local suppliers. Further, the local tender can be proceeded outside of the affected country by other local offices of the IHO in neighbouring countries.

One of the main reasons for using local suppliers is because it enables fast and effective responses. Particularly, when responding to emergency situations, the IHO tries to respond within 72 hours and as quickly as they can. In this early stage of emergency response, most tasks are associated with lifesaving assistance, food or NFI distribution or water trucking, which are the most essential criteria for life. It is very time-dependent and aid actors should react rapidly in a short time. Therefore, local suppliers are very advantageous in terms of quick delivery and cost-effectiveness because the local delivery will be faster than international importing and international

transportation charges will be saved. In addition, there is a good reason to help with the local economy and their rehabilitation.

Nonetheless, there might be challenges in using local or national suppliers because of the lower level of professionalism and the potential risk of fraud and corruption that possibly arises within the local networks. There may be interests that are more directly related to the local suppliers or personnel. As such, the probabilities of leaking the bidding information exist through the local networks informally. In the case of a new country where the IHO did not have existing presence before, the likelihood of professional misconduct can be much greater than the established office because international personnel are not familiar with the working environment in a new country.

Regarding international open tender, this is available only for international companies. At that stage, if international open tender is decided, this means that the suppliers within the affected area or country do not have enough capability or expertise to fully meet the demands in the emergency situations. As such, international open tender is specifically applicable to international suppliers. In the procedure of international open tender, the tender is advertised in the international media such as publications and websites to attract a global response.

There are strong plus points for using international suppliers. First, they are usually very professional suppliers. Although there are challenges in going through all the questions of crossing borders and receiving permission from the governments, they are generally experienced and professional in resolving these issues. Thus, they are reliable and the IHO can depend on them because they know how to make the process run more smoothly. Further, international suppliers can usually meet the high demand of aid products and deal with a surge of demand in the field. Hence, when there is a

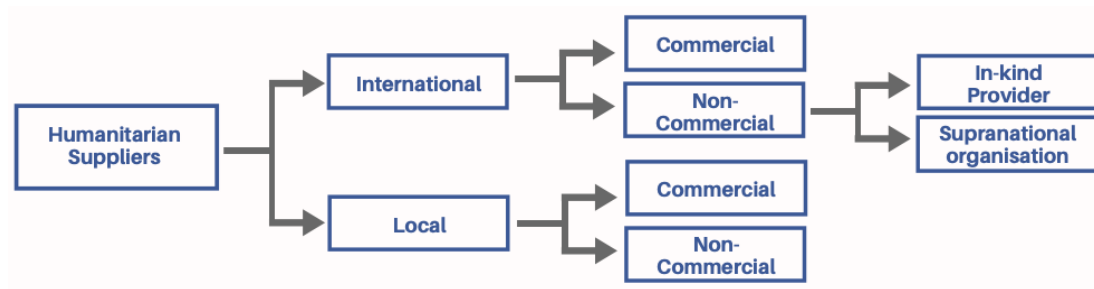
shortage of aid items, international procurement is considered. Lastly, there are more opportunities to develop long-established relationships with international suppliers by using various logistics hubs and supply chain nodes such as Dubai. Usually, it is easier to find a wider range of suppliers in these kinds of hubs, which are predictable and already qualified as secure.

However, there may be some challenges in using international suppliers due to their long-distance location and international transport. Relatively, it takes a longer period to import aid products from abroad because international suppliers are not sited in the same country with the IHO's local offices or the affected country. Further, there may possibly be limiting factors that are not predicted. For example, in some affected countries, their airports are small and could not accommodate large planes. Then, aid products should be transferred onto smaller planes. As such, some limited factors can make additional delays related to international transport and logistics when using international suppliers.

5.3.3.2. *Commercial vs non-commercial*

In the exploratory study, suppliers were divided into two groups: commercial suppliers; and donor type suppliers. Furthermore, in the primary study, non-commercial suppliers are divided into an in-kind provider and a supranational organisation type as drawn in Figure 5-4 and, further, the concept of international and local is added on the division of supplier type. This section attempts to clarify the distinctions between these different types of suppliers by primarily explaining individual processes and procedures in dealing with each supplier type.

Figure 5-4. Categorisation of suppliers in the humanitarian sector



Source: Developed by the researcher

5.3.3.2.1. *Process with commercial suppliers*

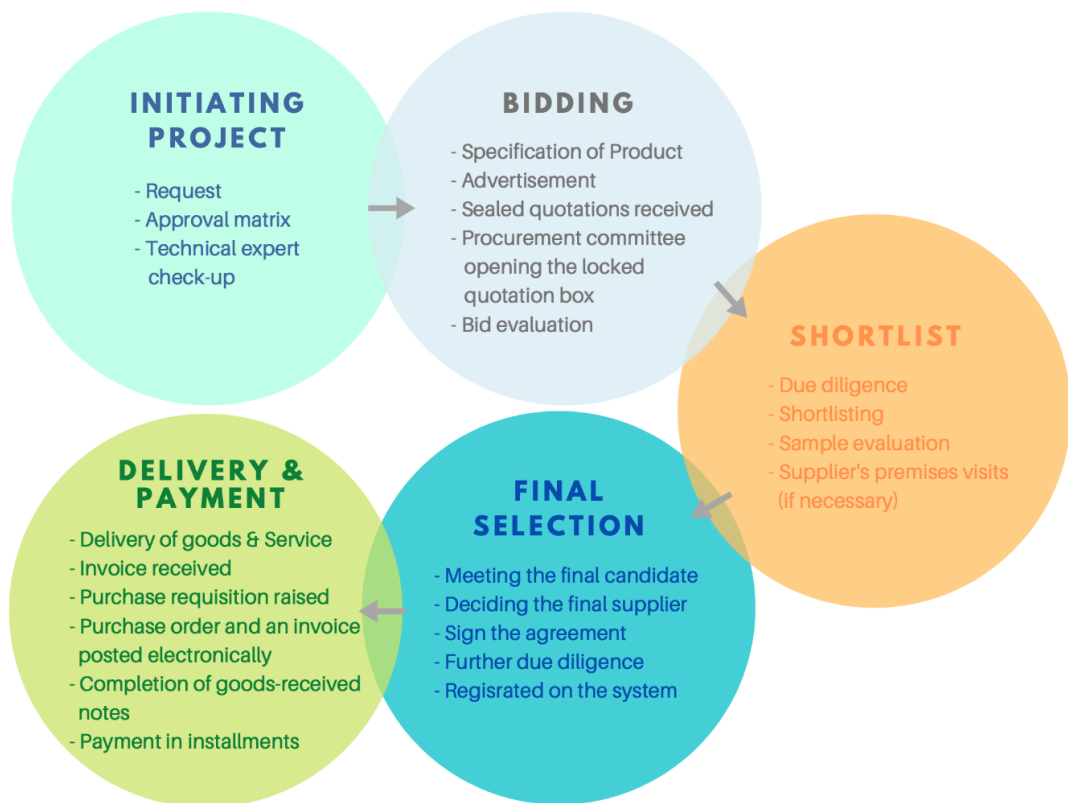
This categorisation of suppliers is the traditional concept of suppliers that are selected through traditional procurement process like the business sector, although differences apparently exist in details of procedures between the humanitarian and business sectors. The concept of commercial suppliers will become easier to be perceived from the humanitarian perspective by understanding the whole process in dealing with commercial suppliers. Commercial procurement can be divided into two types: for an emergency and for a non-emergency. The procurement process for a non-emergency follows the normal procurement process according to its range of budget amounts. The procurement for an emergency enables an accelerated process during emergency circumstances by making the process procedures simpler than ones of the normal process.

A. The normal procurement process

Depending on the amount of budget to spend, different process of tendering is operated. When the budget is small, the process is simplified. Dealing with a large budget, the complete tendering process is applied to the greatest extent. The range of tendering budgets can be classified, for instance, a smallest amount-simply requiring invoice, the

second range-requiring three quotations, the third range of amount-requiring certain approvals and tendering and then the largest amount of budget range-requiring a full-fledged tendering process. These ranges of budget amount vary depending on regions where each office locates. Also, each donor organisation specifically provides different process guidelines for different values of budget scale. Hence, the range of budgets for process guidelines may vary depending on the location of the offices and donor organisations. The principle is that the higher the volume of the project budget is, the higher up level of decision-making goes in the managerial line. In this section, the biggest tendering process will be focused on as Figure 5-5 describes.

Figure 5-5. The normal procurement processes.



Source: Developed by the researcher

The first step of the procurement process is initiated by the request for the project. This request is usually made by the budget holder after the needs on the ground are

identified. As such the inputs required for the projects can be shelter kits, sanitation, or water in accordance with the nature of project. This needs to be approved by the line managers of the requester according to the approval matrix process. At the same time, the budget is being reviewed by the finance team before the project is assigned and sent to the donor. The finance team of the HQ checks whether the balance is enough for the projects and functions as a link between the field offices and donors. Thus, once the request is assigned and contracts are signed with donors, the finance team is ready to transfer the fund to the relevant department. The approved request, then, goes to the SC department.

Next, technical experts review the technical specification of the requested products. After this tendering is advertised in the newspapers or on the website according to the timeframe, sealed quotations are received. The bids are kept completely confidential in a locked quotation box whose keys are held by two or three different people of the committee. The committee members open the bids together and record all the information of the bids such as the price, quantity, quality of the goods for each supplier on the bid evaluation form. Then, appropriate suppliers are shortlisted based on the needs, quality of the items and the prices they proposed. After samples of the products are received from the shortlisted suppliers and are evaluated by the committee. The committee may visit the suppliers' premises if necessary. After the final supplier is selected, the agreement is signed.

There are distinctive aspects in the procedures. The first one is about the make-up of a procurement committee. In general, the procurement committee consist of around four key members including a programme manager, a finance manager, a supply chain manager, and an administration manager. Additionally, a director of the local office is included if he/she wants to be involved. These are the mandatory panels for the

procurement committee in the normal procurement full process. The second is about rigorous programmes of screening and vetting suppliers. Before the shortlisting of applicants is made after bid evaluation during tendering process, due diligence is proceeded. After the agreement is signed between the IHO and the final supplier, further due diligence is made before the supplier is registered in the system into the software of the IHO. Due diligence is an essential investigation and a prerequisite requirement that must be completed before entering into a transaction with commercial suppliers. As such, the IHO screens the status of their suppliers by checking references, ethical issues, trade records, financial stability, the origins of resources they use for products and the history of committing any type of offences like fraud or child labour. Additionally, it is essential to cross-check with the anti-terrorism list if the suppliers are not linked with any terrorism issues. All these procedures of the due diligence programme should be processed before appointing the vendor on the system of the IHO. This due diligence process in the humanitarian sector is more complicated and requires greater thoroughness compared with one between commercial parties. This is because the problems caused by a lack of due diligence process can jeopardize the reputation of the organisation or financial punishment exacted by the authorities. Lastly, the contract is not on the basis of a renewal system. This means that a separate tender deals with separate items under separate agreement for each request. After the agreement is terminated, which usually take three to five months to be completed, this is not renewed.

After an agreement is signed and aid items are delivered, payment is made to the supplier. For this, the process of producing a purchase order should be completed through its own approval matrix. After the supplier sends the invoice to the IHO and the field team confirms that they received the goods, purchase requisition is raised by

the field team in the system with all attached documents before this goes to the finance team. This should be approved by the relevant programme staffs such as the project manager, the head of programmes, the director of the field office and the programme team of the HQ. Then, after the approved purchase requisition is sent to the finance team on the system and further approvals are made in the finance team, the purchase requisition is automatically converted to a purchase order and an invoice is posted into the system. This is a prerequisite for payment.

The finance team does check if the evidence document for the supply payment is correct. Finally, payment will be made according to the contract details and goods-received notes. Each contract stipulates specific guidelines and terms in making payment. Sometimes payment is divided into three times: upfront, a second and then final payment that is made after deliver is completed. Or it can be made by two payment such as upfront fifty percent to eighty percent and the rest in the final payment when all the supplies are delivered. One important point is the finance team do not make all the payment in advance. The finance team always hold back the final payment until their field team confirms that all supplies are delivered at the right time, with right quality and agreed quantity. The IHO has standard forms as a goods-received notes that the project teams use for monitoring and evaluation. Whenever the project team receives the goods they ordered, they must make sure the correct quality and quantity of the products and on-time delivery, recording them on the goods-received notes.

B. The emergency procurement process

Extremely tense and sensitive situations during emergencies are taken into consideration in the emergency procurement procedures. Further, the local procurement departments are under considerable pressure in responding to

emergencies within short timescales because the situations are related to the matter of life, livelihoods, or starvation. Thus, there is a need to make exceptions of procurement guidelines, that are separate from the normal process. As such, emergency procurement process is allowed for all purchases of goods and services up to the value £100,000. Purchases of goods and services above this amount may require full tendering procedures, using the discretion of the director in the field office. However, in this case of the values above £100,000, the emergency procurement procedures cannot be decided by the local office director alone. The director of the field office must first have discussions with the procurement department in the HQ, and then must inform the finance director of the HQs. Still, emergency procedures are simplified by one-fifth of normal procedures, which greatly reduces the responding time in the early phase of disastrous situations. Most of the procurement protocols or restrictions are waived in this accelerated tender except for essential procedures such as screening suppliers, raising purchase order, appointing a supplier, and making notes instead of documentation. Hence, an existing supplier list on the panel for emergency is very useful in this procedure as they were already screened, and their capabilities were verified.

5.3.3.2.2. *Process with non-commercial suppliers*

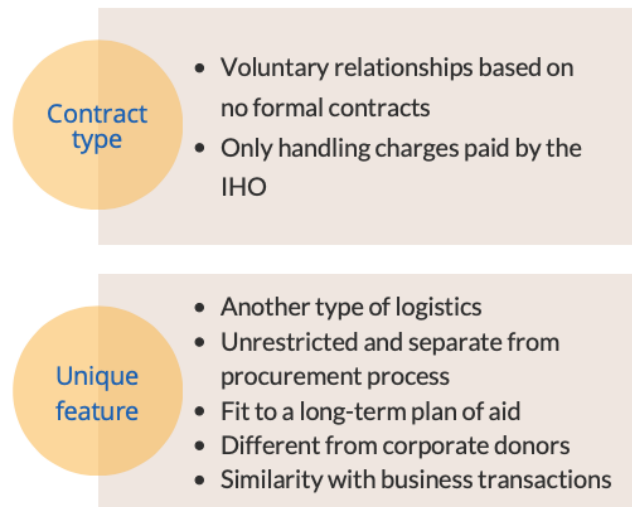
A. In-kind providers

Some participants emphasised that in-kind supplies have been underestimated as a way of providing aid and neglected in terms of its importance in overall aid work. Further, it has been neglected as a means of yielding benefits for both sides and beneficiaries. Even inside organisations, there is a lack of understanding about in-kind supplies. However, the items have monetary values and provide physical and practical help on

the ground. This is a part of humanitarian logistics and practical/physical aid with monetary valuable aid items. Additionally, free aid items from the in-kind suppliers are the primary interests for the NPOs. As participants suggested, there is a need to have new perceptions about in-kind supplies and to develop this method as providing aid efficiently and usefully.

Figure 5-6 describes that the relationship with in-kind suppliers is different from one with the commercial suppliers. It is a voluntary, rather than a contractual relationship. There is no formality without any formal contracts or agreement. There is no long-term contract or a memorandum of understanding (MOU) in this relationship. The transactions of in-kind supplies are made year to year basis or project by project basis. Also, this is not mutually exclusive, and the in-kind supplies can be sent to other organisations as well. The IHO is in charge of the shipping costs and handling charges of in-kind supply deliveries. However, the in-kind suppliers usually ship containers in advance before they receive the cost from the IHO. The partner offices that usually focus on the fundraising projects cover the shipment from the location of aid item to the destination place for aid. One of local partner organisation voluntarily pay for the container shipment cost.

Figure 5-6. Understanding of in-kind suppliers



Source: Developed by the researcher

Figure 5-6 also shows the unique characteristics of in-kind providers. First, the in-kind supplies are considered as a part of logistics and another attribute that consists of logistics. Once the needs on the ground are matched with the availability of in-kind supplies, shipment and distribution are arranged by the logistics personnel. Thus, the most of tasks in dealing with in-kind supplies are practically related to logistics. Second, the in-kind supply process is clearly separated from the commercial procurement process. As such, there is no formal ordering system or formal forms, which differs traditional logistics. It is rather maintained on a communication basis. The nature of the relationships with in-kind suppliers tends to be unrestricted and non-exclusive. This relationship is not bound by any formal agreements and any chances are open for other potential partners respectively. The important matter in the in-kind supplying process is whether the needs on the ground match what is available from the in-kind suppliers. Before proceeding the commercial procurement, the IHO can check if the in-kind suppliers can provide with goods and services that are needed on the ground.

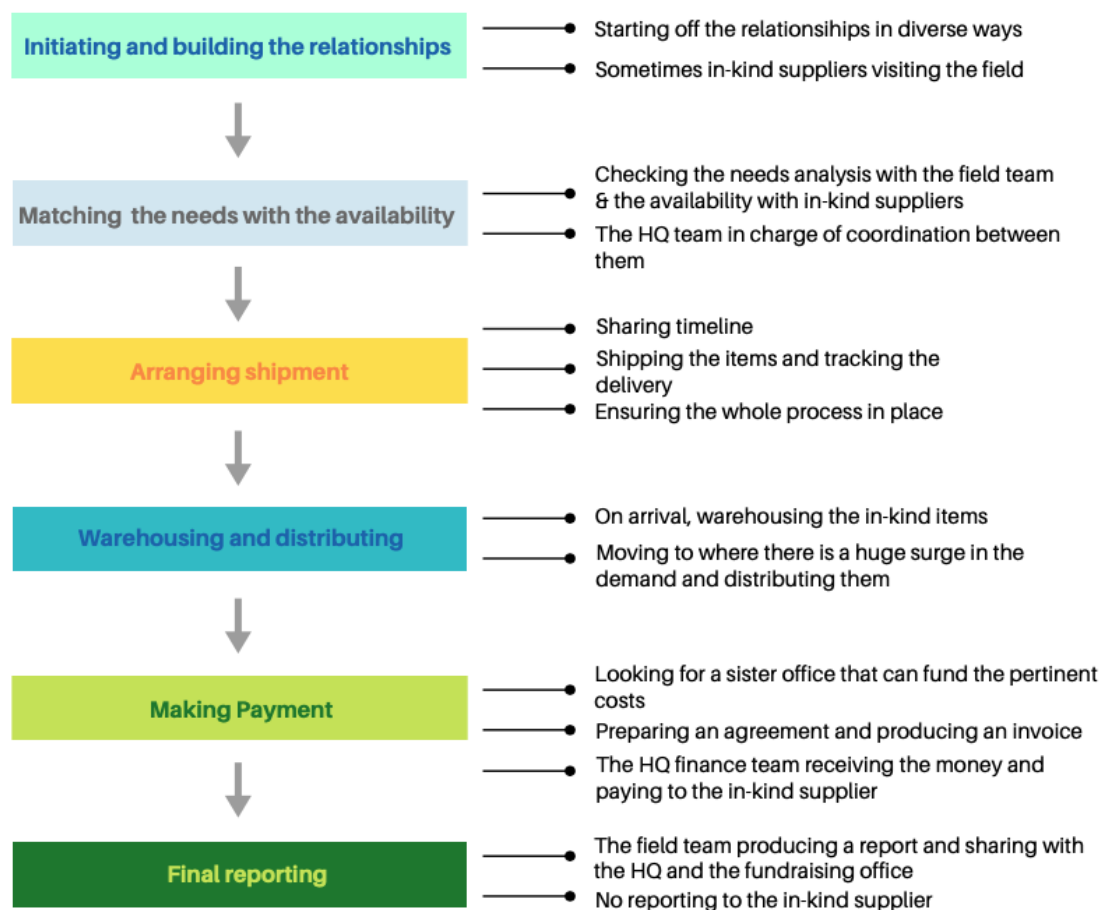
Third, the in-kind supplies are more compatible with a long-term plan of aid in relatively stable situations, where needs can be assessed on the ground and feedbacks and reporting about aid activities can be made. In an emergency, usually specific aid items are requested in the field depending on the urgent situations. Due to the limited availability of items of in-kind supplies, the in-kind method cannot make the desired effect in an early phase of crisis. Next, in-kind providers are not necessarily corporate donors, and there are modest differences between them. In the case of corporate donors, there is usually a specific purpose and desire to enhance their reputation by exposure of the corporate brand in aid work. As such, charitable giving can be one of the management strategies for corporate donors to prove corporate social responsibility and establish a good reputation. However, in-kind suppliers are differentiated particularly, in terms of approaches to the aid project. They are rather more interested in developing the relationships with the IHO and supporting the aid projects based on the needs of beneficiaries. Lastly, other than that their products are free of charge based on the charitable motivation, the operations for the in-kind supply process are similar with those of normal business transactions. As such, there are dedicated staff who are mainly in charge of in-kind supplies in the IHO and the in-kind supplying companies, respectively. Both sides try to achieve smooth and harmonious operations and management. Further detailed codes about contracts and features of in-kind providers are displayed in Appendix 5-4.

As explained above, there are no explicitly unified process or manuals for dealing with in-kind supplies in the IHO. However, actual practices in processing the in-kind supply can be grouped into seven steps (see Figure 5-7).

As a first step, there are various ways of beginning the relationships with in-kind suppliers. The IHO may get introduced to diverse kinds of suppliers or businesspeople

and build up the relationships from the beginning. Sometimes it takes 5-6 year to lay foundation work for the relationships with in-kind suppliers. Usually, the fundraising department and fundraising regional offices abroad play this role. Alternatively, after some other organisations hear about the IHO's projects, they might contact the IHO to become a part of the aid work by donating in-kind items. After starting off the relationships as above, some of in-kind suppliers visit the field where the IHO operates aid projects and witness first-hand how the projects make a difference for the beneficiaries. Finally, general encounters turn out to be very supportive in-kind providers.

Figure 5-7. Process of in-kind supplies



Source: Developed by the researcher

The second phase is significant in the in-kind supply process because the most important criteria in dealing with in-kind supplies is the relevance of the products or services that the in-kind supplier provide to the IHO with the purpose of the aid programme. That is to say, their goods and services should fit to the needs of the beneficiaries on the ground. There are normally two ways of matching the needs with the availability. First, the HQ checks the needs on the ground with the field offices. The field teams usually provide the HQ with a needs analysis although it is not a detailed list of items. Then, the relevant team in the HQ tries to meet the needs and to find appropriate suppliers. Usually, the field teams inform of what they need on the ground and the HQ coordinates it between the in-kind suppliers and the field teams. The in-kind suppliers respond whether they have available items or not. If available, they provide the list of available items fulfilling the needs on the ground as similar as they can. The HQ team checks the items listed with the field team whether they are required in the field. When discussing with the field teams, particularly, the features of location and seasonal differences should be taken into consideration in making up a schedule of delivery and distribution. Otherwise, the aid items can become useless due to the incongruity of seasonal needs and locational uniqueness. The other way of processing is that the in-kind suppliers sometimes suggest what they can offer to the IHO beforehand. Then the relevant team in the HQ confirms the details of packing list and makes sure if the items are within the expiration dates. The HQ team pinpoints the needs in the field, discuss with the field offices about the best suited place, and check if the items can pass the customs clearance in that place. Also, there is a need to identify the delivery methods, for instance, whether the field team can distribute the items directly or indirectly through the government of the affected areas. As such, this procedure is operated in a flexible manner. These procedures can be changed

accordingly because each in-kind supplier has different approach to the work with the IHO and different resources they can provide. Some in-kind suppliers are more interested in the suitable needs depending on the countries, whilst some focus on what they can offer and process it quickly.

Next, shipment is arranged according to the clear timeline. Any kinds of problems can be occurred during this process such as technical issues or extra storage issues due to weather conditions. Both sides try to manage these problems smoothly. Also, there are series of operational actions such as shipping, tracking, and making sure the process in place. All these procedures are operated based on discussions and communications as there are no official rules or manuals. After the in-kind items arrive in the regions, they are warehoused first. Then, from the storage, they are moved to the place where they are most required.

After the place where the in-kind items are urgently needed is confirmed and where to send the in-kind items is decided, the HQ team looks for a fundraising sister office that is willing to fund the transportation, delivery and handling costs for this in-kind supply. Once this sister office that sponsors the charges for shipping and distributing is secured, the finance team of the HQ draws up an agreement with this sister office and produces an invoice to let the fundraising office pay the charges for shipment and distribution. When the finance team receives the money from the sponsoring office, they pay the supplier the shipping and handling costs. Funding in-kind supply delivery is very beneficial to the sister office that funds the delivery fee because with a relatively small amount of money they have a chance to deliver highly valued containers at once. Thus, this can be seen to their own donors as great achievements and effective and efficient way of spending financial donations.

The final step of this process concluded with a final reporting procedure. The in-kind suppliers do not demand reporting from the HQ team in charge of in-kind supplies. Rather, the fundraising sister office requires reports that shows how the fund is spent in detail such as the number of containers, the destination of the in-kind supplies, the amount of delivery costs and handling and distribution charges. In this reporting system, where the in-kind items were moved to and how these items were ended up should be included. Usually, the field teams that are in charge of distribution send the HQ team the report with pictures because the details regarding distribution are decided on the ground by the field team directly. It includes where these items were distributed and how many beneficiaries were affected and received these items. As the fundraising office pays these charges by using their fundraising from their donors, they need details of expenditures.

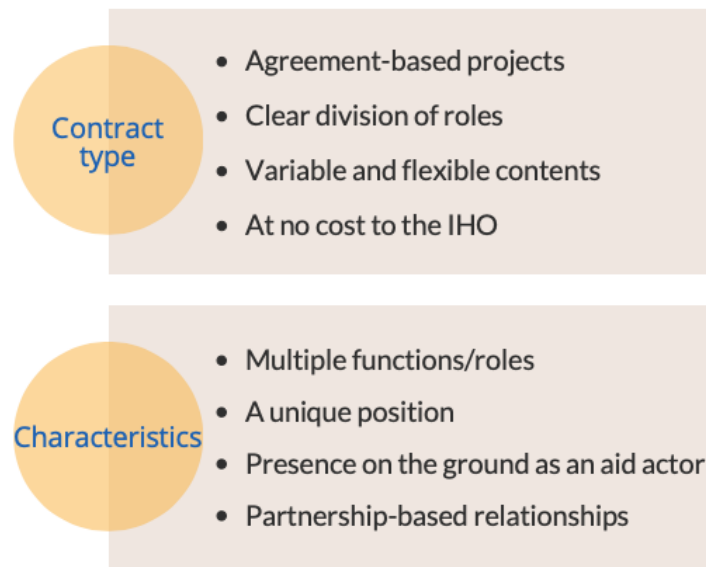
Given this, the in-kind supply is a very cost-effective way for both sides of the IHO and the in-kind suppliers. In the in-kind supply process, because of the procedure of matching the needs on the ground with the availability in the in-kind suppliers, the in-kind items are very useful in the field and are very helpful for the beneficiaries. Usually, the in-kind suppliers provide indispensable or essential goods that are desperately needed in the field. As such, these items are not just extras that are given in addition to what is necessary. These will have to be directly purchased from commercial suppliers if they are not supplied by the in-kind providers. Hence, this way of supplying enables the IHO save a lot of cost and effort. Sometimes, the IHO field team does not know what they will receive exactly until they open the container. This can be a disadvantage of in-kind supplies. Nonetheless, due to extreme situations in the affected areas such as Regions X and Y, any kinds of products are needed, and it is not difficult to find beneficiaries who need them.

B. Supranational organisation

Supplier S1 is categorised as a supranational organisation, which has a slightly different features from the other two in-kind suppliers as illustrated in Figure 5-8 (see Appendix 5-5). The biggest difference lies in the agreement made between the IHO and Supplier S1-the supranational organisation. There is an overall strategic framework agreement that covers general aid activities with Supplier S1. There are also individual agreements case by case depending on affected countries or diverse projects. Having overall agreement makes the projects processed faster than the case processing the projects without the overall agreement. This supranational organisation usually has different partners such as local NGOs or international NGOs that act as a subcontractor of the supranational organisation.

The agreement clearly specifies responsibilities and roles of each side. For example, it sets out who takes a responsibility of shipping the items to the port, of moving to the warehouse and to the distribution points. Also, it clarifies who will be responsible for the verification and distribution of the aid items and the registration of beneficiaries. Depending on the situations, the range of responsibilities changes and is adjusted. Generally, the IHO is in charge of distributing aid items on behalf of this organisation. In this sense, the IHO functions as a subcontractor of Supplier S1.

Figure 5-8. Understanding of supranational organisation



Source: Developed by the researcher

The contents of the agreement vary country by country, project by project. Aid methods can change depending on the situations such as in-kind supplies or cash distributions. In addition, the contract does not restrict the aid activities, although this is based on contractual relationships. Even if the agreement is not signed or finalised, the IHO does not need to stop the work and both sides keep continuing the aid work together. As such the agreement is flexibly applied in practice. Due to the nature of emergencies, shifting locations or some amendments about the contracted period are flexibly considered on the agreement. Usually this agreement with this supranational organisation is a short-term one, three-months. They extend the contract whenever necessary, rather than make a new contract. Or there is also an option for making a long-term contract such as six months to one year. As such, all these criteria of the agreement are flexibly and variably adapted to fit specific emergent situations.

Lastly, working with this organisation does not cost the IHO at all because they undertake the responsibility of the whole expense. The supranational organisation

provides in-kind items, handling charges and administrative costs. They pay not only delivery costs but also incidental costs for the IHO.

Additionally, this type organisation demonstrates several unique characteristics. First, this supranational organisation performs a wide range of functions such as a donor organisation, an in-kind provider, a coordinator between diverse entities, and an aid actor in the field. They play multiple roles or sometimes shift from one role to another depending on changing circumstances. Secondly, this supranational organisation is generally under a funding regime not under the procurement process, as other donor organisations are. However, this type of organisation is in a unique position that cannot be compared any other organisations or suppliers. This supranational organisation cannot be simply defined as a donor organisation. They have their own way of working that is differentiated from other donor organisations. Their roles are not limited to donating for the IHO.

Next, the organisation goes beyond merely donating money to the IHO. Unlike normal institutional donors, this supranational organisation participates in disaster relief and aid work first-hand and takes on a role on the ground as other aid actors do. They work in the field with the local office of the IHO and have better understanding of the realities on the ground. They play a critical role as a coordinator among many associated entities on the ground. Lastly, the way of working with this supranational organisation is different from the principle of other donor organisations. The relationships between the IHO and this supranational organisation tend to be interactive, collaborative and interdependent. Usually, this supranational organisation cannot cover the whole affected area during emergency outbreaks and must rely on other humanitarian aid actors. The IHO also provides their own resources and has lots of mutual communication when working with this supranational organisation. As such,

this is not a unilateral relationship, rather it is a partnership based on mutual interaction and collaborative working style.

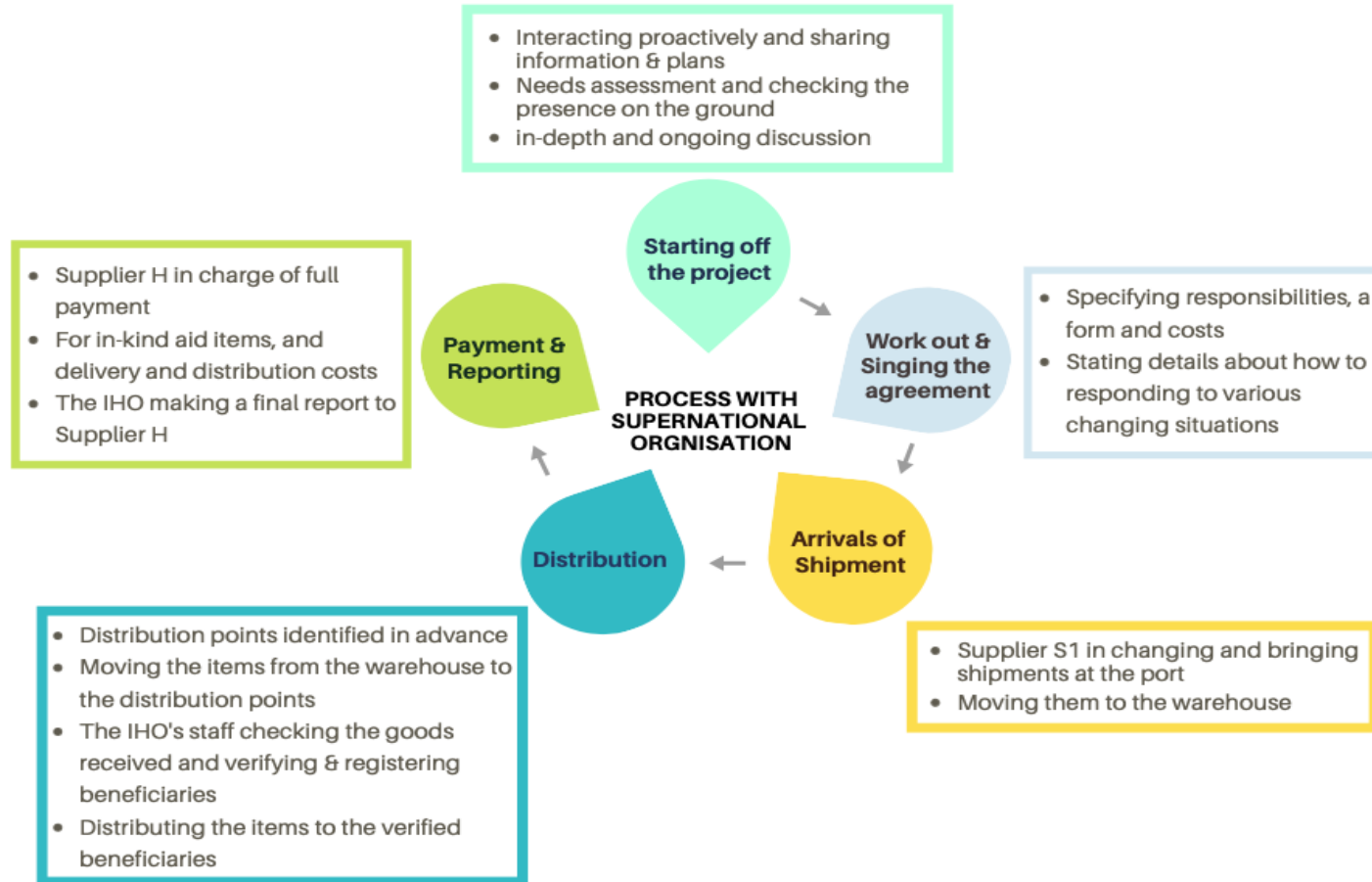
The working process with this supranational organisation is also differentiated from those of other type of suppliers. Figure 5-9 demonstrates that the process can be summarised as five stages which does not necessarily matched with a time sequence. Hence, these can be overlapped or muddled in time or occur in parallel. As a first step, the IHO usually shares the needs assessment with other peer groups including this supranational organisation. In this case when dealing with the crisis in Region Y, the IHO seems proactive in grasp of the situations and the needs. In this case, the IHO proactively shared the data regarding the needs and the altered conditions on the ground with other NGOs and the supranational organisation. The IHO suggests the needs of the field, the distribution plans and how to respond to the events. Alternatively, when a new spot emerges as an affected area, this supranational organisation contacts the IHO from their side first to check if the IHO is present on that location where disaster relief and aid is needed. Then, they explain their plan for the aid activities to the IHO first and discuss further for the response proposals. The IHO then decides if they can participate in disaster relief and aid of the particular location. Or, the IHO has productive discussions with the supranational organisation by recommending other organisations that are more suitable to the tasks and suggesting other locations which the IHO considers important. Thus, there is no static way of starting off the projects between the IHO and this supranational organisation. The projects are developed by a continuous interchange of ideas between them.

Next, there is an agreement between the IHO and this organisation, which specifies responsibilities of each side, a term of projects, cost covered, etc. It also states how these details are changed in the outbreak of clashing. The projects with this

organisation are generally subject to the agreement that both sides sign, but are not operated in a stern discipline. For example, even if the agreement is not signed or amended, the IHO does not need to wait for the agreement completed. Usually the IHO has a short-term contract with this supranational organisation, three months. When the IHO does not finish the aid work, they can extend from one to three months depending on the situations, without making a new contract. There are also longer-term contracts from six months to one year if necessary. As such, the details of agreements vary depending on the location, situations, type of disasters, and so on.

This supranational organisation brings their own container ships into Region Y. The IHO staff do not know where these items come from and who the 2nd or 3rd tier of suppliers are. Presumably, they use international suppliers outside of Region Y. This supranational organisation is responsible for receiving the shipment at the port. Depending on the situations and agreement, they deliver the products to the warehouse of the IHO/Supplier S1 or the IHO needs to move the products from the port to the warehouse.

Figure 5-9. The working process with the supranational organisation



Source: Developed by the researcher

The distribution points are identified and decided in advance by the supranational organisation by considering infrastructures, the location of warehouse, etc. The IHO also collaborate with Supplier S1 to identify the actual point for distribution. According to the agreement, the supranational organisation or the IHO brings the aid items from the warehouse to the distribution point and hand them over to the relevant staff of the IHO. Then, the staff check the received goods, verify, and register beneficiaries, and distribute the aid items. As such, it seems that the IHO usually takes a full responsibility at the distribution point.

Supplier S1 is in charge of payment throughout the whole process, including administrative costs for delivery and distribution and some portions of management costs. The IHO is not aware of how the aid items come from originally. Supplier S1 gives both in-kind aid items and funding for distribution, storage, etc to the IHO and the IHO distributes the aid products and services on behalf of them. In the final step, the IHO must write a report for the supranational organisation after all these tasks are completed.

5.3.3.3. *Argument and justification*

As discussed in Chapter 2, the commercial concepts in SCM are sometimes not matched exactly with those in the humanitarian SCM. In the business sector, ‘customers’ are used in a commercial meaning, while for the humanitarian organisations ‘customers’ can be replaced with beneficiaries or donors that are not commercial ones nor matched with the meaning of customers. Thus, there should be some attempt to reconsider whether some terms traditionally used in SCM could be applied to HSCM.

Many notions that are used in the business section are not compatible with the humanitarian concepts. For instance, it is difficult to adopt the concept of ‘customer’ in the beneficiary concept as there are lots of gaps between them. Nonetheless, they are both end-users, in this sense they are in common. In the circumstances surrounding the IHO, it is difficult to stick to the product cycle when defining the supply chains because the humanitarian supply chains are deeply associated with the funding cycle. Indeed, the product cycle and funding cycle are inevitably attached and related each other. Most of products in the commercial product cycle are purchased by using funding through the funding cycle and many in-kind items are used to deliver to beneficiaries through the product cycle. These two different cycles are mixed and interconnected and are not markedly distinguished on the ground. Furthermore, it can be said that institutional donors are part of procurement procedures. In the internal regulations of the IHO, its documents specify that the processes that the institutional donors have internally acquire a preponderance over the processes that the IHO operates, if the IHO use the funding from the institutional donors. As such, it is difficult to separate the funding cycle and the procurement cycle. Looking upon the process of supplies, they are indistinguishable and intimately connected to one another in the humanitarian context of SCM.

Additionally, their suppliers are remarkably diverse, and all do not operate in all their supply chains. One of participants mentioned a case that the 2nd tier or 3rd tier suppliers could be governmental organisations although the IHO used the commercial procurement process. This means that the types of suppliers could be diversified according to uniqueness of the humanitarian context. Hence, there is a need to consider different types of suppliers from the humanitarian perspectives to optimise the study for humanitarian focus.

One of programme staff described the categorisation of their programmes as follows: “So, we have two programmes really going on where we receive funding from donors that we can spend on whichever project, but we also have in-kind donation.....”. The former is about the supplies that are gained from the commercial suppliers through the commercial procurement by using financial donation. The latter is about the in-kind supplies that are given complementarily from the in-kind suppliers or through supranational organisations. In this sense, all these aid products and services can be viewed as supplies that come to the affected area and are distributed through their supply chain pipelines. This perspective accords well with the stance of this research.

This research could confirm through both the exploratory study and the primary case study that there are two types of suppliers in the humanitarian sector and there is a clear distinction between these two: commercial suppliers and donor type of suppliers. However, three interviewees did not accept in-kind suppliers as a supplier and pointed out that the term 'donor' would be more appropriate to describe in-kind providers than the term 'supplier'. One of these three participants accepted that the in-kind suppliers are a part of a provider, rather than a supplier. They wanted to clearly distinguish in-kind providers from the commercial supplier that is selected based on the commercial procurement processes. One of them strongly refuted the inclusion of donor providers in the supplier group. It seems that there is a fixed idea about the term 'supplier' that must be selected on a procurement basis. The in-kind suppliers give what they have to the IHO without receiving payment. In this sense, it is perceived as a donation regime.

On the other hand, one of participants asserted that in-kind suppliers are clearly different from donor organisations. As described above, they do not demand corporate promotion and have a different attitude trying to meet the needs on the ground. As such, for this participant, in-kind suppliers cannot be defined merely as a donor

organisation. The in-kind suppliers provide their products according to needs assessment and demands on the ground. They do not give whatever they have or what they want to give to the IHO. As explained above, there is a process of matching the need on the ground with the availability of the in-kind products. As such, this is oriented by needs on the ground and local situations of the affected areas.

Further, the items provided by these in-kind donor organisations are supplies from the view of beneficiaries on the ground. Just the products are supplied free of charge, although shipping costs should be paid from the IHO side. In terms of volumes, the amount of in-kind items' value in their SCs is not the negligible quantity. There are lots of in-kind items that are given by in-kind donors in the pipeline of supply chains of the IHO. This type of aid item cannot be ignored or excluded in humanitarian supply chains just because they are given free of charge. As such, these aid items are under the supply chains of the IHO in a broad point of view, though they are not under the procurement process. Additionally, this research is not limited in the procurement area, which is related to buyer-seller relationships. Rather, this study encompasses the comprehensive supply chain management point of view.

Lastly, one of participants called the companies that offer in-kind items 'suppliers'. This means that each participant might have different perspectives about the scope of suppliers depending on different departments or position on the humanitarian organisations. This topic cannot be fully covered in this research, but this can be a future agenda: to demarcate appropriate boundaries of the concept 'supplier' which is suitable for the humanitarian perspectives.

With regard to the supranational organisation, one of participants strongly refused to include this type of organisation as one of its suppliers. It was rather considered as a

part of funding cycle only because this organisation is not related to the procurement process in this participant's opinion. This participant said that the supranational organisations are not under the procurement procedures. Another participant also categorised Supplier S1 in a donor group. From the point of the financial flow, Supplier S1 can be regarded as a donor. They give the IHO in-kind items, administrative costs for distribution and some part of management costs.

On the other hand, one of participants understood the supranational organisation as a partner, not as a donor. There are different perceptions about this type of organisation that is multi-player. This participant said that Supplier S1 cannot be defined merely 'donor' because there are exchanges of resources between the IHO and Supplier S1. The IHO also provide diverse resources depending on the circumstances such as manpower, expertise, etc. They have discussions and meetings whenever there are issues. Thus, this relationship is based on partnership, rather than being viewed as that of a donor. In addition, as addressed above, this supranational organisation is a strong actor on the ground, which means they are present on the ground and cooperate with other aid actors such as NGOs or governmental organisations in the affected area. In particular, as they cannot cover the whole affected area, they depend on other aid actors to supply aid items and services. They also play a coordinating role among many aid actors as they have capacity to access unreachable places and to approach diverse entities. Hence, this supranational organisation collaborates directly with the local office of the IHO not through the HQ of the IHO. Given this, one of participants emphasised that this supranational organisation is not a donor, this is a strong actor and a partner of the IHO.

As one of participants said, the donors' requests are irresistible for the IHO. Unlike this relationship with donors, the relationship with this supranational organisation is close

to a partnership because both sides actively interact and discuss plans and challenges, then they help each other by dividing tasks and roles to solve the issues. Additionally, this relationship is not a one-way relationship that the supranational organisation just gives funding and in-kind items unilaterally. The IHO also provides resources such as their expertise, manpower, hands-on information, etc. Further, the IHO can raise issues about the relationships and problems to solve in their relationships. As such, it is insufficient to describe this supranational organisation merely as a donor organisation.

Their role is complex and multifunctional, which makes difficult to define their roles. Hence, it is difficult to define Supplier S1 type in one word because S1 can be described as a partner or a donor organisation. There might be huge controversy upon this stance that S1 is a supplier or provider for the IHO. Nonetheless, its working mechanism is based on supplying aid items through the focal IHO. It cannot be denied that S1 provides the primary source of the supplies that the focal IHO uses particularly for the regions. The IHO staff do not exactly know where the products that this supranational organisation offer come from. The IHO receives these aid items through the supranational organisation, not knowing 2nd or 3rd tier of suppliers behind the supranational organisation. Nonetheless, they are under the supply chains reaching the beneficiaries through the IHO in the end. As such, S1 has diverse aspects and functions as an aid actor and certainly take a part in supply chains of the IHO.

Albeit these controversial arguments about the range of suppliers in the humanitarian sector, this study attempts to put a new perspective on the supranational organisation. Taking a part in supplying aid products may be a small portion of understanding the supranational organisation as it has a wide range of roles in the humanitarian sector. Still, the products they provide make up a large portion of aid items of the focal IHO, which cannot be ignored as primary resources. These items are delivered only through

the supranational organisation as the IHO does not know about the 2nd or 3rd tiers of suppliers and communicates directly with the supranational organisation to receive the products. Therefore, in spite of the risk causing controversy, this study looks at the aspect of the supranational organisation as a supplier in the IHO's supply chains.

5.4. Organisational structure

Each HO has different degrees of centralisation in coordinating the organisational structures. Table 5-2 illustrates opposite ends of the spectrum: centralised and decentralised structures. Kunz et al. (2015) assert that there are a very few HOs that are run in a highly centralised structure, being largely decentralised in nature. Rather, “they have diffused power ‘down and out’”, but still tend to maintain “uniformity” by using “normative policies, standards, and guidelines” (Clarke and Ramalingam 2008, p. 49). This means that the loosely centralised way or semi-centralised structure is more commonly adopted in HOs by combining features of both ends. Further, some HOs guarantee an autonomous system for each unit and provide very little standard principles and rules, which stands at the other end of a decentralised system (Clarke and Ramalingam 2008).

Table 5-2. Features of centralised & decentralised HOs

Categories	Features
Centralised	Tightly hierarchical structures, top to down decision-making power, centralised guideline to ensure uniformity
Decentralised	Diffuse power down and out, greater autonomy of individual units, little normative guidance provided,

Source: Adapted from Clarke and Ramalingam, 2008

As illustrated in the previous section, the working processes vary depending on the counterparts. In this research, the overall organisational structure cannot be compared with those of other IHOs since this is based on a single case study design. However,

how its working process shifts with the different type of suppliers can be described in this section. Figure 5-10 clearly depicts the transition of the working structure of the IHO according to each counterpart, and further details are addressed in Appendix 5-6.

5.4.1. Overall structure

Although the working process of the IHO cannot be identified in one concept, it tends toward a semi-centralised structure in general. Although each field office functions quite independently, the HQ plays an important role as an umbrella organisation by embracing and coordinating the differently functioning offices all over the world. Each local office has its own function, for instance, fundraising or implementations. Therefore, it is essential to coordinate different functions of local offices.

When responding to emergencies, the IHO tends to control the aid activities from the HQs through its big coordinating team. The team organise the emergency team and allocates aid products and services for the affected area. In this sense, the emergency operation tends to be managed in the centralised structure basis.

However, disaster response and aid activities are not directly operated in the HQ level. Rather, the local teams lead and take a responsibility of programme implementation. On the other hand, the HQ greatly supports the field teams in various ways to make the responses more effective by using a wider range of networks and partnerships with technical know-hows and administrative skills in humanitarian work. Further, the HQ deploys relevant staff to the field team to help with planning the responses to disasters, organising project concepts, writing proposals and networking. Even for the preparedness phase, the HQ organises a specific team for at-risk countries to lower the vulnerability and to increase coping capacity in advance. Further, it seems that the IHO

has invested less in the HQ than in its local offices and operations. Therefore, it has a small HQ that focuses on supporting the local offices and their aid work. This aspect can be show as a semi-centralised or loosely centralised structure of their working processes.

Last but not least, the decentralised aspect is the most prominent in describing the structure of their working process. First, one person does not take all the responsibilities of certain tasks. For instance, when dealing with screening, several entities inside the IHO are involved in screening and setting up the vendors such as an ICT team, a finance team, a procurement team and so on. In the case of the procurement committee, this is organised based on cross-functionality throughout most of relevant departments such as logistics, finance, programme, procurement, etc. When dealing with high volumes and high budgets, the level of decision-makers goes higher up. If these are local suppliers, the local office must conduct the same process in their system, that are shown to the HQ as well. This strategy is not just for improving transparency, also for preventing corruption.

Secondly, compared to large international NGOs in the UK, the focal case organisation has fewer personnel in its HQ by one fifth compared to one of the largest NGOs or by a half compared to a typical large NGO (see Table 4-2). Hence, when a new emergency occurs or a new country team is organised, there are no supply chain and logistics staff at the global level that can be deployed from the HQs in the new team. Given this, by saving resources and reducing operations costs in the HQ, the IHO invest more on the field offices and support them. The role of field offices has become crucial as the IHO relies on the local staff during the emergency responses and aid activities.

Figure 5-10. Adaption structure according to the counterpart

	CENTRALISED ASPECT	SEMI-CENTRALISED ASPECT	DECENTRALISED ASPECT
OVERALL WORKING STRUCTURE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Centralised reponse to emergencies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Central role of local teams in implementing disaster relief and aid activities with great support from the HQ Greater investment on local offices and operations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Diffuse power of control within the organisation Small HQ focusing on supporting field offices Bottom-up decision making process
with Commercial suppliers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fund being managed through the finance team of the HQ The HQ controls in dealing with international procurement Procurement manuals providing standard process across all field offices HQ receiving monthly reports from the field offices Internal integration by using financial manuals through standardised ERP system Approval matrix integrated in ERP system 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The HQ team strongly liaising with the local office in dealing with the Region X case Local offices following both the global and local standards Information collected for the HQ from the local offices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Robust local procurement in local offices Different limits and rules due to different surroundings in each local office
with In-kind suppliers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> HQs controlling the whole in-kind process as a hub HQs receiving a progress report from the local office 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The HQ playing a role of coordinator 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Different departments involving in-kind suppliers management No formal standardised process
with the supranational organisation		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The relationships looked after at the HQ level 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agreement made with local offices Critical role of field offices

Source: Developed by the researcher

Lastly, in general, the process of delivering aid products and services is based on the bottom-up decision making. This means that the IHO considers the voices of the field very important and strongly reflects these in their decision-making process, rather than setting a goal from the top management. For example, the request to meet the needs and a shortage of beneficiaries is raised from the field offices, not by the HQ. What to procure and what products and services are needed in the affected areas are observed and suggested by the field team. The IHO basically tries to represent the stance of beneficiaries, advocate on their behalf and find out what the exact needs are.

5.4.2. With commercial suppliers

In comparison to the overall structure of the IHO's working process, there is a tendency towards more centralised working process when dealing with the commercial suppliers. This working process is systematised through official manuals governing all the global offices and the ERP system facilitating management in the central office. First, there is a standard procurement manual that are applied to all field offices of the IHO and unifies their processes. This guideline includes details of procurement for instance bidding procedures depending on the amount of budget, the number of quotations they should receive, etc. Secondly, the financial process is standardised through an integrated ERP system and financial manuals, that the HQ and field offices should follow. This is online based software that sets the standard cross the whole organisation and facilitates centralised management financially.

Thirdly, the use of budget, transferring funds to the field office or the result of tendering are approved in the ERP through the software system inside the IHO according to the approval matrix. All the supporting documents are uploaded with the request through the system for a review and approval, that need to meet the criteria for the tendering procedure or financial process standards. Each project has its own approval matrix in the system, that ensures the correct staff being involved in the decision-making process. Financial procedures and programme progress cannot be completed without all the relevant approvals made in the system. For instance, after the use of budget, the result of tendering, purchase requisition, and all relevant documents are reviewed and approved in the system, the purchase order can be automatically published in the system. As such, diverse personnel are globally

involved in the approval line and financial procedures, that are processed in the integrated ERP system.

Fourthly, the fund is transferred through the finance team of the HQs after the team reviews the request for the project. The finance team of the HQ makes a link between the donor and the field office. Once the request is assigned and the contract is signed with the donor, the finance team proceeds transferring the funds to the field offices. As such, the fund is handled in a centralised system through the finance team of the HQs. Hence, there are sometimes challenges in transferring fund from the HQs to the field team as diverse issues and problems can interrupt smooth processing and delay the payment to the suppliers in the field. Additionally, international procurement is conducted through the HQ. However, the field team will be also involved through a joint field and HQ process. The information from the field office is needed such as the needs analysis, products specification, quantity, quality of the products, and the location from the field perspectives. Still, the HQ team proceeds the tendering process like advertising the bid and contacting international suppliers. As such, the HQ leads the international procurement process in cooperation with the field team. Lastly, the field offices send monthly reports to the HQ, that includes details of expenditures for the projects, staff wages, normal costs such as fuel, rent, electricity, water, etc. The HQ finance team can analyse a detailed cost breakdown of the projects that are running around the world and compare with the uploaded data about the budgets in the system.

Nonetheless, there are loosely centralised aspects. Each field office has its own functional divisions such as a procurement team, a finance team, programme team, and a director. Procurement can be conducted through these field offices as well as through the HQ. In dealing with the event in Region X, the HQ procurement team strongly liaise with one of the local teams that locate in a country nearby Region X.

Hence, suppliers are selected in coordination between two teams. The operations for Region X are dealt by the local office in collaboration with the HQ and payment for supplies are made by the HQ. As such, although the local office usually raises the request about the needs and details of programme to the HQs and tendering is conducted through the local procurement, the process is managed by the HQ to some extent.

In addition, all local offices of the IHO are affected not only by the global procurement standards that the HQ advocates, but also by local policy and procurement procedures. As such, the local offices have autonomy in operating their own procurement procedures to some extent. Nonetheless, even if the budget is a relatively small amount, they must ask and inform the HQ's relevant teams. In this sense, the structure and working process of the IHO cannot be perfectly decentralised when dealing with the commercial suppliers.

Further, goods are received, and the quality and quantity are checked in the local offices where disaster relief and aid activities are implemented. Although the local offices have their own procurement and finance system, their plans for operating programmes and using budgets are reviewed by the HQ teams. After the programmes are implemented, all the documents and expenditures are reviewed again by the HQ teams for the payment to the suppliers. Thus, relevant information and data are naturally collected in the HQ.

Due to a leading role of the local offices on the ground, the decentralised aspects cannot be ignored even though there is a formal manual. Basically, the IHO has a decentralised, flexible structure in terms of operating procurement departments of local offices. Every regional office has its own procurement function and has

established a strong pool of both local and international suppliers. Further, each local office has similar functional departments as the HQ has, such as the head of the office, finance, administration, logistics, programme, etc. Depending on the size of offices, each department can be organised as a team or merely consist of a few members.

Moreover, each field office is surrounded by different circumstances, particularly in terms of the level of the local economy and different currency values. Therefore, applying standard range cannot be applicable to every field because it depends on the standard living costs of each country where each field office locates. Each field office should have a different level of limits because a certain amount of money is considered as significant expenditure and requires a fully-fledged procurement process in one local office, but, in another region, entails simplified process. As such, overall, field offices act in accordance with the standard manuals of procurement, but different limits and details should be considered meticulously for each field office at the same time.

5.4.3. With in-kind suppliers

The working process with in-kind suppliers is disposed to be in the middle of two ends of the spectrum. The HQ team primarily controls the whole process as a hub when working with the in-kind suppliers. For instance, the fundraising offices in other regions do not send the handling charges to the relevant entities associated with distribution. They transfer the money to the HQs and let the finance team of the HQs deal with payment. In addition, the local offices create internal reports for the HQ and the fundraising partner. The distribution of in-kind products is organised by the local offices in the field. Therefore, the local offices have the most of information where the need is great, where the beneficiaries are, and how these items are distributed and meet

the needs. As such, the local offices are the best entity that can exactly determine how the in-kind items are spent for the beneficiaries as they directly implement the project on the ground. However, the in-kind suppliers do not request the final reports as they already know the destination of the in-kind items when they ship these items.

However, the role of the HQ teams is somewhat limited to one of coordination. On one hand, the in-kind process is generally controlled by the HQ teams from the finance perspectives. On the other hand, the HQ cannot materialise the in-kind project without collaborating with other regional offices. The HQ needs to search the field offices that can implement the project in an appropriate place where the needs are and the fundraising partner that can fully pay for the shipping and delivery costs. In the meantime, the HQ also needs to keep communicating with the in-kind suppliers. As such, the HQ staff has a significant communication process with these offices and the in-kind suppliers as a coordinator.

As explained above, several departments and offices are involved in the in-kind supply process. There should be one of fundraising offices that pay for the shipping of the in-kind items. The In-kind suppliers check the quality and quantity of the items, pack and ship them on time to the destination. The field office must give the right information about the needs and the situations of the affected area, receive the items, and distribute them. The HQ teams coordinate and support all the process and make this happen smoothly. Given this, the in-kind supply process is particularly operated by many stakeholders who are equally important.

As such, it is operated in a very flexible way as there is no such a formal contract or regulations that can guide the in-kind supply process. The procedures in dealing with

the in-kind supplies have not been formally fixed, rather adjusted according to the convenience or situations of stakeholders.

5.4.4. With the supranational organisation

The way of working with the supranational organisation tends to be very close to the opposite end of the spectrum, a decentralised structure. There is a global and general MOU between Supplier S1 and the IHO. Now moving away from the general agreement, they pursue the strategy of localisation and build an individual relationship with each local office. Supplier S1 usually makes a country-based agreement with each local office that locates in or nearby that affected country. This agreement governs the relationship between them locally. Thus, details of each local agreement vary depending on the local situations. As such, the role of field offices stands out more in this case. When working with this type of organisation, most activities are related to the field operations such as needs assessment, adjusting the details of responsibilities of each side on the contract, checking the arrivals of the items, verifying the beneficiaries, distributing the items and writing a report. These are usually carried out by the field staff on the ground.

As described, all the practical activities related to this supranational organisation are managed in the field teams. Further, the global MOU made between the IHO and Supplier S1 is no longer effective because this supranational organisation pursues more localisation now. However, the HQ teams are still involved in the task with this supranational organisation as a regional coordinator broadly. At the same time, the relationships with Supplier S1 are particularly looked after as an important donor and partnership in the HQ level. In this sense, there is a loosely centralised aspect in dealing

with this relationship, though most aspects are associated to the decentralised working process.

5.5. Donor influence

There are a wide range of influencing factors surrounding IHOs, which have not been fully examined. Indeed, the third sector [encompassing voluntary organisations, non-governmental organisations, and NPOs] is expected to be equipped with a method combining the best of two worlds, namely, “efficiency and expertise from the business world with public interest, accountability, and broader planning from government” (Etzioni 1973, p. 315). In addition, it is inevitable for IHOs to be obligated to follow the laws, regulations, and norms of both a home country (Stroup and Murdie 2012) and a host country (Heiss and Kelley). However, there was an increasing trend for countries to place restrictions on civil society groups, for instance, legally restricting international funding for NGOs or closing foreign-funded NGOs (Christensen and Weinstein 2013). On the other hand, the demand of donor organisations has been greatly raised for professionalisation and accountability, for instance, by measuring and evaluating the output of performance in NGOs they sponsor (Bush 2015). Given this, a multitude of contextual factors and complexity of surroundings of IHOs have appeared as environmental pressures and expectation towards IHOs.

The IHOs as an INGOs have gone through the conflicts between their own principles to be aimed at and their external pressures or constraints (Mitchell and Schmitz 2014). One interviewee said as follows: “there is a need then to compare those [policies and norms] with international standards and we have certain commitments.....”. Indeed, the external pressure cannot be ignored in shaping internal policies, norms and standards of the IHO. Another participant indicated that there are common policies

and similarities in policies among IHOs, which can mean that they are under similar environmental pressures. Among these contextual factors that affect the daily operations of IHOs, the norms and expectations from donor organisations are particularly considered as “the first significant pressure on NGO activities and behaviour” (Heiss and Kelly 2017, p. 3). Drawing on the exploratory study, the donor influences were also suggested to be applied in the primary data as they were assumed to highly influence the relationships between IHOs and their suppliers.

5.5.1. Characteristics of donor relationships

The IHO has established relationships with various types of institutional donors such as governmental organisations, transnational organisations, networking organisations, other large NGO partners, etc. These institutional donors offer support in a variety of ways for the IHO. The details of agreements between the IHO and each institution are customised according to different institutional donors. The five aspects are briefly summarised as the general features of the relationships with donors that the IHO have had (see Appendix 5-7).

a. Major programme funding from institutional donors: the institutions are the main sources of the programme funding for the IHO. Most projects rely on donors up to 90 percent. For this reason, the support from institutional donors is vital in operating and maintaining the programmes of the IHO.

b. Donor-driven organisation: Usually each NGO has different ways of operating projects and programmes. Depending on the way of managing funds, there is a huge gap in operations. The more self-funding the IHOs have, the more independently the IHO can decide their own aid activities. Having independent status financially may be the key to being independent for the IHO in aid operations in the field. Funding may

be the key to understand the way of operations and management of HOs indeed. Funding structure and the level of financial independence can decide the direction of humanitarian aid operations. Some organisations produce their own funding without the support of governments or other institutions as they want to independently spend their funding to fulfil their own aims. Some organisations operate projects mainly based on the field-driven method, through which the needs of field are prioritised over other requirements. The IHO has different funding conditions that tend to be donor-driven. Usually, large projects that require funding from donors can be initiated, only when donor organisations agreed with the projects and signed the contract. Further, a new idea about projects is sometimes proposed and proceeded by institutional donors. Presumably, this is because they have sufficient funding to create a consortium consisting of several NGOs, through which synergy effects are expected.

c. One-sided relationships: The relationships with donor organisations are described as asymmetrical. Unlike partnerships, it is not easy for the IHO to exchange opinions mutually or to reject a request of a donor organisation. Most programmes are run with donors in the case of this IHO. Usually, each donor has a different requirement about payment, contracts, or the way of operating the programmes, that the IHO have to undertake.

d. Joint working relationships: However, as one of the interviewees asserted, "the relationship isn't always about the funding". With some organisations, the IHO have had collaborative working relationships and run joint projects. In this case, the IHO may be allowed to be involved in early stages such as designing projects and setting the plans. The IHO can also be involved with a decision-making process on the ground. Further, in a different platform such as academic institutions, both the IHO and its donors have conducted research sharing information and resources and learning from

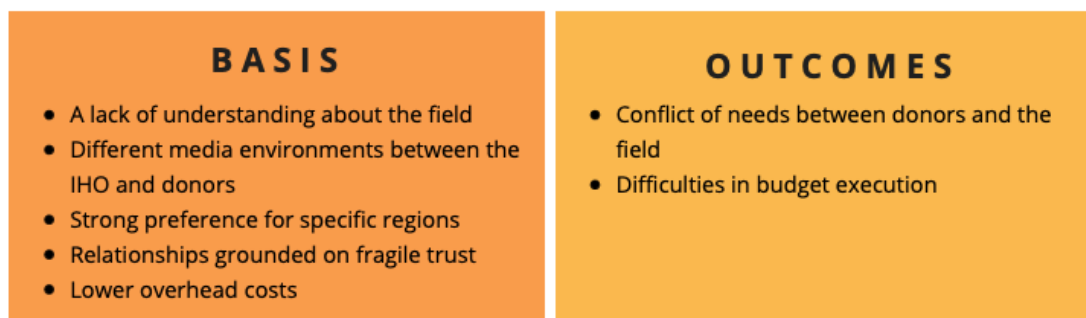
each other. As such, activities are not limited to operations of projects, and there could be possibly many other types of joint activities between the IHO and donors.

e. No involvement in tendering process: Although donors are indispensable for the IHO, their role is not involved with a tendering process at all. One of participants describe as follows: ".....it's very neutral in that way. We couldn't accept a recommendation from a donor." The IHO is authorised to select commercial suppliers through strict procurement process according to the policies. In this sense, the role of donors restricted to some extent.

5.5.2. Challenges in the donor relationships

Figure 5-11 clearly illustrates two primary aspects of difficulties that the IHO has experienced in the relationships with donors: conflicts of two needs; and unfavourable process in executing budgets. Further, these challenges are based on five main issue types (See Appendix 5-7).

Figure 5-11. Challenges in the relationships with donors



Source: Developed by the researcher

k. A lack of understanding about the field: Sometimes, donors do not fully understand the circumstances of the affected country and the needs of the beneficiaries. For instance, while an affected country suffered from floods, there was a lack of fresh water. When the affected country had a big factory that manufactures tents,

donated tents were useless for the country, however donors continued to send tents. As such, these different circumstances of the affected countries were not carefully considered, and unwanted items were sent or needed items were not sent. If donors persistently want to implement a certain plan, the IHO cannot make an argument against the viewpoint of donors.

- l. Different media environments: Each country involved with international disaster relief has their own agenda that media and its country's government primarily care and deal with. As a result, what donors provide does not meet the needs on the field. For instance, when the media spots a specific item in an affected area, the affected country consequently receive too many aid items of the same type. Thus, the different media environment may bring about misunderstandings of reality in the field.
- m. Strong preference for specific regions: There are preferred regions that donors are willing to donate for, while some regions are not popularly chosen by donors for funding. In the former regions, donors can run a variety of programmes such as education, water, hygiene, gender and child protection, which can attract more media spotlight. For the latter, the needs of beneficiaries in the field are very simple and obvious, which are relatively not very interesting to donors.
- n. Fragile trust: One of participants mentioned about 'trust' that some donors have in the relationships as a fundamental cause of the time-consuming procurement process. Fragile trust tends to make processes complicated and uneasy, and consequently can cause extra delays in processing funding and adjusting processes according to the situations.
- o. Lower overhead costs: Compared to other humanitarian organisations, the focal IHO incurred lower overhead costs. Thus, the IHO does not have extra funding left

that can be used for the additional projects which their field teams implement. If some independent funding can be saved separately from the designated donation to a specific event, the IHO can use the surplus fund for the unexpected emergencies and projects where their field team wants to provide aid.

- p. Conflicts of needs between donors and the field: Donors' own strategic aims are usually more prioritised than the needs from the field. When donors try to donate aid items that are not suitable to the specific disaster management phase, the IHO can hardly refuse the offer for fear of harming future relationships. For instance, in the recent past, one donor wanted to provide specific items in a specific affected area, which is irresistible for the IHO. The IHO had to newly rent a warehouse to store them as the items were unwanted in the field and could not be distributed shortly. From a perspective from the IHO, even though they do not need the donation and need to pay extra fees to store the donated in-kind, they are forced to accept it because other competitors in the sector will take it. For maintaining the good relationships with donors, the IHO has to sacrifice some expense for warehouse or whatever, they have to accept the needs of the donors, over the needs of the field. As such, these different needs from both ends are sometimes incompatible, which becomes acute problems for the IHO. Nonetheless, usually fulfilling the needs of donors are more likely to be chosen, because the operation process and checklists are modified to the standards of donors. Thus, the effort the IHO put for the relationships with donors are enormous.
- q. Difficulties in budget execution: The field needs to spend money to start projects, but donors have their own processes and standards to transfer funding. Sometimes, the contract between the two does not explicitly include the detailed practices about processing funding. For the field operations, the IHO usually needs to transfer

funding to the field offices prior to the donation coming from donors, because sometimes, suppliers request up-front payment from the IHO. However, considering the nature of funding in the humanitarian sector, for some IHOs that are especially donor-driven it may be difficult to pay up-front payment for the suppliers and the field as they do not have accumulated funding for their own projects. Some donors do not take these unique circumstances of humanitarian operations into consideration. Further, some donors need to have board meetings to make a decision. There may also be an issue of time differences between all stakeholders-HQs, donor organisations, and the field offices. As such, there are lots of unnecessary conversations and different perspectives, that result in delay or inefficiency of the operations in the field. Also, there is not enough accumulated funding, hence it is not easy to start new projects that require initial investment to set up the project. This is vicious circle in their financial process.

5.5.3. Institutional pressures

Institutional approaches have been widely adopted in organisation studies since 1970s because they are specialised and useful for investigating the relationship between organisations and their surroundings (Lawrence and Suddaby 2006; Meyer 2008; Oliver 1991). The choices and activities of IHOs in relation to their suppliers are mediated, shaped and potentially channelled by external donor pressures (Wooten and Hoffman, 2012), as discussed in this section. As such, institutional elements can be a useful tool in understanding donor influences as environmental pressures upon the IHO.

Table 5-3 shows three key dimensions such as regulative, normative, and cultural-cognitive, that strengthen ways to contribute to the institutional circumstances.

Applying these elements in the context of IHOs, donor organisations may constrain and support the activities of IHOs through regulated policy (have to), the expected norm (ought to), and internalised values (want to) (Palthe 2014; Scott 2001). In detail, the regulative process emphasises that donor organisations can constrain and regulate IHOs' behaviours by means of laws, policies or rules through coercive methods such as rewards and punishment systems. The normative view highlights that donor organisations can focus on informal structures such as moral bases by stressing values regarding preferred behaviours and norms identifying how thing should be done. These normative expectations can lead to both constraining and empowering IHOs through a sense of duty and moral obligation. Lastly, the cognitive stance values common beliefs, and shared mindsets for genuine changes of behaviours rather than enforcement of rules or norms.

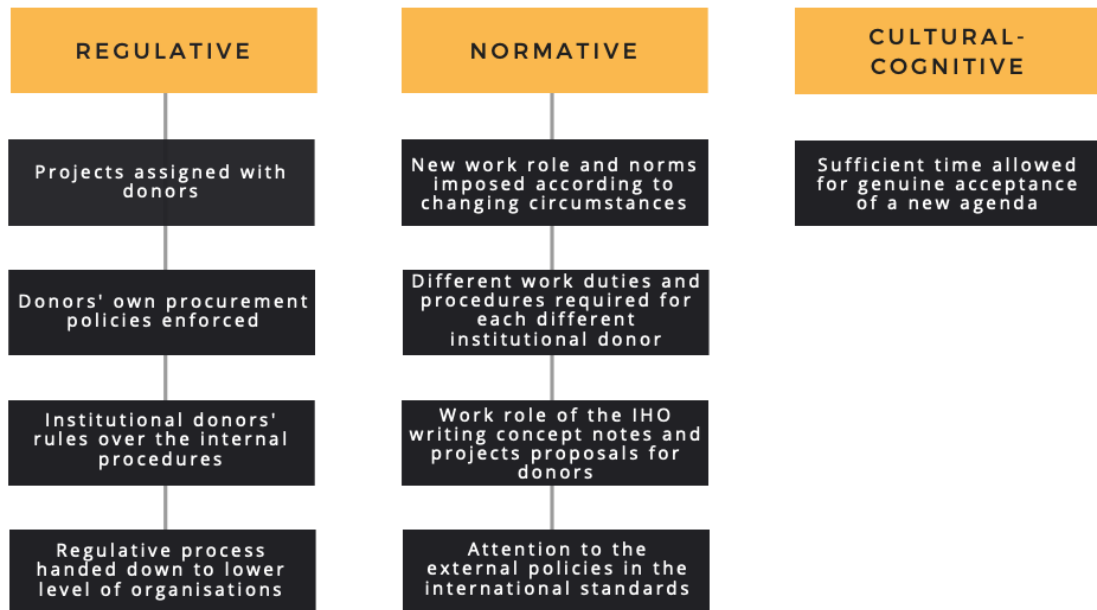
Table 5-3. Three pillars of institutions

	Regulative	Normative	Cultural-Cognitive
Bases of legitimacy	Legal system	Moral and ethical systems	Cultural support through a shared mindset
Central Rudiments	Policies and rules	Workplace norms, roles and habits	Beliefs, shared meanings and assumptions
Drivers	Legal obligation	Moral obligation	Internalization
Perpetuating factors	Fear and coercion	Duty and responsibility	Social identity and personal desire
Behavioural reasoning	Have to	Ought to	Want to
Mechanism	Coercive	Normative	Mimetic

Source: Adapted from Scott 2014, p. 60; Palthe, 2014, p. 61

Drawing this theoretical perspective upon the IHO's case, Figure 5-12 indicates that the pressure from the institutional donors is inclined to regulative and normative elements rather than a cultural-cognitive process in the point of the IHO's views (see Appendix 5-8).

FIGURE 5-12. Institutional donors' pressures on the IHO



Source: Developed by the researcher

Indeed, coercive or regulative elements were found in the relationships with the institutional donors of the IHO such as policies or contracts requirements driven through coercive means, that constrained and regularised the IHO's behaviours.

- r. Projects assigned with donors: The IHO must receive approvals from donors for a budget for operating projects before starting the project. The funds that the IHO receive are operated on a project basis. Therefore, the finance team is only able to transfer funding for the specific aim to the field offices once the donor agrees to the project. Thereafter, specific guidelines and requirements applied to each project should be fulfilled when spending the relevant funding. This is systemised and regulated through their policies, not just a moral obligation. As such, the funds must be spent according to the details on the agreement as approved by the donors.
- s. Donors' own procurement policies enforced: Each institutional donor may have their own policies that the IHO should comply with. If the plan or performance of the IHO is not compatible with the rules that the donors pursue, the opportunity for

funding is dubious from the start or the funding offer can be withdrawn. For example, the IHO has been struggling with implementing programmes through local NGOs in certain areas where direct operations are immensely difficult as this working method is against the regulations of many institutional donors. As such, not following the policies costs the IHO a loss of potential funding, even if the circumstances are beyond its control. Abiding by the policies of donors can determine receiving rewards or losses of funding.

- t. Institutional donors' rules over the internal procedures: The IHO should follow the guidance of the institutional donors and clarify with the relevant personnel regarding the procedures. Regarding approval levels, institutional donors' approvals take precedence over other procedures and internal approval matrix. Some institutional donors may demand that the IHO applies a certain policy protecting human rights, health and safety, wellbeing, etc that the IHO must abide by. These essential policies have already been reflected on the written policies of the IHO in harmony with the donors' views because it is crucial for the IHO to keep satisfying its donors. Regarding contracts with donors, there are various versions as some donors want to use their own standard contracts. The IHO meets the different demands of each donor, not insisting on its own procedures. Further, the internal rules were breached to fit the process to donors' standards.
- u. Donors' policies handed down to lower level of organisations: Interestingly, the institutional pressures are passed down from the institutional donors to local NGOs through regulative processes such as due diligence that local NGOs or other partners must pass to work with the IHO. Because the aid resources that the IHO have are spent through the local partners, in terms of funding flow, they are below the IHO. In the same sense, the IHO also checks if these partners are the right ones

and have similar policies and working ways with the IHO. Through this verification process, the institutional pressures are exerted to another lower level of organisation where funding flows into.

Beside the regulative rules and policies, there are lots of unstated norms that personnel follow like customary procedures. One of participants explained this as follows: "even if it's not written down on paper or it's not identified, we are still working to policy, it just might not be explicit – it might not be stated." Some works do not have any written account of policies whereas some policies are officially written and documented, still obliging the IHO to work in a certain way. Even if the details of policies are not written during the aid activities, there are still policies the focal IHO follows and abide by. There is a hidden and invisible boundary of the activities and their behaviours, although these boundaries are not stated through the legal type of rules or policies.

- a. New work role and norms imposed according to changing circumstances:
According to increasing social demands for accountability and transparency towards NGOs, institutional donors realign the normative system by adapting preferred activities and new procedures. For instance, the IHO was asked to make a full list of all suppliers, including small ones that the IHO does not necessarily have a formal contract with. As such, new work duties and responsibilities were imposed on the IHO by an institutional donor so as to clarify precisely how the funding was spent in this occasion by aligning the whole supply chains related to specific funding.
- b. Different work duties and procedures required for each different institutional donor:
The IHO has to deal with various institutional donors. These donor organisations are situated in different countries, have different responding mechanisms to disasters and require a different reporting style, which the IHO ought to follow.

This normative system does not constrain the IHO as much as the policies or laws do. Nonetheless, as one of participants mentioned, the IHO needs to stick to these norms and standards of each institutional donors. The IHO, therefore, adapts to different roles and norms depending on the needs of different institutional donors.

- c. Primary role of writing concept notes and projects proposals for donors: Donors are usually involved from the very beginning of the project by expressing their needs. Usually, the concept notes and full proposals are sent to the donors before the project are initiated. The concept notes briefly specifying the needs are produced and reviewed by the donor side. But, large institutions normally prefer project proposals with full details. After a full proposal is developed from the concept note, the donors review and approve the proposal and relevant budget. Upon their approval for the budget, the IHO can launch a new project. As such, the work role of producing a quality proposal is crucial in the process of working with donors to persuade them to join the project. Additionally, some parts of this working process with institutional donors are not fixed as a regulation, so are not clear and simple under sequential processing. Rather, the process can be modified from time to time as the needs of donors arise based on long-standing custom.
- d. Attention to the external policies in the international standards: Looking at external policies has become a work role in the IHO, which means this is a part of its work duties and responsibilities. The IHO has tried to pay attention to the outward trends in policies and compare them with its own policies, in order to remain broadly in the line with international standards. They research international agreements and sometimes attend relevant conferences. The IHO cares about a wide range of policies from gender-related to climate change and tries to reflect them to their own policies. In reverse, it tries to look into what is happening in the field and how

things are dealt with on the ground. The reality in the field such as actual work norms and duties is considered important. Hence, even if a specific policy is not formally written in the IHO, the organisation considers the way how to put the policy into practice and adaptation process, through a consultative and interactive process.

Institutional donors' intentions and demands are not implemented only through the policies or workplace norms. Some institutions usually put a lot of efforts on cultural legitimacy for settling new policies of what donors pursue. Sometimes, it takes a long time to let each IHO and their members to understand shared meanings, and to accept a need of new or upgraded policies. Hence, they try to give sufficient time and opportunities to internalise a change and culturally support it in each one's own way. The IHO also had enough time to think about a certain agenda which has been globally focused on and a chance to present officially their own statements pertinent to the issue. Nonetheless, compared to the aforementioned pillars, the cultural-cognitive aspect was not significantly observed in the relationships with donors from the IHO's viewpoint.

5.6. Contextual description

When designing programmes or projects, the context analysis is essential, such as checking if the local markets are functioning, what type of crisis it is, or whether it is emergent. Depending on the situations and surroundings of the affected area, the method of operation varies. As such each project can be completely different depending on affected regions. For the IHO, specifying needs accurately is crucial in operating projects. For accurate specification of products and services, the contextual factors such as the terrain, weather, etc. must be taken into account. For instance, even if the needs are same for tents, each area has different weather and the IHO should

provide different tents with appropriate materials for the different weather, considering temperature or raining seasons. One participant describes this as follows: ".....again, that's very much depending on the context. So, in some countries, it's very rainy so you need to make sure that the tents can put up with that rain. In other countries it's going to be very hot, so again you need to factor all these things." Therefore, understanding the unique characteristics of affected terrain is significant in the activities of HOs. As the explorative study pointed out, regional situations and disaster types are dealt with in this primary case as two of major contextual factors surrounding the supplier relationships that the IHO has (see Table 5-4).

Table 5-4. Summary of contextual description

Category	Description
Regional characteristics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Large-scale conflict due to unpredictable attacks - Extreme devastation leading to dysfunctional social systems - Shift location due to rapidly changing situations - Extremely unstable and uncontrollable circumstances - Difficult access to the region - Insecure conditions for humanitarian personnel, beneficiaries, and aid stocks - A deterioration in the condition of the regional conflict
Disaster type	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Man-made disaster type with great pressure from political issues - Ongoing and chronic sudden-onset disaster type - Long-term emergency differing from usual disaster management cycle - Protracted conflict mode requiring long-term emergency support - Urgent needs for humanitarian support with emergency items

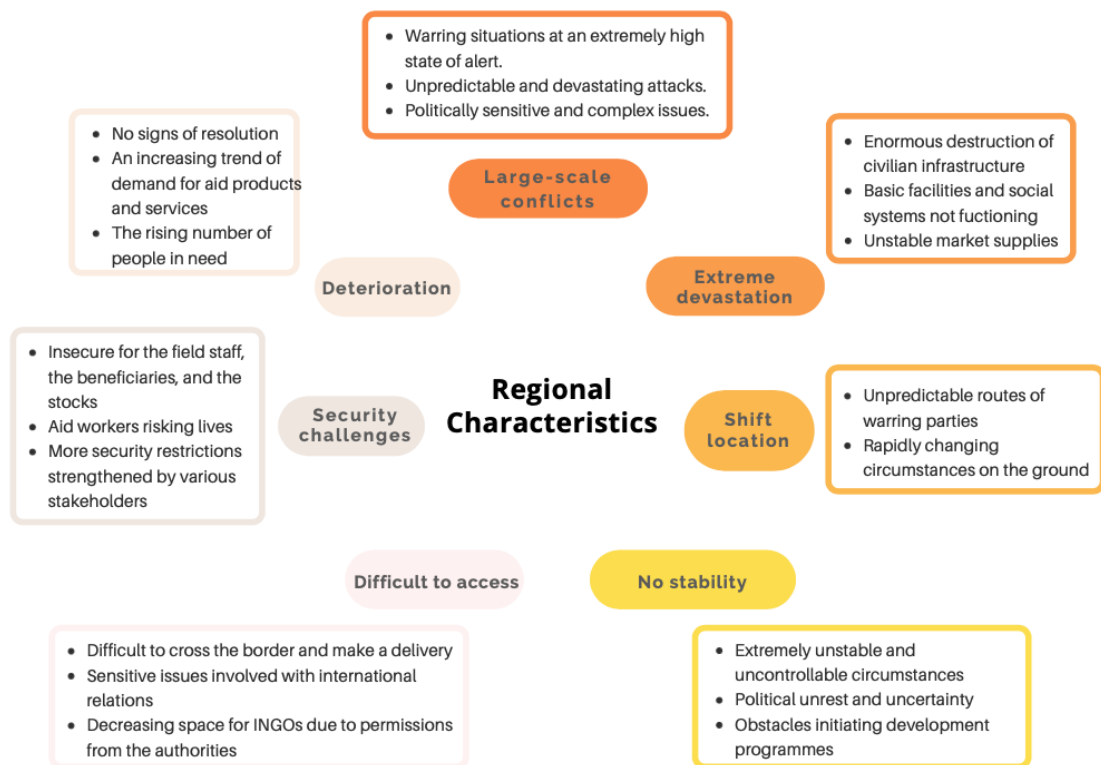
Source: Developed by the researcher

5.6.1. Regional description

Regions X and Y are the primary places where the IHO has operated humanitarian projects for many years. The situations in both Region X and Region Y have been changing and evolving, which is very difficult to manage. Depending on the situations and contexts of affected areas, the most needed aid products and services can vary and

the aid activities are very influenced by the situation. One interviewee said that “it all varies according to the situation on the ground and the crisis that we’re dealing with”. Therefore, a grasp of the contextual factors is crucial to deepen an understanding of the activities in the humanitarian sector. In this case, Figure 5-13 clearly shows the seven points of regional characteristics as follows (see Appendix 5-9).

FIGURE 5-13. Characteristics of regional contexts



Source: Developed by the researcher

e. Large-scale conflicts: Despite different historical background of two regions, there are a number of commonalities between them in terms of the disaster type and situations of beneficiaries. The two regions are at an extremely high state of alert with the warring situations. The regions have suffered a series of unpredictable and devastating attacks. Further, diverse warring parties are involved, which adds to complexity of the issues. As such, there are multiple conditions that the IHO should consider in order not to meddle in politically sensitive issues. Also, the dangerous

situations affect the way of distribution, for instance, distributing food in their shelters not calling them to an open site, because for the beneficiaries it is extremely risky to go to the outside of their shelters. In these circumstances, cash programme is not efficient as the local markets do not function.

- f. Extreme devastation: These armed ongoing conflicts brought about the wanton destruction of civilian infrastructure such as water supply plants, hospitals, schools, food production facilities, etc. Due to this extensive and enormous damage to the basic facilities, the beneficiaries have suffered from a severe deficiency in most necessities. The regions have been besieged for several years, and local markets do not function as prices in the market are not stabilised and going to the market is itself dangerous for the beneficiaries.
- g. Shift locations: the conditions on the ground change quickly in the regions, which make the IHO shift locations very often. Dealing with the moving parties in the region is one of the most challenging aspects in delivering aid in this region. As the route of warring parties' moves is unpredictable, the IHO usually takes an immediate response to rapidly changing circumstance by having regular meetings with partners in the network. Further, the situations differ depending on the location even inside one region. Some parts of the region have not experienced the armed conflicts, whilst other parts of the region were destroyed.
- h. No stability: given these, it is natural that there is no stability in the region and the regional contexts surrounding the aid activities are uncontrollable and unpredictable for the IHO. This political unrest and uncertainty are the greatest challenge for the IHO as it is hard for aid actors to conduct the basics - delivering essential goods. Stability is a prerequisite of transition from a immediate response phase to an initiating phase of a development programme after emergencies

relented. Hence, such extremely unstable circumstances obviously influence on decisions concerning the type of programmes of aid actors, which make aid actors to put more effort on the emergency response.

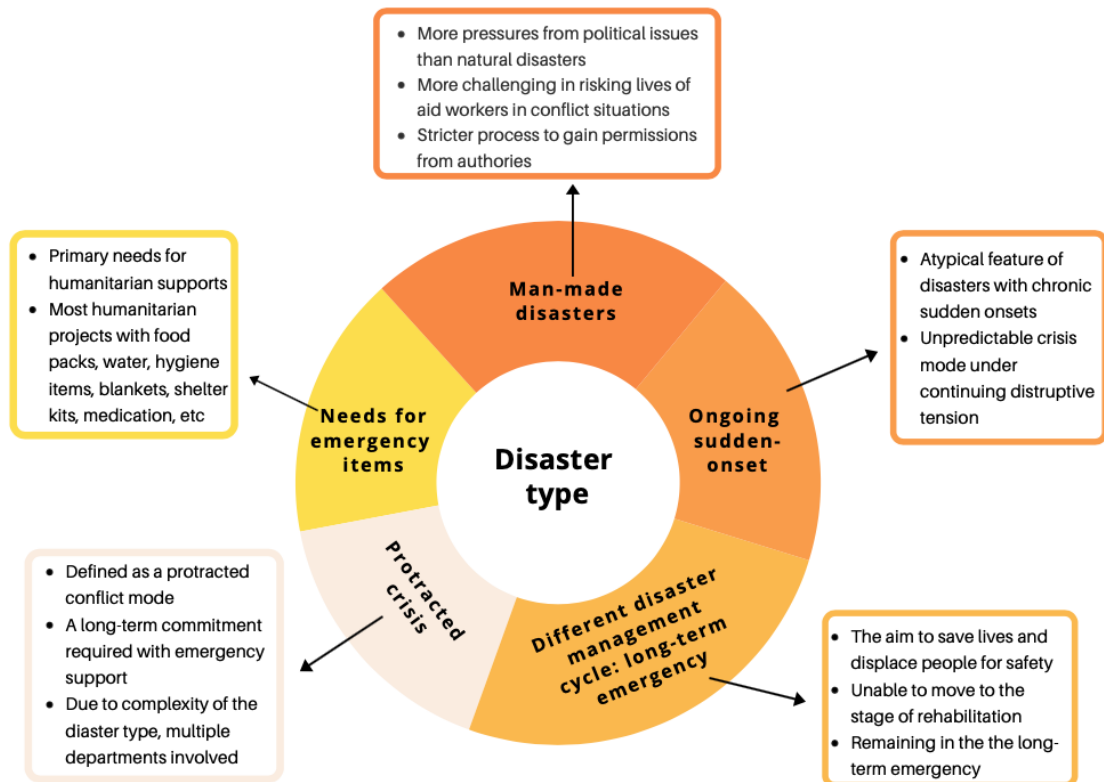
- i. **Difficult to access:** complicated political issues and highly unstable contexts are linked to the access issues in both regions X and Y. Gaining access to the affected areas presents more practical difficulties for aid actors than raising funding in the region. As aforementioned, the contextual factors such as complexity of political issues and the ongoing devastation lead to the issue of access to the affected areas. This is also associated with international relations as the host governmental authorities can treat aid actor differently depending on their country of origins. For instance, due to political relationships, the IHO could not cross the border to access to the region with people from specific countries that are involved in political conflicts.
- j. **Security challenges:** The security issues are regarded as one of the greatest challenges in carrying out the aid activities in the region. The security for the field teams, the beneficiaries on the projects, and the aid items is easily jeopardised in this region due to intense conflicts as described above. It is difficult for the IHO even to stay in contact with its field staff in this extremely volatile context. One of interviewees said that assisting people in need in conflict areas could mean taking a risk of losing a life of aid workers. This factor tends to make the working process more complicated as there is a need to set up restrictions and rules to tighten up the security.
- k. **Deterioration:** The unresolved conflicts show no signs of ending in the region. The demand for aid products and services has unceasingly grown, as the number of local people in need of help has continuously increased. The political situations,

economic conditions, and the quality of life have been seriously worsened with interminable conflicts.

5.6.2. Disaster types

As explained above, the region has very complex characteristics that do not conform to one specific disaster type. It is hard to define the disaster situations in these regions as they are mixed and contradicted. For instance, situations which require an urgent and immediate response do not allow room to account for aspects of long-term development programmes. It is, however, long-term disasters that are usually accompanied by rehabilitation activities supported by development aid. Figure 5-14 summarises five aspects of the disaster type in the region and further details are addressed in Appendix 5-9.

FIGURE 5-14. Characteristics of the disaster type in the region



Source: Developed by the researcher

- l. Man-made disasters: from the traditional viewpoint in analysing the disaster type, the context of this case can be considered as one of man-made disaster types. There are some differences between a natural disaster and a man-made disaster-conflicts. For instance, donors tend to fund the affected areas by natural disasters more generously, because there are less pressures from political issues. For aid actors including the IHO, there is always a risk of injury or deaths working in both types of a natural emergency and armed conflicts. Still, as conflicts have relatively greater mortality risks, it is more challenging to deal with this type of disaster for aid actors. Additionally, in conflict situations, the humanitarian space for NGOs tends to decrease as the governmental authorities become stricter in dealing with access permissions, international funding, and the method of distribution. Hence, when assisting in conflict areas, humanitarian principles such as accountability, neutrality and impartiality become more significant issues.
- m. Ongoing sudden-onset: Another attribute to divide the disaster types is sudden-onset and slow-onset type disasters. The region demonstrates the mix of sudden-onset and slow-onset disaster types. From a broad view, the disaster types in the regions are in the group of slow onset. However, both regions have had chronic disruption with higher alert for a long time and shifting locations. Since the conflicts got started in the region, it has remained in the unpredictable crisis mode under continuing disruptive tension. In this sense, the disaster type in this case shows differing features from the typical type. The region has continual sudden-onset conflicts without knowing when they will be over, while typical sudden-onset disasters usually last during a certain period. These sudden onset conflicts will be continued for many years to come as political confrontation does not seem

likely to be resolved in the foreseeable future and complex international relations add volatile factors on the chaotic situations.

- n. Different disaster management cycle: the situations in the region have lasted for a long time which require a long-term development aid. However, the development programmes cannot be operated in these regions because people in these regions still struggle and move to survive. The region has not reached to the stage of rehabilitation or reconstruction yet. The activities in the region are primarily associated with the phase of immediate response, although the disastrous situations have lasted for several years. Usually, emergency situations last for a specific period and then spontaneously move to the phase of rehabilitation starting development programmes. Development programmes generally concern long-term sustainability and long-term impact from the ground up. Unlike this normal disaster management cycle, the region remains in the prolonged immediate response phase to deal with continuing emergent situations. In the urgent situation, the main aim is for local people to survive amid brutal disruption away from dangerous places and, therefore, there are more needs for emergency aid care and urgent distribution of food, NFI and water than for education, training, or reconstruction of buildings. The unrest situations do not allow long-term development projects to help local people to rebuild their own social systems and infrastructure. As such, the normal disaster management cycle is not applicable to the region that has stayed in the long-term emergency.
- o. Protracted crisis: In other words, the disaster type of this region can be also defined as a protracted conflict mode. This is very similar with the terms that were used previously such as long-term emergency and ongoing sudden onset. Still, many participants described the type of disasters in this region as 'a protracted crisis'.

This type is very difficult to deal with as it requires a long-term commitment without entailing a long-term development programme. A protracted disaster has an aspect to be viewed in a longer-term whilst emergent conflicts still require immediate support. Hence, multiple departments are involved in dealing with the case of the region to meet different needs in the region.

- p. Needs for emergency items: as previously mentioned, there has been long-lasting destruction in the regions, which primarily requires humanitarian support rather than development aid. Most essential products are needed as much as the region has been seriously destroyed. Most aid items are useful in the region, as long as they are functioning, within the expiry date and in a good quality. Particularly, the primarily needed items in the region are related to the first basic aid that is essential to life such as food items, clean drinking water, sanitation items, blankets, shelter, medical items, and other non-food items (kitchen sets, hygiene kits, chlorine kits, winterisation sets, etc). These are commonalities for the immediate response in the region. At the same time, the gaps and needs assessment should be context-specific, as the situations have been rapidly evolving in the region. As such, there are such enormous needs for humanitarian projects rather than development projects to save lives and meet people's immediate needs in this context.

5.7. Summary

In this chapter, the focal and the nested sub-cases were introduced in detail. Specifically, the range of organisations involved in a humanitarian context were categorised by identifying the key suppliers and investigating the working processes according to each type. Further, this chapter considered the contextual and organisational factors that were expected to affect the supplier relationships of the IHO

from a range of perspectives. The findings indicate that the IHO has a flexible, adaptable working structure which varies according to the type of supplier. Also, the methods used by donors to influence humanitarian responses were revealed using an institutional theory perspective. Finally, the regional characteristics of the IHO and a unique disaster type were examined. Moving to the central aspect of the thesis, the next chapter discusses the supplier relationships of the focal IHO based in a theoretical context.

Chapter 6 Theoretical analysis

6.1. Introduction

6.1.1. Objectives

Beginning this chapter, the comprehensive research question that has guided the research is recalled once again.

RQ: How can SCI be facilitated in the relationships between the IHO and its key suppliers in the humanitarian context?

The previous chapter served to develop a better understanding of the contexts where the focal IHO work with its suppliers. This chapter provides a more in-depth study into a subject of relationship dynamics between the IHO and its key suppliers from the SCI perspectives by using power, trust and commitment paradigms that were extracted from the exploratory study in Chapter 3. The study is grounded in a relatively broad conception of SCI. Further, this chapter attempts to make a connection between the theoretical argument and empirical realities.

This chapter presents the findings and analysis of the relationships between the IHO and its key suppliers, which consisted in developing an understanding of:

- a. the roles or influences of power, trust and commitment in the relationships between the IHO and its key suppliers.
- b. how different these theoretical factors are depending on the types of suppliers.
- c. patterns or typologies of SI activities of the IHO.

6.1.2. Sub-research questions

As show in Chapter 3, the research framework illustrated the reasonable assumption of interplay between power, trust and commitment in SI from the humanitarian SCM perspective. These theoretical paradigms revolved around supplier relationships in HSCM so as to understand the specific characteristics of SI between the IHO and its key suppliers. There are specific characteristics of humanitarian SC in terms of SI, which are articulated in this chapter. The links found in the exploratory interviews and early findings suggested that exploring the interplay between trust, power and commitment in SI was a possible way to help make sense of and define the types of relational dynamics of SI between the IHO and its key suppliers in the context of HSCM. The following sub-research questions have guided this finding chapter:

Sub-RQ 5. How does an IHO work with its different key suppliers from the perspective of SI?

5a. How are the supplier relationships of the IHO influenced by power, trust and commitment?

5b. How are SCs integrated between an IHO and its key suppliers?

5c. How do power, trust and commitment influence the SI practices of an IHO?

For this part, the interviews were restricted to only seven participants who have experience working with the key suppliers or were directly involved with the key suppliers. Due to a small number of relevant members, each participant is not titled at all to preserve anonymity. Instead, to maximise protection of participants' identities and to ensure the value and integrity of the interview data (Saunders *et al.* 2015), their statements were quoted under the pseudonym of the object supplier they referred to.

6.2. Theoretical foundations

6.2.1. Power paradigm

6.2.1.1. Background

To trace the origin of the power paradigm as a social theory, it is necessary to recapitulate the ideas about power and its phenomena of a countless series of great names “from Plato and Aristotle through Machiavelli and Hobbes to Pareto and Weber” (Dahl 1957, p. 201). The concept of power, thus, is found everywhere and anytime throughout/beyond the time and space. With this long history there are a range of definitions and conceptualisation of power (Belaya et al. 2009). It is not essential to identify how to measure power, however, it is crucial to clarify the meaning of this primitive term (Bacharach and Lawler 1980).

Power has been conceptualised throughout a wide range of areas such as political, psychological, economic contexts and conceived as an ability to achieve intended effects or aims (Belaya *et al.* 2009). Particularly in the political context, the definition of Dahl (1957) is the most commonly referred to (Belaya *et al.* 2009) and power is viewed as the ability of an individual or group to get another unit to do something that another unit would not have done otherwise. This view of power has been widely accepted in many studies within marketing and SCM (Dapiran and Hogarth-Scott 2003; Gaski 1984; Hingley 2005; Rokkan and Haugland 2002; Thorelli 1986), which understood having power as the ability of conditioning others. Given this, Belaya *et al.* (2009, p. 169) comprehensively aggregate different perspectives about power and define this concept as “the ability, capacity, or potential to get others do something; to command, to influence, to determine or to control the behaviours, intentions, decisions,

or actions of others in the pursuit of one's own goals or interests against the will of the power target; as well as to induce changes, to mobilize resources, to restructure situations, and so on". On the other hand, power can be understood as a function of dependence because it is based on the dependency of the other (Emerson 1962). In this sense, the partner organisations depend more heavily on an organisation that can offer more scarce or critical resources (Casciaro and Piskorski 2005). As such, degrees of dependency on partners in SCs can be linked with the level of power and dominance in relationships.

Dahl (1957) understands that power has been connected to such words as influence, control and authority for a long time and used these terms interchangeably at its convenience. In this perspective, the existence of power and power being exercised are not easily distinguished as the mere existence of power can mean having a significant influence on others (Thorelli 1986). As such, power is widespread in relationships whether it is noticed or not. Further, one of main challenges for the focal organisations in the SC network is to organise the exchange relationships and achieve mutual interests (Jap & Ganesan, 2000). Practically, understanding inter-organisational power dynamics is significant in improving organisations' ability and performance. "The successful use of power will enhance a firm's ability to use its power in the future" (Brown *et al.* 1995, p. 365). Brown *et al.* (1995, p. 385) also emphasise that "power and its usage can have a pivotal impact on the working relationships" and "under certain conditions, the use of power in the channel can enhance performance for all channel members". Particularly, successful SCM necessitates practitioners' profound understandings about the power structures that are present in their SCs (Cox 1999). Additionally, understanding the power dynamics between players and the appropriate usages of power can be useful to reduce environmental uncertainty and dependence on

partner actors (Hillman *et al.* 2009). Thus, it is very important for each organisation to comprehend the way to use power effectively and the conditions for the best outcomes of its usage.

6.2.1.2. (Im)balance of power

Many authors have viewed the nature of power relationships as innately asymmetrical. Relationships in coequal influences are not recognised as power relationships (Blau 1964). The term, ‘power relationships’, itself connotes a disparity of power among the actors (Belaya *et al.* 2009). Further, SC networks are characterised by a strategic nature (Jarillo 1988), which can result in a hierarchical structure in the relationships (Belaya *et al.* 2009). In the same sense, the natural state of relationships in the SC network also does not show symmetrical distribution of power among the network actors (Ogbonna & Wilkinson, 1996). This means that unbalanced power relationships are prevalent in the inter-organisational relationships including SC networks. However, this does not indicate that power can be exercised by only one side in the relationships. Interdependence and mutual influences are more commonly observed in the relationships (Thorelli 1986). Therefore, even if the focal organisation dominates power in the relationships, suppliers can also have some power (Medcof 2001). As such, power can be considered as a very relative concept in the relationships. On account of this, as a relative concept, power can be categorised into two types such as balanced or unbalanced power in the relationships (Muthusamy and White 2006). Power balance indicates “roughly equal power” (Brown *et al.* 1995, p. 378) distributed among actors in terms of affecting decisions of counterpart actors (Muthusamy and White 2006). Balanced power relationships are often viewed as being collaborative in nature, which has implications for the manner in which conflicts are resolved and how

emerging contingencies are accommodated between them (Spekman 1988). However, some authors contend that balanced power relationships are not commonly observed in practice because each organisation has different conditions in terms of size, reputation, resources, and availability of alternatives (Ramsay 1996). On the other hand, power imbalance appears when there are different levels of power and ones' decision can be much more influenced by counterparts (Muthusamy and White 2006). Having a dominant position in the relationships can also allow the organisation in this position "to force through" what they desire from partner actors (Cox 1999, p. 170). However, as collaborative balanced power relationships do not mean that there are no conflicts in the relationships (Spekman 1988), there may be some collaborative practices in unbalanced power relationships.

In this sense, in the dyadic relationships of SCs, two typical relationships can be identified such as powerful buyer-weak supplier or weak buyer-powerful supplier (Bates and Slack 1998). However, this dichotomous way of classification may not fully explain the power relationships in the SC networks. The relationships can be constantly changing and dynamic and also differ per each transaction (Pfeffer and Salancik, 1978). Hence, many different angles have been added to view power asymmetries between SC actors (Belaya *et al.* 2009).

6.2.1.3. Power sources

Power is characterised by the multi-dimensionality of its constructs in the dyadic relationships (Ireland and Webb 2007; Meehan and Wright 2012). Particularly, power sources can be a very useful index to differentiate power (El-Ansary & Stern, 1972; Simon, 1953). There is 'a divergence of theoretical classifications for sources of power and systematization of sources' (Belaya *et al.* 2009, p. 170). In other words, one

organisation may have several different types of power, whose combination becomes a total power of the organisation (French and Raven 1959; Belaya *et al.* 2009). This view allows researchers to empirically investigate the characteristics of power and to put them into practice by providing a breakdown of an abstract concept. The representative sources of power are summarised in Table 6-1.

Table 6-1. Bases of inter-organisational power.

Type of power	Power source	Descriptions	References
Mediated	Reward	Based on the ability to offer rewards to other network actors for conformity	Belaya <i>et al.</i> (2009); French and Raven (1959)
	Coercive	Coming from the expectation that one can punish another for nonconformity or failure	Belaya <i>et al.</i> (2009); French and Raven (1959)
	Legal legitimate	Legally derived bases of legitimate power such as legal contracts	Brown <i>et al.</i> (1995); Johson <i>et al.</i> (1993)
Non-mediated	Expert	Depending on the high level of skills and knowledge in a given area	Belaya <i>et al.</i> (2009); French and Raven (1959)
	Referent	Based on one's desire for identification with another that is highly attractive, or with great reputation	Belaya <i>et al.</i> (2009); French and Raven (1959); Zhao <i>et al.</i> (2008)
	Information	Stemming from one's ability to control information that are previously not available to partner actors, but needed for them	Nermin and Osman (1991)
	Traditional legitimate	Legitimacy based on shared norms and values	Brown <i>et al.</i> (1995); Johnson <i>et al.</i> (1993)

Representatively, French and Raven (1959) introduce five types of power, grounded on its source: rewards, coercive, legitimate, referent and expert power. Rewards power and coercive sources of power arise from the abilities to compensate others for obedience or to punish others for disobedience, respectively. Legitimate power originates in a formal right to prescribe behaviour and to expect others to accept this influence. Expert power depends on the extent of knowledge or skills in a particular

area, which are perceived as valuable for others. Referent power has its basis in the greater attractiveness and the desire of identification.

Following this seminal taxonomy of French and Raven (1959), more power origins have been added to discover unexplored facets of power (Belaya *et al.* 2009). Raven and Kruglanski (1970, cited in Belaya *et al.* 2009) identify informational source of power, which has been usually subsumed within reward or expert power in the academic studies (Nermin and Osman 1991). Despite a lack of existing literature, some scholars have tried to nurture the concept of information power (Kasulis *et al.* 1979, cited in Johnson *et al.* 1993; Frazier and Summers 1984) and further attempted to measure this in various settings (Boyle *et al.* 1992; Johnson *et al.* 1993; Nermin Osman 1991; Stoddard *et al.* 2000). Additionally, the use of legitimate power was divided into two types, which are included on both non-mediated and mediated power usages dimensions each (Kasulis *et al.* 1979, cited in Johnson *et al.* 1993; Kasulis and Spekman 1980). The difference between them is that a mediated legitimacy is based on legal contract and a non-mediated legitimacy is based on shared norms and values (Brown *et al.* 1995).

As such, power has been conceptualised through a variety of sources. Some authors attempted to dichotomise these various power bases “as either aggressive (overt) or non-aggressive (subtle) forms of power” (Johnson *et al.* 1993, p. 2). These two different groups are displayed in Table 6-2. Hunt and Nevin (1974), Etgar (1978) and John (1984) dichotomise French and Raven’s power sources into two groups through different standards, respectively. Some authors adapted these into influence strategies (Boyle *et al.* 1992; Frazier and Summers, 1984). Johnson *et al.* (1993) further develop the concept of legitimate sources of power and apply them in the classification of

mediated and non-mediated power. This division reflects the existence of ability to control reinforcements guiding the partner actor's behaviour (Brown *et al.* 1995).

Table 6-2. Dichotomisation of the power bases

Overt form	Subtle form	Reference
Coercive - Punishment	Noncoercive - Reward - Expertise - Legitimate - Referent	Hunt and Nevin (1974)
Economic - Reward - Punishment	Noneconomic - Expert - Legitimate - Referent	Etgar (1978)
Contingent - Coercive - Reward	Noncontingent - Expert - Legitimate - Referent	John (1984)
Perception unaltered - Request (Referent) - Promises (reward) - Threats (Coercion) - Legalistic (legitimate)	Perception altered - Information exchange (information) - Recommendation (expert)	Frazier and Summer (1984)
Coercive strategy - Threat - Legalistic plea - Request	Relational strategy - Promise - Information exchange - Recommendation	Boyle <i>et al.</i> (1992)
Mediated - Reward - Coercion - Legal legitimate	Non-mediated - Referent - Expert - Traditional legitimate - Information	Johnson <i>et al.</i> (1993)

Source: Developed by the researcher

6.2.2. Trust paradigm

6.2.2.1. Background

Trust is thought to play a significant role as a predictor of positive outcomes in interorganisational relationships (Parkhe 1993; Currall and Inkpen 2002; Koka and Prescott 2002). Indeed, trust is viewed as the most significant factor influencing both interpersonal and interorganisational relationships (Kiessling *et al.* 2004). Therefore, this concept has been widely studied from various perspectives such as strategic management and governance mechanism (Bradach and Eccles 1989; Ring and Van De Ven 1992) and organisational research based on buyer-supplier relationships (Zaheer

et al. 1998b; Perrone *et al.* 2003). Also, trust is particularly emphasised as a foundation of SCM with commitment (Lee and Billington 1992; Kumar 1996; Chen and Paulraj 2004) and regarded as the principal and core factor for SCM excellence (Zhao *et al.* 2008; Zhang and Huo 2013) and successful logistics alliances (Moore 1998). Hence, a number of studies examined trust from the SCM perspectives, particularly, focusing on diverse dyadic relationships in the manufacturing context (Anderson and Narus 1990; Sako and Helper 1998; Doney and Cannon 1997; Mccutcheon and Stuart 2000; Johnston *et al.* 2004). Particularly, the ability to build a high level of trust and cooperation with suppliers has become essential quality for manufacturers to improve their international competitiveness (Spekman 1988).

The benefits of having trust in interorganisational relationships have been asserted in a wider range of research. Many scholars have supported that working to build high level of trust can improve the organisations' performance and suppliers' responsiveness (Noordewier *et al.* 1990; Jones *et al.* 1997; Handfield and Nicholas 1999; Hoyt and Huq 2000; Handfield and Bechtel 2002). Especially, a high level of international trust can result in SC efficiencies by lowering costs of negotiation, reducing conflicts and forming collaborative relations (Zaheer *et al.* 1998; MacDuffie and Helper 2007; Ireland and Webb 2007). There is a tendency that partner organisations in high-trust relationships are more likely to share all information and to take a risk than those in low-trust ones (Beccerra and Gupta 1999; Corsten and Kumar 2005; Kwon and Suh 2005). Further, the existence of trust generates better working relationships by reinforcing informal social bonding in a buyer-supplier relationship, that develops relationship stability between them. This stable relationship shows a strong positive link with alliance performance and is also related to a hidden norm of reciprocity among SC members (Yang *et al.* 2008). As such, trust usually plays the

role of trigger to cause a chain reaction and is often regarded as a relational lubricant that eases transferring knowledge, sharing risks and joint learning (Nahapiet and Ghoshal, 1998; Inkpen, 2006).

On the other hand, the condition of a lack of trustworthiness in the relationships can be directly linked to opportunistic behaviours (Ireland and Webb 2007). Also, this lack tends to disturb or diminish the effects of sharing information, reciprocity of influence and joint problem solving (Zand 1972). Additionally, a lack of trust can bring about time-wasting and unnecessary procedures in the working process because counterparts should be scrutinised thoroughly, and all details of transactions have to be verified (Kwon and Suh 2004). This lack of trust makes the working process or practical transactions complex and time consuming.

Despite diverse advantages gained from trust-based interorganisational relationships, building such a relationship is difficult (Zhang *et al.* 2011) and it takes time to establish it (Ring and Van de Ven 1992; Nahapiet and Ghoshal, 1998). Cultivating mutual trust is considered as one of the greatest challenges in implementing successful SCM (Bowersox *et al.* 2000). There are many pitfalls and difficult conditions in the process of fostering trust among SC partners, which have not been fully investigated (Kwon and Suh 2004).

6.2.2.2. *Diverse viewpoints in definitions*

There is no universally accepted definition of trust that can satisfy every scholar (Zhang *et al.* 2011) and many definitions of trust have been suggested in prior research (Cai *et al.* 2010). Many scholars use the credibility and goodwill dimensions to conceptualise and merge into trust (Doney and Cannon 1997; Zaheer *et al.* 1998; McCutcheon and Stuart, 2000; Perrone *et al.* 2003; Johnston *et al.* 2004; Gattiker *et al.*

2007; Zhang *et al.* 2011). On the other hand, the term ‘willingness’ is commonly adopted to define trust. Trust is frequently defined as “a willingness to rely on partners in whom one has confidence” (Moorman *et al.* 1992, p. 315), a willingness to give up opportunistic behaviour (Chen and Paulraj 2004) and a willingness to take a risk (Johnson-George and Swap 1982; Kee and Knox 1970; Mayer *et al.* 1995). In some definitions, confidence is emphasised. Confidence as well as faith, reliance or belief is regarded as one of the types of conveying trust in the relationships with suppliers (Chen and Paulraj 2004). Trust is also described as existing when one party has confidence in a counterpart’s reliability and integrity (Morgan and Hunt 1994). Further, trust has been operationalised as confidence in some studies (Mayer *et al.* 1995; Moorman *et al.* 1993). Some researchers identified trust as referring to the partner’s two characteristics: honesty and benevolence (Deutsch 1958; Kumar *et al.* 1995; Yeung *et al.* 2009).

However, there are some limitations of these elemental characteristics to fully explain trust. Honesty does not always guarantee enhancement of trust in certain cases, for instance, where coercive relationships exist (Kumar 1996). In addition, there is a distinction between confidence and trust because trust requires previous engagement on one’s account, perceiving risks and dangers and accepting them (Luhmann 2000). Other research indicates that confidence on the part of the trusting party can be an outcome of the organisation’s belief that the trustworthy party is reliable and has high integrity (Rotter 1967; Larzelere and Huston 1980; Morgan and Hunt 1994; So and Sculli 2002). As addressed above, Moorman *et al.* (1993, p. 315) emphasise the facet of ‘willingness’ in conceptualising trust as ‘without being willing to rely on partners trust is limited’. However, Fishbein and Ajzen (1975) assert that behavioural intention such as ‘willingness’ cannot be regarded as its definition, rather it can be best viewed

as an outcome of attitude. In this sense, Morgan and Hunt (1994) say that willingness to rely should be viewed as consequences of trust and not as a part of how trust is defined. As such, these benevolent attitudes and intentions can be possible sources or origins of trust, not trust itself (Pruitt 1981; Cai *et al.* 2010). These origins eventually influence or result in one's expectation about the partner's trustworthiness (Krammer 1999).

There are definitions that more focus on the expectations than the sources of trust. Although Pruitt (1981) admits that the definitions of trust can be contextualised according to different situations, trust was defined as the belief that a partner's word is reliable and that a partner will fulfil its obligation. Two elemental characteristics are distinguished in this way of conceptualising trust: reliability of words and fulfilment of obligations. Applying this in the SC area, trust can be defined as the belief that SC partners will behave in a predictable manner and carry out what they promise (Chen and Paulraj 2004). In the same vein, Zaheer *et al.* (1998b) define interorganisational trust as one's expectation that the partner organisation can be relied on to accomplish obligations and act in a consistent and fair manner even when the possibility for opportunistic behaviours exists. In interorganisational contexts, there are many scholars that view trust based on the expectations of desired performance delivered by partner organisations (e.g., Anderson and Narus, 1990; Barney and Hansen 1994; Cai *et al.* 2010; Chiles and McMackin 1996; Das and Teng 1998; Doney and Cannon 1997; Mayer *et al.* 1995; Joshi and Stump, 1999). Currall and Inkpen (2002) also define trust as the decision to rely on partners based on the expectation that the partners will act in accordance with common agreements. These expectation-based definitions of trust allow researchers to deal with practical issues of organisations' behaviours responding to uncertainty (Cai *et al.* 2010). Indeed, the questions about words fulfilled,

achievement of obligation, consistent manner of behaviours that are asked through this definition are closely related to actual practices and direct implementation of trust, not just having intentions that may foster trust.

6.2.2.3. *Sub-dimensional constructs*

A wide range of origins of trust can be applied in both interpersonal and interorganisational settings (Cai *et al.* 2010). Honesty, benevolence, and competence are representatively regarded as the sub-dimensional constructs included under trust (Dyer and Chu 2000; Joshi and Stump 1999; Kumar *et al.* 1995; Mayer *et al.* 1995). In the case of Maister *et al.* (2000), their research suggests four key elements driving trustworthiness: credibility, reliability, intimacy, and a lack of self-orientation. These dimensions are related to **relational trust**, which help lower transactional costs, but legal contracts are also considered as the principal means to secure transactions (Dyer 1997). Legal protection and formal rules in organisations can be origins of trust and help with development of interorganisational trust (Kramer 1999). **Rule-based trust and expectations** about a partner's action can be established by sharing understandings of standards and norms through formal rules, common agreements, and contracts (Krammer 1999). Grounded on these rules and contracts, penalties can be calculated for a partner, and the partner's behaviours are also expected to some extent to avoid the costs of violation of rules and contracts (Maguire *et al.* 2001). As such, **calculus-based trust** is built up as trusting organisations can believe the partner organisation will act in a certain way based on the rules (Maguire *et al.* 2001).

Sako (1997) develops a typology of trust by categorising trust into three levels, namely **contractual trust, competence trust and goodwill trust**, based on different sources to establish trust in the buyer-supplier relationships. Contractual trust is grounded on

the expectations that the partner will adhere to the common agreements and behave according to the written contract or general rules accepted as the industry norm. A second type of trust, labelled competence trust, stems from the belief that the partner organisation has technical and managerial competence to carry out given tasks. Sako (1997) says that competence trust can be considered at a higher level than the first type of trust, because breaking relationships due to a lack of contractual trust is related to reasons that are morally unacceptable. On the other hand, a lack of competence is expected to be rectifiable and another chance can be given to the partner. The last type concerns the belief that the partner is reliable, trusted to take initiatives and refrain from taking unfair advantages. Goodwill trust is not based on explicit promises to be fulfilled or professional standards to be accomplished as in the cases of two types, and therefore, can be hardly screened in advance. As such, goodwill form can be verified after transactions or projects are begun, as it is a more contextual and diffuse concept (Sako 1997).

Trust can be also grouped in two categories: **trust in a partner/organisation** and **trust in a situation** (Ireland and Webb 2007). For instance, in Sako's typology contractual trust is more inclined to trust in a situation where explicit punishment is clearly identified in the case of violation of promises. Goodwill trust is more likely the former as this does not depend on conditions, rather is decided by the characteristics or values of the partner/organisation. The effect of trusting a situation is different from that of trusting a partner and the benefits of trusting a partner are much higher (Ireland and Webb 2007). As such, primary benefits earned from relationship trust are attributed to goodwill form, but how this can be managed is still not fully explained in theories (Ireland and Webb 2007).

6.2.3. Commitment paradigm

6.2.3.1. Background

Commitment plays a critical role in inter-organisation relationships (Anderson and Weitz 1992; Morgan and Hunt 1994; Wu *et al.* 2004; Kwon and Suh 2005). Enduring commitment is a prerequisite for successful SC implementation, as interorganisational relationships and following transactions can easily be breakable or be at risk without commitment (Kwon and Suh 2005). It is also said that relationships can be established on the foundation of mutual commitment in the service relationships (Berry and Parasuraman 1991). As such, in a discussion of relationships, the concept of relationship commitment cannot be excluded and is considered to be central to relationships.

Indeed, there are a variety of benefits garnered from enduring commitment in interorganisational relationships. Commitment helps with building social relationships and encourages supportive action in interorganisational relationships (Yang *et al.* 2008). Commitment can also lead to the continuity and development of interorganisational relationships (Anderson *et al.* 1994). Further, relational commitment contributes to improving partnerships by enhancing communications between partners and employing the coordinative relationships among the SC members (Hunt *et al.* 2002; Narayandas and Rangan 2004; Yang *et al.* 2008). A high level of commitment in the dyadic relationships with suppliers engenders cooperative and collaborative behaviours leading to maintenance of long-term relationships (Morgan and Hunt 1994; Ring and Van de Ven 1994). As such, it is evident that the factor of commitment is directly related to interorganisational relationships and influence the outcome of those relationships.

6.2.3.2. *Definition*

The concept of commitment implies “solidarity and cohesion” (Dwyer *et al.* 1987, p. 19) which seems vague and diffuse. Hence, there is a need to understand the practical characteristics of commitment, as these may potentially conflict with value for money or other procurement issues. Some scholars have viewed commitment as the highest value of behaviours in relationships. Dwyer *et al.* (1987, p. 23) say that “commitment represents the highest stage of relational bonding” and Morgan and Hunt (1994, p. 24) compare commitment to “higher levels of loyalty” as being the same. Fournier (1998) also emphasises that commitment is established on the construct of loyalty, which is an inclination to transact further leading to “sequential purchase or proportionality” (Zhao *et al.* 2008, p. 371). As such, commitment is associated with tangible outcomes of performance and directly linked with practical issues.

Another key aspect of commitment lies in a long-term perspective. The common feature of all the definitions about commitment (e.g., Dwyer *et al.* 1987; Anderson and Weitz 1992; Morgan and Hunt 1994) is its involvement with “continuity or a long-term orientation” (Moore 1998, p. 25) with partners. Signalling commitment itself can be perceived for partners as a long-term orientation towards the relationship (Narus and Anderson 1986). Dwyer *et al.* (1987, p. 19) mention that commitment indicates “an implicit or explicit pledge of relational continuity between partners.” Namely, continuing relationships are considered as one of the most significant aspects in the concept of commitment, which therefore justifies putting maximum efforts to ensure maintaining the relationship continually (Moore 1998). In the same sense, commitment is interpreted as an attitude pertinent to improving and maintaining a stably ongoing reciprocal relationship with SC partners (Anderson and Weitz 1992;

Moore 1998; Zhao *et al.* 2008). Commitment in logistics and SC networks is also characterised by a future-centric perspective as well as a stable, long-term orientation (Ellram and Cooper 1990; Moore *et al.* 1998; Kwon and Suh 2005). Given this, commitment is grounded on the perspective of pursuing a long-term relationship considering the future transactions more prominent than current transactions. This point is related to the next topic, sacrifice for stability.

Two elemental characteristics of commitment, stability and sacrifice, are treated as the core throughout all the different levels such as interpersonal (e.g., Becker 1960), intraorganizational (e.g., O'Reilly and Chatman 1986), and interorganisational relationships (e.g., Anderson and Weitz 1992; Wu *et al.* 2004). This implies that commitment to relationships means more than a basic form of evaluation about the counterpart “based on a consideration of the current benefits and costs associated with the relationship” (Anderson and Weitz 1992, p. 19). The long-term orientation involves a willingness to make short-term sacrifices in order to maintain long-term relationships and to actualise long-term benefits from the relationships (Dwyer *et al.* 1987; Anderson and Weitz 1992). Thus, in committed relationships, SC members try to bear short-term sacrifice and to focus on future transactions, in order to maintain long-term stable relationships. This does of course depend to some extent on the necessity for institutional memory whereby the commitments made at the start of a relationship are carried through and acted on, even by success management regimes.

On the other hand, commitment can be deemed an investment in transaction-specific assets that are hardly retrieved even if a relationship is terminated (Heide 1994; Joshi and Stump 1999; Zhao *et al.* 2008). Commitment indicates a willingness to dedicate one's resources such as energy and time to sustaining the relationship with a partner (Dion *et al.* 1992). This is also a different method of investment to maintenance of

relationships and promoting the aims of SC (Chen and Paulraj 2004). The scope of investment for the committed relationship has developed and become varied including financial, physical aspects, not only relational-based sources (Morgan and Hunt 1994; Zhao *et al.* 2008). Zhao *et al.* (2011, p. 20) accordingly view relationship commitment as “the willingness of a party to maintain a relationship through the investment of financial, physical, or relationship-based resources”.

Lastly, some definitions focus on the members (i.e., a party and its partner) involved in committed relationships. Moorman *et al.* (1992, p. 316) define commitment to the relationship “as an enduring desire to maintain a valued relationship”. Morgan and Hunt (1994) scrutinise their definition about commitment and borrow the core concepts from it. For instance, ‘the valued relationship’ can imply that commitment can be activated when the relationship is regarded valuable or prominent. ‘An enduring desire to maintain’ denotes the desire for indefinitely enduring relationships and a willingness to put efforts on maintaining it. Based on this logic, Morgan and Hunt (1994, p. 23) define relationship commitment “as an exchange partner believing that an ongoing relationship with another is so important as to warrant maximum efforts at maintaining it; that is, the committed party believes the relationship is worth working on to ensure that it endures indefinitely.”

6.2.3.3. Measurable criteria

Many different types of measurable criteria have been suggested regarding commitment (Morrow 1983). Some dimensions are grounded on the characteristics and meaning of commitment. Scanzoni (1979) and Dwyer *et al.* (1987) understand interorganisational relationships through a stepwise procedure such as awareness, exploration, expansion, commitment, and dissolution. As such, commitment is

considered as one of several phases in developing relationships in their theory. Particularly, in the commitment stage, a party depends on partners' inputs, durability and consistency (Cowan *et al.* 2015). Committed relationships are characterised by a high level of inputs to partners (Blau 1964; Scanzoni 1979) and therefore "economic, communication and/or emotional resources" can be exchanged between a party and its partner (Dwyer *et al.* 1987, p. 19). Regarding the second and the third aspects, commitment can be measured through enduring this input over time and maintaining a constant level of the input without fluctuation (Scanzoni 1979; Dwyer *et al.* 1987). Given this, these elements seem useful to figure out the levels of commitment in the interorganisational relationships.

Commitment can also be further clarified by discovering the way of signalling or indicating commitment to partners. In detail, organisations can strategically signal commitment to their partners by hiring proficient personnel, attending required meetings, offering exclusive treatment, and devoting transaction specific assets (Narus and Anderson 1987; Anderson and Weitz 1992; Brown *et al.* 1995). Also, commitment can be daily established through the way a party tries to make influence on its partners in the process of initiating new projects, making changes to current programmes, or dropping inefficient or ineffective practices (Mohr and Nevin 1990; Brown *et al.* 1995). As such, commitment can be signalled in interorganisational relationships through all these daily practices or the process of carrying out given tasks.

Lastly, commitment can be grouped through its sources or origins. Allen and Meyer (1990) illustrate an individual level of commitment to organisations that one belongs to from the organisational psychology perspectives through a three-component model of organisational commitment: affective, continuance and normative components. Kumar *et al.* (1995) also adopt this three-item contract in the interorganisational

relationships between dealers and its suppliers. Affective commitment concerns “the feeling of belonging and the sense of attachment” (Wu *et al.* 2004, p. 323) to a counterpart. Continuance commitment involves financial and non-financial costs of leaving partners and the existence of alternatives (Allen and Meyer 1990; Wu *et al.* 2004). Normative commitment refers to the feeling of obligation to remain in the relationship and establish shared cultural expectations (Allen and Meyer 1990; Wu *et al.* 2004).

On the other hand, some studies view relationship commitment from two aspects: normative and instrumental commitment. Normative commitment exists when organisations share common values and goals working closely to accomplish both their individual and mutual goals (Brown *et al.* 1995; Wu *et al.* 2004). This type refers to mutual and ongoing committed relationships in a longer-term orientation with reciprocal dedication and sharing values, norms, and managerial approaches (Ellram 1991; Zhao *et al.* 2008). In contrast, instrumental commitment is not grounded on mutual norms or values ‘nor is it toward long-term orientation’ (Zhao *et al.* 2008, p. 375). Calculative involvement is the primary driver for instrumental commitment, which is more transactional, rather than relationship based (Zhao *et al.* 2008). Indeed, being rewarded is crucial since an exchange of behaviour grounded this commitment is engendered by specific extrinsic rewards (O’Reilly and Chatman 1986; Zhao *et al.* 2008).

These two forms of commitment have been reified through three different sources (i.e., compliance, identification, and internalisation) initially developed by Kelman (1958) and O’Reilly and Chartman (1986). As explained in Table 6-3, compliance involves instrumental involvement for extrinsic rewards, identification indicates a sense of belonging and identifying self with a counterpart, and internalisation refers to

intrinsically rewarding based on congruence of values and norms of behaviour (Kelman 1958; O'Reilly and Chatman 1986; Brown *et al.* 1995).

Table 6-3. Three distinct forms of commitment

Criteria	Descriptions
Compliance	Becomes present 'when attitudes or behaviours are adopted not because of shared belief but simply to gain specific, extrinsic rewards'
Identification	Occurs 'when one accepts influence to build or maintain satisfying relationship, feeling proud to be a part of a group with a counterpart'
Internalisation	Happens 'when one accepts influences as attitudes and behaviours become congruent with its own value that has become the same with the counterpart'

Source: Adapted from Kelman (1958), O'Reilly and Chartman (1986) and Brown *et al.* (1995)

Typically, there is not much difference found between identification and internalisation (Caldwell *et al.* 1990) as one identifies itself with its partner, then naturally internalises shared norms and values of the partner (Brown *et al.* 1995). These two components are grouped and termed as 'normative commitment' (Brown *et al.* 1995). As such, normative commitment is reflected by value similarity or pride affiliation. Instrumental commitment is indicated by the compliance scale or instrumental exchange of behaviour for rewards (O'Reilly and Chatman 1986).

6.2.4. Supplier integration

The importance of effective supplier management has been emphasised to improve efficiency and organisational performances in the business sector (Monczka *et al.* 1993; Primo and Amundson 2002; Chen and Paulraj 2004). It is essential for organisations to have collaborative buyer-seller relationships for competitive success (Laing and Lian 2005; Zhang *et al.* 2011; Meehan and Wright 2012). Further, for some academics, the SC concepts are restricted to the relational activities between a buyer and seller (Cavinato 1992; Ellram 1991). This approach focuses on the relationships with the

first tier of suppliers and considers this dyadic relationship as a basis to establish the whole SCs. As explained in the literature review chapter, there has been minimal study about SCI from the HOs' perspective and therefore this topic in the humanitarian sector may exist in embryonic form. Given this, the basic dyadic relationships that the IHO has can be a very good starting point of the SCI research in the humanitarian sector.

Moreover, although internal integration (II) is considered as a foundation of broader SCI (Flynn *et al.* 2010), in unsettled circumstances external integration (EI) can be a more strategic way to secure competitive advantage (Quesada *et al.* 2008, p. 297). As these relationships between the IHO and its key suppliers are situated in a very uncertain environment dealing with changeable situations, the external domain is preferentially investigated in this study, rather than the internal domain of SCI. In particular, Maloni and Benton (2000, p. 52) summarise the benefits from supplier integration: "reduced uncertainty for buyers; reduced uncertainty for suppliers; reduced uncertainty for both; cost savings; and enhanced responsiveness". As such, considering uncertainty and unpredictability of the humanitarian context, focusing on the supplier integration (SI) aspect seems sensible as an initial step of the humanitarian SCI research. Such an approach should not however be adopted at the risk of fossilisation of supply chain practices whereby no changes become possible and which could be potentially very inefficient.

Supplier integration can be defined as "the degree to which a firm can partner with its key suppliers to structure their inter-organisational strategies, practices, procedures and behaviours into collaborative, synchronised and manageable processes in order to fulfil customer requirements" (Yeung *et al.* 2009, p. 68). Applying this in the humanitarian context and drawing on Flynn *et al.* (2010, p. 59), SI can refer to 'the

degree to which a humanitarian organisation strategically collaborates with its key aid products providers and collaboratively manages its interorganisational processes in order to fulfil beneficiaries' requirements on the ground'. To measure this SI concept, a wider range of elements has been suggested. Wasti and Liker (1999p. 451) suggest three critical elements on SI practices as follows: 'influence on design decision, the amount of control over the design, and early communication frequency'. These elements can be summarised as a decision-making process, a level of participation and interactive communication behaviours. Vickery *et al.* (2003) also emphasise that SI requires information sharing and participation in a decision-making process. In addition to this, conflict resolution techniques are considered as a primary element to achieve partnership success with suppliers (Mohr and Spekman 1994). Joint problem solving is particularly selected as prominent SI practices that are likely to result in mutually satisfactory resolution (Das *et al.* 2006). These criteria can be the standards in measuring the degree of integration with suppliers.

As addressed in the literature review chapter, the levels of integration are deemed very important due to the blurred concept of SCI. In this research, three different levels of integration were adopted, namely, strategic, tactical and operational perspectives (see Table 6-4).

Table 6-4. Three levels of integration

Levels	Practices
Strategic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -True cross-organisational integration -Demand processes and supply processes, fully incorporated into joint decision-making mechanisms -Extensive joint project planning processes -Focusing on a long-term plan to improve future events and optimise SC processes
Tactical	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Proactively discovering SC disruptions -Joint problems solving oriented activities such as preventing, identifying and resolving problems -Conducting joint needs assessment processes -Sharing key information such as needs assessment or new project plans -Using a wider range of communication mediums over more various issues
Operational	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Concerning operational and transaction driven activities such as on-time delivery and fulfilment as per agreement/informal promises -Immediate solution to overcome obstacles in the field operation -Often making decision separately, rather than joint decision-making

Source: Adapted from Stevens (1989), Whipple and Russel (2007), and Larson (2012)

Stevens (1989, p. 4) initially takes a view on these three perspectives about “the management of material flow”. The strategical perspective concerns developing “objectives and policies for the SCs”, enhancing the SC system such as “facilities and their locations”, and improving organisations’ competitive strengths and organisational structure for effective SCI (Stevens 1989, p. 4). The focus at the tactical level is related to determination of the means such as “the tools, approaches and resources” (Stevens 1989, p.4) that are necessary to make the strategic plans feasible. The operational perspective involves practical operation and procedures on the ground. Hence, it concerns inventory, service quality, throughput and cost efficiency (Stevens 1989). Huo *et al.* (2009) and Kamal and Irani (2014) also develop the three-echelon theoretical SCI framework: integration at the basic operations management level, at the planning and controlling level and at the strategic management level.

Whipple and Russell (2007) apply three levels of approaches in the collaborative organisational relationships between manufacturers and retailers, namely collaborative

transaction management, collaborative event management and collaborative process management. The basic level of collaboration is focused on the operational level of decision-making and the exchange of transactional data. This type, collaborative transaction management, usually involves daily operations that fulfil the short-term needs (Whipple and Russell 2007, p. 181-2). The second level, collaborative event management, refers to generating joint plans and sharing key information of new projects (Whipple and Russell 2007, p. 184). This perspective usually concerns how to execute plans in a “tactical/managerial” level of management and how to prevent and resolve problems (Whipple and Russell 2007, p. 181). Lastly, in the perspective of collaborative process management, upstream and downstream processes are fully integrated allowing optimised SC decisions and “long-term improvement plans” (Whipple and Russell 2007, pp. 181) are more valued. Communication behaviours in this level are characterised by “simultaneity of exchange” (Whipple and Russell 2007, pp. 188).

As such, the level of SC relationships has been focused on business logistics contexts. Larson (2012) attempts to adapt the Whipple and Russell’s three typology of SC relationships to the humanitarian logistics context. The basic level of collaborative relationships involves “close cooperation in the field” and carrying out practical tasks to overcome obstacles on the ground (Larson 2012, p. 4). The second level of collaborative relationships refers to “joint needs assessment and sharing of assessment information” (Larson 2012, p. 4) with SC partners. The final level concerns joint decision-making for strategic plans and fully integrated SCs to prepare for future disasters (Larson 2012).

6.3. Influences of power, trust and commitment

This section pays attention to analysing how power, trust and commitment plays in the relationships between the IHO and its key suppliers.

6.3.1. Power influence

The analysis of power relationships between the IHO and its key suppliers is displayed in Table 6-5. Most relationships reflect a trend of power asymmetry between the IHO and its suppliers. All the relationships between the IHO and its commercial type of suppliers fall into the buyer dominance category. Only one relationship is categorised as supplier dominance. On the other hand, all the relationships with the in-kind suppliers are classified as power balance.

Table 6-5. Power relationships at the dyadic level between the IHO and its key suppliers

Supplier type	Relationship	IHO power	Supplier Power	Relationship Type
Commercial	IHO-C1	High	Low	IHO dominance
	IHO-C2	High	Low	IHO dominance
	IHO-C3	High	Low	IHO dominance
	IHO-C4	High	Medium	IHO dominance
	IHO-C5	High	Low	IHO dominance
Non-commercial	IHO-I1	Medium	Medium	Balanced
	IHO-I2	Medium	Medium	Balanced
	IHO-S1	Medium	High	Supplier dominance

Source: Developed by the researcher

6.3.1.1. IHO dominance

Overall, the relationships the IHO has with the commercial suppliers (C1-5) are not very influential on the aid performance, although the whole procurement process generating the commercial supplier relationships is very important in the aid activities.

As explained in Table 6-6, ‘the importance as per the agreement’ was emphasised in the relationships with commercial suppliers.

Following the complex procedure of procurement, suppliers become critical as much as contractually stated and moreover all essential products such as food, medicine and NFI are all critical in the field. Therefore, basically they are treated equally in terms of contractual relationships with equal criticality on the aid performance of the IHO. As per the agreement, the commercial suppliers are considered critically as much as stated on the contract. As such, among these commercial suppliers, it is difficult to discover the difference of criticality. Instead, there are some differences in the number of alternatives and the differentiating resources the suppliers can provide.

Table 6-6. Power relationships between the IHO and its key suppliers

Power relationships	Summary	Representative quotations
IHO dominance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Availability of multiple suppliers - IHO treating suppliers only in a contract basis - Strict screening procedures applied in selecting suppliers - Divided payments and holding the final payment until precise monitoring and evaluation 	C1-5. "None of these companies that we are telling you [about] are specific to us. They are replaceable. And there are many other companies that are replaceable by them."
		C1-5. "It could be screening, it could be checking the supplier, doing their references, their existence, checking their accounts, their financial stability. Also checking their worthiness, their existence, do the screening....."
		C1-5. "So, the project team will be doing the monitoring and evaluation and also making sure the quantities, the quality required, and it has been delivered on the right time."
		C1-5. "....we don't pay upfront 100% supplier.....so we always hold back final payment, and we only pay that final payment once everything is delivered at the right time, the right quality, the right quantity."
		C1. "So, they are not that much critical. There are other companies [in the market] as well."
Power balance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Not bound by a contract - Each side expressing one's needs or opinion freely - Strongly trust-based relationships - Mutual benefits considered very important 	I1-2. ".....whenever there is an in-kind required, we hire them. If there is no in-kind required then we don't need it."
		I1-2. " It pleases them, and it also pleases us as an organisation if the items are relevant, so it works in both of our favour."
		I1-2. ".....from building relationships with donors in ways that will benefit them and us, it is critical to keep that long-term development and relationship with them."
		I1. ".....it's a very, very healthy relationship."
		I1. "It's a voluntary thing.....like I said, there's nothing in writing as such, there's no agreement....."
		I1. "There are no hidden agendas with them."
		I2. ".....because there's no formality, there's no agreement, there's nothing in place, so it's in our interest to keep the relationship, but it might not be in their interest to do so."
		I2. "I've never been in a circumstance where they change their mind and they go back on their word."
Supplier dominance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A lack of alternatives to IHO - Supplier's critical role in a certain area - Strict constraints on IHO - Overall aid performance designed by supplier 	S1. "But I don't think there's any competitors in the market now, probably none....."
		S1. ".....it would be quite hard to imagine our organisation without them at the moment....."
		S1. "Their rules and regulations, their policies and guidelines. They are providing each and every step."
		S1. ".....it would be higher than that.....40% I guess."
		S1. ".....what [S1] do is to identify the distribution point....."

Source: Developed by the researcher

Compared to the non-commercial, these commercial suppliers are not regarded that critical because there are some alternatives in the market. In addition, the focal case IHO has a very good reputation and brand, which is favoured by suppliers. This fact can be illustrated as its advantages from referent power sources and leads to a powerful position in the market as illustrated in Table 6-8. They do not need to put much effort to maintain the relationship with the commercial suppliers. As shown in Table 6-7, all the commercial suppliers are replaceable and none of them are specific to the IHO. In the case of C4, there are relatively less alternatives replacing C4 in ranging from one to two alternative suppliers. This is because of the different nature of their items that has shorter period of shelf life till the expiration date. An organisation can gain power over others from the scarcity of resources it possesses (Dahl 1957). Hence, the relationship with C4 can be regarded more critical than other commercial suppliers.

Further, regarding withdrawal from the contract, for these five key commercial suppliers, contracts have never been withdrawn so far. In general, withdrawal or cancellation rarely happened. However, practically both sides can withdraw from the contract by giving notice and have to give reasons based on the clauses on the contract. Still, it may be more restricted and difficult for suppliers' sides to withdraw the contract whose terms and conditions are made by the IHO. Moreover, withdrawal or cancellation from contracts can be taken into account for the next tender if the same suppliers participate in it. Hence, for suppliers, it will not be easy to withdraw or cancel the contracts with the IHO.

Table 6-7. Alternatives and strengths of the key suppliers

Supplier	Alternatives	Strengths
C1	5~10	A very well-established cooperate with good finance status Deeper understanding of the humanitarian sector and its requirements Experienced professionals in dealing with and providing aid products Excellent management skills
C2	3~5	Value for money Pretty much on-time delivery
C3	3~5	On-time delivery of the products Meeting the target within agreed time
C4	1~2	Exceptional ability in providing scarce or best bulk items
C5	3~5	Providing quality products On-time delivery
I1	None	Transparent management system Excellent operation skills and practices A perfect fit of their products to the need of beneficiaries
I2	Possibly some, but unpredictable	Offering access to the donor network
S1	None	High reputation Good network, established system and process in place Quickly responding to the requirements on the ground Ability and power in accessing certain areas A strong actor with the ability to coordinate on the ground

Source: Developed by the researcher

6.3.1.2. Power balance

There is a different trend in the relationships with the in-kind suppliers-I1 and I2, as Table 6-5 illustrates. It is assumed that both I1 and I2 have various power sources. They are large companies, which is their strength. There are not many alternatives to I1 and I2 for the IHO, only a few may exist. I1 is the primary in-kind supplier and there is no other in-kind supplier that can offer similar items as what I1 offers. The items I1 provides are very useful and valuable for the beneficiaries as they offer medical products, which are of an acceptable standard in terms of expiry date, beneficiaries' needs, and appropriate location. Further, their aid items are not something commonplace, which are valuable supplies in an emergent situation. In the

case of I2, in theory, there must be alternatives because clothes are not very scarce items. However, I2 is the only one in-kind supplier of clothing items for the IHO. Firstly, it takes a long time to find an in-kind supplier that can fulfil the requirements and needs. Also, even if discovering available in-kind supplier, it might not be economically feasible as handling costs can be more expensive than the monetary values of the aid items provided to the IHO. Although there are some possible providers of clothing or other essential items, I2 is practically the only connection which meets all criteria for in-kind supplies.

Additionally, I1 always provides aid items that the IHO requests and are very cooperative and willing to provide these items. They are very transparent with no hidden agendas between I1 and the IHO. They are very good at practice and operations on the ground with perfect packaging and clear labelling. In summary, they are excellent in operating practically and have systematic working patterns. They are very cooperative for audit process or scrutiny. For the IHO, it is very comfortable and convenient to work with I1. Further, because of long-term relationships, their items are familiar to the user in the affected area, hence, there is no need to adjust or change according to the needs of the ground. Plus, there is no need to undergo the whole administrative process with the local authorities. On the other hand, I2 is very flexible about where aid items should be allocated because they focus on meeting the best interests of the beneficiaries as a whole. They do not pay attention to making marketing benefits from aid item supplies. They just provide items and leave the rest of the process to the expertise of the IHO. I2 considered the relationships with the IHO very important and did not complain about the actual business side of it. For instance, when there were some problems in transferring shipping charges to I2 from the IHO due to banking situations or others, they understood the limitations or systems the IHO faces.

The strength is that I2 values the relationships with the IHO, and the IHO also understand the weaknesses of I2. There is a mutual respect in this relationship. Additionally, I2 introduce the IHO to other potential donors through their networks and also provides financial donations. Given this, these in-kind suppliers have diverse source of power such as referent, expert, information, traditional legitimate.

Table 6-8. Type of power and power sources of dominant entities

Power relationship	Type of power	Power sources	Summary	Representative quotations
Buyer dominance	Mediated	Legal legitimate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The relationships completely bound by the contract - The existence of standard agreements applied uniformly - The terms and conditions on the contract usually designed by the IHO side 	<p>C1-5. "It will depend on the terms of the [contract], the contract will stipulate. So, each contract will have specific guidelines because you cannot have arbitrary dates."</p> <p>C1-5. ".....they agree on our terms. We don't agree on their terms."</p> <p>C1-5. "The terms and conditions on our contract agreement is the same for everybody. That is standard."</p>
	Non-mediated	Referent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - High reputation and popularity with a big size 	<p>C1-5. ".....we don't put effort to maintain the relationship because we are a very big company.....When we advertise a tender, they come to us. They want to have a good relationship with us....."</p>
Supplier dominance	Mediated	Legal legitimate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Regulations and guidelines provided by supplier 	<p>S1. "Their rules and regulations, their policies and guidelines. They are providing each and every step."</p>
	Non-mediated	Expert	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Special ability to gain access to difficult areas and get aid products there - Coordinating skills 	<p>S1. "Because they are able to bring in huge ships of goods and food and they are able to do a lot of coordination."</p> <p>S1. ".....because of the kind of power they have in terms of being able to deliver in certain countries and certain areas we work in....."</p>
		Referent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Great reputation 	<p>S1. "It's a big organisation. That is it, that is the big strength."</p>
		Information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ability to communicate with the governmental level or 	<p>S1. "They are able to talk to both parties to try and let the ... to look for humanitarian access....."</p>

		unapproachable bodies - Gaining information that are not available to the IHO and solve problems	S1. ".....they are able to do as a partner is maybe access government level.....or in the fighting parties which we can't, so they may be able to give us information where can go on and provide some security....."
	Traditional legitimate	- Sharing values and norms to prioritise the aid purpose than formal contracts	S1. ".....to sign an agreement with the WFP, it takes a long time but we don't stop the work from continuing so we will keep working with each other and until we reach an ideal contract stage we've already done the work....."

Source: Developed by the researcher

This index indicates the high level of importance of both Supplier I1 and I2 for the IHO's aid performance. Nonetheless, I1 and I2 do maintain very cooperative working relationships with the IHO in an equal status, as shown in Table 6-6. Power was never abused in these relationships and the IHO pursues a long-term relationship with these suppliers, which means high commitment. There is no formality or no agreement for the transaction between the in-kind suppliers and the IHO. This is completely based on a voluntary relationship. Thus, both sides can withdraw from operations they have worked on together anytime. There are only payment issues regarding costs of package, delivery, and shipment that are paid by the IHO. In theory, if the containers have not left the port yet and the cost has not yet been incurred, the in-kind suppliers can pull back the work. The IHO also can withdraw when there are no needs on the ground for their products. However, there have been no such circumstances between these suppliers and the IHO. They have never changed their mind or plans, and the IHO has never broken the relationship. Although this relationship is not restrained by any formality or agreement, the aid supplies have been provided stably and constantly. There is no doubt about trustworthiness between them. As such, the balanced power

relationships with I1 and I2 cannot be discussed particularly without trust and commitment paradigms.

6.3.1.3. *Supplier dominance*

There are hardly any alternatives to replace S1 although a couple of organisations have similar features with S1. The only other way to replace S1 is to process a commercial tender and access commercial suppliers. As described in Table 6-7, S1 has a lot of strengths and Table 6-8 shows its diverse power sources. Firstly, S1 can resolve the issues the IHO faces by providing access to a higher level of organisation, sharing information with the IHO, or providing security. S1 has the ability to coordinate on the ground and to provide access. They are able to talk to many other bodies to find solutions, which means their high level of communication and solution skills. They can facilitate humanitarian access for the IHO in sensitive areas. Their existence is very critical to operate aid activities because S1 can make deliveries happen even in a serious regional conflict. In certain regions, it is very difficult to provide aid assistances to beneficiaries without S1 in certain areas. S1 is also a strong actor as it has a wider range of aid modalities depending on changing circumstances (e.g. cash programme, food distribution, deliverables, etc). S1 has the ability to change the aid modality depending on the needs on the ground. According to the types of food needed in the affected area, they are able to change content of supplies provided to projects. Thus, depending on changing situations in the affected area, the method of operation changes between S1 and the IHO by changing responsibilities and roles of both sides. Given this, the good relationships with S1 improves the aid performance of the IHO, particularly, from the point of programmes, it is very influential on the aid performance of the IHO.

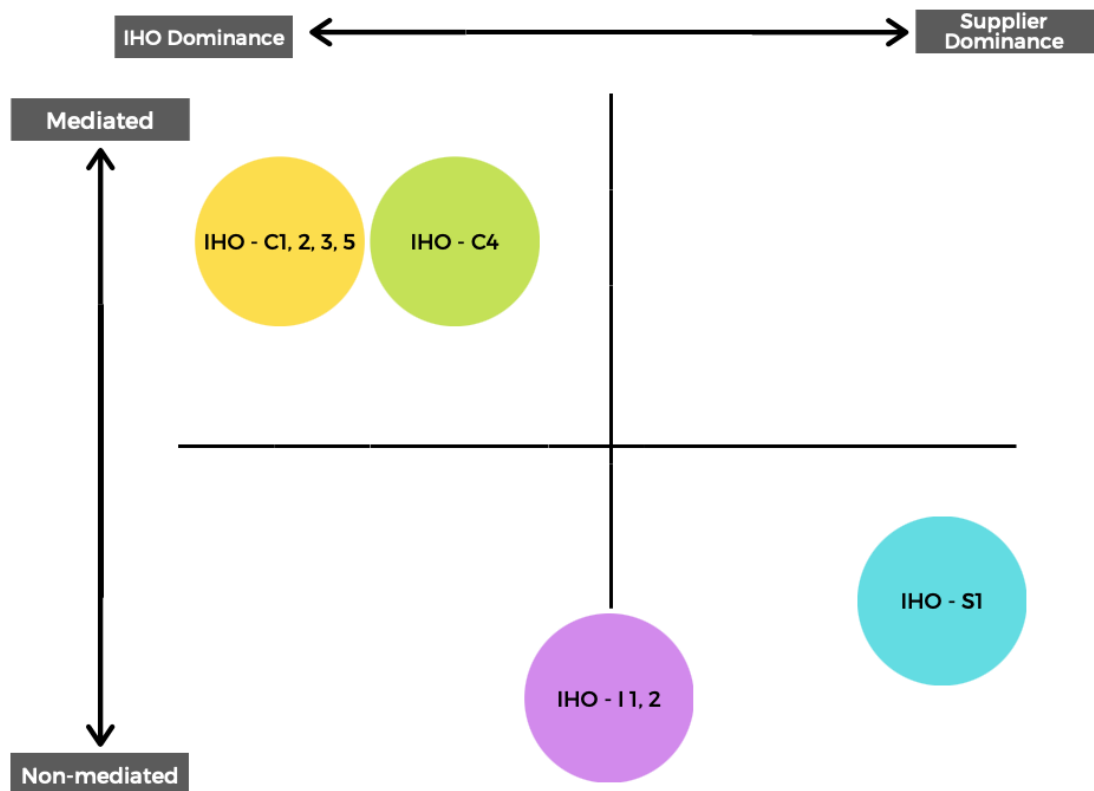
Withdrawal of agreements hardly happens between S1 and the IHO. In a very special situation, a certain project can be pulled out due to insurmountable circumstances. Even if the IHO pulls out of the project, they have enough time to explain and get S1 prepared for it. However, usually both sides do not break off or withdraw the contract. Also, this relationship can be defined as a partnership rather than a donor, as described above. When they help the IHO, the IHO also needs to do something S1 wants and provides its own resources, manpower, expertise, etc as S1 does. As such, superficially, this relationship seems balanced based on mutual concessions. Nonetheless, this relationship can be identified as supplier dominance because there are very few alternatives to the IHO, the agreements are designed by S1, the projects contents are led by S1 and the aid programmes financially rely on S1.

As explained above, power relationships can become more apparent through the existence of alternatives and the origins of power sources in this case. Figure 6-1 demonstrates that power relationships clearly divided into three categories such as IHO dominance, power balance and supplier dominance by the existence of formal agreement and the main body to make a contract that are associated with legal legitimate power. The relationships with the in-kind suppliers are not bound by any written agreement and are maintained only by competence of both sides, transparent management, and fidelity between them. Based on the voluntary relationships without any compulsion or legal obligations, these relationships with I1 and I2 are thought to be equal partnerships, particularly in the methods of processing the transactions and dealing with issues.

On the other hand, the relationships with commercial suppliers and the supranational organisation are bound by the formal agreements. There is a difference in making contracts and availability of alternatives. The terms and conditions on the contracts

with C1-5 are generally made by the IHO, while those on the agreements with S1 are reflected more on the S1's stances. The relationships with the commercial suppliers are completely founded on a contractual basis and there are relatively more alternatives to the IHO in the market. Only for C4, there are few alternatives because of the possessions of its scarce products. This leads to varying degrees of buyer dominance between the IHO and its commercial suppliers and therefore C4 locates slightly toward supplier dominance out of the commercial group in Figure 6-1. Still, not all relationships with commercial suppliers were dominated by the IHO.

Figure 6-1. Power relationships between the IHO and its key suppliers



Source: Developed by the researcher

On the contrary, it is very important for the IHO to satisfy S1, because S1 also plays a role of donors for the IHO. One of participants said that “...we need to keep that relationship to make sure that they're happy with the project we do”. Especially, S1

has a different stance in terms of criticality on the aid operation because, in the region of this case, it is almost impossible to distribute aid products without S1's support. Given this, S1 is in a dominant position compared to the commercial suppliers and in-kind providers.

6.3.2. Trust influence

6.3.2.1. *Degrees of trust*

The five commercial suppliers are all generally reliable, which is enough to carry on the relationships for many years. If they were not reliable, the IHO would not have used these suppliers for their aid work. Nonetheless, there are varying degrees of trust in comparison among them as described in Table 6-9. C1 would be the more reliable one compared to the rest of the chosen commercial suppliers, although there were no specific issues with other suppliers except for C4. C1 is considered highly reliable, hasn't made any failure of delivery or issues in the procurement process and has shown excellent performance. On the other hand, C4 is regarded as less trustworthy in terms of on-time delivery and meeting the agreed quantity, which leads to amendments of contracts for the supplier.

In the case of the in-kind suppliers, the relationships with I1 and I2 present a high level of trust. There is strong belief that both fulfil their obligation completely in a consistent manner and that their promises are reliable. Firstly, I1 is considered as an utterly reliable supplier. This supplier has never failed to make an appointed delivery, and never made a cancellation. This supplier has never presented any issues so far and never missed items that were requested by the IHO. I2 is also very reliable, because they have never failed delivery requests, never missed any container deliveries so far, and never cancelled any orders. As such, there is expectation that I2 is ready to meet

the request and the information given by I2 is trustworthy based on previous experiences.

Table 6-9. Degree of trust between the IHO and its key suppliers

Degree of trust	Summary	Representative quotations
High	Strong belief about: - the supplier's obligation to be fulfilled - the supplier's words to be kept - great competence - consistent and transparent manner - the IHO's request to be accepted	C1. "...very. Very much [reliable].... I don't get any issues with them. They're very reliable. No problems whatsoever."
		I1&2. "Both of them are reliable because never ever happened that we have missed any containers."
		I1. "... they've helped us in a number of ways.... So, they've been very, very reliable. We haven't had any issues at the moment, so far." "... we've had no issues with the products and no kind of complaints or anything like that. So, it's a very, very healthy relationship." "[I1] always has items available and they're always willing to provide things."
		I2. "I've never been in a circumstance where they change their mind, and they go back on their word."
Moderate	The existence of belief about common agreements to be fulfilled	C2,3&5. "They are reliable.... we are using them for the last many years, all of them, so definitely we are happy with their services."
		S1. "... they are probably, you know, a very reputable, well recognised organisation.... But there are tough negotiations on the ground, it is quite difficult to work smoothly all the time with [S1], there's a lot of challenges on the ground."
Low	Slight distrust about successful delivery to be made due to occasional failure of delivery and amendment of the contract details accordingly	C4. "[C4] can be unreliable at times.... They can all make mistakes, but this is a slightly weaker one.... we have to just give a bit more time, and if there's less quantity then we have to agree to that, amend the contract, and we just have to really work with them to ensure they deliver the products."

Source: Developed by the researcher

Reliability toward S1 cannot be clarified simply and also the relationship with S1 cannot be simply defined. One of participants said about this relationship that *"....it could be a mixture of things"*. The reputation of S1 is highly appreciated and they are a very strong actor on the ground that has various abilities. However, on the ground, there are inefficiencies and inflexibility associated with S1. For example, there is little negotiation regarding the method of working in the field, and therefore the method of

operation can become rigid on the ground. Still, in general, there is fundamentally a moderate level of trust as the disadvantages are offset by their great reputation and capability to manage huge crises.

6.3.2.2. *Type of trust*

In general, relationships between organisations can be characterised by one or more levels of trust, namely contractual, competence and goodwill trust (Sako 1992). A certain level of trust should exist in the interorganisational relationships to enter any relationship (Ireland and Webb 2007). As delineated in Table 6-6, all relationships with the key suppliers had one or two levels of trust. Only the relationships with C2-5 were applicable to one level of contractual trust, whereas the remainder were covered by two levels of trust. Each supplier group shows different features and levels of trust.

The relationships with the commercial suppliers and S1 are basically contract-based. All details are written on the agreements including the cases of contract withdrawal. For instance, there are inevitable circumstances of withdrawal that apply to all commercial suppliers. From the IHO side, when there is no requirement from the ground or aid items cannot be physically delivered to the affected areas due to bad situations, the contracts can be postponed or cancelled. Also, suppliers can receive warning messages due to low quality of products. If supply failures are repeated in terms of meeting the quality standards, the IHO may terminate the contract. From the suppliers' side, when there are SC issues or they cannot maintain the agreed price, the contracts can be terminated. As it takes time to complete the tendering process and the situations in the affected region change rapidly, products can sometimes become more expensive or delivery charges may drastically increase. With regard to S1, the IHO makes two-fold agreements: a global strategic framework agreement and individual

agreements for each regional project. The former addresses the overall agreement that is generally applied in the international operation, while the latter includes specific conditions and details of responsibilities according to different cases. This way may give some flexibility to adapt to new working environments. For instance, while they await an individual agreement to be approved, they can start aid projects prior to the final approval based on the overall agreement.

Some suppliers reached the levels of competence trust as described in Table 6-10. Particularly, Suppliers C1, I1 and I2 excelled in making deliveries in terms of punctuality, the attitude of being well prepared, accuracy of providing requested quantity and quality. They all have a higher level of operating skills compared to others without making any mistakes. In the case of Supplier C1, there have been no issues or problems through the whole procurement cycle based on their well-established system. Supplier S1 demonstrates different aspects in terms of competence such as high coordinating skills between several stakeholders, problem-solving skills, and an ability to access conflict zones. Give this, the IHO has 'competence trust' towards Suppliers C1, I1, I2 and S1 based on the previous experiences with them, that they will successfully fulfil the given tasks.

There are only two suppliers at the level of goodwill trust, which are both in-kind type. These relationships were considered for the IHO as 'very healthy ones'. Both I1 and I2 are likely to act in a way that exceeds normal operational standards or expectations. For instance, Supplier I1 was used to ship first even before the shipping cost were received from the IHO, which makes the relationship very special to the IHO. Supplier I2 have introduced the IHO to the valuable and confidential network they belonged to, which is very helpful for the IHO to widen the donor networking. Also, this supplier readily acceded to the requests from the IHO even when the extra costs had to be paid.

These suppliers generously accommodate any issues occurred during the process and are very supportive for the IHO.

Table 6-10. Type of trust between the IHO and its key suppliers

Type of trust	Summary	Representative quotations
Contractual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Both sides' action based on the legal contract or agreements - Expectation that the supplier will perform according to the agreement 	<p>C1-5. "If the supplier doesn't provide quality items as agreed, then we terminate the contract.....all of these, I don't think anything's happened with these five.....But if it was to happen, our issues would be legitimate and correct..... It may have happened with a smaller supplier, yes."</p> <p>S1. ".....all that is documented so that when we do sign the contract, we are paid for all the work that we have done." ".....there's a strategic agreement between [the IHO] and [S1]" ".....we would sign a contract with [S1] and then [S1]'s job is to get it to the Port....."</p>
Competence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Expectation of suppliers' capabilities to carry out their given tasks competently - Meeting the needs on the ground perfectly based on in-depth understanding of the field 	<p>C1. ".....start to finish, they're very, very good in terms of delivery, product support, sampling, evaluation.....And they deliver the items on the appropriate timescales.....Not really problems or issues throughout the whole procurement cycle."</p> <p>I1&2. "No they haven't failed any delivering." ".....once we get the inventory list, then they've essentially packed everything, so it's in a container ready to be shipped."</p> <p>I1. ".....if they've committed to a certain order, they've conductedif we've received our order, there haven't been any changes in that sense." ".....the other thing is the products fits the need very perfectly. They are very easy to understand on the ground. There's no opening the whole boxes and working out where we should put this, they are very clearly labelled. So, in that sense, it is very, very easy to operate with them, and the system is very, very good."</p> <p>S1. ".....they have the ability to coordinate on the ground, they have the ability to sometimes provide access, they have the ability to talk to both sides to find a solution for peace, so they are quite a strong actor."</p>
Goodwill	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Performance exceeding conventional procedures and obligations - Greater openness for communication and sharing information - Tolerating any flaws of the partner with a benevolent attitude and in-depth understand of the humanitarian context 	<p>I1. "They've actually shipped containers where we haven't transferred the shipping cost to them, but because they know they will receive the shipping cost from us. So, we have that kind of relationship with them that.... we will send them the cost, but they've shipped already for us." "There are no hidden agendas with them.....The actual working pattern and the way that they've done the system is very, very good, very transparent, and they're very open to audits or scrutiny, they're very open to that."</p> <p>I2. "The strong points are, as I say, they value the relationship more than the actual business side of it, and that's unique in the sense that sometimes they bend over backwards just to accommodate us....." ".....because we have problems in transferring money over to them, or whatever, but because of the fact they know</p>

		<p>us, they know the mission, they know the bigger picture, they know the limitation that we have, and they know that we are sincere."</p> <p>".....it allows you access to a wider network and, you know, high business people who are able to trust and donate to [us].....But in them being there and always being able to provide to us and willing to share with us and be part of [the IHO] family, they give us more access to others from [their country] or that part of the world they're vouching for us."</p> <p>".....we've let them down essentially because the shipment arrangements haven't – there's something technical that has gone wrong or with weather conditions and things have changed, so they've had to hold the items in storage longer which means that it costs them as a business to hold items. But them being supportive of [us], as long as they're kept in the loop and kept informed, they're understanding that these things don't always go to plan."</p>
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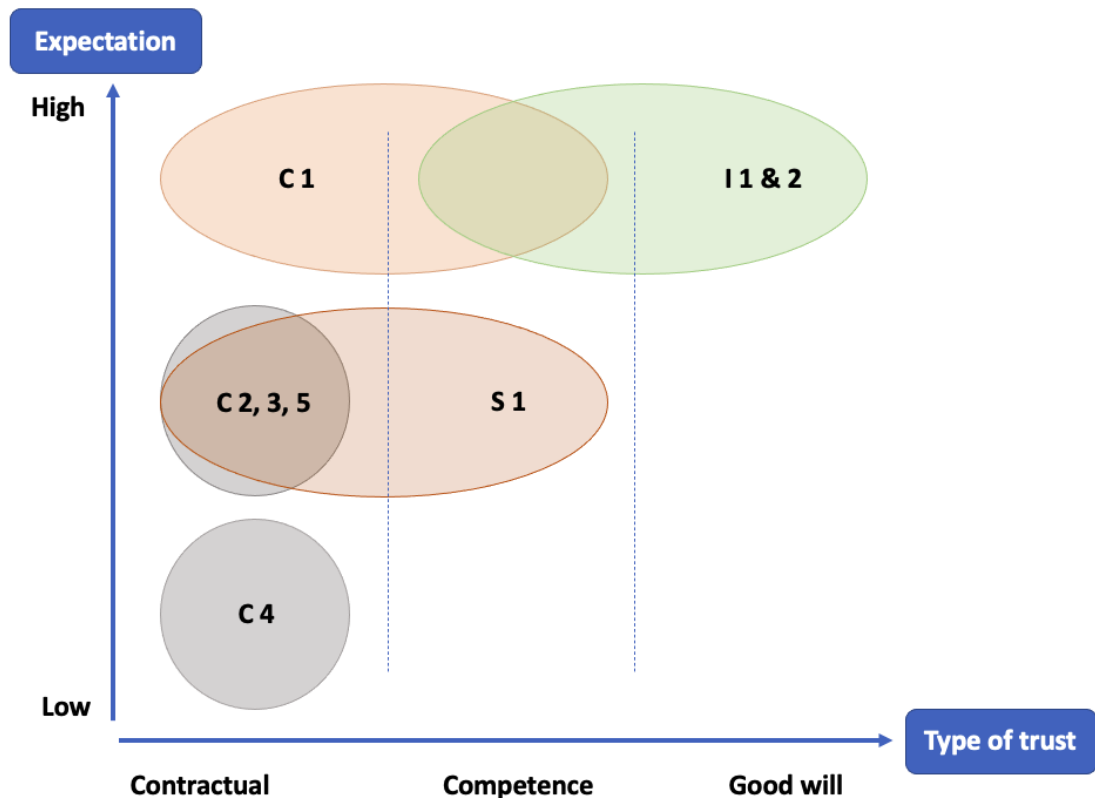
Source: Developed by the researcher

To sum up, this section explored how the relationships between the IHO and its key suppliers can be analysed through the facet of trust. In total, Figure 6-2 outlines the supplier relationship diagram of the IHO according to the facet of trust by using two dimensions: the degree of expectation and the type of trust. Depending on the performance of each supplier or the type of suppliers, the level and type of trust relations varies.

One of the most remarkable aspects in the trust relations is the relationships with the in-kind suppliers. These are in the highest position of the trust degree covering competence and goodwill trust domains. In these relationships, mutual trust and understanding exist. As these suppliers have in-depth understanding about the IHO's situations and try to make up for the partner's fault or situational problems. One of participants said that *"Similarly, we understand their weaknesses, so we don't push them into something that they're unable to do. So, it works both ways, yeah. So, their strength is more, I would say, they value relationship more."* As such, this is not a unilateral relationship, rather there is an atmosphere of pursuing reciprocity and a considerate attitude for the partner between the IHO and the in-kind suppliers. Such

norms of reciprocity can result in the expectation that a favour will be rewarded, “influencing goodwill behaviour” (Ireland and Webb 2007, p. 484). This mutual trust in a dyadic relationship is emphasised as a foundation of the strategic partnership with suppliers (Spekman 1988).

Figure 6-2. Trust relations between the IHO and its key suppliers



Source: Developed by the researcher

On the other hand, there were varying degrees of expectation about the commercial suppliers’ performance and consistency. Particularly, Supplier C4 falls in the lowest expectation domain with contractual trust only as this supplier has occasionally failed to meet its obligations, for instance, delivery delay or less quantity delivered. The level of trust can be developed as the relationship can progress through repeated engagement reaching goodwill trust (Ireland and Webb 2007). In theory, therefore the relationships with C4 can be developed into those with I1 and I2, if positive experiences repeatedly occur between them.

6.3.3. Commitment influence

6.3.3.1. Degree of commitment

Drawing on the previous literature review, Table 6-11 depicts the summary of commitment criteria: durability, importance for the IHO's aid work and input/efforts that the IHO put to the supplier relationships. Based on this summary with the quotations from the interviews, the levels of commitment towards the key suppliers are grouped in two categories as addressed in Table 6-11.

Table 6-11. Summary of commitment criteria

Type of organisations	Relationships	Length of relationships	Importance for the IHO's work	Input/efforts
Commercial	IHO-C1	6 years	Important	As per the agreement
	IHO-C2	4 years	Important	As per the agreement
	IHO-C3	4 years	Important	As per the agreement
	IHO-C4	4 years	Important	The agreement sometimes amended for C4
	IHO-C5	3 years	Important	As per the agreement
In-kind	IHO-I1	7 years	Highly Important	A lot of investment in the relationship
	IHO-I2	6 years	Highly Important	A lot of investment in the relationship
Supernational	IHO-S1	Over 24 years	Extremely Important	Strenuous effort invested

Source: Developed by the researcher

In terms of the importance of maintaining SR for the IHO's work, it was said that all five commercial suppliers should be equally treated according to the agreements. One of the interviewees mentioned 'favouritism': "*we can't consider anybody higher than the others, otherwise we'll be doing favouritism.....*" If one of these five primary suppliers is treated as more important, it can be shown as giving unfair preferential treatment to a specific supplier at the expense of another. Moreover, these relationships

were considered very contractual ones. Once the contracts are made, the relationships with the suppliers that were based on contracts become equally important. For the contract-based relationships, the IHO tends to be much speedy in responding to the suppliers based on the contract. As such, the commitment is conducted based on the contract made between the IHO and the suppliers.

On the agreement, many details are already specified down to earth for both sides. Particularly, suppliers' obligations are related to start date, finish date, the quantities, destinations, delivery points etc. The type of efforts in the IHO's side are to be responsive such as answer contractual queries and support and to be punctual in payment. Trying to strengthen responsiveness is how the IHO maintains the relationships with commercial suppliers. For the supplier who won the contract, the IHO becomes remarkably quick and responsive to the suppliers. Given this, the commercial suppliers are basically contract-based, and it is therefore difficult to differentiate between them. In general, these relationships with the commercial suppliers are included in the low level of commitment domain, as displayed in Table 6-12.

Table 6-12. Degree of commitment to the key suppliers

Degree of commitment	Summary	Illustrative quotations
High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The relationship valued as hugely important - A strong desire for long lasting relationships - Sustained efforts put to resolve issues and to support - Taking risks not to disturb operating projects 	<p>S1. "...from a grammatical perspective it's very, very, very important." "Currently, very important. It's because we have access to a lot of locations and [S1] provides a lot of support with food aid for us to deliver...." "From our perspective we're very committed to the relationship.... so we're 100% committed to it." "...it takes, to sign an agreement with [S1], takes a long time but we don't stop the work from continuing so we will keep working with each other and until we reach an ideal contract stage we've already done the work...."</p>
		<p>I1. "Very important....it works in both ways. I don't know whether they need us rather than we need them....we need to maintain that relationship because the products are such that is needed." "The demand is such that we can't even fulfil it with 50 containers a year on a regular basis. So, from our point of view, we need the relationship to be very strong." "[I1] is very important because of the quantities of things that they have, the benefit that we can get from their items and delivering it to the beneficiaries. It's something that can last long term." "Medical equipment is not the easiest to come across, so they are very important." "Because getting in-kind is not an easy thing. You need a lot of efforts to do that."</p>
		<p>I2. "...it is very important." "...they're vouching for us....it's higher up in the overall effect that they are having."</p>
		<p>C4. " If they've got any issues because of difficult products then you really have to work with them to find a solution....we get around that, but we have to just give a bit more time, and if there's less quantity then we have to agree to that, amend the contract, and we just have to really work with them to ensure they deliver the products."</p>
Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The relationships not valued as very important - A low level of effort put into the relationships - Minimum input as per the contract 	<p>C1-5. "We don't say a great deal of importance in maintaining relationship....." "We don't make that many efforts to be honest." "Our relationship only becomes important with them when they win the contracts with us."</p>

Source: Developed by the researcher

Nonetheless, there is a slight gap in the duration of maintaining relationships and the level of efforts put into each relationship of the commercial group as described in Table

6-11. C1 has a longer-term relationship in six years whilst the rest range from three to four years in the length of relationships. Further, as explained in the previous sections, the IHO had put efforts to amend the contract details when C4 failed to meet the agreed quantity or on-time delivery. This can be considered as an exception of their rules to deal with commercial suppliers because the IHO usually terminates the contract when a supplier repeatedly fails to meet the term of contract. Referring to the section of power influence, this commitment would be related to their possession of scarce medical products which leading to a lack of alternatives in the market. Hence, the IHO has tried to understand the situation of C4 and tolerate the inconvenience caused by inconsistent performance as much as it can.

The IHO showed its desire to maintain the relationship with Suppliers I1 and I2 for a longer time. Both relationships were valued highly important and the IHO has put a high level of effort in these relationships. Regarding I1, the relationship is very important for the IHO's performance because all their items are very useful, available in date in a very good condition. Particularly, these items are highly demanded on the ground. Sending about 50 containers filled with medical equipment requires strong relationships, which leads to highly committed attitudes. Maintaining the relationship with Supplier I2 is also very important for the IHO. Particularly, in the winter, clothing and blankets provided by I2 are very essential items, which are greatly needed on the ground. In addition, I2 introduces trustworthy networks to the IHO, which is incredibly effective for the IHO's aid work. In terms of the relationship duration, the IHO have maintained good and satisfactory relationship with the in-kind suppliers over six to seven years, which are averagely longer than that of the commercial group. The IHO has put a certain level of efforts to maintain the good relationships with Suppliers I1

and I2. For instance, when I1 visits in the UK, they are treated well. Also, every year a field trip takes place with I2.

In a certain region including this case, Supplier S1 becomes much more important than in any other places as they play a more critical role in operating aid programmes. Hence, in the viewpoint of programmes in a local area, S1 is extremely important for the IHO as they provide it with critical resources such as available access routes and aid products that it is difficult to obtain. Further, among all eight key relationships, the IHO and Supplier S1 have maintained a longest-term committed relationship over 24 years. The IHO has put a significant effort into and is utterly committed to this relationship. As such, all the relationships with the non-commercial suppliers tended to be highly valued, and great efforts were put for enduring relationships, as show in Table 6-12.

6.3.3.2. *Types of commitment*

Regarding the type of commitment divided into two categories: normative and instrumental, both appeared in most suppliers being blended. It is not easy to clearly demarcate suppliers by two types of commitment. Hence, this can be a matter of the extent of inclination toward one of the types.

As shown in Table 6-13, all the relationships with the commercial group are characterised by instrumental commitment. Basically, the guidelines written on the agreement are considered as efforts invested in the relationships with their commercial suppliers. This means they are very contract-based relationships and there are no extra further efforts to make better, enduring relationships. Abiding by the rules on the contract is regarded 'being committed each other', which leads to applying minimalised concepts of commitment. Therefore, the relationships are time-limited as per contract

terms, its importance and efforts into the relationships only last for a definite period as specified in the contract. These relationships are usually short-term oriented for each individual project and there should be a new tendering process initiated for a new project or demands. This is very transaction-focused, not relationship based.

Table 6-13. Two types of commitment

Sources of commitment	Summary	Representative quotations
Normative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Shared and internalised norms of managerial approaches and working styles - Mutual respect - New strategies willingly accepted - Internalising guidelines provided by the partner - Pride in affiliation - Value similarity for beneficiaries 	I1. "... you don't have to follow the formalities of things because you have that relationship with them.... we've looked after each other. Mutually, it's very good so far."
		I2. "So, there's a lot of investment in the donor because they're investing in us as well" "So, he's always trying to look for what the suitable needs are in countriesit started off as just a general encounter with an individual who turned out to be a generous businessman who's trying to do good."
		S1. "But we know that we have a good relationship with them, and the idea is for them to establish a localised type of agreement for them to operate." "Their rules and regulations, their policies and guidelines. They are providing each and every step." "... they have to decide who is working on the ground, who is the best organisation that WFP can give them this in-kind donation to. It's on them."
Instrumental	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Very transactional-oriented - Contract-based relationships - A short-term basis according to the limited period on the contract 	C1-5. "... but the ones who have won the contract, we have to be very, very quick and responsive.....We're very committed to the contract." "... we go, as per the agreement." "Our relationship only becomes important with them when they win the contracts with us."

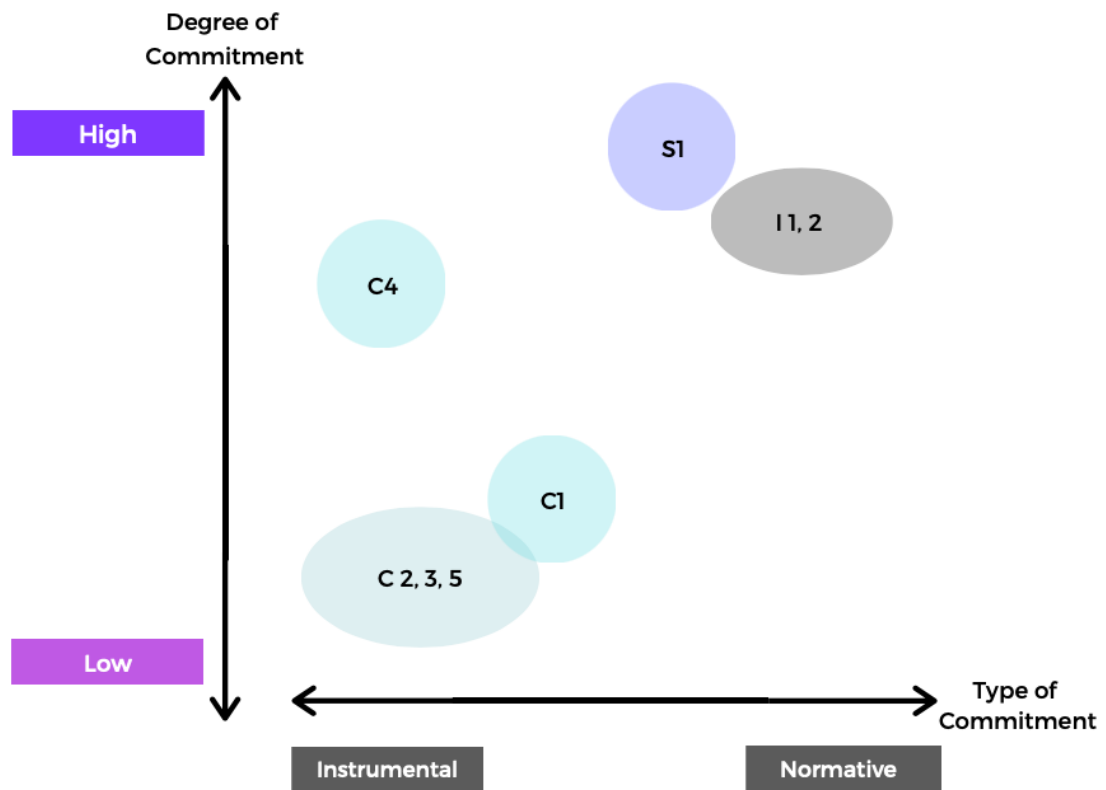
Source: Developed by the researcher

All the relationships with the non-commercial suppliers fall into the normative commitment domain. The existence of behaviours for rewards cannot be avoided in this relationship with the non-commercial providers. One interviewee said that *"....all that is documented so that when we do sign the contract, we are paid for all the work that we have done."* That is to say, in the relationships with the donor type of supplier,

the IHO cannot ignore the purpose of acting for rewards such as receiving complementary supplies. Nonetheless, this does not seem to be the primary aim of the collaborative operations among them. Table 6-13 indicates that there are shared values and norms prioritising the needs of beneficiaries on the ground and common aims to meet these through their operations. This motivated the IHO to willingly follow new localisation strategies of Supplier S1 and to take risks in terms of starting aid work before completing an agreement. Suppliers I1 and I2 are not interested in using the aid programme for their corporate promotion at all, which is very different from other partners. Thus, these relationships are very valuable to the IHO and shared values and norms make them more committed to the relationships.

Synthesising all the criteria of commitment addressed above, Figure 6-3 maps the commitment relations of the IHO with its key suppliers. Overall, the IHO tended to be more committed to the non-commercial suppliers than to the commercial group. Firstly, there seems clearly a strong desire to maintain long-lasting relationships with the non-commercial group. These are not contract-oriented. With the in-kind suppliers, there are no agreement or formalities, and these relationships are more bound by strongly shared high values and mutual understanding. As such, I1 and I2 tend to slant towards the normative side in Figure 6-3. With S1 the IHO made two-fold agreements. However, the contract does not severely affect the relationship itself, although their roles and detailed responsibilities are practically specified on the contract. Apart from the contract period, the relationship has been ongoing. Further, the IHO and S1 have been through a variety of international aid projects together over 24 years. Still, they were carrying out a large-scale project in the region. This leads to positioning S1 in the highest commitment level compared to the rest.

Figure 6-3. A map of commitment relations between the IHO and its key suppliers



Source: Developed by the researcher

Regarding the commercial group, these relationships were relatively considered less important, and therefore the IHO did not seem to invest extra effort to maintain the relationship except for Supplier C4. Despite these general features of the commercial group, Supplier C1 is slightly different from the rest. There are more shared norms and values between C1 and the IHO. One participant said that C1 had deep understandings about the humanitarian sector, managerial approaches of the IHO and the operation system: *"I think it's important that we have a good relationship with them. They understand us, we understand them.....I think it's quite crucial and important that we work together and we understand each other."* Additionally, relatively they have had a longer-term relationship than the rest in the commercial group. Given this, C1

slightly tilted towards the normative and higher sides compared to Suppliers C2, 3 and 5.

6.3.4. Summary

Based on the theoretical foundations of power, trust, and commitment, that were provided in the previous section, this section demonstrates the influence of these theoretical attributes on the relationships between the IHO and each supplier. Table 6-14 summarises the outcomes of applying the power, trust and commitment paradigms to the key supplier relationship of the IHO.

Table 6-14. The influence of power, trust, commitment on the supplier relationships

Relationships	Power		Trust		Commitment	
	(Im)balance of power	Power sources	Expectation-based trust	A level of trust	Types of commitment	Degree of commitment
IHO-C1	IHO Dominance	Legal legitimate	High	Contractual & Competence	Instrumental	Low
IHO-C2	IHO Dominance	Legal legitimate	Moderate	Contractual	Instrumental	Low
IHO-C3	IHO Dominance	Legal legitimate	Moderate	Contractual	Instrumental	Low
IHO-C4	IHO Dominance	Legal legitimate	Low	Contractual	Instrumental	High
IHO-C5	IHO Dominance	Legal legitimate	Moderate	Contractual	Instrumental	Low
IHO-I1	Balanced	-	High	Competence & Goodwill	Normative	High
IHO-I2	Balanced	-	High	Competence & Goodwill	Normative	High
IHO-S1	Supplier Dominance	Legal legitimate, expert, referent, information & traditional legitimate	Moderate	Contractual & Competence	Normative	High

Source: Developed by the researcher

6.4. Patterns of supplier integration

6.4.1. Levels and degrees

This section explains SI activities of the IHO according to the main dimensions of SI such as information sharing including communication behaviours, participation in decision making processes and joint problem-solving. Then, the practices will be analysed through three levels of integration: strategic, tactical and operational perspectives.

First, Table 6-15 explains the activities and actual practices regarding integration between the IHO and the commercial suppliers. Material flow from upstream to downstream SC entities must be supported by the information flow from downstream to upstream (Frohlich and Westbrook 2001). As such, communication practices and information sharing activities of the focal organisation are particularly important, for instance what kinds of information technology are used and what information the IHO is sharing with its key supplier. Email was the primary method to communicate with the commercial suppliers for the IHO. It is useful for requesting product information, specification, and sample. The IHO preferred communication with its suppliers via email because it was considered as “the most cost-effective method” and the IHO wanted their conversation with the suppliers to remain in their written emails. Following using emails, if necessary, phone was the second popularly used method in this relationship. Also, using its own website was very useful to provide suppliers with all the criteria of requirements and a full background of needs. When the case organisation communicates with their commercial suppliers, a face-to-face meeting is one of the options. The type of these meetings was “through a formality, through meetings, through business reviews” including audit and on-site inspection. These

were used to improve the process and performance of their suppliers. These formal meetings did not occur very often between them.

Table 6-15. Integration practices with the commercial suppliers

Criteria	Summary	Representative quotations
Communication behaviours	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -The primary communication medium: email, if necessary, using phone -A specific email address dedicated to tendering -Conducting on-site inspection, audit Website 	<p>C1-5. "Usually what is best for us is we try email first, it's the most cost-effective method. We don't like to use the phone too much... And then follow that up with maybe a phone call if you need to. These are the two main sources of communication: email and phone."</p> <p>C1-5. "...but it's usually emails because we want everything in writing."</p> <p>C1-5. "They will go outside onto their site, what we call audit..."</p> <p>C1-5. "...we will send them the tender document and they will either go on to the website, and they will see all the information that's there for them."</p> <p>C1-5. "So, if they contact us, we have a neutral email address..."</p>
Information sharing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Recommendations for suppliers' improvement -Requirements of aid products -Delivery details 	<p>C1-5. "...during the audit we will make recommendations, or when the audit report is returned to the supplier, there will be recommendations there for the supplier, for them to make improvements within their organisation."</p> <p>C1-5. "No, this is our own independent system here... We don't share this with any supplier."</p> <p>C1-5. "...by email and we send them the link. Website link."</p> <p>C1-5. "Everything in the tender, this is all shared with the supplier."</p> <p>C1-5. "Information we share is through the product specification...quantities...delivery address..."</p>
Participation in decision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -No participation in decision-making process -Transactional relationships 	<p>C1-5. "...the suppliers don't normally get involved in that [programme design/decision]. But they can provide feedback, you know, areas of improvement, they can assess or help in any other way, within limitations. But normally, this is a commercial relationship."</p>
Joint problem-solving	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Through local teams' formal meeting with suppliers 	<p>C1-5. "...we'll do that through a formality, through meetings, through business reviews. And the people in the locality there will speak to them...and they will make recommendations, through an audit, on-site inspection. So, these are some of the formalities we use to help improve their business and their procedures."</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Exceptionally accommodating the needs of the supplier with scarce products 	<p>C4. "...we have to just give a bit more time, and if there's less quantity then we have to agree to that, amend the contract, and we just have to really work with them to ensure they deliver the products."</p>

Source: Developed by the researcher

The interaction between the IHO and the commercial suppliers tended to be based on formalities. A basic level of information was shared with the commercial suppliers via emails. After the supplier selection procedure, the suppliers usually referred to the details of requirements through the website of the IHO and then when they had a question, they could use the IHO's neutral email account specified to tendering inquiries. As such, the information shared between them was usually focused on transactional information. Recommendations for improvement were suggested generally through formal meetings and business reviews, rather than through informal interaction. Theoretically, commercial suppliers can express their opinions or complaints, as the IHO is open to accepting these from their suppliers. However, the suppliers have never taken chances, as one of the interviewees said: "... we are always open. but we never see anything from them". It is doubtful that the commercial suppliers could practically make complaints or negative feedback to the IHO in the contract-based relationships.

Overall, it is a transaction-oriented relationship, which does not involve programme design or any decision-making processes. There might be participation of suppliers in the type of feedback or some help within limitations. One of interviewees said that "...but, normally, this is a commercial relationship". Hence, participation of suppliers was conducted in a very limited way regarding the process of carrying out aid activities of the case organisation. This shows that the role of commercial suppliers is regarded as a passive one in the IHO's aid work and lies in the operational level of integration. Further, there was no specific financial assistance for both sides and no collaborative electronic systems built between the IHO and their commercial suppliers. Joint training was not regarded as a necessity to help their supplier understand the procedures and

processes of the IHO. As such, the nature of these relationships is unlikely to involve long-term plans or activities.

The IHO tried to work hard with the commercial suppliers to solve any problems and make sure delivery was completed. The problem-solving activities were mainly related to the field obstacles that should be treated immediately, such as delays of delivery or a shortfall in quantity. Usually, when a supplier repeatedly caused problems, previous failures would affect the evaluation in the tendering process. Nonetheless, due to the difficult nature of the items provided, the IHO amended the details such as the agreed quantity or delivery time on the contract according to the actual quantity and time that C4 could fulfil. This problem-solving behaviour is still related to immediate response to resolve obstacles in the process of completing delivery, rather than joint problem-solving at a tactical level.

As Table 6-16 demonstrates, a wider range of communication media were used in communicating with the in-kind suppliers compared to the commercial suppliers, such as emails, phone, video call, face-to-face meetings, and a field visit. Like the commercial case, among these methods, emails were the most frequently used method for transparency and convenience. Suppliers I1 and 2 regularly visited the HQ of the IHO every year, which allows a face-to-face meeting and socialising in person between them. On the other hand, the IHO designated its personnel as a contact point for the in-kind suppliers and centralised all information pertinent to the in-kind transactions to the dedicated personnel who would directly communicate and cooperate with Suppliers I1 and 2. This seems for enhancing efficiency and maintaining consistency in SC decision related with the in-kind supplies.

Table 6-16. Integration practices with the in-kind suppliers

Criteria	Summary	Representative quotations
Communication behaviours	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -A wide range of communication media: email, phone, video call, face-to-face meetings -Field trips -Having a focal point of contact in the IHO 	<p>I1&2. "Email, Skype, phone, WhatsApp, and things like that...And from any transparency point of view, email is the best method of communication."</p> <p>I1. "...when they come to UK, they visit us...we treat them well...so there is that kind of relationship that we've had."</p> <p>"...when they come into the country, they come mainly twice a year..."</p> <p>I2. "...there's at least one visit a year that take place to be with the donor...a couple of field visits with the donor."</p> <p>"they will have an individual who is their point of contact in [the IHO]. That person will continue to liaise with them, so we'll have all the information, we'll pass it on to that person who will liaise with them and pass on information to them."</p>
Information sharing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Aid item lists and specifications -Needs assessment and available stock status -Reporting aid activities and future plans -Yearly forecasting and schedules 	<p>I1&2. "...the main information that we get from them is about the items and the specifics of the items and what they consist of..."</p> <p>"We don't give them a list like we would do with a supplier; it's more like these are the sorts of things which we need, and they send us a list of what they have available..."</p> <p>"And then, obviously, once it's available they will send me the list of what is available....it's just purely on a communication basis that we just kind of communicate by email."</p> <p>I1. "So, we just go over what we've done and what the plans are for next year..."</p> <p>"...so I give them a rough indication as to how much we're looking for in a year and when we're likely to be taking it off them."</p>
Joint problem-solving	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Open to any types of feedback in both sides -Keeping adjustment of process 	<p>I1&2. "...we can give feedback, yeah. We've done it in the past where we have encountered issues or concerns or whatever, so they are open to that. So, it's not like they're very restrictive in any negative comments or whatever."</p> <p>"Similarly, there's things that we can improve that they come to us, and, you know, so it's basically on both sides. But, as I say, because of the relationship that we've had over the number of years, we're able to do that openly, so it's not been looking down on each other or whatever kind of things. If there's things that's wrong, we mention it and manage."</p> <p>"...occasionally we would be touching each other, saying can you do this quickly or can you do this slowly because we've got holidays coming up."</p>

Source: Developed by the researcher

There were also a wider scope of information sharing practices throughout all three levels of integration. Basically, there was an exchange of transactional information between the IHO and Suppliers I1 and 2 such as aid products list, specifications, delivery details, shipping costs, documentation, etc. Particularly, the transactions with I1 have been on a regular basis as one interviewee mentioned: "...with the medicine it's quite simple because it's a regular thing that we've been doing in regular places". The IHO shared approximate demand forecasting and time schedule for a yearly plan with Supplier I1. Supplier I1 usually has visited the IHO twice a year and I2 has visited once a year. When they visited, the IHO had a chance to directly share the status of aid activities and their plans. Further, the IHO even made a field visit with Supplier I2. This field trip was a huge investment for the relationship and project plans with the supplier. One of participants mentioned that by showing the actual operation in the field to the supplier they could build more trust-based relationships and encourage a long-term relationship. These SI activities seem more grounded on a long-term perspective in a strategic level of integration.

Participation in a decision-making process was not clearly observed between them. However, joint problem-solving oriented activities were widely conducted. These long-lasting relationships tended to have tacit understandings between them and they have established their own methods of processing in-kind supplies. Particularly, one participant mentioned in-depth understandings of the in-kind suppliers as follows: "...they've been doing it for a long time with us and they know what we are after..." They have collaboratively built the relationships up for several years based on continual discussion and communication. The in-kind suppliers are very open to even negative feedback and consequently the IHO and the in-kind suppliers could have gradually adjusted their working process by accepting mutual feedback. Finally, the

working processes with Suppliers I1 and 2 seemed to be of a very satisfactory level for the IHO. One of participant said that "...the process seems to be running fine, and we've been doing it for a number of years, so I cannot see how I would need to improve it in any way." They have already gone through the process of resolving issues and problems for the last several years by proactively discovering problems and setting up a smooth process for operations. However, this does not obviate the need to continue investing time and effort into maintaining the relationship.

Table 6-17 explains the SI activities between the IHO and Supplier S1. There were very diverse types of communication media used for interacting with S1 such as emails, phone calls, diverse meetings across different management levels, forums, partnership platform and a shared IT system. The main communication methods were emails and face-to-face meetings. Like the other relationships, emails were also mostly effective in this case. The meetings with S1 have usually been held on the ground level and the local team were often invited for the coordination meetings for the field operation. In the HQ level, there were opportunities to have discussions through forums or partnership platforms with S1 approximately three to four times per year. The IHO has worked with S1 in many other countries and therefore needed to maintain extensive communication for many projects held globally. Communication between them occurred throughout diverse levels of job positions across its diverse departments including logistics, programme, finance, etc from the HQ and local teams, because there are a number of relevant personnel in working with S1. Further, Supplier S1 had dedicated personnel who could be a channel of communication with the IHO. Hence, their interaction could be managed efficiently and synthetically through the focal staff.

Table 6-17. Integration practices with the supranational organisation

Criteria	Summary	Representative quotations
Communication behaviours	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -A wider range of communication media used across diverse departments -Diverse communication media used: emails, phone calls, face-to-face meetings, forum, partnership platform -A dedicated contact point of S1 for the IHO 	<p>S1. "...phone calls, between the country director and the S1's country director ... programme staff will be linked and the logistics staff will be linked...Programme guy will be talking to the programme department to say this is the quantity we need...finance will be talking to each other..."</p> <p>"...we have meetings and they invite us to meetings...discussions, dialogues follow ups, implementation, so we're 100% committed to it."</p> <p>"...Most likely emails or through meetings, face to face on the ground not from this level."</p> <p>"...local offices where they have the offices, they are attending the coordination meetings."</p> <p>"...we do have some meetings where we have partnership platforms and forums, where they bring us on board and we have discussions about various aspects."</p> <p>"...we need to prepare our plans so we provide our data to [a shared network]..."</p> <p>"...we have an individual contact with [S1] with the partner relations so they just reach to us or we reach out to them..."</p>
Information sharing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Transactional information such as required quantity of aid items/service and delivery details -Stock levels and shipping status through a shared system -More intense and detailed information shared in the field, a wider, larger programme strategy shared in a global level -Needs assessment Feedbacks and reviews of operational issues within limits -Sharing key information for safe routes, changes of plan and strategies and changes of sites 	<p>S1. "...working with each other to say [aid item] are moving to the warehouse on this date, please be prepared. Programme guy will be talking to the programme department to say this is the quantity we need, this is the amount we need..."</p> <p>"they can see how much quantity has arrived in the warehouse...from that point onwards from this shipping to see what has arrived and if it matches...there is some kind of system...you can't access all of it – it's just certain parts, for example [aid products] requests or confirming [products] received..."</p> <p>"...in country it's a lot more intense, a lot more detailed. We will obviously share with them what our activities are within the country, what we're doing, where we're doing etc., etc., to give them visibility...At a global level it's probably a lot more about advocacy...mainly our strategy, what's the strategy, what the needs are, what we're working, where the gaps are."</p> <p>"Locations, number of beneficiaries, the current situation on the ground, sometimes we talk about what food is needed...because in some locations different foods are accepted by the community and in different places they won't eat it so, yes, it's needs assessments."</p> <p>"...they often look for feedback and they do ask us to review operational issues and stuff like that, it's not always an open conversation, we don't always get that information..."</p>

		<p>"...they'd meet and say okay we need to move our operation to this location...The food parcel is not arriving, the road is no longer safe...so yes, we have regular communications."</p> <p>"...so they're may be able to give us information where can go on and provide some security...you know we share information wherever we can."</p>
Participation in decision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Deciding the actual distribution point collaboratively -Joint needs assessment process -Suggesting joint aid plans in the field -Giving advices for advocacy 	<p>S1. "So, we will work together to identify the actual point for distribution."</p> <p>S1. "...we are involved in the need's assessment as well at the start and we are also involved in identifying the movement of [conflicts]...we speak to [S1]...this is the need on the ground, this is where we need to set up our [aid] distribution point and then we take it from there and start planning, you know, how we are going to deal with the response."</p> <p>"I wouldn't be surprised if they're working together to try and understand what the needs are, and they may contribute to saying, okay, maybe you want to design a programme that fits with this need. So, it would be a two-way conversation initially..."</p> <p>"...they sought us out and asked us for advice and insight in to this and how we can advocate on behalf of..."</p>
Joint problem-solving	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -A meeting for discussion about improving the relationship and preventing problems -Operational issues managed by the field team and global issues by the HQ team -Active joint problem-solving processes in the field 	<p>S1. "...if there's a problem with the distribution or in terms of quality or monitoring then ask the programme staff to deal with their people directly...if it's a global issue we then tend to take the lead in trying to identify how to solve those problems..."</p> <p>"...we had meetings with them last year when they were looking for ways of improving the relationship."</p> <p>"...when we receive challenges, we notify them because [S1] is our partner and one of the things they are able to do as a partner is maybe access the government level, maybe access areas in the government or in the fighting parties which we can't....we try and say okay, how can you help us with this and they say we will do this for you and you can do this for us. So that is how we help each other."</p>

Source: Developed by the researcher

The relationship with S1 presented the greatest varieties of information sharing among the eight key suppliers. The IHO shared transactional information such as quantity of needed items, details for delivery, etc. Interestingly, the IHO and S1 linked their IT systems, which allowed checking inventory level, expecting shipment, received products, and requested items. Further, the outcomes of needs assessment have been shared through a partnership network including S1. As explained about the conflict context of this case, it is very important to simultaneously exchange of information

between partners to respond to urgency. The IHO and S1 frequently held the field meetings and shared critical information such as safe routes for aid, moves of operation sites, changes of aid plans and strategies and delivery conditions. As such, the type of information shared in the field was more intense and more detailed. On the other hand, at the global level of discussion, the IHO shared its strategic plans for huge programmes and its policies for aid projects. By continually sharing the strategy, needs, gaps and current activities, the IHO tried to maintain a long-term plan and to promote joint programme planning for the future events with S1. Supplier S1 sometimes asked the IHO about feedback or review of operational issues and had a meeting to discuss about how to improve relationships, although the conversation may not be made in a very open atmosphere for the IHO.

In the field, there seemed a range of joint decision-making processes to decide many operational practices such as the actual point for distribution of aid products and service in a chosen area by S1. The IHO also conducted joint needs assessment with other partners in a partnership platform including S1. Based on this, the IHO suggested its opinion to them regarding detailed plans and strategical practices and participated in deciding the aid routes and distribution points in the field. When new programmes were commenced, both sides could initiate a new idea to design a programme to meet the needs and fill the gaps that were found on the ground through needs analysis. As such, there were collaborative initiatives on the ground between the IHO's local teams and S1, which mutually affected the decision-making processes of both sides. In a very strategic and global level, S1 requested advice on a certain topic of policy that the IHO was specialised in. Given this, there were mutual influences in the process of generating advocacy and global strategy because the IHO could participate in the

process of deciding broad policies of S1, which would affect the aid activities of the IHO in the end.

Depending on the levels of issues, different departments or personnel are in charge of solving the problems. For instance, when the problems were related to operational issues, the programme staff and the field team were involved the problem-solving. In the case of global issues, the relevant staff at the HQ managed the problem-solving process. The IHO had a meeting with S1 to find a way to improve their relationship, which facilitated the identification of issues and preventing problems in long-term perspectives. In the operational level, there were very active, collaborative problem-solving activities between them. Whenever the IHO had challenges, they tried to share the difficulties and request assistance such as access to affected areas and security. Supplier S1 also requested assistance from the IHO when they met challenges.

As demonstrated in Table 6-18, these activities regarding SI can be divided into three levels: operational, tactical and strategic perspectives. Overall, in the relationship with S1, there were very extensive SI activities across all three levels. Particularly, there were extensive integration activities in the relationship with S1. S1 provided access to their system for the IHO within limits, which can be interpreted as a highly integrated supplier relationship. In addition, the IHO tended to have more strategic level of integration activities with S1 compared to other suppliers, such as holding a strategic meeting to find a way of improving the relationship and global level of joint programmes. Given this, they may have more real-time exchange of diverse information through a linked IT system and frequent meetings. Further, both sides actively conducted joint problem-solving processes not just at an operational level, and S1 was the only one supplier that invited the IHO for a meeting to discuss their future relationship and to prevent potential problems.

Table 6-18. Three levels of SI of the IHO

Levels	Categories	Representative quotations
Strategic	-Seeking to make a long-term plan and to improve future events collaboratively -Extensive joint project planning processes	I2. "...a couple of field visits with the donor. So, there's a lot of investment in [I2] because they're investing in us as well and he also gives us networks, open access to other networks, so it's important to keep that relationship...so they might see some of the projects that they are the reason for happening." S1. "...mainly our strategy, what's the strategy, what the needs are, what we're working, where the gaps are. Because, it allows them to then keep our programme in the scope of their bigger programme, yeah."
	-Improving relationships in a long-term perspective	S1. "...we had meetings with them last year when they were looking for ways of improving the relationship."
	-Global level of joint programmes and strategies	S1. "...we work with them globally...I mean our director has a regular meeting with [S1]...we work with [S1] in other countries around the world so it's maintaining that global communication and then that's filtered down to ground level. So, we try and maintain the relationship globally." "At a global level it's probably a lot more about advocacy and about where we work etc., etc. So, it's sharing that type of information..."
Tactical	-Identifying issues and disruptions	C1-5. "...during the audit we will make recommendations, or when the audit report is returned to the supplier, there will be recommendations there for the supplier, for them to make improvements within their organisation" S1. "...they often look for feedback and they do ask us to review operational issues and stuff like that, it's not always an open conversation..."
	-Sharing key information about new annual plans and rough forecasting	I1. "So, we just go over what we've done and what the plans are for next year..." I1. "...so I give them a rough indication as to how much we're looking for in a year and when we're likely to be taking it off them. So, they're aware that it's gonna be this much that's going out..."
	-Sharing key information about practical plans and strategies in the field	S1. "...we speak to [S1] and say, this is the need on the ground, this is where we need to set up our food distribution point and then we take it from there and start planning, you know, how we are going to deal with the response."
	-Matching needs on the ground with stock availability	I1&2. "We work with them to say okay, we need these types of items. We don't give them a list like we would do with a supplier. It's more like these are the sorts of things which we need, and they send us a list of what they have available..."
	-Joint needs assessment	S1. "...we are involved in the need's assessment as well at the start and we are also involved in identifying the movement of [conflicts]..."
	-Linked IT system	S1. "...there is some kind of locally, some kind of system of requesting more food supplies, or just confirming a goods received note, and we then log it on our system which is like linked directly to the [S1]'s system..."
	-Joint decision-making processes	S1. "So, we will work together to identify the actual point for distribution."

	-Close cooperation on the ground -Daily operation	C1-5. "We're always communicating all the time..." C1-5. "Responsive, answer queries, support, contractual queries, just be responsive." I1&2. "So, basically we have regular communications – what's happening with stock, what's happening with shipment, what's happening with documentation." S1. "[S1] and our office have meetings literally every week..." S1. "...working with each other to say food is moving to the warehouse on this date, please be prepared. Programme guy will be talking to the programme department to say this is the quantity we need, this is the amount we need, so yes, there will be communication..."
Operational	-Immediate solution to overcome obstacles in the field operation	C1-5. "If there's any difficulties we have to really work with the supplier to help ensure delivery. So if there are any problems or issues we have to work with them to help resolve the issues with the supply chain, shortage of parts, unable to meet the schedule or whatever it may be." C4. "they've got any issues because of difficult products then you really have to work with them to find a solution." S1. "...they'd meet and say okay we need to move our operation to this location...The food parcel is not arriving, the road is no longer safe...so yes, we have regular communications." "we try and say okay, how can you help us with this and they say we will do this for you and you can do this for us. So that is how we help each other."

Source: Developed by the researcher

Overall, the relationship with I2 also encompassed all three levels of SI activities, whereas I1 was focused on the operational and tactical levels of integration. This is because the field visits with I2 were associated with long-term plans considering the future aid programme and long-lasting relationships. However, at the tactical level, there were more integration activities with I1 such as sharing forecasting demands. The IHO and Suppliers I1 and I2 seemed to be attentive and very responsive to the relationships. Hence, they tried to reply to each other promptly, though there is a delay in communication with the in-kind suppliers due to time differences. With I1 and I2, the IHO have used a wider range of communication media and openly discussed any issues with them. Extensive joint problem-solving activities were conducted to optimise the working process for both sides. The IHO proactively shares key information about needs on the ground and sometime attended a field visit for the

future events. Given this, though the SCs of these relationships may not be considered as fully integrated, they can be evaluated as highly integrated.

Lastly, the relationships with the commercial group showed the least integrated activities in this research. The IHO tended to share primarily transactional data for instance purchase orders, product specification, and sample information with their commercial suppliers, while it relatively shared more diverse types of information with the donor type of suppliers. Social aspects of information integration consider the contents of information shared and communicated, whilst technological aspects of information integration focus on the form of information for instance how to share information (Prajogo and Olhager 2012). Information sharing from integrative perspectives means exchanging a strategic level of SC information, not just transactional data such as materials or product orders (Fawcett *et al.* 2007, cited in Prajogo and Olhager 2012, p. 516). The IHO only shared information that is associated to a relevant tender, not forecasting data with the commercial group. Additionally, their SI activities in the tactical level were also very limited, as finding problems and suggesting recommendation through audit usually occurred once during the contract period. One outstanding aspect was that the IHO proactively helped C4 with removing obstacles at the operational level to complete deliveries.

6.4.2. SI typologies

All possible elements extracted from the theoretical reviews about power, trust and commitment paradigms were tested in terms of how they interacted to find a meaningful combination. The degrees of trust and commitment were found the most effective to group the characteristics of SI. As such, the supplier was evaluated in terms of the interaction between trust and commitment that the IHO had towards its key

suppliers. Figure 6-4 presents 2x2 interaction and introduces four typologies about supplier relationships in the humanitarian sector. These four typologies are: (1) potential partnership (high trust × low commitment), (2) win-win integration (high trust × high commitment), (3) contractual relationship (low/moderate trust × low commitment), and (4) supplier-driven relationship (low/moderate trust × high commitment).

Figure 6-4. Trust-commitment matrix in SI

		Commitment	
		Low	High
Trust	High	<p>2. Potential partnership</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A longer-term relationship • Great interests in the IHO and its context • Contractual & competence trust • Great potential to be developed to real partnership 	<p>3. Win-win integration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open atmosphere for exchange of opinions • Balanced power • Mutual commitment • In-depth understandings about the IHO and its context • A short-term sacrifice for a long-lasting relationship • Goodwill trust • Mutual benefits respected
	Low/Moderate	<p>4. Contractual relationship</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimum efforts put • Availability of multiple alternatives • Transaction-oriented activities • Precise monitoring & evaluation • Contractual trust • Treatment as per contract 	<p>5. Supplier-driven relationship</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The IHO's high level of commitment • A lack of alternatives or no substitute • Aid performance led by suppliers • Suppliers' conditions or preferences more valued

Source: Developed by the researcher

Cell 1 - Potential partnership, Supplier C1 belongs to this typology. C1 has been a large and regular supplier in the region for relatively a longer term. Although this was not considered absolutely crucial, their capabilities in terms of in-depth understanding

about what the IHO required and what was needed in the field were highly appreciated in the relationship. In particular, the understanding ability of commercial suppliers was very important for the IHO, as it usually took a time for the commercial suppliers to adapt to the humanitarian context. In addition to this, they have built trust based on their higher competence in operations and practices. The integration activity did not much differ from that of Cell 3 – contractual relationship as basically they were in the same status in that they were bound by the formal contract. Nonetheless, there was a gap in terms of greater possibilities for C1 to improve the relationships in the future based on the IHO's strong trust toward Supplier C1 and C1's great interests in the IHO.

Cell 2 - Win-win integration, this type is a very well-established relationship which maintains steady relationships with a strong bond. Suppliers I1 and I2 are applicable to this typology. All practices and procedures were efficiently built up even without formal agreements. Both the IHO and the suppliers were used to the working processes they developed together. One of interviewees said that *“because the relationship has been going for this long now; we know what they have, and we know this is what they're gonna be providing, so it's not something new.”* Further, there was very comfortable atmosphere that promoted the exchange of opinions between the IHO and the suppliers. These relationships were also characterised by balanced power, goodwill trust and mutual commitment. The IHO put a certain level of effort to maintain the relationships with I1 and I2. Suppliers I1 and I2 also had in-depth understanding of the IHO and endured a short-term sacrifice for the IHO in long-term perspectives when they had operational issues.

Cell 3 - Contractual relationships, the commercial suppliers C2, C3 and C5 are relevant to this typology. These relationships can be legitimated and bound on the strong rules as per agreements. Efforts were put in equally across the suppliers,

following the regulations and guidelines as per contract. As such, these are very contract-based relationships with contract trust. Hence, there must be more precise monitoring and evaluation processes based on the regulations. Further, these suppliers were characterised by availability of multiple alternatives to them in the market.

Cell 4 - Supplier-driven relationship, Suppliers C4 and S1 belong to this typology. In this category, there was a tendency of suppliers-driven relationships, although there is a gap between C4 and S1 in terms of the level of SI activities. The common features of these suppliers were their characteristics of irreplaceability. There is no substitute for S1 in the region and very little alternatives for C4 in the market due to their scarce products or abilities. Given this, it can be assumed that power from scarcity or a lack of alternatives can decide the method of managing the supplier relationships, because this scarcity or irreplaceability can lead to an advantageous position for these suppliers in their relationships with the IHO. Consequently, the IHO tended to be greatly committed to the relationships. The IHO has been cooperating with S1 beyond the agreement. When C4 delayed deliveries or failed to supply the agreed quantity, the IHO allowed more time for this supplier and amended the contract according to the conditions of the supplier. The IHO made greater efforts to make the transaction happen and resolve the issues. Further, both C4 and S1 were more likely to be supplier dominant. In the previous section of power paradigm, C4 was placed in the IHO dominance domain when the donor type of suppliers was included in the comparison. However, in the comparison within the same type of suppliers, the commercial group, C4 was the most inclined to a supplier-dominance tendency among the five key commercial suppliers.

A basic premise of this argument is that the differences in the degrees and levels of power, trust and commitment are not absolute values. They are based on the

comparison among the chosen core suppliers in this study. For instance, the level of trust is overall high and the IHO has had strong bond with its key suppliers. One participant described the relationships with the commercial suppliers as follows: *“our rapport with the suppliers is very good, it’s strong and we trust each other. There’s an element of trust and we eliminate all forms of uncertainties through certain practices...”*

The degrees of power and commitment paradigms are also relative values that come from comparison of eight sub-cases.

6.5. Summary

This chapter developed theoretical elements that were suggested from the exploratory study in Chapter 3 by conducting a theoretical literature review. Based on this further review, the key dimensions and measuring elements of power, trust, commitment and SI were clearly identified. Then, this chapter attempted to investigate the influences of the theoretical paradigms on the supplier relationships of the IHO. Different patterns through the theoretical lenses were found depending on the type of suppliers, attributes each supplier has or the nature of each relationship. Among these core elements, two critical elements, the degrees of trust and commitment, were used to suggest the typology of SI from the humanitarian perspective. The details of these findings will be further discussed in the following chapter.

Chapter 7 Discussion and conclusion

7.1. Discussion

7.1.1. Understanding SI implementation contexts

There were many influential factors in the context surrounding the supplier relationships of the IHO, which were identified through the exploratory interviews. Among them, donor influences, disaster type, regional context, organisational structure particularly were found meaningful in the process of the first-round coding analysis of the main case study. Chapter 5 provided practical and valuable answers to the four research questions regarding the SI implementation contexts.

RQ1. How do the relationships between an IHO and its suppliers operate in a humanitarian context?

The importance of supplier relationships in the humanitarian context was confirmed in Section 5.3.1, and also in Chapter 3. Three distinct reasons were discovered to support this: (a) suppliers' roles are crucial in providing aid assistance; (b) well managed supplier relationships are the key to improve efficiency in operations; and (c) cooperation and information sharing with suppliers are essential to meet the strict requirement of donors that demand a higher level of transparency and accountability.

Regarding the understanding of suppliers and supplier relationships in the humanitarian context, this study highlighted the gap between the commercial concept in SCM and the humanitarian notion, which often are not compatible with each other. The need for conceptualising the term 'supplier' according to the humanitarian perspective already was identified through the expert interviews in Chapter 3.

Particularly, Figure 3-1 simply describes different categorisation of suppliers in the humanitarian sector by adding donor types of suppliers to the traditional concept of suppliers in Section 3.3.2. As such, the scope of suppliers was re-examined according to the humanitarian context and each working process was rigorously explored as per different type of suppliers in Section 5.3.

Section 5.3.3 presents the categorisation of suppliers in the humanitarian context through explanation of the types of the IHO's key suppliers. The key suppliers were basically divided into two types: commercial and non-commercial. Further, the non-commercial type includes in-kind providers and a supranational organisation. The commercial suppliers are regulated by standardised processes and certain procedures. These processes are similar with those in the business sector except that the screening process is stricter than that of the business sector. In addition to this, this research attempted to integrate non-commercial suppliers into the overall concept. Different opinions from this research's view were found from the interviews in terms of defining suppliers. Nonetheless, when closely looking at the working processes with each type of supplier, it cannot be denied that in-kind providers and a supranational organisation provide essential aid products to the IHO.

Also, it is evident that the in-kind providers are different from normal corporate donors and the supranational organisation differs from donor organisations. Hence, a significant part of the descriptive findings was dedicated to understanding the working processes and different characteristics according to each supplier type through the chosen sub-cases. Section 5.3.3.3 explains this in more detail and justifies the broader view about defining suppliers.

There are very few research papers that deal with vertical relationships of HOs and view supplies provided by the donor type of suppliers as a part of the broad SC perspective of HOs. Pazirandeh (2014) investigates buyer-supplier relationships in terms of purchasing power and purchasing strategies in the humanitarian sector, which is, however, restricted in the purchasing aspect.

RQ2. How is the organisational structure of an IHO related to the different type of suppliers?

The organisation structure was also suggested in the exploratory study as one of crucial situational factors. Regarding the organisational structure of the IHO, Section 5.4 presents that the IHO's working structure was adapted depending on the situations and the counterpart supplier. Consequently, the working process of the IHO cannot be identified as one process model, although it tends toward a semi-centralised structure in general and prioritises the field teams and needs on the ground. As such, the working process of the focal IHO indicated a shifting tendency from centralised structure with the commercial group to the decentralised structure with the supranational organisation, and the semi-centralised structure for the in-kind provider as shown in Figure 5-10. In dealing with the commercial suppliers, the IHO generally is affected by the centralised guideline and the integrated ERP system facilitates centralised management. The HQ functions as a coordinator when working with the in-kind suppliers, but without any officially standardised procedures. With the supranational organisation, the working structure is grounded on the decentralised manner that was affected by the localisation strategy of the supranational organisation.

As mentioned, Clarke and Ramalingam (2008) contend that most HOs demonstrate semi-centralised structure with the combination of a diffusing power system and

standardisation of regulations and norms within an organisation. This study also discovered that, overall, the focal IHO tends to have a semi-centralised structure. The HQ of the IHO plays a significant role as an umbrella office and coordinator, while the IHO can be considered as a field-oriented organisation focusing on its support for the local teams. On the other hand, Kunz et al. (2015) assert that the majority of HOs have a decentralised structure, and this style of management can lead to invisible flaws and faults at the field operational level as a decentralised system may not provide standardised guidelines or effective solutions and HOs tend to focus more on their mandate and mission rather than operational issues on the ground. However, this study suggests that the organisational structures of HOs may vary depending on the partner and not necessarily be problematical.

RQ3. How do donors influence the relationships between an IHO and its suppliers?

The characteristics of donors and the challenges incurred in the relationships with donors were explored from the focal IHO's viewpoint in Sections 1.5.1 and 1.5.2. Particularly, the focal IHO was characterised as a donor-driven organisation, whose field programmes relied enormously on institutional donors such as governmental organisations, supranational institutions, etc. with specific requirements about what their donations could be used for. Hence, its projects tend to be influenced by their donors' preference in terms of deciding location or aid products. This can also lead to the conflicts of needs between donors and the field. De Leeuw (2010) emphasises that, dependant on the balance of different type's donors within an HO, decision-making behaviours can vary between organisations. For instance, HOs that are highly sponsored by private non-institutional donors can be more independent because funds are not specifically allocated by donors (De Leeuw 2010). Donors can affect the performance massively since donations are the key financial resource of aid

organisations differently from the private companies (Van Wassenhove 2006). In the same line with these literatures, this research also confirmed that it is challenging for the IHO to meet different needs and requirements of institutional donors.

Further, the type of donor influences was analysed as external pressure by adopting three dimensions of institutional theory as shown Table 5-3: regulative, normative, and cultural-cognitive. Section 5.5.3 shows that there were evidently more regulative and normative pressures on the IHO than cultural-cognitive ones, as described in Figure 5-12. Institutional donors provide the key source for its field programmes of the IHO, it is inevitable for the IHO to accept donors' policies and prioritise donors' standards with great pressures mostly in the types of coercive means or normative means. It is of great significance for HOs to meet the growing needs of donors (Thomas and Kopczak 2005). Although HOs do not pursue profit, funding is still "a crucial issue" (McLachlin *et al.* 2009, p. 1050). Most HOs try to manifest their ability and initiatives to donors and to enhance donor insight toward themselves because they recognise the donor as their important customer (Makepeace et al. 2017). This may be prioritised over the effective aid outcomes (Balcik and Beamon 2008). HOs must be conscious about "donor desires and mission statements", which can put restrictions on the usage of funding, otherwise it can result in losing funds (Larson and McLachlin 2011, p. 318). In the line with these existing literatures, this study also verifies the crucial status of donors for an IHO's aid activities. Further, this study attempts to analyse the methods of donor influences on an IHO through the lenses of institutional theory.

RQ4. Which aspects of context matter depending on where the case is situated, such as disaster type, regional location, etc?

To grasp the fundamental context, there was an attempt to understand the characteristics of the region where the beneficiaries were located, the programmes were actually implemented and the supplies from these chosen suppliers were provided. The region shows very complex characteristics that could not be explained by one type of disasters, as described in Figure 5-13. There are large-scale conflicts in extremely devastating circumstances, which result in unpredictable moves, security challenges, inaccessibility, etc. According to the prevalent categorisation of disasters in Section 2.3.1, the disaster type of the region can, overall, be considered as a man-made, slow-onset disaster type. However, its disaster type was characterised by chronic sudden onset or long-term emergency, which requires the continuous immediate response.

Additionally, the disaster can be categorised as protracted conflicts, that were extremely difficult to cope with. Although this type of disaster demands long-term commitment to responding the long-lasting emergency, there is no room for long-term plans. In terms of a cyclical disaster management model of Safran (2003) in Section 2.3.2, the disaster management phase does not evolve to the recovery phase. The regional situations are not improved to the recovery phase where a long-term development programme can be initiated. The aid activities have, consequently, been focused on meeting the beneficiary's immediate needs on the ground. As explained above, this protracted disaster type does not clearly fit to the prevalent categorisation that is suggested by Van Wassenhove (2006) as it has mixed characteristics. Still, the suitable management techniques are needed (Kovács and Spens 2007) in order to cope with special situations caused by protracted disasters. L'Hermitte *et al.* (2016, p. 174) attempt to define that protracted operations "are longer term and regular humanitarian operations conducted in the recovery phase of a disaster". Further, their research develops the disaster management skills that are specialised in protracted operations.

Nonetheless, there are very few literatures regarding the protracted disaster type and this study will be meaningful in terms of providing more detailed description of this type of disaster.

7.1.2. SI between the IHO and its key suppliers

Theoretical analysis was conducted by adopting power, trust and commitment to investigate the SI patterns of the IHO in Chapter 6. For RQ5, three sub-questions are answered as below.

RQ5. How does an IHO work with its different suppliers from the perspective of SI?

5a. How are the supplier relationships of an IHO influenced by power, trust and commitment?

Prior to the adoption of theoretical elements, a literature review was conducted about three theoretical paradigms in Section 6.2, which provides the theoretical foundations of the in-depth analysis and justification of the chosen elements to analyse these attributes in the supplier relationships of the IHO. This section clearly demonstrates the strong influences of these theoretical elements on such relationships. The relationship types are classified according to the selected elements, namely, power, trust, and commitments as described in Figures 6-1, 6-2, and 6-3.

Section 6.3.1 examines the power relationships between the IHO and its key suppliers from various angles. The relationship type is summarised in Table 6-5, the grounds for the categorisation of the power relationships are illustrated in Table 6-6, and the power sources of the dominant entities are analysed in Table 6-8. The relationships with the commercial suppliers are categorised under IHO dominance, whereas the relationship

with the supranational organisation falls into under supplier dominance. The former results from power sources of the referent and the legal legitimate ones of the IHO, as the IHO has an excellent reputation, and these relationships are bound by contracts that were prepared from the IHO side. However, Supplier C4 is distinct because of the scarcity of its products, which leads to its dominant position in the commercial group. The latter is related to a range of the power sources and irreplaceability of Supplier S1. As such, the scarcity of C4 and S1 influences the degree of commitment that the IHO invests. Uniquely, the relationships with its in-kind suppliers are characterised by a power balance and mutual respect. It is difficult to find a more powerful entity in these relationships. Their trust-based relationships enable a high level of openness and collaboration, which leads to the power balance relationships between the IHO and its in-kind suppliers. As Ireland and Webb (2007) state, the link between power and trust in dyadic relationships, albeit existing in SC relationships, has been ignored by academia.

Regarding the trust paradigm, the degree of trust between the IHO and its key suppliers is summarised in Table 6-9, and the types of trust are categorised in Table 6-10. The IHO has a low level of expectation that Supplier C4 will fully fulfil its obligation as agreed due to the latter's failure to meet the requirements of deliveries. By contrast, the IHO strongly trust in Suppliers C1, I1 and I2. As shown in Table 6-10, the high level of trust about C1 results from the contractual and competence trust types. In the case of Suppliers I1 and I2, the competence and goodwill trust types are observed. The goodwill type of trust in these in-kind suppliers seems related to the strong trust-based relationships as a basis for the power balance relationship.

However, the degree of trust of the IHO in a supplier does not always match the degree of commitment it invests in that relationship. For instance, the IHO tends to exert

considerable effort toward its relationship with C4, which receives a low level of trust; the IHO amends contracts to complete deliveries despite that this supplier has failed to meet the criteria as per their contracts, as shown in Table 6-12. Moreover, the relationships of the IHO with C1 demonstrates a high level of trust, but a low degree of commitment. Therefore, there seems to be more relevance between the elements of power and degree of commitment. The suppliers that indicate a high level of commitment (C4, I1, I2, and S1) share a common characteristic: there are very few alternatives to these suppliers (related to the element of power paradigm, as illustrated in Table 6-7). Hence, it can be assumed that the power element influences commitment in these supplier relationships.

As such, in the main empirical study, the links between the theoretical elements of power, trust and commitment differ from their relationships that were identified from the initial research framework in the exploratory study. The goodwill trust type influences the power balance relationships of the IHO with the in-kind suppliers. Regarding C4 and S1, the power-related elements influence the IHO's commitment level to the relationships. Wu *et al.* (2014, p. 129) assert that "a high level of trust is the basic fundamental to enable the building of a long-term collaborative strategy". This study also suggested that a link starting from trust leads to power balance and commitment. As such, trust can be considered a foundation for further discussion supplier relationships.

5b. How are SCs integrated between an IHO and its key suppliers?

Section 6.4.1 presents the SI activities and practices of each key supplier of the IHO by focusing on four criteria: information sharing, communication behaviour, participation and joint problem-solving. These integration activities and practices are

classified into three levels of SI, namely, operational, tactical and strategic, as shown in Table 6-17. Table 6-14 illustrates that most SI activities with the commercial group tend to be on an operational level of integration practices. In these relationships, basic information is shared, and written communication is preferred. Face-to-face meetings are not held unless they are necessary concerns, such as audit, handing of product samples or conduct of site visits for the tendering process. The commercial suppliers are not involved in the decision-making process. Problem-solving is also related to coping with operational issues that require immediate resolution. However, as previously mentioned, the IHO proactively resolves problems when C4 has a delivery issue.

Table 6-15 demonstrates broad scopes of SI activities between the IHO and the in-kind suppliers. The communication behaviours are not limited to emails or phone calls. The IHO regularly meets the in-kind suppliers and conducted a field visit with Supplier I2. There seems that to be an open, comfortable atmosphere where they can freely discuss various topics, including negative feedback. With this continuous interaction, an efficient working process is established by sharing problems, resolving them and suggesting alternatives. As shown in Table 6-17, the relationships of the IHO with Suppliers I1 and I2 encompass all three levels of integration, namely, operational, tactical and strategic.

Table 6-16 shows rich SI activities in the relationship between the IHO and Supplier S1. Their communication media are extended to frequent meetings, a partnership platform and a shared IT system. Face-to-face meetings are more frequently held with S1 than with the other suppliers. Consequently, the level of information they share ranges from transactional- to strategic-level details. There are active joint decision-making processes between the IHO and S1, unlike the other suppliers. Furthermore,

there is a range of joint problem-solving behaviours across diverse departments at both the operational and global levels. Although the openness of the IHO's conversation with S1 may be less than that with the in-kind suppliers, greater integration across all three levels is observed in this relationship with the widest range of SI practices.

Zhao *et al.* (2011) demonstrate that commitment should be selectively applied, depending on different conditions and contexts. When suppliers are highly influential, an organisation can improve SI by emphasizing relationship commitment. As the IHO is a donor-driven organisation, it tends to invest considerable effort on its relationship with donors. Hence, the IHO has more integrative relationships with the donor type of suppliers. In this case, commitment can play a more critical roles than those in other cases, as SI can be improved through commitment. Zhao *et al.* (2011) show the selective use of relationship commitment to enhance external integration across industry groups. Hence, the identified deep commitment to donor suppliers and this more integration with such suppliers may be natural.

5c. How do power/trust/commitment influence the SI practices of an IHO?

Table 6-14 shows six theoretical elements derived from power, trust and commitment, that were analysed in Section 6.3. Section 6.4.2 suggests four supplier relationship types adapting to the humanitarian context, after exploring the interplay and interaction between six elements that are displayed in Figure 6-4. Among them, the degrees of trust and commitment were found the most effective and were applied in dividing the SI typology of the IHO into four categories: Cell1-potential partnership; Cell 2-win-win integration; Cell 3-contractual relationships; and Cell 4-supplier-driven relationship. Potential partnership in Cell 1 refers to the relationships that can be developed potentially to the strong partnerships based on a high level of trust and

suppliers' in-depth understanding about the focal organisation. Win-win integration in Cell 2 concerns firmly established relationships that are characterised by balanced power, goodwill trust, and mutual commitment. In this relationship, a high level of integration is achieved. Contractual relationships in Cell 3 involve very transaction-oriented relationships based on contract trust. An operational level of integration mostly is observed. Supplier-driven relationships in Cell 4 are characterised by suppliers' irreplaceability grounded on their scarce products or irreplaceable resources. Hence, the integration practices tend to be led by suppliers' stances.

The notion of interplay between power, trust and commitment in SI was first brought to this primary empirical phase by the exploratory studies. Trust, power, and commitment have also been closely associated one another in discussing SC partners across various literature of SC studies (Cao *et al.* 2015). They are independent but can be combined or interacted in a variety of ways. Thorelli (1986) say that the concept of power is the central one of the networks and condition other elements, while Morgan and Hunt (1994) asserted that relationship commitment and trust are the key constructs for cooperative and successful relationships in network. Ireland and Webb (2007) investigate the impact of trust and power on cultural competitiveness in the context of strategic SCs. As such, there are a range of different perspectives about the relationships between these three paradigms. Particularly, trust and commitment are considered as essential factors for being true partners and achieving complete SCM (Spekman *et al.* 1998, p. 56; Lee and Billington 1992). Mohr and Spekman (1994) also emphasise that both trust and the ability to convey a sense of commitment to the relationship are critical to partnership success. In the line with these researches, this study found the degrees of trust and commitment meaningful to group the relationship type between the IHO and its key suppliers.

Morgan and Hunt (1994, p. 24) assert that “as in the organizational context mentioned previously, they also find trust to lead to higher levels of loyalty (i.e., commitment) to the bargaining partner.”. Kwon and Sub (2005) reinforces Morgan and Hunt’s hypothesis illustrating strong relations between the level of relationship commitment and the level of trust. Their research reconfirms the positive influence of trust on the degree of commitment. Through the statistical analysis, Wu *et al.* (2004) prove that the higher level of trust, power, continuity and communication can bring higher relationship commitment of SC partners. However, this research discovers the stronger link between power elements such as the number of alternatives and a degree of commitment, rather than the link between commitment and trust.

Commitment has been considered as the most important factors and determinant factors for supply chain excellence alongside trust and power (Zhao *et al.* 2008; Zhang and Huo 2013). Reflecting on the outcomes displayed in Table 6-14, the suppliers remarked with a high degree of commitment tend to have more integrative relationships with the IHO. As such, commitment cannot be ignored when explaining about SCI in the humanitarian perspective. Particularly, Spekman (1988, p. 77) illustrated mutual commitment between both parties and a balanced power relationship are essential to achieve the level of collaborative relationships. This research also confirms this argument through the relationship type of ‘Win-win integration’ in Cell 2. Suppliers I1 and I2 in Cell 2 are characterised by power symmetry and mutual commitment, which lead to reaching the level of ‘Win-win integration’.

7.2. Contributions

This research sought to provide for humanitarian practitioners and researchers with an extended perspective on the SI implementation in the humanitarian SC context.

From the academic perspective, this research provides unique contributions to the literature on supplier relationships and humanitarian SCM, in spite of the limitations that are discussed in the next section. Firstly, this study has contributed to filling the gap that exists in the humanitarian SCI studies. The findings contribute new evidence to the literature, analysing the patterns of SI practices of the IHO that relates theoretical paradigms. This study provides an opportunity to think about direct and indirect influencing elements of SI in the humanitarian context. This study attempts to explore the aid working processes, an HO' structure and its contexts, which are all complex. There are many factors that should be considered in order to implement SI in the humanitarian area.

As discussed in Chapter 2, in the study of SCM, the focal organisations used to be manufacturers, which means that the SCM studies has been manufacturers-oriented and -focused on. Hence, it was challenging to adopt the SCM concept to a new sector, the humanitarian SCM studies. In this study, the focal organisation is an IHO, and the unit of analysis is dyadic relationships with its key suppliers. This perspective enables to view supply relationships of HOs as a part of the whole process of humanitarian SCM, which leads to deepening and broadening the insights of this area.

This research contributes to the literature by developing and empirically examining theoretical paradigms and SI. The research framework includes power, trust, commitment and SI. Empirical evidence is presented for the dynamic relationships between theoretical attributes and SI dimensions with contextual and organisational

factors and patterns of these in the humanitarian SC context. There are not many frameworks that fully represent the broader scopes of power asymmetry reality in inter-organisational relationships (Cowan *et al.* 2015). Belaya *et al.* (2009) also point out that there are a few scientific studies that adopt power aspects in the context of SC networks. Based on the initial theory about power sources of French and Raven (1959), this research adopted the power sources that have been extended and developed through many other authors (i.e., Johnson *et al.* 1993; Brown *et al.* 1995; Zhao *et al.* 2008). Kwon and Suh (2004, p. 5) assert that “there is a lack of empirical studies that examine the relationship between trust and the ultimate facilitator of supply chain success, commitment.” Organisations are not locked into any one typology and try to change the relationship continuously (Cowan *et al.* 2015). From the humanitarian perspective, Tatham and Kovács (2010) suggest the model of swift trust in hastily formed networks during sudden onset disasters through conceptual research. This study built on their suggestion by applying trust in the relationships between an IHO and their suppliers during protracted crisis through empirical research. From a theoretical perspective, this framework offers a more dynamic and comprehensive view of supplier relationships for researchers in the humanitarian studies. In addition to this theoretical contribution, this study also offers managers a realistic framework to get the most out of diverse supplier relationships.

As discussed in section 2.5.2, there is no such research that investigate SI from the humanitarian perspective. Hence, it is difficult to find a gap in terms of research methodology as there is very few existing research to compare with. Nonetheless, the qualitative approach was suitable to initially study the unexplored subject. Goffin *et al.* (2012, p. 805) say that “how qualitative methods can be applied rigorously to SCM research is a pertinent and important issue.” This research thoroughly explains the

process of linking the philosophical background to research approaches. Section 4.3 demonstrates how the reflective principles of CR is reflected on the research process. Particularly, detailed description is provided for the case study design and the data collection process. Additionally, Chapter 5 precisely describes the contexts and organisational factors revolving the supplier relationships that the IHO has. Hence, in terms of transferability, this research can be useful for future research as this is traceable.

Regarding practical implications, the findings in this research can provide guidelines for practitioners in managing power, developing trust and commitment in SC relationships from the humanitarian perspectives. Particularly, the supplier relationship typology offers a more comprehensive framework for combing divergent theoretical aspects on supplier relationships of IHOs. Ireland and Webb (2007) point out that “high levels of trust and power are not necessary in all relationships”, however, appropriate combination of trust and power depending on different situations improve organisations’ performance. As such, based on the case that is suggested in this study, the optimised patters of SI practices can be developed according to different circumstances.

Regarding the integration levels, supply issues have relatively not been handled in the strategical perspectives compared to other domains such as marketing, finance and manufacturing (Stevens 1989), although fresh research in this area has been carried out by, for example, Mackelprang (2014) and Ralston et al. (2015). Stevens (1989, p. 4) asserts that when the focus of supply chains only lies in the operational level and the strategic level of discussion is excluded, many issues can be brought about such as “imbalance”, missing “exploitable opportunities” and the increasing “impact of the competitive threat”. This framework can provide an opportunity for the humanitarian

practitioners to broaden the perspective about managing supplier relationships from the operational level to the strategic level.

7.3. Limitations

Although this study makes significant contributions to both academia and practice, there are several limitations which open up venues for further research.

This thesis attempts to investigate only the supplier-focus integration, particularly 1st tier supplier from the IHO's side. Hence, the customer-side was not considered in this research and a wider range of suppliers were neglected, although "voice of the beneficiary in SCM, clearly emerge" (Makepeace *et al.* 2017, p. 50). Further, although the inter-organisational relationships start from the dyadic ones, the constraints of time and data availability have made this study to focus on the only one side of the dyad relationships. Particularly, due to confidentiality about the information of suppliers, the key suppliers were not accessed. Hence, the perception about the relationships from the suppliers' perspectives remain unknown in this study. Additionally, the main data was collected only from the HQ. Although the researcher tried to contact the local personnel of the IHO, no replies were received due to extremely busy circumstances in the field. As a result of this, details of the ground level were not included in this research. As such, the generalisability of the results of this research across a broad range of SCM or humanitarian SCM studies are cautioned.

This study has limitations regarding the SCI perspective. Internal integration (II) is considered as a prerequisite and starting point transferring to successful external integration (EI) with suppliers and customers (Zhao *et al.* 2011). However, in this study II was not considered, and, therefore, the results can be different depending on the level of II when this is applied in other research settings. Also, the impact of the

relationships between diverse influencing factors such as power, trust, commitment, and SI on HO's performance has not been explored. Hence, what patterns of SI activities and relationship types are effective in supplier relationship management has not been verified for the humanitarian practitioners.

From the theoretical aspects, in this research trust was used as influencing factors on SI. However, trust can also be a consequence of integrative efforts (Kwon and Suh 2004), which can generate a virtuous circulation among theoretical elements. More multi-directional influences among the theoretical attributes and SI criteria were not investigated in this study. Further, macro levels of perspectives were not included in this study by inviting policy-related interviewees, which could provide broad and in-depth knowledge about the inevitable forces surrounding HOs (Kinra and Kotzab 2008).

This study suffers from methodological limitations that are typical of most single case qualitative studies. The primary empirical data was collected from one single large HO, which has its own specific background and features. This research settings may be a cause for a possible response bias. The findings of this research have to be interpreted taking this limitation into account. The single focal case and its contexts are specified to a certain situation such as location, a large HO, donor-driven structure, a certain disaster type, etc. The effects found in one single types of IHO may be different from other type of HOs as each may be situated in a different context. Consequently, it can be inappropriate to generalize these findings beyond this single case frame.

7.4. Directions for Future research

There are several major directions for future research.

As many prior studies demonstrate, II is thought as a prerequisite to achieve efficient EI (Alfalla-Luque *et al.* 2015, p. 245). During the empirical data collection on the ground, some barriers in internal integration were spotted, which could be a gap for the future studies regarding the relationships between II and EI of HOs. Additionally, it is possible that the impact of integration in a commercial context could be applied in a humanitarian context. However, the objective of this research was not to investigate the transfer of business concepts to the humanitarian field, rather to understand how such concepts might be applied directly. Further research could potentially address integration in this way.

This research relies on the IHO's standpoint only. Hence, future research can apply the proposed research framework from both the IHO's and the suppliers' perspectives concurrently. In addition, the findings reflect specific settings only. To address these inherent limitations, future research on multiple case studies on various forms of HOs would be worth conducting in order to examine structural differences and contextual differences in the implement of SI. It would be worth examining this research framework in the different context and different type of HOs such as self-funding HOs, which are less oriented by donors. Further, comparing organisational structures ranging from decentralised to centralised structures can be dealt in more detail which could be tubulated by collecting data from multiple HOs. This would require substantial additional investigation which lies outside the scope of this research.

From a methodological perspective, various methodological approaches can be adopted to examine humanitarian SCI. This study adopted a single in-depth case study with a qualitative analytic approach in order to look into the patterns between theoretical factors that were extracted from the exploratory study and SI in a humanitarian context. Future studies could potentially be used to verify the

quantitative effects related to these theoretical factors through the use of, for example, surveys of aid organisations.

This study only examined dyadic relationships between an IHO and its key suppliers. To understand the entire SC of IHOs, future studies should examine power, trust and relationship commitment among complex structure of entities including customers (donor and beneficiaries) together. Examination of triadic relationships will reveal more complex dynamic relationships among them.

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Appendices

Appendix 1 - Exploratory Interview Agenda

Academics
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Can you tell me what your formal job title is?2. Could you briefly summarise your main research topic?3. How would you define supply chain integration in the humanitarian context? What does this mean to you?4. How would you describe the relationships between international humanitarian organisations and their suppliers?5. Have you observed any challenges in this relationships?6. Are there any differences between supplier relationships in the humanitarian and business sectors?7. What do you think would be the benefits for international humanitarian organisations from more interaction and collaboration with their suppliers?8. Could you tell me about the capabilities that international humanitarian organisations require for effective humanitarian aid?
Practitioners
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Can you tell me what your formal job title is?2. Could you briefly summarise your main responsibilities?3. What does supply chain integration in the humanitarian context mean to you? And to your organisation?4. How were your suppliers selected?5. Please could you explain the relationship between your organisations and suppliers?6. What does your organisation consider the most important when selecting a supplier?7. Do you perceive that there are differences between supplier relationships in the humanitarian and business sectors?8. Please tell me about your key suppliers. Could you describe in as much detail as possible how your organisation works with the key suppliers?9. What would you say were the most challenging aspects of this process?10. Are there circumstances where your organisation interacts and collaborates more closely with your suppliers?11. What capabilities do you consider the most important for effective humanitarian aid in your organisation?12. Do you measure your suppliers' performance? If so, how?

Appendix 2 – Ethics approval



Cardiff Business School

Ysgol Busnes Caerdydd

Kim, Jihee
Cardiff Business School
Cardiff University

19 June 2018

Dear Jihee,

Ethics Approval Reference: 1617082
Project Title: Supplier Chain Integration in the Humanitarian Sector

I would like to confirm that your project has been granted ethics approval as it has met the review conditions.

Should there be a material change in the methods or circumstances of your project, you would in the first instance need to get in touch with us for re-consideration and further advice on the validity of the approval.

I wish you both the best of luck on the completion of your research project.

Yours sincerely,

Electronic signature via email

Dr. Debbie Foster
Chair of the School Research Ethics Committee
Email: CARBSResearchEthics@cardiff.ac.uk

Appendix 3 - Interview protocol

<p>A. General question</p> <p>A.1. Background on organization, position, job title, working period and responsibilities</p>
<p>Section I . Background inquiry (Top management-i.e. Head/senior managers or relevant personnel)</p>
<p>B. Shortlisting key suppliers</p> <p>B.1. Overall information about suppliers i.e. the number, types of products/services, locations, etc.</p> <p>B.2 Key suppliers</p> <p>B.2.1 Among the suppliers, which are the ones regarded as of key importance?</p> <p>B.2.2 Please tell me why you chose these suppliers as key ones.</p> <p>B.2.3 Could you describe in as much detail as possible each key supplier?</p> <p>B.2.4 Could you tell me about other suppliers that have played an important role in the past, even if they are not regarded as key suppliers? (Why is it important?)</p> <p>B.2.5 Which of these suppliers are most critical to you aid performance?</p>
<p>C. Procurement structure/process</p> <p>C.1 Do local offices have their own procurement and finance system? Or is it usually managed by the central HQ?</p> <p>C.2 Could you explain what products/services are procured in HQ or local offices each?</p> <p>C.3 Selection of suppliers</p> <p>C.3.1 Could you explain the process to select suppliers?</p> <p>C.3.2 Which department/position was involved (i.e. procurement, finance, programme, logistics etc)?</p> <p>C.3.3 What does your organisation consider the most important when selecting a supplier?</p> <p>C.4 How is the procurement process regulation formed?</p>
<p>Section II. Questions for each key supplier (Involved personnel from procurement, logistics, finance, aid programme, etc.)</p>
<p>E. Trust</p> <p>E.1 How reliable is this supplier? (Example, can you think of an occasion when this supplier failed to deliver a satisfactory service?)</p>
<p>F. Power/Dependence/Symmetry</p> <p>F.1 How critical is this supplier in your overall aid management? (if very critical, why?)</p> <p>F.2 How much does the relationship with this supplier affect your aid performance?</p> <p>F.3 How many alternative suppliers do you have for this item?</p> <p>F.4 What are the strengths that this supplier has?</p> <p>F.5 Do you or this supplier have the ability to withdraw from the contract?</p>
<p>G. Commitment</p> <p>G.1 How important is it for your organisation to maintain the relationship with this supplier?</p> <p>G.2 How committed is your organisation the relationship with this supplier?</p> <p>G.3 How much effort goes into maintaining this supplier relationship? (Is it worth?)</p> <p>G.4 What circumstances would cause you to break off the relationship with this supplier?</p>
<p>H. Supplier Integration</p> <p>H.1 Could you describe your contractual arrangements with this supplier? (Length, terms, negotiation)</p> <p>H.2 What information do you exchange with this supplier? (i.e. production plan, inventory level, demand forecast, aid plans, cost information sharing etc)</p> <p>H.3 Do you use any information network?</p> <p>H.4 How do you make an order? Do you have ordering system with this supplier?</p> <p>H.5 How often do you procure through this supplier?</p> <p>H.6 To what extent can/does this supplier participate in the process of procurement/logistics/designing aid programme?</p> <p>H.7 Do you help this supplier to improve their process to better meet your needs? (i.e. technological assistance, financial assistance, training in quality, process improvement etc)</p> <p>H.8 How are any problems addressed with this supplier?</p>
<p>I. Context</p> <p>I.1 Could you explain the context when you have transactions with this supplier? (i.e. disaster/aid type, phase of disaster management, level of emergency, donation/fund, challenges etc)</p>

Appendix 4 - Invitation Letter



Cardiff Business School
Ysgol Busnes Caerdydd

Logistics and Operations Management Section
Cardiff Business School, Aberconway Building
Cardiff University
Cardiff, United Kingdom
CF10 3EU
Email: KimJ14@cardiff.ac.uk

Company address

Dear (name),

I am a third-year PhD student at Cardiff Business School, UK, conducting the academic research on the topic of supply chain integration in the humanitarian context. The main purpose of my research is to investigate the relationships between an international humanitarian organisation and its supplier through the perspectives of supply chain integration. As your organisation has been undertaking international humanitarian aid and disaster relief, I write to enquire whether your organisation would be prepared to participate in my research. This will involve conducting interviews with members of staffs who are involved with supplier relationships, and observation of the workplace. The result from this research will be submitted to the participant organisation and this can benefit the participant organisation by providing suggestions for future supplier relationship management.

To protect the participants' privacy, my research will comply with the highest ethical standards and no interviewee's personal identifiers will be disclosed to any third party. I also confirm that all data and information collected from the participants will be used only for research purpose.

Thank you very much in advance for your support.

Yours sincerely,

(Legible signature)

Jihee Kim

Doctoral Student
Logistics Operations Management Section
Cardiff Business School, Cardiff University

Appendix 5 – Coding matrices

Appendix 5-1. Category: Understanding the IHO, strengths.

No	Subcategories	Codes	Representative quotations
1	Developing its own way of working	An innovative way based on High level of adaptability depending on different events	"See in the emergency team, we have different style from different countries who has signed an agreement to be a part of the emergency response team. So, whenever there is an emergency, who or what is near to that location, or if the person is already in the country – same country where the emergency is – we allocate those staff from here and from there, and they respond to the emergencies. So, that is a big strength. That is the key for responding to the emergency....." (P1). ".....when we are dealing with local – we have a very high percentage of local staff compared to other NGOs.....It makes sense for us to recruit local people because local people have local knowledge, local acceptance, you know, it makes sense" (P8).
		Efficient way of formation in a new country	"So, we got three people from Country A, a couple of people from Country B, a couple of people from Country C.....That included a logistics person, programmes, finance, and essentially – I think maybe one person from HQ – but essentially it was run by the different offices" (P9).
		Trying and testing a new or different way	"It tries and tests, has tried and tested different ways and it has streamlined the process for the best way to do things. But at the same time, it's always looking for new ways to do things....." (P13).
		Unique business model	"I think some of the work that we do with microfinance and things is quite unique and impactful" (P6). ".....the reason is because their business model is a bit different, and their funding structure is also a bit different, but also because we have very good and strong links with the communities..... we have a much higher degree of trust, so that is one of our unique things, and that also links us with our donors who are primarily public" (P7).
2	Localisation ability	In-depth cultural understanding	"Generally, the staff tends to be from that country and has an understanding of the political context and has the language comprehension and things like that which help us to build those links and be active on the ground and liaise with other countries" (P10). "Because we tend to understand the communities, because the staff we get are from our community, we don't get staff from expats who will go there and try and speak the language and will go through everything" (P14). ".....they already understand the dynamics of the local situation, they speak the right dialects, they probably know some of the people already, so they have the right connections. It would be much harder I think for

			people coming from other areas to have that kind of engagement" (P6).
		Sensible approaches to different cultures	".....it's different and requires a different approach, whereas [some organisations] don't really understand that.....they treat them all the same, and they have one approach for everybody, and a lot of the time you have to have a kind of way of doing it that, culturally, the people you're dealing with can relate to" (P7). "we get the staff from the field who talk the language so they can explain to them in their own language, own terms, delivers that.....he's trying to represent us" (P14)
		Robust practices of localisation	"I think it's because of the strength of our local team and our local expertise.....we've always had this unofficial localisation policy, so we've always had local staff, we don't really go for expats apart from very few, maybe one or two in each office....we have always been an organisation that's very focused on local people and employing local people to conduct our operations." (P10). " they have their remote management and lots of Skype calls and coordination between the two. But the people implementing the projects are the ones who were there in [Region X]" (P6). ".....when we are dealing with local – we have a very high percentage of local staff..... Our international staff tends to be a very small amount." (P8).
		Local/field teams-focused	"The role of headquarters should be to support and improve the quality in the field offices." (P9) ".....we have always been an organisation that's very focused on local people and employing local people to conduct our operations.....across the various continents that we work in, you'll find really dedicated local staff, very experienced local staff that have really very specialist, good knowledge of their countries." (P10).
3	Cooperation skills and transparency	Strong cooperation with peer groups through powerful networks	"We supplied to the port, but they distributed on our behalf of [us] to the [certain] areas [where we cannot access to]. But we supplied the food and everything else.....So when they have funding for [certain] areas [where they cannot access to], we'll distribute on their behalf....." (P14) "In countries where we do not have any programme, what we do is we work with other international – you know we are part of different networks." (P8). "Whenever we work, we have to tell people who am I, and what am I doing to make sure that other agencies are aware of what I'm doing so there is no duplication.....For example, you may have a resource that I do not have. I have something that you do not have, and between us we can help each other.....Naturally, as a consequence of those kind of interactions, you will come across people, other agencies, other actors." (P8)

		<p>Close links with local communities</p>	<p>"I think the only strength it's got is the good will which is their ability to engage with communities that are otherwise unreached or unreachable by governments or other agencies.....it's those people who make the connections with the community" (P15). ".....probably the strength of our access and relationships that we can establish with local communities, I think is very good" (P6).</p>
		<p>Working basis of transparency</p>	<p>".....we work with the government agencies, we work with banks in order to come up with really robust processes and really transparent processes" (P10). ".....so I am able to do that on a very transparent basis. So, we have to do that because we are accountable to the people who provide us." (P3). "The main thing is that we're transparent." (P5)</p>

Appendix 5-2. Category: Understanding the IHO, weaknesses.

No	Codes	Representative quotations
1	Little capacity for innovation	<p>"They are what we call tangible items. That's mainly our mode of responding. It's not very effective or efficient" (P7).</p> <p>"So, they do a mixture.....With development, it can require you to, you know, calm thinking, thinking it through, etc., etc. With emergency, we have to run with what we have because if we sit down and think it all through, it's probably too late. So, that's a kind of disadvantage that sometimes it's difficult to think for the 2 things" (P8).</p> <p>".....it means you can't push new things here.....they don't have time to think of any new innovations" (P9).</p> <p>"So the office refused but because our relation with the donor is so important, we didn't wanna say no to him because he will go to someone else and give them the tents. So we had to accept the tents...." (P14).</p> <p>"I think it is really important to do that because so many of the people who work in this building, for instance, have very little to do with the actual face-to-face business with our primary stakeholders." (P15).</p>
2	A lack of centralised management process	<p>"It might have a few people holding relationships at the global level; at the country level, it's completely reliant on national staff.....we don't have the logistics globally to deploy and actually manage things...." (P9)</p> <p>"A lot of them don't travel and they don't go into countries to see what work we're doing. Their facilitating that work and they are absolutely key to it but they don't actually have any knowledge of what we're doing....." (P15).</p>
3	Complicated and unwritten operation processes	<p>".....we kinda have a very complex operations, process. It's not straightforward unfortunately....." (P14)</p> <p>".....they don't have strict guidelines or prohibiting procedures or manuals, there are general guidelines, frameworks, everyone works on frameworks rather than 'this is your guideline this is what you have to do' so there's no clear-cut processes....." (P14)</p>

Appendix 5-3. Category: Grounds of supporting criticality of supplier relationship.

No	Subcategories	Codes	Representative quotations
1	Basic methods in disaster response	To maintain good quality and prices of aid items	"I think to have a good relationship with the supplier is very important because if you have a good relationship, definitely the supplier will give you the good quality, and supplier will give you the good trades as well, you know, prices. So, that is important for us" (P1).
		To achieve on time delivery, right quantity and quality meeting the standard of the IHO	".....certainly being able to have commitments from our suppliers to be able to deliver on time of the quantity that we want, of the quality that we want, of all these things – having a relationship that enables us to do, that is definitely critical because if that bit is not working then the whole rest of the project is delayed or compromised" (P6).
		Fundamental relationships to provide aid items and services	"Well, I mean without the suppliers there's no aid. So, the relationships are obviously super critical..... Without the good relationship, you can't do anything actually" (P9).
2	Improving efficiency of aid performance	To responding to disasters quickly	"I think it's really very important because, well, in emergencies, either if there's already an established supplier relationship it's great..... and we actually have been, over the last couple of years, running this capacity-building project in Asia which is designed to kind of work on establishing local partnerships but also provides guidance on supplier relationships and vendors and having all this in place so that you're better prepared to quickly respond to emergencies when they occur" (P10).
		to avoid inefficiencies of aid performance	"I think it's building the high degree or high level of trust and if it breaks down then you're probably exposing yourself to a lot of inefficiencies. So, yes I think it's very important to have that level of a relationship....." (P12)
		To maximise efficiency and effectiveness of what the IHO has such as limited money and time and help more beneficiaries	"Absolutely critical. I mean, procurement and logistics is like 70%" (P8).
3	Enhancing transparency and sustainability of aid	Increasing standard and demands of information about supply chains in the humanitarian sector	"I think it's very important..... So, usually, I think in the past, we didn't look at every single little contract, every single small supplier who we didn't necessarily have a contract with. But they now wanted to know where every single penny that we spent. So, I think that's something throughout the whole NGO sector that's now become very important....." (P11)

		To prevent from causing political issues and problems on the conflict areas	"It's quite important.....so we need to keep that relationship, so they understand anything that they do outside the world affects us." (P14)
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Appendix 5-4. Category: understanding of in-kind suppliers

No	Subcategories	Codes	Representative quotations
1	Contract type	Voluntary relationships based on no formal contracts	<p>"There's no formal long-term contract, but on a year to year basis – or you know, package to package..... but as far as I know it's year by year or project by project, it's not a long-term MOU that's in place."</p> <p>"They've actually shipped containers where we haven't transferred the shipping cost to them, but because they know they will receive the shipping cost from us".</p> <p>" It's a voluntary thing, yea, but you know, like I said, there's nothing in writing as such, there's no agreement as such.....It's a voluntary thing, yeah. There's no contractual relationship, no".</p> <p>"We don't have that much strong contract with them.....This is different.....Here, this is in-kind, we have to pay only the freight charges".</p>
2		Only handling charges paid by the IHO	<p>".....they offer us several places and we will sponsor these containers to go to [RegionX]".</p> <p>"So they pay for that, and if they put their hand up to say we will cover that – "</p>
3	Unique features	Another type of logistics	<p>".....this is another aspect of logistics, you know, the in-kind."</p> <p>".....any in-kind that we receive from any donors, it's managed and appropriately sent to wherever it is needed most.....And then obviously make sure that the logistics are in place for it to get there in the correct manner".</p>
4		Unrestricted and separate from procurement process	<p>"So, we tend to separate the procurement and the in-kind side of it".</p> <p>"it's not that we're restricted to that supplier, as such, because it's in-kind. So, you know, we open our doors to more or less everyone so there isn't any –"</p> <p>"This is mainly in-kind, so it's strongly towards free of charge."</p> <p>"We don't [do a] stock request form or anything like that. There isn't such a system.....It's slightly different to logistics side of it in the sense that we don't have like a formal kind of thing".</p> <p>".....it's a charity and we're not restricted to them in a sense that it's not exclusivity, that we have to get it from them, and, similarly, they can provide it to anyone else that is needed".</p>
5		Fit to a long-term plan of aid	<p>"But, in disaster situation in-kind really isn't recommended. In-kind is mainly when the relative stability on the ground....."</p>
6		Different from corporate donors	<p>".....corporate donors would be organisations or businesses that specifically are looking for doing some good in that business's name".</p> <p>".....they, from their own wanting to do good, are doing it in their name or in their company's name....."</p>

			"So, we're more of – our biggest focus, probably only focus for in-kind donation, is the in-kind from individuals, so that they start to develop that relationship with [our organisation]".
7		Similarity with business transactions	"When it comes to the shipment companies they deal with them directly, so it's almost seen as like a business transaction which means that both sides can just do things smoothly and just get on with things together".

Appendix 5-5. Category: understanding of supranational organisation

No	Subcategories	Codes	Representative quotations
1	Contract type	Agreement-based projects	".....and all that is documented so that when we do sign the contract, we are paid for all the work that we have done." (P5) "Yeah, I think there's a strategic agreement between [the IHO] and [Supplier S1]" (P9) "So, we're essentially a subcontractor of [Supplier S1] in a sense." (P9)
2		Clear division of roles	"So now, they're responsible for delivering it to our warehouses.....[we] take responsibility of the distribution points and that is the registration of beneficiaries, verification and distributing the food, so those are the three responses. We are no longer responsible for the food arriving, that is the [Supplier S1]'s problem now." (P5) "So, we're essentially a subcontractor of WFP in a sense." (P9)
3		Variable and flexible contents	" But we did a distribution plan and it could be quite short term, if its more cash distributions will take a bit longer and there will be different.....So, it all depends on the scope of the project itself, some could be quite intense, some could be a bit detached.....So, it's all varies on the nature of the project." (P12)
4		At no cost to the IHO	".....so, there is no delay from them, there is no payment something....." (P1) ".....they will pay everything on the process." (P5) "No, they pay us. So, for example, if we wanna do food distribution in [Region Y], [S1] will give us the food, and they'll give us the administrative costs for delivering that food, and they'll give us a few percent for management cost as well. I'm not sure how much is the percentage, but basically that's how it works." (P9)
5	Characteristics	Multiple functions/roles	".....so they give us the food items for the beneficiaries, and we distribute them.....They give us the in-kind donation for everything, whatever they have. They give us and we distribute and they also give us money to distribute that..... they are a donor organisations." (P1) "If WFP has got in-kind donation available for a certain country, they will give us.....It depends on their stock. It depends on the way they want to deliver the non-food items or in-kinds donations on a certain location." (P1). "Because they are able to bring in huge ships of goods and food and they are able to do a lot of coordination. They are able to talk to both parties to try and let the ... to look for humanitarian access....." (P5) ".....they have the ability to coordinate on the ground.....so they are quite a strong actor." (P5)
6		A unique position	"There is no comparison, there is nothing to do with this company.....They have their own way of working, so we cannot compare this with these ones" (P1) "So, the donor is that they just give us some money and make us do the work." (P5)

7		Presence on the ground as an aid actor	<p>"So, with the stages of the countries we work with we're not specifically at a level where we're established enough to work with institutional donors. [Supranational organisation], they usually work on the field with [our] staff on the ground....." (P13)</p> <p>".....yes because they are also present on the ground, so they see the ground realities....." (P13)</p> <p>".....they have the ability to coordinate on the ground, they have the ability to sometimes provide access, they have the ability to talk to both sides to find a solution for peace, so they are quite a strong actor." (P5)</p>
8		Partnerships-based relationships	<p>"So, the donor is that they just give us some money and make us do the work. But if they're a partnership it means we can talk to them – yes they give us money – but we also give our resources, our manpower, our expertise.....it's a partnership, rather than a donor." (P5)</p> <p>"[S1] also have their own distributions but.....they rely on other NGOs because its, you know, they can't be spread all over the country [by themselves] so that's how they do it.....they're not a donor, they're a partner." (P5)</p>

Appendix 5-6. Theme: transition of organisational structure of the IHO

No	Categories	Subcategories	Codes	Representative quotations
1	Overall structure	Centralised aspect	Centralised response to emergencies	"So, within 72 hours we are delivering things on the ground, so those are the strengths. And we have a big team here who can be allocated quickly and who are a part of the emergency team....." (P1)
2		Semi-centralised aspect	Central role of local teams in implementing disaster relief and aid activities with great support from the HQ	".....it is organised in a way that regions and country teams are responsible for programme implementation. So, that means that if there's an emergency in [for instance, Country A] where we have a big team, then it is the country team who is responsible for scaling up to deal with that humanitarian crisis if they feel that they have the capacity and they are placed to be able to do it.....So, what we do is we support them to make the scale-up, or make the response, more effective.....So, the first thing we do is we are linked to a lot of different networks and a lot of different organisations.....Secondly, we have technical knowledge in a bunch of various sectors..... Thirdly, we know how to make the administration and bureaucracy of humanitarian scale-ups work.....[Next], I can deploy staff to go and help the team...." (P7) "I'm working on an insurance project at the minute so that people can be insured against disaster, that kind of stuff. And we're working on a small search team so that we can send extra teams to countries to help them reduce the risk." (P7) "I was sent to [City A] because it's central to all three countries, and based in [City A] I was able to sit in the same office as the local team and also for the regional team and look at how they're planning the response. So, I won't be frontline, but I'll be on the phone or on Skype or meeting with the people who are frontline staff." (P9)
3			Greater investment on local offices and operations	".....we have always been an organisation that's very focused on local people and employing local people to conduct our operations. So we have our HQ here.....but when you look at our country offices, I think that's where our strengths lie..... compared to other organisations, we don't have that much staff at HQ-level and we're very clear in the way that we're set up that we want to work in order to

			support our country offices, so I think we're designed in that way" (P10).
4		Diffuse power of control within the organisation	"So, that's the segregation of duty, and one person is not able to have control of the system." (P4) "Together, basically, so different departments will have.....So, this is to afford things like conflict of interest, to over corruption, so it's not only one person, or two people dealing with it, it will be cross functionality." (P4)
5	Decentralised aspect	Small HQ focusing on supporting field offices	".....at the country level, it's completely reliant on national staff, and if there's a crisis in a new country, or even in a country where we're present but we have limited.....then we don't have the logistics globally to deploy and actually manage things....." (P9) "The role of headquarters should be to support and improve the quality in the field offices.....if you have too many people in headquarters, they start supporting each other and become self-serving headquarters, whereas if you have the balance, it's a lot better actually and a lot less expensive to run projects as well. So, if I was to again compare Islamic Relief, I would say – in terms of cost of operations, it's much lower here than it is in other organisations because our HQ is less." (P9)
6		Bottom-up decision making process	".....once we get instructions from the field office in Country B. They are best placed to tell us what to provide the tender for and advertise and get the process going. It's really to do with them. We don't tell them that you have to procure this, no – it's the other way around." (P2) "But the people here, the beneficiaries, they should have a voice, and we want to take their voice back to the donor and back to the UK population or global population, and then represent them in terms of what they need." (P9)

7	Structure when working with commercial suppliers	Centralised aspects	Procurement manuals providing standard process across all field offices	<p>".....we have got a procurement manual, and that procurement manual provides the process of procurement, so the standard process is there should be....." (P4)</p> <p>"This is head office, headquarters, and we do have a procurement policy based on our global procurement policy....." (P1)</p>
8			Internal integration by using financial manuals through standardised ERP system	<p>".....the finance department, we've got a financial manual which sets all the standards, and we make sure that the same standards are followed, whether here or in the field. We use most of the field offices for the last couple of years now we standardised the software used, it's an online based one". (P4)</p>
9			Approval matrix integrated in ERP system	<p>".....because we use software now, all these approvals are done in the system. So people approve in the system." (P4)</p> <p>"The applicant will submit the request in the system. So when they need to go to the next approval, and he needs also to share all the documents." (P4)</p> <p>"so an approval matrix will show who, in the workflow, who all the purchase is raised, and this project who will take on." (P4)</p> <p>"The finance are like the final gate-checker, and at that stage finance will check not only the budget availability, but they will check everything, they will check all documents are correct, contracts are signed..... then they approve that purchase requisition, and the system automatically makes it the purchase order." (P4)</p> <p>".....a purchase requisition will be raised in the system before it goes to finance. Then it goes in the system to the purchase holder.....when the purchase requisition comes through the system to finance." (P4)</p>

10			Fund being managed through the finance team of the HQ	<p>".....before projects are assigned with donors, [the HQ finance team] will review budgets before they are sent to donors. Once the projects are assigned and contracts are signed with donors, [the HQ finance team] also process fund transfers to field offices.....So, basically, [the HQ finance team] is the link between field offices and donors in terms of financial matters." (P4)</p> <p>"So, it is initiated from field and field logistic will confirm, then it goes to the field programme who will confirm that everything is okay. Once they agree, they will share with the programme team here, [the HQs]. [The HQ programme team] will face purchase requisition, and for finance check, it's basically like a gatekeeper check....." (P4)</p> <p>"So, we sometimes have challenges about being able to transfer money through various complications with, you know, having received the funds from the donor, being able to transfer them to the next place, having things in the right currency.....but sometimes these things can create a delay in our processing, so we're not able to release the money to our supplier which makes it very difficult for the field teams....." (P6)</p>
11			The HQ controls in dealing with international procurement	<p>"If it is international, the whole process will be done the same, but in addition of this local team, the procurement team here will be involved, and the programme team here will be involved. So, it will become a joint field and HQ. The reason why is that you still need the field input the country because they're the ones who will provide the specification, what they want, the criteria basically. The quality, the quantity, the location; all that information will be from their side, and from here we will help them in assistance of publishing this bid online and getting and contacting international companies which we can do deal with" (P4)</p>

12			<p>HQ receiving monthly reports from the field offices</p>	<p>"Monthly, yes. And we can see what is procurement, so, basically, the report will show, right now of the expenditures, you can see staff payment, procurement, normal costs like fuel, rent, electricity, water, things like that. So, you can the breakdown of the costs of what they think for a project. Also, we have in the system upload budgets." (P4) "Headquarters gets all the information afterwards.....The HQ receiving the monthly financial report from the field offices we received all the information that goods has been received, so then we get the information, then we pay them directly from here." (P1)</p>
13			<p>the HQ team strongly liaising with the local office in dealing with the Region X case</p>	<p>".....the main ones HQ does is the project in [a local office], [for the Region X] operations. Most of the supply payment we've done too.....we've got a procurement team locally based in [one of local offices] who liaise with the procurement team in [the HQ]. So, in coordination between the two, suppliers are selected" (P4) "The screening is part of the process.....once we get instructions from the field office in Country D." (P2)</p>
14		<p>Semi-centralised aspects</p>	<p>Local offices following both the global and local standards</p>	<p>"The county director must approve all emergency purchases up to the amount of £100,000.00. For all purchase above this amount the procurement authority must first consult the Procurement department based in the International Headquarters. The country director must then inform the Finance director (International Headquarters) if a decision is made in respect of this." (Internal docs) "we do have a procurement policy based on our global procurement policy, but each and every country, in each and every country they have their own local desktop procedures, desktop policies they follow." (P1)</p>

15			Information collected for the HQ from the local offices	<p>"Headquarters gets all the information afterwards. All these things are happening locally. Our teams, locally, they are dealing with it.....We do it from remotely them." (P1)</p> <p>"And then the team in Region X, when they want to make a payment to the supplier – so, they've done all their agreements and everything, they're responsible for that-.....it comes through to [programme staff], [he/she] set it on our system as to what the item is, what it's for, which budget it's being charged to, which vendor we're paying, what currency it's going in, all of that sort of stuff, so processing the order. We check that the funds are available with what we've already received from our donors to be able to process the payments, and we then pass it to our finance team who then sort of activate that payment to be made to the supplier. " (P6)</p>
16		Decentralised aspects	Robust local procurement in local offices	<p>"So, we have a good process, we have good suppliers, and we are able to ship our goods and service into the affected areas around the world using a very large pool of suppliers locally and from neighbouring countries using several procurement departments which are currently decentralized. Every region has their own procurement. So, that's our strengths....." (P2)</p> <p>".....everyone has their own procurement committee around all the field offices and partner offices. So, by doing that we are very flexible. We are very well-aligned, and we've got a good combination of a team within the panel where we are able to make distinct decisions using specialism....." (P2)</p>

17			Different limits and rules due to different surroundings in each local office	<p>"By themselves, following that because we have got a procurement manual, and that procurement manual provides the process of procurement, so the standard process is there should be, there are, says how much the minimum amount of procurement where you need to do a bid, you need to get quotations from multiple suppliers. In each field office, there's a limit." (P4)</p> <p>"In one country, 500 will be a very small amount.....In some countries, 500 is a significant amount. So, depending on the local context, a standard procurement, a minimum procurement amount will be set so anything that offers that minimum one....." (P4)</p> <p>"So, it will become a joint field and HQ. The reason why is that you still need the field input the country because they're the ones who will provide the specification, what they want, the criteria basically. The quality, the quantity, the location; all that information will be from their side, and from here we will help them in assistance of publishing this bid online and getting and contacting international companies which we can do deal with" (P4).</p>
18	Structure when working with in-kind suppliers	Centralised aspect	HQs controlling the whole in-kind process as a hub	<p>"You [one of fundraising office teams] transfer the money for which I pay for the shipment, I pay for the handling charges, and I pay [Region X] for them to distribute it." (P3)</p> <p>"Yeah, it's in the HQ [to deal with Supplier I2]" (P3)</p>
19			HQs receiving a progress report from the local office	<p>"Not from my side but obviously from the distribution side they send me the report to say.....this is what's been distributed. So, basically they would send me a report with pictures with the number of beneficiaries that it's affected, the hospitals that it's entered into – you know I get all of that reporting from them." (P3)</p> <p>"when we say donor, we are referring to two types: one is the actual physical person who gives us the containers. They wouldn't need the reporting as such, they wouldn't need to know because they know these containers. The reporting would be for the person who is actually gonna pay for the containers....." (P3)</p>
20			Semi-centralised aspect	The HQ playing a role of coordinator

				them, but.....we are using partners to fund for the containers.....(P3)
21		Decentralised aspect	Different departments involving in-kind suppliers management	"Now, if they pay a very small portion, which is the costing from [North America] to [Region X], then they have in their books half a million that they can attribute to themselves to say look, you know, we've raised this much for [Region X]. So, everyone is obviously very interested in doing that – to say we've done this much in fundraising and what have you." (P3) "So, we ask all our fund-raising partners if they can sponsor this in-kind, so if they can pay the delivery fee. Once they agree, [the finance team] invoice and ask them to pay, so we throw the agreement and we ask them to sponsor that.....and when the money comes in, we pay the supplier who will deliver to the field office." (P4)
22			No formal standardised process	"There's no formal long-term contract, but on a year to year basis – or you know, package to package..... but as far as I know it's year by year or project by project, it's not a long-term MOU that's in place." (P13) ".....because it's a charity and we're not restricted to them in a sense that it's not exclusivity, that we have to get it from them, and, similarly, they can provide it to anyone else that is needed. And, we're not paying for the items....." (P3). Yeah, because there's no formality, there's no agreement, there's nothing in place, so it's in our interest to keep the relationship, but it might not be in their interest to do so. (P3)
23	Structure when working with supranational organisation	Semi-centralised aspects	The relationships looked after at the HQ level	"We used to have a global MOU. So, they've moved away from the global MOU now....." (P12) ".....you could say coordinate, manage, response to four country offices at the moment, it's Region Y....." (P5)
24		Decentralised aspects	Agreement made with local offices	".....now they're doing the localised, in country-based agreement. So, each country is supposed to have their own agreement locally..... But we know that we have a good relationship with them and the idea is for them to establish a localised type of agreement for them to operate." (P12) "So, it all varies on the local agreements that they want to do locally, yeah." (P12)

25			Critical role of field offices	<p>".....we are involved in the need's assessment as well at the start and we are also involved in identifying the movement..... this is the need on the ground, this is where we need to set up our food distribution point and then we take it from there and start planning....." (P5)</p> <p>"Then the S1's role will be to get the food from their warehouses to that distribution point where they hand it over to our staff and our staff will take the responsibility of checking everything has arrived and then the beneficiaries will come and we verify who they are and we will distribute the food and then we write a report after." (P5)</p>
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Appendix 5-7. Category: Understanding donor relationships

No	Subcategories	Codes	Representative quotations
1	Characteristics of donor relationships	Major programme funding from institutional donors	"Because the programme funding is mainly to do from the institutions is the ones that fund us....." (P12) ".....predominantly, we run a field with a donor. Donors run 80%-90% of the projects.....They dictate what projects we run." (P14)
2		Donor-driven organisation	"So the model is different in some organisations. Like [the IHO is] donor driven, donor will come and say I have the money. Some of them are field-driven....." (P14) "I think [one of institutional donors] came up with this new concept because this concept is kind of a new breakthrough.....certain NGOs that had certain specialities may have been approached by [this donor organisation] to help run this project." (P11) "Once the projects are assigned and contracts are signed with donors, we also process fund transfers to field offices." (P4)
3		One-sided relationships	".....the donor is that they just give us some money and make us do the work. But if they're a partnership it means we can talk to them – yes they give us money – but we also give our resources, our manpower, our expertise, so that's also, like a partnership where we talk to each other and we say yes we can or no we can't – " (P5) ".....predominantly, we run a field with a donor. Donors run 80%-90% of the projects.....They dictate what projects we run." (P14) ".....all partners or all donors have different ideas of how best to run it and you can't dictate that. You just have to accept that." (P14)
4		Joint working relationships	"They would want to implement a project in [Regions Z] we have a presence on the ground, they don't have a presence, but they've got money which they raised to implement projects there. So, they may come and say we've got some money we want to work with you to implement a project so, that's how that funding would work, or they could come to us and say lets work together....." (P12) "So, it's the whole different types of activities that can be done it doesn't have to be about the funding, although funding is what keeps them sustained, the relationship isn't always about the funding." (P12) "So, what we have done is design the project and then we identify, okay, the organisation A where do they want to implement it, where do we want to implement it and we both sign projects together like that." (P12)
5		No involvement in tendering process	".....it is always for us to select the suppliers, and that always has to come through a tendering process.....So, it's very neutral in that way. We

			couldn't accept a recommendation from a donor." (P6)
6	Challenges-Grounds	A lack of understanding about the field	"So sometimes donors have issues about understanding the problem." (P14) ".....you can't argue with a donor." (P14)
7		Different media environments between the IHO and donors	".....they have their own media caption, so say if something happened in a country, their own country, the donor country and the media is interested in for example, water. So almost every donor wants to send water." (P14)
8		Strong preference for specific regions	"In [Region A], they're able to get funding a lot easier, quicker than in [Region B]. There's not many donors who are willing to spend money in [Region B].....donors are not interested. Mainly because they're not news headlines....." (P14)
9		Relationships grounded on fragile trust	"If I had the trust with you, then there's no time wasting.....So this is just time wasting. And who's paying for that? Field! Because field is waiting." (P14). ".....but they've come back, we agreed I'm not gonna pay you until you spent 50-60%. But it's a procedure, we have to send the invoice." (P14)
10		Lower overhead costs	"Majority of the work we do is donor-based, because we need to ask for money, but we don't take as much money from the donation. We take as little as possible, just to cover our own costs. But we have too many projects that will sustain us and hopefully keep the place running, but we spend more money in the field and....."(P14)
11	Challenges-Outcomes	Conflict of needs between donors and the field	"So sometimes the donors don't understand the needs in the field, which is a major problem. They might have their own strategy, their own media, or their own—." (P14) "So there's all trick way between what the donor needs and what the field needs. There's a fine line. But majority of the time, donor will win." (P14) "So there's a check line, so procurement —all of what the donor needs, everything how the process fits, sometimes rules are broken to keep the donor happy." (P14) "On the long run, we have to keep donors happy. On the short term, might just have to accept losses." (P14) "I'll find someone else if you don't take it, I will find someone else. Usually they will find someone else. Another big organisation will take them, will take the money, take everything." (P14)

12		Difficulties in budget execution	<p>"Sometimes it takes them a long time for the money to be transferred..... The problem with that is that all of this takes time..... So if it doesn't say that in the [agreement], it becomes a problem." (P14)</p> <p>"Now the field has already paid for that and can't cover the costs of procurement and everything else because we paid them money.....and then we have the other issue, trying to speak with the donor. There's a lot of things—" (P14)</p> <p>"So this is just time wasting. And who's paying for that? Field! Because field is waiting. [HQs] discuss with donors, they don't know what's happening." (P14)</p> <p>"But the problem is it's like a spider net, everything's connected to each other. The main one falls, everything's fall around it." (P14)</p>
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Appendix 5-8. Category: institutional pressures from donors

No	Subcategories	Codes	Representative quotations
1	Regulative	Projects assigned with donors	".....before projects are assigned with donors, [the finance team] will review budgets before they are sending to donors" (P4) ".....all our funds are project based, so they're not general donation. So, each project will have specific guidelines, specific requirements which the donor has approved. So, we have to follow those, and there will be a timeline, and what we need, the delivery will be within that timeline." (P4)
2		Donors' own procurement policies enforced	".....about procedures, so they may have their own procurement policies that you need to follow." (P8) "And then a lot of our donor partners came back and said we can't give you funds because we have very strong policies on implementing projects through local partners; we would rather you do this directly." (P11)
3		Institutional donors' rules over the internal procedures	"Where funding is provided by institutional donors this will take preference over the above procedures and sign off levels..... then one must consult the institutional donor for guidance. " (Internal docs) "So there's a check line, so procurement —all of what the donor needs, everything how the process fits, sometimes rules are broken to keep the donor happy." (P14) "For example, [Institution D] requested we need to have a policy on.....sometimes donors will request that you have a set of policies, maybe gender, or child protection.....you just have to follow it, majority we write our own policies because it needs to comply with the government or the laws and also our [social/cultural] etiquette.....there are conditions that basically look after the persons, dignity, health and wellbeing and everything. Applying take it to the donor's point of view.....accept it..... Just to keep the donors happy so, we'll accept it....." (P14) "So [donor] contracts, we have too many versions for donors, some donors would have their own [contract] versions, so you just have to use their copy." (P14)
4		Regulative process handed down to lower level of organisations	"I'm sure donors are expecting this. So, then you also look at other compatibilities looking at if they have similar policies in place. So, for example, we may have child protection policy, we have an anti-bribery policy, we need to make sure they also understand those safeguards that we have. Because when you are partnering with someone, because your money is going through them, they need to know how you work because then you expect them to work the way you work." (P8)

5	Normative	New work role and norms imposed according to changing circumstances	"....it's made accountability and transparency very, very important to everything that we implement. So, chasing everything down the chain.....[One institutional donor] asked us to map out our whole supply chain. So, [the donor] wanted to know where every single penny of the money they were giving us went.....So, I think that's something throughout the whole NGO sector that's now become very important –" (P11)
6		Different work duties and procedures required for each different institutional donor	"There are other institutional donors, [Institution A], they have a [specific] response mechanism; they have their own.....There is [Institution B] or there is [Institution C]. So, these are different donors. Each one of those donors often has its own reporting requirements or, you know, procedures that you need to follow." (P8)
7		Work role of the IHO writing concept notes and projects proposals for donors	".....we have two sorts of needs. Yeah the field, the field basically from country side.....then we have the donor who comes and say I have money for.....After the concept note is reviewed and approved, if it's approved by the owner, okay, then you'll go to project proposal. Okay, so we write a full proposal.....Now once the project proposal and the budget get approved by the donor, then he goes from that to project implementation." (P14) ".....it's not straightforward like, it's not sequential, there's too many feedbacks and too many loops and hoops." (P14)
8		Attention to the external policies in the international standards	".....international perspectives on climate change saying where we stand as an organisation and we have a similar policy for instance on gender; we have been preparing a policy on inclusion and protection – looking outwards – it's a stance, a position that we take –" (P15). ".....you don't have to do tell countries what to do within a policy because the policy itself is what they're doing." (P15) ".....it wasn't a formal policy, but more an account of what we're doing to [a specific policy's] adaptation work..... (P15)
9	Cultural-Cognitive	Sufficient time allowed for genuine acceptance of a new agenda	".....so we take that differentiation from [Transnational organisation A] and we will make our statements about what our position is on those two things,when it comes to our emergency work, for instance, we are looking at the office [of the transnational organisation], and we would be making statements around the sort of areas that they identify." (P15)

Appendix 5-9. Category: contextual features of the affected regions

No	Subcategories	Codes	Representative quotations
1	Regional Characteristics	Big-scale conflicts	".....such as areas in [Region X] where it becomes besieged.....maybe it's even dangerous for them to go to the market because it's a target for the bombings." (P6) "So, for those weeks there'll be lots of bombings, lots of people dying, lots of support needed from humanitarians....." (P9)
2		Extreme devastation	".....so there is a lot of destruction of civilian infrastructure, and that's ongoing, so there's targeted bombings of schools and hospitals and bakeries and food production sites, and water, all those sorts of things." (P6) ".....because in [Region X] they kind of need everything, it doesn't really matter what's in there. So, as long as it's good quality, as long as it's within the date, as long as it's functioning equipment or something like that, then we can find somewhere where it is needed." (P6)
3		Shift locations	".....there are some parts of [Region X] that have been untouched by war in the eight years. There are some parts of [Region X] that were really bad at the beginning but now they're fine because they went through a process of rehabilitation. There are other parts of [Region X] which for the first time are having attacks, or for the first time they are in a new crisis." (P9) ".....especially the situation in a conflict situation, things move, people move, the fighting moves so every week they'd meet and say okay we need to move our operation to this location....." (P5) "The areas of control change very frequently, so which group is in charge of a particular area doesn't stay stable for very long, and so you think maybe you're working in a safe area and then things will happen with who is in charge that means that maybe it's not so easy to work in that area anymore, and we have to shift the project to a different location." (P6)
4		No stability	"This is the challenge of working in a conflict area. You have instability; there is nothing stable.....So, it's difficult to articulate." (P8) ".....but due to the political unrest in the country, sometimes, you know, they are struggling to deliver those goods because there's a lot going on....." (P1) " So, this is about being able to get programmes done within a very difficult security situation but also a very uncertain political situation." (P7) "Once stability starts to show, that's when you can start doing your development work." (P5) ".....you'll see very little activity in terms of long-term development because there is no stability." (P5)

5		Difficult to access	<p>".....and that'll be the same problem in [Region X], too. Money is not the problem; access is the problem." (P7)</p> <p>"In [Region Y], the challenges on the ground are all about access. So, this is about being able to get programmes done within a very difficult security situation but also a very uncertain political situation." (P7)</p> <p>"So, access becomes a major issue, a major challenge." (P8)</p> <p>"..... if we're not able to access the crossing then we can't get the goods. So, we might have everything ready for the project, but if we can't get the items coming in then we can't do anything." (P6)</p>
6		Security challenges	<p>"Security every day is an issue which implies security of our staff, security of the beneficiaries on the projects, security of the goods, so where we have our storage and our warehouses is very important to plan that." (P6)</p> <p>"It's very difficult to maintain contact with the staff, and it's difficult for us to do – " (P6)</p> <p>"The biggest challenge is probably the security because that encompasses all sorts of other things within it because of the lack of security, it makes the transportation of the goods difficult, it makes the staff security difficult, it makes where we can go and who we can help – it has some restrictions on that." (P6)</p> <p>"So, this is about being able to get programmes done within a very difficult security situation....." (P7)</p> <p>"Then there is your security, your safety. Our staff who are delivering, all those partners that we work with, they are putting their life on the line." (P8)</p>
7		Deterioration	<p>".....And this will continue more and more and more, so it's really sad and depressing really....." (P9)</p> <p>".....it gets worse every year.....everything gets worse the longer it goes on." (P6)</p> <p>".....for the last five years we have been working very hard because of the conflict and the situation..... it's been worse." (P5)</p>
8	Disaster type	Man-made disasters	<p>"Well, obviously it's a conflict, and people tell you that of the two types of emergency, the conflict ones tend to be the more challenging of the natural ones." (P8)</p> <p>".....generally, people tend to give more because it's a natural. You know, nobody is to blame.....the access tends to be a lot easier because there are no sensitivities with regards to access.....Because if you are assisting people in a conflict area, you risk losing your life. Yes, it could happen in a natural emergency, but it's less likely to happen." (P8)</p>

9	Ongoing sudden-onset	<p>"So, it's like multiple crises in one [country]. You can't say that what's affecting one location in [RegionX] is representative of another." (P9)</p> <p>"Currently it is a lot of sudden onset, it's a lot of emergency response, because it's just fighting.....Ongoing." (P5)</p> <p>"But that's very specific to ongoing disasters or issues in a country, whereas with [Region X] and [Region Y], it's just conflict mode all the time." (P10)</p> <p>".....in terms of the other areas, it tends to be, we know what our involvement is gonna be and it's gonna be for a specific period." (P10)</p> <p>".....because every situation has its unique components, there are some similarities with Region X in terms of, it's chronic.....I think that the more mature version of this sort of chronic disruption....." (P15)</p>
10	Different disaster management cycle: long-term emergency	<p>".....there hasn't been a period for starting development work, for start rehabilitation, it's just been, fighting.....So, you don't have much time to put efforts into development –" (P5)</p> <p>".....by the time you start to prepare development plans the fighting could move to your locations and then you start again." (P5)</p> <p>"This is an emergency response. [Region Y] is still at the stage where it's responding to an emergency, you'll see very little activity in terms of long-term development because there is no stability." (P5)</p> <p>".....the majority of our efforts is the emergency response." (P5)</p> <p>"[In Region X]..... it's not that much about development, and it is mainly humanitarian work." (P11)</p> <p>".....so it's harder to do the training people – even though the crisis lasted for a long time. You can't really do development aid for long term.....Because people probably won't be as interested in that because their main aim will be to survive....." (P11)</p>
11	Protracted crisis	<p>".....with [Regions X and Y], they're both protracted..... [Regions X and Y] have always been in conflict mode and then there's been, you know, crisis mode....." (P10)</p> <p>".....In [Region X], it's called a protracted crisis because it's been going on for nearly eight years." (P9)</p> <p>"It's what we call a protracted – it's going on for a very long time." (P8)</p> <p>"I mean, definitely a protracted crisis....." (P12)</p>

12		Needs for emergency items	<p>".....it's just been, fighting, people moving, food, shelter, medicine, you know, water, the key emergency responses.....the majority of our efforts is the emergency response." (P5)</p> <p>".....it's just been, fighting, people moving, food, shelter, medicine, you know, water, the key emergency responses.....it's just ongoing." (P5)</p> <p>"So, for example, because of the fighting at the moment in [Region X], we've got an emergency appeal to provide emergency aid care, so food and non-food items, to the displaced populations, and that is a very humanitarian project....." (P11)</p> <p>".....but a lot of them are very humanitarian, so providing food parcels, water, medical kits – very short-term things....." (P11)</p> <p>".....there'll be lots of bombings, lots of people dying, lots of support needed from humanitarians" (P9)</p> <p>".....food, medical items, that's a regular thing." (P6)</p> <p>"But because in [Region X] they kind of need everything, it doesn't really matter what's in there." (P6)</p> <p>"I was told that they needed water and sanitation, they needed medical assistance, they needed NFIs, and possibly food. But, it depends on the context. " (P8)</p> <p>".....so I think in [Region Y] it would probably be food and mainly the food side of things." (P12)</p> <p>".....they will need somewhere to stay, a shelter item, they will need food. And they need some wash, hygiene, they need some NFI item. These are the commonalities." (P8)</p>
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Appendix 7 – List of IHOs in Start Network

Organisation's Name	Details	Mission focus	scales	HQ	Source (website)
Agency for Technical Cooperation and Development (ACTED)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Established in 1993, as the second French humanitarian NGO. - Committed to immediate humanitarian relief to support those in urgent need and protect people's dignity & co-creating longer term development for sustainable growth and fulfilling people's potential. 	Disaster Relief Development	€347m (2020 budget) No. of personnel: 6,200	Paris, France	Homepage: https://www.acted.org
Action Against Hunger	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Established in 1979, as the global humanitarian organisation in France - Led the global fight against hunger in 25 million people across 46 countries. - Saving the lives of children and working with their communities before and after the disaster strikes 	Disaster Relief Development (Food security & livelihoods, Gender equality, Climate resilience)	\$101m (2020 budget) No. of personnel: 7,000	Paris, France	Homepage: https://www.actionagainsthunger.org.uk
ActionAid	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Established in 1972, a global federation working for a world free from poverty and injustice. - Four broad areas: women, politics and economics, land and climate, and emergencies. 	Humanitarian works Emergency	ActionAid revealed that 98% of the UK's FTSE 100 companies use tax havens	Johannesburg, South Africa	Homepage: https://actionaid.org
Age International	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Established in 2012 by HelpAge International - Help older people living in some of the world's poorest places to have improved wellbeing and be treated with dignity. - The network has 154 members in 85 countries. 	Humanitarian works	£13m (2019 budget) No. of personnel: 189(HQ only)	London, UK	Homepage: https://www.ageinternational.org.uk

Catholic Agency for Overseas Development (CAFOD)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Established in 1960, as international development charity and the official aid agency of the Catholic Church in England and Wales. - Help some of the most difficult-to-reach people in Africa, Asia, Latin America, and the Middle East. - Have a member of a global Church network with a presence in 165 countries 	Humanitarian works	£45m (2020 Budget) No. of personnel: 410 (along with more than 6,000 volunteers)	London, UK	Homepage: http://www.cafod.org.uk/
Care International	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Established in 1985, to work with women and girls - Working in 104 countries, supporting 1,349 poverty-fighting projects and humanitarian aid projects, and reaching over 92.3 million people directly and 433.3 million people. 	Humanitarian relief and development support	£55m (2020 Budget) No. of personnel: 110	London, UK	Homepage: http://www.careinternational.org.uk/
Catholic Relief Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Established in 1955, carries out the commitment of the Bishops of the United States to assist the poor and vulnerable overseas - Motivated by the Gospel of Jesus Christ to cherish, preserve and uphold the sacredness and dignity of all human life, foster charity and justice, and embody Catholic social and moral teaching as we act to: Promote human development by responding to major emergencies, fighting disease and poverty, and nurturing peaceful and societies - Working in 114 countries with 1,929 local partners to improve the lives of 159 million people. 	Humanitarian Response	£787m (2020 Budget) No. of personnel: 5,000	Baltimore, Maryland, United States	Homepage: http://www.crs.org/
<i>Christian Aid</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Established in 1955, the official relief and development agency of 41 Christian (Protestant, Catholic and Orthodox) churches in the UK and Ireland, and works to support sustainable development, eradicate poverty, support civil society, and provide disaster relief in South America, the Caribbean, Africa and Asia. 	Disaster relief Development aid	£95.4 m (2019 Budget) No. of personnel: 990 (along with more than 425 volunteers)	London, UK	Homepage: http://www.christianaid.org.uk/

Concern	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Established in 1968, in response to the famine in the breakaway province of Biafra in Nigeria. - 36.9m people reached, in 23 of the world's poorest countries 	Long-term development and disaster relief	£34.5 m (2020 Budget) No. of personnel: 3,900 (along with more than 425 volunteers)	Dublin, Ireland	Homepage: https://www.concern.org.uk/
Doctors of the World	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Established in 1980, an independent humanitarian movement working at home and abroad to empower excluded people to access healthcare. - provides emergency and long-term medical care to the world's most vulnerable people - Area served Worldwide 	Development (medical care, strengthen health systems and address underlying barriers to healthcare)	£135m (2020 Budget) No. of personnel: 3,000	Paris, France	Homepage: www.doctorsoftheworld.org.uk
Dorcas Aid International (DAI)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Established in 1980, a Christian organisation, inspired by the potential that lies within every human being. - Working with vulnerable individuals, the communities around them and wider societal structures to ensure humanitarian programmes, and active in countries in Eastern Europe, the Middle East and Africa. 	Development and Humanitarian disaster relief	£10m (2020 Budget) No. of personnel: 390	Netherlands	Homepage: https://www.dorcas.org/
Humanity and Inclusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Established in 1982, to help disabled and vulnerable people in situations of poverty and exclusion, conflict, and disaster - Implemented more than 160 projects in aid of people affected by the Covid-19 crisis and provided more than 2.2 million people with emergency aid. 	Long-term development and disaster relief	£17m (2020 Budget) No. of personnel: 3,500	Lyon, France	Homepage: https://humanity-inclusion.org.uk/en/index
International Medical Corps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Established in 1982, a global, nonprofit, humanitarian aid organization - Deliver emergency medical and related services to those affected by conflict, disaster and disease, no matter where they are, no matter what the conditions - Works in some 30 countries in Africa, Asia, and the Middle East, providing relief to populations facing war, conflict, natural disaster, famine, and poverty, while also laying the foundation for sustainable development 	Emergency relief and development aid (medical care, strengthen health systems)	£147m (2020 Budget) No. of personnel: 7,200	Los Angeles, US (HQ) Other offices in Washington, D.C., London and Croatia.	Homepage: https://internationalmedicalcorps.org/

Islamic Relief	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Established in 1982, an independent non-governmental organisation (NGO) - Responding to disasters, rebuilding lives, and preparing people in case disaster strikes and transformed the lives of over 120 million people - Providing disaster and emergency response and promote sustainable economic and social development by working with local communities. 	Development and humanitarian disaster/emergency relief	£131m (2019 Budget) No. of personnel: 2,000	Birmingham, UK	Homepage: www.islamic-relief.org.uk
MAG - Mines Advisory Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Established in 1989, a global humanitarian and advocacy organisation that finds, removes, and destroys landmines, cluster munitions and unexploded bombs from places affected by conflict. - Helped over 19 million people in 68 countries in Africa, Asia, Latin America, the Middle East and Europe rebuild their lives and livelihoods after war. 	Development and humanitarian education	£9.75m (2020 Budget) No. of personnel: 403	Manchester, UK	Homepage: http://www.maginternational.org/
Medair	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Established in 1989, an international non-governmental organisation (INGO) whose purpose is to relieve human suffering in some of the world's most remote and devastated places and assist people affected by natural disasters and conflict to recover with dignity through the delivery of quality humanitarian aid - Providing humanitarian services in the following countries: Jordan, Lebanon, Madagascar, Democratic Republic of Congo, South Sudan, Sudan, Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Somalia, Syria, and Yemen 	Humanitarian aid	£90m (2020 Budget) No. of personnel: 1,500	Ecublens, Switzerland	Homepage: www.medair.org
Mercy Corps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Established in 1979, a global humanitarian aid organization, more than 40 countries around the world, over 5,600 team members work side by side with people living through poverty, disaster, violent conflict, and the acute impacts of climate change - Work beyond emergency aid, partnering with local governments, forward-thinking corporations, social entrepreneurs, and people living in fragile communities to develop bold solutions that make lasting change possible 	Development and humanitarian relief	£327m (2020 Budget) No. of personnel: 6,000	Oregon, US	Homepage: https://www.mercycorps.org.uk/

Muslim Aid	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Established in 1985, one of the largest Muslim development and humanitarian organisations in the UK - Strive to ensure that all those suffering from the effects of poverty, natural disaster and war are able to survive and empowered to thrive - Provided Humanitarian / Emergency relief, Sustainable Livelihoods (long-term development programmes), Education, Healthcare 	Development and humanitarian relief	£30m (2020 Budget) No. of personnel: 156	London, UK	Homepage: https://www.muslimaid.org/
Oxfam	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Established in 1942, a British founded confederation of 20 independent charitable organizations focusing on the alleviation of global poverty - Works in 67 countries around the world and with more than 3,500 partner organisations, as well as allies and communities. 	Development and disaster relief	£872m (2019 Budget) No. of personnel: 15,000	Oxford, UK	Homepage: www.oxfam.org.uk
People in Need (PIN)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Established in 1992, a Czech nonprofit, non-governmental organization based in Prague, Czech Republic, that implements humanitarian relief and long-term development projects, educational programs, and human rights programs in crisis regions internationally (As of 2020, PIN operated in 34+ countries) 	Development aid and humanitarian relief	£87m (2020 Budget) No. of personnel: 1,500	Prague, Czech Republic	Homepage: www.peopleinneed.cz
Plan International	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Established in 1937, an independent development and humanitarian organisation that advances children's rights and equality for girls. - Based around 8 core areas: Education, Health, Water and sanitation, Protection, Economic security, Emergencies, Child participation, and Sexual health - Work in more than 50 countries around the world across Africa, Asia and Americas 	Disaster and Risk Management	£800m (2020 Budget) No. of personnel: 8,000	Woking, Surrey, UK	Homepage: www.plan-uk.org
Qatar Charity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Established in 1992, an international NGO and one of the largest humanitarian and development organizations in the world - Providing life-saving assistance to those hit by conflicts, persecution and natural disasters and creating durable solutions for poverty using sustainable development programs in social welfare, water and sanitation, education, nutrition, and economic empowerment - With field offices in 30 countries and implementing partners in 20 others, Qatar Charity reached 29 million people through large scale humanitarian and development projects with a total cost of £1 billion GBP 	humanitarian and development operations	£1b (2020 Budget) No. of personnel: 100	Qatar	Homepage: https://www.qcharity.org/en/qa

Relief International	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Established in 2005, a humanitarian non-profit agency - Provide emergency relief, economic rehabilitation, and development assistance to vulnerable communities worldwide 	Development and humanitarian aid	£44m (2020 Budget) No. of personnel: 7,300	Washington, D.C. and London	Homepage: www.ri.org
Save the Children (Childern)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Established in 1919, an international NGO - Improve the lives of children through better education, health care, and economic opportunities and protects the rights of children - Providing emergency aid in natural disasters, war, and other conflicts - Have 29 national member organisations which works in 120 countries. 	Development	£283m (2020 Budget) No. of personnel: 24,000	London, UK	Homepage: www.savethechildren.org.uk
Solidarites International	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Established in 1980, an international NGO - Assists populations affected by conflicts and violence, epidemics, natural or climate-related disasters and economic collapse - Committed to helping people whose lives, health and security are threatened, by meeting their most vital needs: food, water, shelter, and hygiene - Area served: worldwide (Africa, Asia, and Middle East) 	Development	£3.8m (2019 Budget) No. of personnel: 2,350	Clichy, France	Homepage: www.solidarites.org/en/
Tearfund	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Established in 1968, a Christian charity which partners with churches in more than 50 of the world's poorest countries. - Tackle poverty and injustice through sustainable development, by responding to disasters and challenging injustice. 	Development	£1m (2020 Budget) No. of personnel: 45	Teddington, UK	Homepage: http://www.tearfund.org/
Trocaire	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Established in 1967, the overseas development agency of the Irish Catholic Church and work in partnership with local development and humanitarian actors, to support people and communities to tackle the root causes of poverty, injustice, and violence and to use their own power to create positive and lasting change. 	long-term development projects	£65m (2020 Budget) No. of personnel: 135	Maynooth College, Ireland	Homepage: www.trocaire.org/

War Child	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Established in 1993, a British Charity, by film-makers David Wilson and Bill Leeson. - To reach children as early as possible when conflict breaks out and stay to support them through their recovery - keeping them safe, helping them learn and cope with their experiences, and equipping them with skills for the future. - Work with children affected by war and reached 124,949 children in 2020. 	Development (improve the psychosocial wellbeing of children affected by conflict)	£500,000 (2020 Budget) No. of personnel: 300	UK, the Netherlands, Canada	Homepage: https://www.warchild.org.uk/
Welthungerhilfe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Established in 1962, a non-governmental aid organization, fight against global hunger and for sustainable food security. (This includes promoting site-oriented agriculture, access to clean water, environmentally friendly energy supplies) - Supported more than 14.3 million people through 539 projects in 35 countries 	Development	£280m (2020 Budget) No. of personnel: 135	Bonn, Germany	Homepage: http://www.welthungerhilfe.de/
World Jewish Relief	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Established in 1933, a British Jewish charitable organization. - Supported older people 54,735 in 17 countries (Europe, Asia, Africa) 	Humanitarian Programme	£1m (2020 Budget) No. of personnel: 34	London, UK	Homepage: www.worldjewishrelief.org
World Vision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Established in 1950, an evangelical Christian humanitarian aid, development, and advocacy organization - Helping the vulnerable children, in the most difficult places, overcome poverty and experience fullness of life 	Development & humanitarian aid	£1b (2019 Budget) No. of personnel: 34,000	London, UK	Homepage: www.worldvision.org.uk