The role of organizational culture in the delivery of humanitarian assistance and inter-organizational collaboration

Jamie Antoinette Wilke Corvin
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The Role of Organizational Culture in the Delivery of Humanitarian Assistance and Inter-Organizational Collaboration

by

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A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy
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Keywords: cultural orientation model, haiti, military, ngos, qualitative

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DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to B. Jay Wilke.

My desire to make a difference in this world, my need to provide comfort to a stranger, and my dream to make the world a better place for children and their families stems from my love for you. With every life we touch, a piece of you lives on.
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“We cannot hold a torch to light another's path without brightening our own.”

~ Ben Sweetland

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The Role of Organizational Culture in the Delivery of Humanitarian Assistance and Inter-Organizational Collaboration

Jaime Antoinette Wilke Corvin

ABSTRACT

The international community has seen a dramatic increase in the complexity of aid operations, with increasing numbers of donors participating in humanitarian aid endeavors. Therefore, it is essential to determine factors that contribute to successful aid delivery. In an effort to guide more effective and efficient aid operations, this study investigated organizational culture in three distinct types of humanitarian organizations: (a) the U.S. military, (b) the International Federation of the Red Cross, and (c) a sampling of local and indigenous non-governmental organizations. Being a relatively unexplored area, this study took an exploratory approach, utilizing qualitative methods to analyze humanitarian aid efforts. Organization types were evaluated as individual case studies, consisting of in-depth interviewing, naturalistic observer studies, and reviews of records and reports. The study utilized the Hofstede Cultural Orientation Model as a theoretical framework to systematically compare organizational cultures.

Overall, the study lends support to the general principle that organizational culture plays an important role in the delivery of humanitarian assistance. Differences in group culture emerged and were indicative of the varied cultures of prominent aid organization types. A systematic cross cultural comparison of the three aid delivery types indicate that the basic assumptions and beliefs that guide humanitarian
organizations vary greatly, affecting how organizations act and interact with others. Findings yielded support for collaborative efforts, while also highlighting differences in policy and practice. The study also identified areas of cultural divergence, allowing for a clearer understanding of differing aid delivery methods, organizational decision making, and the affect on collaboration. Findings stress the importance of bridging organizational differences more effectively.

These findings come almost ten years after Hurricane Mitch, countless pledges to humanitarianism and the determination of the need for collaboration. Yet results indicate that the international community continues to grapple with many of the same issues, highlighting the need for better communication, unity of effort, and strengthening of relationships between the military and the NGO community. Findings also suggest the need for further research, changes in policy and practice and a call to action.
CHAPTER I

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Introduction

Disasters are complex events resulting from either war and civil strife or natural phenomena. When disasters occur, multifaceted responses are required. Therefore, to minimize the impact of disasters, environmental, biological, political, and social scientists must come together to understand the complexity of issues surrounding these events and their overall effect on the population. While scientists work to understand the causes of disasters, public health officials and social researchers must focus their efforts on the consequences of disaster, the impact on the health and well-being of the population affected, and methods of reducing vulnerability and enhancing response to disaster situations.

As oceans continue to warm, environmental degradation imposes further threats to the natural environment and tensions increase in war torn areas of the world, the international community is faced with the impending threat of disasters and the consequent complex humanitarian emergencies. Additionally, increasingly dangerous natural environments are further impacted by the decline of political and social infrastructures, leading to a volatile international community with increased reliance on humanitarian relief. Relief agencies that provide humanitarian assistance have been formed in response to the dramatic increase in victims of natural disasters, complex
humanitarian emergencies, civil strife, and the subsequent increase in refugees and
displaced persons worldwide. These organizations include multilateral organizations,
such as those sponsored by the United Nations, government organizations that provided
bilateral aid, and international and local indigenous non-governmental organizations
(NGOs) (Cobey, Flanagin, & Foege, 1993).

This study aimed to assess one aspect of complex humanitarian emergencies, the
delivery of humanitarian assistance. While there are a multitude of organizations
working to provide disaster assistance and reduce suffering, starvation, and death, it is
believed that these organizations are guided by differing organizational cultures. Thus,
this study attempted to understand the values, beliefs, and ideologies that guide
organizations, in an effort to identify and understanding factors impacting aid delivery.

Statement of the Problem

As the face of war changes and the prevalence of natural disasters and complex
humanitarian emergencies increase, the international community is forced to deal with
the victims and the aftermath of such emergencies. Whereas the term complex
humanitarian emergency was uncommon less than two decades ago, the term used to
describe human-made crises and natural disasters that require international response
which includes military elements for civilian safety is almost commonplace today (Noji
& Toole, 1997; United States Institute of Peace, 2000). Complex humanitarian
emergencies (CHE) are delicate situations that require multifaceted responses. Complex
emergencies often juxtapose internal conflict, large-scale displacements of people, mass
famine, and declining economic, political, and social intuitions. In many cases, this is
exacerbated by natural disasters, which typically serve as a catalyst to complex
emergencies (Toole & Waldman, 1993; United States Mission to the United Nations,
2000a).

Although large-scale emergencies existed during the cold war era, response
efforts to such emergencies were often limited. Today, however, the international
community is no longer able to overlook such atrocities. Quoting Burkle (1999, p. 422),
“as existing governments collapse, militaries become increasingly supported by
undisciplined paramilitaries, while insurgents and organized gangs and warlords gain
power; the collapse is usually preceded by worsening corruption, criminalization of
government, and suspension of the rule of law.” This description adequately defines the
situations in Rwanda, Kosovo, Somalia, Haiti, and most recently in Iraq and Afghanistan.
Thus, the resulting demand for international interventions has illuminated a need for
analysis of current activity to inform future endeavors.

Nearly every nation is impacted by natural disasters, and as the scope and
magnitude increase, the need for more efficient and effective aid delivery systems
becomes increasingly apparent. Further, disasters resulting from internal conflict and
international war are increasingly distressing to nations worldwide (Grunewald, 1998).
Today, more than 38 major conflicts exist. Key elements of many of these internal
conflicts include ethnic or social differences (International Crisis Group, 1998). The
famine, violence, displacement and civil unrest that result have led to growing
international concern and the subsequent humanitarian involvement requires multifaceted
responses by the international community to implement emergency response, recovery
and rehabilitation.
As the need for multifaceted responses increase in the face of impending disasters, collaboration becomes essential to humanitarian aid endeavors. To ensure effective and efficient delivery of aid, organizations that provide assistance must be analyzed and their motives, behaviors, and actions must be understood. The way in which an organization reacts to a situation, interacts with other organizations, and is thus effective in its humanitarian efforts, is dependent on a multitude of factors, including organizational culture, the level of collaboration between organizations, and the conditions surrounding interaction. Improving our understanding of the factors that surround aid initiatives and impact success are vital to improving humanitarian efforts.

Objectives

Previous operations such as those in Somalia and Kosovo and the recent increased intensity of natural disasters worldwide have illustrated the importance of effective aid delivery systems. Such operations have also shown the disastrous results when these systems fail. Learning from previous operations becomes essential, as the world anticipates continued crisis in the Middle East, the possibility of famine and drought throughout Africa, and the need for reconstruction and humanitarian assistance in areas affected by natural disasters and complex humanitarian emergencies. The provision of aid and successful recovery are vital to the future of societies affected by disasters, natural or man-made. However, lessons from past operations have taught the world that narrow scope, lack of planning and lack of insight into a recovery plan often leads to failure.
Current initiatives also cite the importance of organizational collaboration in providing humanitarian assistance. Determining the success of these initiatives is imperative. It is likely that the way organizations act and interact is impacted by organizational culture or the pattern of basic assumptions espoused by a group (Schein, 1985, 1992, 1997, 2004). Thus, this study proposed to evaluate the role of organizational culture on the delivery of humanitarian aid. Specific objectives included:

1. To determine the role of organizational culture in humanitarian aid efforts by the U.S. military and humanitarian aid organizations (HAOs) providing assistance to those affected by complex humanitarian emergencies worldwide.
2. To identify and report areas of success, as well as potential barriers to current aid initiatives, in an effort to add to the literature on humanitarian assistance, organizational culture and organizational collaboration.
3. To assess the viability of the collaborative effort model as the primary model for supplying humanitarian assistance during complex humanitarian emergencies through an in-depth analysis of the organizational culture of the U.S. military and HAOs, further determining the impact of organizational culture on organizational collaboration.

Rationale for the Study

With more than 43 million refugees and internally displaced persons existing in the world today, there is an increasing need for relief agencies that provide humanitarian assistance to victims of war, natural disaster and complex humanitarian emergencies worldwide (Toole & Waldman, 1993). Multilateral, bilateral, and international and
indigenous non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have responded to the dramatic increase in civilian war victims, casualties, refugees, and displaced persons as well as the victims of natural disasters. Each organization works to provide effective humanitarian assistance for those most in need. However, while each organization works to provide assistance and reduce suffering within their target population, organizations are driven by differing missions and values, indicative of their organizational culture. Therefore, if the cultures of organizations are in conflict, the potential for effective interaction may be marginalized.

During the past two decades, the international community has seen a dramatic increase in the complexity of aid operations, with increasing numbers of donors participating in humanitarian aid endeavors. As a result, there is a trend toward a collaborative model of aid provision. This trend adds yet another necessary but intricate piece to the already complex issue of providing aid. Thus, determining the role of organizational culture on the delivery of humanitarian assistance and inter-organizational collaboration, as well as the subsequent effects on health, may be helpful in guiding more effective and efficient aid operations.

Organizational culture theory focuses on the shared meanings among organization members and uses culture as a lens through which to interpret and understand organizations, employees, customers, and relationships. Utilizing an organizational culture perspective allowed me to illustrate organizational differences and the impact of those differences on collaboration and provision of aid. Organizational culture theory has great appeal when evaluating complex organizations such as the United States military or vast array of humanitarian assistance organizations. Such a theoretical approach is useful
to the study of aid providers because it guides the researcher in collecting information that can be directly linked to other aid organizations in an effort to improve effectiveness and efficiency of services.

Few articles discuss the organizational culture of either the military or HAOS. Even fewer studies attempt to make comparisons between group cultures in an effort to identify barriers to collaboration and the provision of aid (Rubinstein, 1993, 2003; Tomlinson, 2000). A thorough understanding of the organizational culture of humanitarian aid organizations may be essential in providing effective humanitarian services.

Edgar Schein defines organizational culture as “the deeper level of basic assumptions and beliefs that are learned responses to the group’s problems of survival in its external environment and its problems of internal integration; are shared by members of an organization that operate unconsciously; and that define a basic taken for granted fashion in an organization’s view of itself and its environment” (2001, p.17). Organizational culture includes the values, norms, rites, rituals, symbols, and shared beliefs that make up an organization (Schein, 1985, 1992, 1997, 2004). The values, norms and beliefs shared by an organization create differences in what an organization deems important, in accepted behaviors, and in how business is conducted. Such values and norms tend to differ greatly between organizations. Additionally, organizations develop distinctive sets of emotionalized, commonly held beliefs that drive employees, workers, or volunteers to act a certain way. These ideologies are expressed through symbols, ceremonies, myths, rituals, stories, and rites that collectively make up the
culture of the organization. The core culture of the organization becomes embraced and embodied by those within the organization (Trice, 1993).

There is a current trend toward collaborative relief efforts during complex humanitarian emergencies. It appears that this trend will continue during future initiatives, as the collaborative efforts seen in Somalia and Kosovo have evolved and expanded during current initiatives in Afghanistan and Iraq. Thus, organizational culture plays an important role in the relief effort and organizational culture must be identified and understood for considerations regarding future relief efforts to be made. If the core cultures of collaborative relief organizations are at odds, the organizations themselves, their workers, their work ethic, and their overall ability to elicit aid may be hindered, creating an inefficient and ineffective relief initiative. Understanding organizational culture may prove vital in identifying possible areas of conflict, helping to ensure more successful relief endeavors.

Organizational culture allows for the operationalizing of actions and behaviors of an organization, as well as their subsequent effects. Understanding organizational culture provides insight on the causes of deep-rooted issues within an organization, as well as barriers to interactions with other organizations. Thus, a critical understanding of the organizational culture is beneficial in planning collaborative aid initiatives that are broad in scope and successful in improving the health and well-being of those affected by complex humanitarian emergencies (CHE).
Research Questions

The study hypothesized that organizational culture is a central factor to the provision of humanitarian aid by the U.S. military and Humanitarian Aid Organizations (HAOs). It further hypothesized that organizational culture significantly affects the collaborative efforts of humanitarian aid organizations, whether military or non-military. It was my belief that when organizations possess diverse cultural and organizational backgrounds, differences may cause barriers to communication, interaction and collaboration. As a result, effective humanitarian assistance may be hindered, impeding the overall success of aid initiatives. To provide the optimal level of assistance and efficiently relieve the stress caused by disaster, either natural or manmade, it was my belief that the role of the organizational culture of interacting organizations must be understood and barriers to interaction must be identified. The values of all organizations involved in collaborative humanitarian efforts must be reinforced, allowing for effective collaboration among all organizations involved in these humanitarian endeavors. I hypothesized that interaction would result in complimentary efforts from organizations and promote the most effective means for providing humanitarian assistance and achieving maximum results.

Delimitations

To ensure manageability of the study, a number of delimitations were placed on the study and the sample. Delimitations to the study include the following:
1. The study was delimited to persons who were actively involved in humanitarian aid initiatives through the military or HAOs during the past five years.

2. This study included only participants who had worked in collaboration with or in the same area as other HAOs or the U.S. military during the past five years.

3. The sample of NGOs from this study were local NGOs from Haiti. While local NGOs were either endogenous or exogenous in nature, only Haitian organizations were included in the study.

Definitions of Relevant Terminology

The following terms and definitions are used throughout this dissertation. The operationalization of each of these terms will be discussed in Chapter III. However, they are being introduced here to provide the reader with a basic framework of understanding for commonly used terms.

1. Inter-organizational collaboration: “The process through which parties who see different aspects of a problem can constructively explore their differences and search for solutions that go beyond their own limited vision of what is possible” (Gray, 1989).

2. Organizational culture: “The deeper level of basic assumptions and beliefs that are learned responses to the group’s problems of survival in its external environment and its problems of internal integration” (Schein, 2001, p. 17).
3. Humanitarian Assistance: “Aid to an affected population that seeks, as its primary purpose, to save lives and alleviate suffering of a crisis affected population” (United Nations, 2003, p. 3).

4. Humanitarian Assistance Organization: Organizations that provide humanitarian assistance in an effort to alleviate suffering, starvation, and death resulting from complex emergencies or other crises.

5. Complex Humanitarian Emergency (CHE): “A humanitarian crisis in a country, region or society where there is a total or significant breakdown of authority resulting from internal or external conflict and which requires an international response that goes beyond the mandate or capacity of any single agency and/or the ongoing UN country program” (United Nations, 2003, p. 3).

6. Collaborative Effort Model: A model that supports civil-military collaboration during complex emergencies, including multifaceted responses from a variety of organizations with differing backgrounds.

7. Success (Perceived Success): The belief or conceived notion of a participant that an event accomplished its intended purpose.

8. Barriers (Perceived Barriers): The perception of individual and organizational factors that negatively influence the success of individuals, their organizations and the corresponding mission.
CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is two-fold. First, the chapter will provide an overview of the organizational types that participate in humanitarian emergencies, focusing on the organizational types participating in this study. The chapter will also highlight the literature related to humanitarian assistance, organizational culture and organizational collaboration. Secondly, the chapter will establish a rationale for the study and the need for understanding organizational culture and organizational collaboration. The chapter will also provide the benefit and rationale for the use of organizational culture theory in drawing conclusions regarding the aid delivery process.
Overview: Humanitarian Assistance

The March 2003 *UN Guidelines on the Use of Military And Civilian Defense Assets to Support UN Humanitarian Activities in Complex Emergencies* define humanitarian assistance as “aid to an affected population that seeks, as its primary purpose, to save lives and alleviate suffering of a crisis affected population” (United Nations, 2003, p. 3). Humanitarian interventions are complex initiatives that include saving lives, reducing suffering, and helping victims to return to a self-sustained life (Youri, 2000). Humanitarian assistance must be provided in accordance with the basic humanitarian principles of humanity, impartiality, and neutrality. Other definitions of humanitarian aid focus particularly on “the most vulnerable groups,” consisting of populations centered in developing countries, victims of natural disasters, victims of disasters caused by man, such as wars and conflicts, or victims of situations comparable to either natural or manmade disasters. Definitions also comprise the preparatory activities, which take place before the situation effectively occurs, as well as actions to prevent disaster or comparable exceptional circumstances (Rapport, 1997).

Disasters that require humanitarian aid tend to be either manmade disasters, including war and other armed conflicts or natural disasters. However, in many areas, particularly the developing world, these disasters are irrevocably linked. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) define a complex humanitarian emergency (CHE) as “a humanitarian crisis in a country, region or society where there is a total or significant breakdown of authority resulting from internal or external conflict and which requires an international response that goes beyond the mandate or capacity of any single agency and/or the ongoing UN country program” (Centers for Disease Control and
Prevention, 2003). Although each disaster is different, CHEs share a number of common characteristics including loss of civilian life, mass displacement, political turmoil and civil strife. Often the provision of assistance is dramatically affected by the political situation (CDC, 2003). Additionally, in many cases, the effects of CHEs are further exacerbated by natural disasters such as drought or famine.

The United Nations coined the phrase “Complex Humanitarian Emergency” in 1989, in response to the proliferation of crises that required “system wide responses.” Such emergencies require military, peacekeeping, humanitarian relief, and diplomacy. These situations are complex both in the multi-causal nature of the emergency and the multifaceted response required (Ojaba, Leonardo, & Leonardo, 2002). Complex humanitarian emergencies often lead to the breakdown or destruction of political, economic, social and environmental structures and tend to involve the use of civilians as targets. CHEs often lead to the destruction of social networks and economic systems and often the total failure of the state. This leads to political upheaval, may result in manipulation of supplies for relief and aid, and in many cases environmental destruction occurs. Psychosocial traumas are also greatly linked to CHEs (Ojaba et al., 2002). With such a complex array of issues, the importance of a multifaceted response is increasingly apparent.

As the world is facing an increase in complex humanitarian emergencies, the changing patterns of conflict and the ensuing need for assistance has resulted in significant changes in methods of aid delivery (Toole, 2001). For example, there has been a dramatic increase in types and the mere numbers of organizations working to deliver aid to needy populations. These organizations each bring something different to
the conflict or crisis. They are each supported by varying resource availability, differing levels of experience, and unique organizational structure, all of which may play a role in their patterns of aid delivery and the subsequent results of these efforts.

Humanitarian Assistance Organizations: The Actors

Organizations that are called to provide assistance during complex humanitarian disasters or other humanitarian crises are typically from a variety of backgrounds. Such organizations may be multilateral, bilateral, and international and indigenous non-governmental organizations. Multilateral organizations, also known as multinational organizations, are those organizations that work to fund international or inter-governmental organizations (IGOs) and other non-governmental organizations (NGOs) (Archer, 2003). These organizations are supported by multiple countries and include the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, the World Food Program, the World Bank, UNICEF, and the European Union, to name a few. Bilateral organizations are governmental organizations in a single country that provide assistance to other countries through direct government to government means or through the agencies of the UN or other NGOs (Archer, 2003). For example, the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), and the U.S. Department of State are a few of the North American organizations that provide bilateral aid worldwide.

The Sphere Project (2003) collectively labels organizations that provide humanitarian aid “Humanitarian Assistance Organizations” (HAOs). This is a collective term that encompasses the players involved in complex humanitarian emergencies,
including international or inter-governmental organizations (IGOs), as well as international and indigenous non-governmental humanitarian agencies. International non-governmental organizations include organizations such as the World Health Organization, International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC). Recently, there has also been a proliferation of indigenous non-governmental humanitarian agencies. Such agencies include those that are local to the region or area in conflict.

The different approaches of these organizations to providing humanitarian aid have valued successes. However, each organizational type has also been hindered by severe downfalls. Understanding both the successes and the barriers to success are vital in understanding organizations involved in the aid process, their organizational dynamics, strengths, weaknesses, and modes of interaction. Furthermore, as aid operations increase in complexity and organizations push for increased collaboration between organizations, understanding all facets of the organizations involved becomes imperative. As leaders in humanitarian aid efforts push towards a collaborative model, determining the success of this model on the delivery of humanitarian assistance, as well as the subsequent effects on populations in need, becomes imperative. Therefore, it is important to first understand the basic foundation of organizations involved in humanitarian relief efforts, allowing for insight into more successful collaboration and enhanced provision of aid.

The U.S. Military: Humanitarian Military Interventions

Humanitarian disasters are often the result of conflicts based on human rights violations, including oppression, inequality, discrimination, and poverty. These disasters
exist worldwide and the growing public opinion advocating for the protection of civilians from violence has led to an increase in “humanitarian military interventions” approaches (Youri, 2000). Throughout the world there are areas where fostering security is necessary to provide humanitarian assistance. In such areas, military supported aid is essential. Humanitarian relief consists of activities that include disarmament of former constants in refugee camps, arrest and detainment of those committing war crimes, and the overall maintenance of security in refugee camps, many of which are located close to international boarders (Schenkenberg van Mierop, 2000).

The United States military has a long-standing tradition of providing aid and emergency assistance to the victims of war and disaster throughout the world. It has provided supplies and medical services to thousands of refugees and displaced persons, as well as assistance to the victims of floods, earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, and other natural disasters (Sharp, Yip, & Malone, 1994). U.S. military forces participate in humanitarian relief projects in the United Nations and serve as leaders in providing humanitarian relief worldwide (Sharp, Yip, & Malone, 1994).

A Controversial Topic

Humanitarian military involvement is a controversial topic, with the effectiveness of previous missions often the subject of debate. In the face of such questioning, current government officials believe that to safeguard our national interest, the U.S. military should be involved in humanitarian assistance in an effort to maintain peace, security, and stability throughout the world. Humanitarian assistance has become an important aspect of the United States military, as its role in humanitarian endeavors has increased
dramatically in recent years (Sharp, Yip, & Malone, 1994). Troops, whose primary mission was once regarded as war, are now playing an effective role in providing humanitarian assistance to countries in need. In a 1994 interview, former Joint Chiefs of Staff General John Shalikashvili stated, “Military forces can do a great deal of good because they bring with them an organization and structure that no civilian organization can match” (Szulc, 1994).

Success stories exist, supporting the beliefs of Shalikashvili and others. Following the Persian Gulf War, 1.5 million Kurds fled northern Iraq. Under attack with minimal food, water, shelter, and medical care, approximately 400,000 of these persons became stranded along the Turkey-Iraq boarder. In response, the U.S. began airdropping supplies in an effort known as Operation Provide Comfort. Within three weeks, a safe haven was established and ground assistance, including direct medical assistance, was provided (Skolnick, 1995).

With the ability to provide large-scale logistical requirements, including communication, transportation, engineering, shelter, food, and security, it is apparent that the U.S. military has been a vital force in providing humanitarian aid both at home and abroad. For example, the U.S. military assisted the victims of a cyclone that killed more than 130,000 people in Bangladesh in 1991. The U.S. Marine Corps provided assistance with rescues, water purification, distribution of foods and medical supplies, as well as transport. The military has provided relief in Iraq, Somalia, Haiti, Kosovo, and a number of other countries in recent years (Skolnick, 1995).

More recently, U.S. efforts have again focused on Iraq and Afghanistan. In March 2003, the United States government deployed a multi-agency Disaster Assistance
Response Team (DART) to Iraq. The purpose of this team was to respond to humanitarian needs and begin coordinating an emergency relief effort. Offices were established in Al Basrah, Arbil, Baghdad, and Al Hillah, as well as in Kuwait and Cyprus. Currently, DART members in the region work in coordination with the U.S. Military Civil Affairs personnel and work closely with UN agencies and NGOs operating in the area (USAID, 2003).

Although the military has the resources to accomplish a variety of tasks, the aid that is provided comes under much scrutiny. Examining the role of military forces in humanitarian assistance, it is apparent that the ability of the military to provide assistance is often limited. Not only is the use of military forces as peacekeepers often effective in enhancing peace and providing humanitarian aid, these forces may also be used to fight aggression and oppression in an effort to protect civilians. Thus, threats of the use of force or the actual use of force tend to be the driving factors behind humanitarian military interventions. Therefore, when not combined with other initiatives, the success of humanitarian military interventions tends to be short lived. In some cases, military forces are seen as perpetrators of violence, making humanitarian military interventions dangerous and counterproductive (Youri, 2000).

**Humanitarian Assistance Organizations: Non-military Humanitarian Interventions**

Use of non-military humanitarian interventions is another less precarious method of delivering humanitarian relief. Operations by non-military or non-governmental organizations, including international and indigenous NGOs, are often vital to the sustainability of an area and examples are many. These organizations use food, shelter,
health care, and security as entry points as opposed to the use of political force (Youri, 2000). During 2002-03, CARE International, an international NGO dedicated to improving health in the poorest communities of the world, distributed almost 15,000 metric tons of food to villagers in the Southern Province of Zambia affected by droughts in the area. More than 500,000 people benefited from CARE’s assistance and relief efforts. More than 41,000 families were also supplied with farming supplies and seeds to help alleviate the shortages of maize and other crops lost to the drought. CARE has also begun introducing programs to mitigate the effects of drought and make progress in the recovery effort. These programs include distribution of agriculture supplies and cutting to promote crop diversification, as well as the provision of almost 5,000 goats to replace lost livestock. These supplies will help families buy and grow food (CARE, 2003).

Humanitarian aid organizations worldwide are implementing similar programs to help improve the health and well-being of those facing crisis. These programs have proven successful in saving lives and reducing suffering. Programs use aid, not political conflicts, as a point of entry into crisis situations. The founding principles of humanitarian aid organizations are utilized as a foundation for the provision of aid (Youri, 2000). These principles have proven beneficial in supporting the mission of humanitarian aid organizations and allowing victims on both sides of a conflict to be attended.

In a conference on Civil-Military Cooperation in the Wake of Kosovo, Schenkenberg van Mierop (2000) presented findings on the importance of humanitarian aid being provided by humanitarian organizations. He stressed how the lines between military operation and humanitarian aid were blurred as the military tried to provide aid
while still serving as an active party in the conflict. These same problems do not exist in NGOs. In these organizations, humanitarian aid is based on the following principles: humanity, neutrality, impartiality, and independence. By the nature of the military structure alone, these actions are not possible and the repercussions of such are important (Schenkenberg van Mierop, 2000).

Non-governmental organizations such as the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent have proven effective in providing humanitarian assistance in the most horrendous of conditions. The IFRC provides assistance without any discrimination, as compared to the military, which tends to support one side of a conflict over another due to political involvement (Girod & Gnaedinger, 1996).

Although the IFRC and other international or local indigenous NGOs have proven effective in areas such as Croatia, Bosnia, and other war torn countries, non-military humanitarian aid is not without its difficulties. The large majority of humanitarian needs are found in politically unstable areas, emphasizing the need for military protection. Such was the case on Rwanda when refugees from Zaire and Tanzania arrived in July of 1994. Rwandan leaders, alleged instigators of mass genocide, took the refugee camp hostage. The situation turned out of hand for NGOs and military assistance was necessary (Schenkenberg van Mierop, 2000). In recent years, the need for provision of security to NGOs has been brought to the forefront with the UN bombings and attacks on aid workers in Iraq, Afghanistan, and Sudan.
While humanitarian relief may be comprised of either military or non-military interventions, aid often includes both. Military and non-military organizations alike have effective tools in providing humanitarian aid and bringing relief to countries in need. However, both organizations have barriers to eliciting aid. To be effective in its delivery of aid, humanitarian interventions must be well coordinated, carefully planned, rapid responses, which must use integrated approaches to help promote development (Youri, 2000).

Supplying aid that fosters security, while supporting humanitarian operations, is essential. As the needs of those facing disaster become more complex and the roles of organizations providing aid evolve, the need for discourse between humanitarian agencies becomes more apparent. In 1991, only 20 NGOs were involved in providing humanitarian aid during the Kurdish crisis. That number has dramatically risen, with over 170 NGOs involved in the crisis in Rwanda and the presence of more than 400 NGOs in Haiti when the military arrived in 1994 (Davidson, Hayes, & Landon, 1996). Increasing numbers of HAOs are also working in Iraq, Afghanistan, and other areas currently in crisis. Today, more than 30,000 HAOs are providing aid and assistance to victims of war, natural disaster, and crisis worldwide (Archer, 2003). With such a large population of actors providing aid throughout the world, the need for collaboration becomes increasingly apparent.
What is Collaboration?

Collaboration has become essential to the delivery of humanitarian assistance. However, the definition of collaboration has been widely used and there is much confusion over the actual meaning. This confusion hinders both research and practice (Baggs, 1994). One of the most well-known and popularly cited definitions of collaboration was defined by (K. Thomas, 1976) as the equal concern for the interests of others and one’s self. A number of attributes tend to be associated with collaboration. These include joint ventures, cooperative endeavors, willing participation, shared planning and decision making, shared responsibilities and shared power based on knowledge or expertise (Gardner, 2005; Henneman, Lee, & Cohen, 1995).

Inter-organizational collaboration during the delivery of aid includes those circumstances in which multiple organizations supply aid to a vulnerable population. Gray (1989) defines inter-organizational collaboration as “the process through which parties who see different aspects of a problem can constructively explore their differences and search for solutions that go beyond their own limited vision of what is possible” (p. 5). Defined in such broad terms, this accepted definition of collaboration encompasses both inter-organizational cooperation, defined by Schermerhorn (1975, p.847) as “the presence of deliberate relations between otherwise autonomous organizations for the joint accomplishment of individual operating goals” and coordination, defined by Warren et al. (1974) (as quoted in (Mulford & Rogers, 1983) as “a structure or process of concerted decision making or action wherein the decisions or actions of two or more organizations are made simultaneously in part or in whole with some deliberate degree of adjustment to each other.” For the purpose of discussion in this paper, the broad definition of
collaboration is used to discuss the coordination and cooperation efforts that have and
will continue to play an important role in humanitarian aid endeavors worldwide.

Collaboration involves a synthesis of various perspectives, which enable a clearer
understanding of complex problems that exist (Gardner, 2005). Thus, when collaboration
occurs, many factors are pivotal in the successful delivery. It is likely that organizational
culture is one such factor. Therefore, it can be argued that it is necessary to look at the
interactions of structure, process, outcomes and interpersonal relationships to truly
understand the collaborative process (Gardner, 2005).

Collaborative Efforts

Collaborative efforts and civil-military relations during complex emergencies
have met with mixed results. In Kosovo, for instance, NATO’s humanitarian
engagement was challenged by competing priorities. As a result, the mission of the
military and other humanitarian organizations were blurred. To this end, bilateral
military and political objectives sidelined the United Nations High Commissioner for
Refugees’ mission (Weil, 2001). Furthermore, a lack of authority and a clear hierarchical
structure in Kosovo hindered the success of missions there. In Kosovo, military
operations were not launched by the Security Council and interventions were opposed by
many. At the same time, governments that were active in the military campaign were
funding NGOs to provide humanitarian assistance to the victims. Both victims and
aggressors began to see military forces and humanitarian organizations as a single entity.
Neutral and independent humanitarians were denied access to the victims of war (Davis,
2000). Resulting from lack of authority and poor command structure, a barrier was
created, preventing successful collaboration. Nearly 200 NGOs operated in Kosovo. Coordinating the activities of these organizations proved tedious and was likened by some to “herding cats,” as each organization had a specific area of interest and expertise. Additionally, attempts by the military to control and coordinate the work of NGOs were resented and proper modes of collaboration never reached (Bellamy, 2001).

*Somalia: Successful Collaboration*

Examples of truly successful collaborative efforts are difficult to identify. More often than not, success is mixed with failure. However, valuable lessons may arise from this mix. One such example includes the events that occurred in Somalia between 1992 and 1994 and the lessons learned by all those involved with the situation. The reaction to this disaster has had far-reaching implications in the future of aid initiatives, as well as the collaborative effort model that has gained support. Although a complex and treacherous situation, the events in Somalia, and particularly *Operation Restore Hope*, became a prototype for collaborative initiatives between the military and humanitarian aid organizations. The lessons learned in Somalia have influenced current aid initiatives in response to complex humanitarian emergencies.

The disaster recovery effort that took place in Somalia was greatly affected by a number of elements. These elements are common to many disaster prone or war-torn countries. The starvation, disease, and death witnessed in Somalia were a function of the political tensions that existed at the time. However, it was the famine that brought the situation in Somalia to the forefront in the international aid community. Famine is a shortage of food supplies in an area, often the result of war, destruction or siege (Kates,
1993). Kates (1993) also reported on the existence of famine in areas where food is available, particularly when the availability of food to a large portion of the population, due to purchasing or exchange power or the ability to produce, is diminished. In other cases, increases in the food costs, drops in income, changes in government policy, droughts, floods, pests, and armed conflict can lead to famine (Kates, 1993). During the 1990s, all of the countries that showed evidence of famine also cited conflict as the major cause. Somalia was no different. The crisis in Somalia was the ultimate result of armed conflict, exacerbated by droughts, resulting in famine. In Somalia, aid was provided and available but inaccessible to those most in need, as militia prevented proper distribution of relief supplies. The situation highlighted Somalia as a textbook case of a complex emergency and the efforts that followed further highlighted the need for more effective and efficient delivery of aid to populations undergoing disaster.

The efforts that took place in Somalia were influenced by both prior United Nations and United States efforts in southern Sudan and Iraq. In southern Sudan, officials were able to negotiate routes to provide cross border relief within the zones of conflict. This “corridors of tranquility” technique was used to open the port of Massawa in the Eritrean-Ethiopian conflict. The United States military also used the precedence set during the Kurdish crisis for the direct use of force to provide humanitarian relief operations (Kates, 1993). Relief efforts in Somalia were a direct result of prior efforts and lessons learned. In turn, Somalia set precedence of its own and greatly influenced the future of aid delivery.

The role of the United States in the Somali crisis began in December 1992 when U.S. Marines landed in Mogadishu (Clark & Herbst, 1996). Their purpose was to ensure
delivery of relief supplies to compliment the humanitarian effort of the United Nations (UN) and other HAOs already on the ground in Somalia. The UN’s previous relief effort had proven insufficient. By the time the Marines arrived, Somalia was in a state of chaos. The mayhem, starvation and violence that was occurring combined to create a complex emergency in need of international assistance (Lute, 1998). As a result, the U.S. Marines were deployed for a humanitarian intervention. The request for intervention was brought about by severe drought and civil war resulting in mounting crop failures and the subsequent onset of famine. By 1991, infant mortality rates were as high as 70% in some areas and approximately 1.5 million people, a quarter of the country’s population, were at risk. Another 800,000 had become displaced (Conley, 2002). Somalia was in a desperate state of emergency and international intervention was justified.

In a report to the Carnegie Commission on Preventing Deadly Conflict (1998), Douglas Lute states:

“The UN’s operation is Somalia, largely shaped by the United States, was a shaky start to the unfolding pattern of international responses to complex emergencies in the 1990s. An experienced observer summarized the Somalia operation: ‘...the United Nations was on a binge of humanitarian relief and military foolhardiness, a roller coaster of complex and confused multilateral, unilateral, and quasi-lateral activity, attempting to integrate security, political and economic strategies, suffering the consequences of herky-jerky behavior of the international community, and saving an estimated quarter million lives thorough its humanitarian relief effort.’”
The U.S. government’s response to the crisis was one of the first in a series of post-Cold War attempts to aid in complex emergencies. Understanding the detailed steps to the intervention in Somalia and the attempts at helping the nation recover from crisis and disaster are important in understanding the complexity of the operation, as well as the impact and implications on future aid initiatives. In brief, the operations in Somalia consisted of two extremely complex operations: (1) the United Nations Task Force (UNITAF) and (2) the United Nations Operations in Somalia (UNOSOM II). UNITAF is the phase generally credited for saving hundreds of thousands of starving Somalis. The subsequent UNISOM II phase is most notably remembered for “warlord hunting” and the infamous “Black Hawk Down,” the firefight in Mogadishu, which eventually led to the termination of the United Nations mission (Allen, 1997). Although each phase had differing levels of success, the details leading to their assessments, one a success and one an ultimate failure, hold important lessons for future humanitarian aid endeavors.

On January 23, 1992, the UN Security Council called for an embargo on weapons and military equipment being sent to Somalia. They later agreed to facilitate a cease-fire while promoting positive political ends (L. Martin, 1995). In March of the same year, the UN Security Council called for the deployment of a 500 member security force to assist with humanitarian supply deliveries. In the months following their arrival, the UN forces made little progress in reducing conflict, securing supplies, or moving successfully through the recovery process. On August 15, 1992, President George Bush responded to UN requests to provide military assistance to support emergency humanitarian relief. At this point, U.S. support, known as Operation Provide Relief, was providing logistical support from off the coast of Somalia. A Marine Expeditionary Unit successfully
airlifted more than 28,000 metric tons of relief aid to the Somali people. However, the situation on the ground continued to worsen and pictures portrayed through the U.S. media evoked a cry by the international community to do something (L. Martin, 1995). As a result, increased U.S. military involvement followed.

December 4, 1992, marked the onset of Operation Restore Hope and the deployment of thousands of U.S. troops by President Bush. A United Nations Task Force (UNITAF), consisting of a multinational coalition led by the U.S., provided security for the distribution of relief supplies. UNITAF was to be replaced by a permanent UN peacekeeping force once one could assume responsibilities. Unfortunately, at this point, differences in operation goals between President Bush and the UN Secretary General Boutro-Ghali arose. The U.S. planned on a narrow mission while Boutros-Ghali intended for the United States to stay until the country was stabilized and recovery was successful. Bush refused the Secretary General’s demand for interventions leading to the disarmament and confiscation of weaponry, leaving the matter to the discretion of ground commanders. This issue was never fully resolved and direction was lacking. However, through the work of a United States special envoy, officials were able to negotiate a temporary cease-fire between Somali warlords. Operation Restore Hope was also successful in providing aid and relief to those affected by the famine. Through the operation, thousands of lives were spared, peace was restored in many areas and recovery looked hopeful. Unfortunately, this success was short-lived, as efforts to get fighters to leave Mogadishu resulted in chaos (L. Martin, 1995).

Operations in Somalia were marked by both successes and failures. Some of the key issues that affected the success of Somalia are related directly to the major elements
of recovery and provision of humanitarian assistance. Leadership was, perhaps, one of the greatest hindrances of the Somali conflict. Initially, the crisis was regarded as purely humanitarian in nature. The narrow scope of this view left no consideration to many of the pieces of the complex conflict that manifested. Thus, policy only involved those agencies and departments that dealt with aid and relief (Lute, 1998).

The increasing complexities of emergencies illustrate the need for broad scope and capacity while dealing with such disasters. Thus, involving a coalition of partners is becoming increasingly important (Lute, 1998). Particularly as U.S. government agencies become more involved in complex humanitarian emergencies, the need to interact with NGOs and international organizations seems to increase. In Somalia, one of the first emergencies in which collaboration between military, NGO and government agencies occurred, the success achieved through close coordination among NGOs and the military was highlighted. The short-lived recovery, including restoration of peace, provision of food, restoration of pockets of society, was credited to this collaborative effort (Davidson, Hayes, & Landon, 1996). International contributors can play a major role in the success of the operation and state, international organizations, and non-governmental organizations alike must be involved. The benefits of coalitions go far beyond the benefit of burden sharing (Lute, 1998). The formation of coalitions increases the scope, capacity, and specialization of an operation, further enhancing the capability for success.

During Operation Restore Hope, a “Humanitarian Operations Center” (HOC) was created. The purpose of the HOC was to provide a mechanism for coordination of all parties involved in the relief effort, military and non-governmental alike. This center was combined with a Civil Military Operations Center (CMOC), allowing for a daily
information exchange between all those involved in the relief effort. Through the coordination of this center, humanitarian aid organizations received logistical support, security, and information from the military and other NGOs. In turn, the military was aided by the collaborative effort to enhance efficiency, while economizing efforts (Davidson et al., 1996). The CMOC coordinated efforts including daily security briefings, security convoys, emergency response, technical assistance, and access to critical facilities under military control (Davidson et al., 1996).

Somalia and other aid missions have taught the international community the need for effective and efficient planning. Planning for complex emergencies must become standard protocol for meetings between the U.S. and key allies. This leadership should be used to promote contingency planning among all involved in international response operations, as planning for the possibility of crisis is vital to quick recovery (Lute, 1998). Post disaster mitigation is also vital to the future of disaster prone countries. Mitigation measures, structural or nonstructural, are important in saving lives, preventing suffering, and protecting land and property (Drabek & Hoetmer, 1991). Mitigation measures are increasingly important in areas of recurring disaster such as Somalia and should serve as a vital step in international planning measures.

While the inability of long-term recovery measures may overshadow any success that did exist, it is important to recognize the short-term success of the collaborative aid effort supported throughout Operation Restore Hope. The success of the operation in Somalia was dependent on two key capabilities. First, the U.S. military had an unparalleled ability to transport relief supplies and personnel. With the ability to provide large-scale logistical requirements, including communication, transportation, engineering,
shelter, food and security, mass amounts of supplies could be dropped and important areas could be secured for distribution. The communication and interaction that occurred between the military and HAOs working in the area helped to ensure that the operatives were effective. Secondly, the emphasis on protecting the United Nations Task Force portrayed a clear message not to interfere with the distribution of food to local clan members (Conley, 2002). As a result, U.S. forces were able to restore order and, together with the HAOs operating in and around the area, reduce the effects of famine. For example, in Baidoa, the heart of the famine zone, collaborating aid officials acting through the CMOC were able to provide food, medical assistance, and protection to the population. In a matter of a few short weeks, the situation turned around drastically and the population began to recovery from the effects of disaster. In only a few weeks, death rates, the majority of which were the result of conflict, dropped by 70%. The streets and markets were reopened and food was made available to those in need. Within weeks, the recovery effort showed success and the health of the population was being restored.

The following comment was made by Major General Waldo D. Freeman (1996) regarding the operation in Somalia:

*Operation Restore Hope demonstrated the ability of the (Drabek & Hoetmer, 1991) United States and its partners to achieve military objectives in support of an interaction relief effort and respond to the various politico-military issues inherent with such operations...Restore Hope has become a prototype for humanitarian assistance interventions.*
Unfortunately, the successes of efforts in Somalia were short lived. Today, health indicators show a country not much different from that of 1991 (InterAction, 1999). In such a climate, crisis continues and the country remains in despair, desperate for the full-scale assistance needed to ensure recovery (Burkle, 1999). However, the short-term solution and successes of Operation Restore Hope are important to note. While the underlying cause of crisis, civil strife, was never addressed and thus the recovery phase could never be complete, the implications of Operation Restore Hope have had a tremendous impact on future initiatives. The narrow mission of both the U.S. and UNITAF forces created a band-aid to a much larger problem (Burkle, 1999). As efforts for humanitarian assistance and recovery continue in Iraq and Afghanistan, the lessons provided through the successes and failures of the operations in Somalia, Kosovo, Bosnia, and prior engagements in Iraq are important tools in creating a successful path toward effective collaborative efforts and humanitarian endeavors.

The need for collaboration is clear. Experiences in Iraq during the first Gulf War, Somalia, Rwanda, Haiti, and Kosovo prove that coordination among the military and NGOs can improve the effectiveness of delivery of humanitarian aid during complex crisis (Davidson et al., 1996). Military and NGOs both have a stake in the outcome of humanitarian relief efforts, as well as essential tools to assist in achieving those outcomes. Cooperation between humanitarian agencies and the military can be beneficial, and even crucial. However, current barriers between organizational interactions exist and must be understood to help enhance exchange between humanitarian relief organizations, military and non-military alike.
In his address to the Military/Police Advisers of Permanent and Observer Missions (February 11, 1999, New York), Secretary General for Humanitarian Affairs Sergio Viera de Mello discussed the relationship between peacekeeping and humanitarian aid as problematic. He stated that differences in organizational culture have led humanitarian workers to distrust the military. In turn, military personnel have been critical of what they perceive as a lack of discipline within the humanitarian efforts. He goes on to state “Military forces - like humanitarian agencies - raise certain expectations by their mere presence.” Acknowledging and understanding these expectations must occur for successful collaboration (Vieira de Mello, 1999).

Mechanisms to support collaboration

A variety of structures have evolved to facilitate coordination between organizations that provide humanitarian assistance. However, the mechanisms through which inter-organizational collaboration during the humanitarian aid process exists are often confusing and complex. To provide a foundation and framework for this mechanism, lead agencies have been put into place. Lead agencies are typically under the guidance of the United Nations. Created in 1950, the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugee’s (UNHCR) principal function is to provide for the needs of the world’s refugees and those seeing refuge and fleeing from persecution. The UNHCR is vital in the administration of programs to assist asylum countries in providing food, shelter, and emergency relief to refugees. Upon direction by the UN Secretary General, the UNHCR may act as a lead agency for complex humanitarian emergencies of great magnitude. In order to accomplish its goals, the UNHCR must coordinate efforts of local
governments, UN agencies, and NGOs. The UNHCR collaborates and provides organizational structure and support for multilateral and bilateral aid organizations. For example, the UNHCR collaborates with the UN World Food Program (WFP) to ensure adequate food supplies, with the International Organization for Migration (IOM) to ensure aid in the resettlement of refugees, and with a number of other organizations who provide assistance. The UNHCR also works closely with the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) (United States Mission to the United Nations, 2000b).

OCHA works to enhance the coordination of efforts during disasters and humanitarian actions, in particular those organizations working through the UN system. The major roles of OCHA include developing humanitarian policy, advocating for humanitarian concerns, and coordinating humanitarian responses to complex humanitarian disasters (United States Mission to the United Nations, 2000b). OCHA, through the Consolidated Appeals Process (CAP), appeals for humanitarian assistance on behalf of the entire UN system. Appeals are written through the assistance of all organizations involved.

To further assist NGOs with information exchange and planning during CHEs, a Joint NGO Emergency Preparedness Initiative (JNEPI) is also formed in the field. During a crisis, NGO coordination at the headquarters level is carried out by the International Council of Voluntary Associations (ICVA), Interaction, the Steering Committee for Humanitarian Response (SCHR) and Voice, providing a direct link with OCHA and the all humanitarian assistance organizations involved in the crisis (United States Mission to the United Nations, 2000a).
The hierarchy of roles in a joint operation is often confusing and complex. However, this complexity is a necessity. The need for discourse between humanitarian agencies becomes increasingly apparent as the needs of those facing disaster become more complex and the roles of organizations providing aid evolve. As a result, increased numbers of aid organizations are involved during the CHEs. Collaboration and communication between all organizations is necessary as they work together for the common good of the initiative. Through efforts in Somalia and Kosovo, the importance of international contributors as major factors in the success of the operation has been noted and state, international organizations, and non-governmental organizations alike must be involved. The benefits of collaboration go far beyond the benefit of burden sharing (Lute, 1998). The formation shared through collaborations increases the scope, capacity, and specialization of an operation, further enhancing the capability for success.

The Role of Organizational Culture Theory

The term “culture” is typically reserved for ethnic groups or societies. However, this concept can be applied to other “human collectivities” or groupings, including organizations or professions (G. Hofstede, 1980). While still new to the literature, research on organizational culture actually dates as far back as the 1930s. At that time, the now famous Hawthorne Anthropologic Studies illustrated the relationship between productivity and the physical work environment. However, it wasn’t until the early 1980s that organizational culture began to come to the forefront in business and management (Sleutel, 2000).
While still a relatively new concept, there is increasing evidence that organizational culture plays a pivotal role in organizational outcomes. However, a thorough search of the literature reveals a gap in the literature defining the organizational culture of military and humanitarian aid organizations, as well as the role of organizational culture in the interaction between organizations that provide humanitarian assistance. Thus, in an effort to provide effective humanitarian relief, particularly during times when collaboration is necessary, a thorough understanding of organizational culture theory is essential.

Edgar Schein, author of *Organization Culture and Leadership: A Dynamic View*, defines organizational culture as “the deeper level of basic assumptions and beliefs that are learned responses to the group’s problems of survival in its external environment and its problems of internal integration; are shared by members of an organization that operate unconsciously; and that define a basic ‘taken for granted’ fashion in an organization’s view of itself and its environment” (Schein, 1997, p.6). According to Schein, perceptions, languages, and thought processes evolve over time as organizations deal with challenges, both internal and external (Schien, 1992).

Martha Sleutel (2000) further conceptualizes organizational culture as “normative glue, preserving and strengthening the groups, adhesing its component parts and maintaining its equilibrium.” As part of the glue that binds organizations, organizational culture includes the values, norms, rites, rituals, symbols, and shared beliefs that make up an organization (Champoux, 1996). These values create differences in what an organization deems important, in accepted behaviors, and in how business is conducted (O’Mara et al., 2000). Such values and norms tend to differ greatly between
organizations that provide humanitarian assistance (Cross, 2003; Tomlinson, 2000). Differences between cultures may lead to dissension between the two organizations, thus impeding their ability to interact and provide assistance. Hence, a formal understanding of the organizational culture of groups providing humanitarian assistance may be beneficial in future aid endeavors.

As they evolve, organizations develop distinctive sets of emotionalized, collectively held beliefs that drive employees, workers, or volunteers to act a certain way. Such ideologies, expressed through symbols, ceremonies, myths, rituals, stories, and rites, collectively make up the culture espoused by the organization. The core culture of the organization becomes embraced and embodied by those within the organization (Trice, 1993). An understanding of the culture that guides an organization provides insight into organization’s inner workings and allows for organizational understanding.

Generally speaking, the cultural styles of the military and that of non-governmental humanitarian aid organizations are greatly polarized. For example, control and command are necessary elements of the military. The U.S. military is a tightly disciplined and hierarchical organization. NGOs, on the other hand tend to be structured more horizontally, allowing for more flexibility and independence. NGOs are known for immersing themselves in the local culture and taking on a participatory approach. Gender equity is a major value in the work of NGOs. Although current trends are changing, few women hold positions of power in the military, and gender issues or immersion in culture are not key principles in military involvement (Teagle, 1996).

The military also tends to be much more structured, with self-sufficient units. They can operate large and costly operations. In many countries a stigma is attached to
the military, one that means either “business” or “corruption.” Due to the reliance of donations, NGOs tend to be more conservative in spending and are often viewed as neutral (Teagle, 1996).

Approaches to humanitarian aid tends to differ widely between military and NGOs due, in part, to differences in structure and organizational culture. Military presence tends to be short, upfront, and is limited to establishing stability. Military withdrawal is often linked to political solutions while the role of NGOs tend to extend beyond immediate relief to achieve reconstruction and the re-establishment of civil society (Finch, 2000).

Although the U.S. military and NGOs share a similar commitment to achieving peace and providing humanitarian aid, significant differences exist in their organizational cultures, in their structures, and in their approaches to work. Past experiences of the U.S. military and NGOs in disaster situations have met with mixed results. If values are at odds, and thus, organizational culture is playing a role in the effective delivery of humanitarian aid, a common objective may not be enough to supply that aid.

Measures of Organizational Culture

In the fields of business and management, organizational culture has become recognized for its influence on industry, employees, and the overall bottom line (Smit, 2001). Thus, the literature stresses the relationship between organizational culture and performance. However, due to the complex and difficult nature of measuring cultures and the difficulty in creating instruments that measure performance, few studies have been successful in systematically exploring the relationship that exists between
organizational culture and performance (Smit, 2001). While a number of tools exist to help measure organizational culture, most existing assessment methods are oriented to assess organizational culture descriptively. Such tools provide no “provision for linking cultural patterns with functional results” (Smit, 2001).

Of the tools that do exist, most utilize individual or unique terminology that was designed to analyze a set of cultural dimensions or to fit the researcher’s specific work objectives (Smit, 2001). While each of these tools bears strengths, they are accompanied by weaknesses. Furthermore, inspection of the instruments available find that all constructs are not clearly defined, they vary by instrument and each authors makes subjective selections with little consensus among authors and their work (G. Hofstede, 1980). There is also a lack of uniformity in the constructs measured. Lack of uniformity creates a barrier to the systematic analysis of organizational culture and the content validity of measures appears low.

For the purpose of this study, a number of tools to measure organizational culture were reviewed and critiqued for strengths and weaknesses in measuring the organizational culture of organizations that provide humanitarian assistance. A review of instruments to measure organizational culture illuminates a number of similarities between measures. The most prominent measures in the field today tend to all have categories that serve to measure organizational adaptation, instrumental issues such as goal attainment or satisfaction of needs, integration of organizational members, and expressive issues such as values and beliefs, commitment, motivation, symbols, expression of emotions and language (Smit, 2001).
One of the pioneers in the field, Gert Hofstede utilized similar categories to measure national and organizational cultures. Hofstede (1980) identified cultural value dimensions to serve as a tool for analyzing organizations. Through his self-titled Hofstede Cultural Orientation Model, he focuses on the well-known values of individualism, power distance, uncertainty avoidance, and masculinity to analyze cross-cultural differences in organizations. Research conducted by Hofstede links management and organizational practices with the underlying values and assumptions. The dimensions are then utilized to illuminate similarities and differences in management practices (Denison, 2001). Hofstede’s approach is widely accepted in the field of international business. The comparative approach utilized in the model is a viable tool in comparing and assessing culture and has been noted to be particularly valuable in motivating organizational change (Denison, 2001). Thus, the Hofstede Cultural Orientation model appears a viable choice to compare and assess the culture of organizations that provide humanitarian assistance, to understand organizational interaction and collaboration and, if necessary, to influence organizational change.

Hofstede (1980) defines cultural value dimensions as follows:

- **Power Distance (PD)** – “The degree of inequality among people that the populace of a country considers as normal” (Harzing & Hofstede, 1996).
- **Masculinity-Femininity (MF)** – “The degree to which values like assertiveness, performance, success, and competition, which in nearly all societies are associated with the role of men, prevail over values like the quality of life, maintaining warm personal relationships, service, care for the
weak, and solidarity, which in nearly all societies are more associated with the role of women” (Harzing & Hofstede, 1996, p. 304).

- Uncertainty Avoidance (AC) – “The degree to which people of a country prefer structured over unstructured situations. Structured situations are those in which there are clear rules as to how one should behave” (Harzing & Hofstede, 1996, p. 305).

- Individualism-Collectivism (IC) – “Whether one’s identity is defined by personal choices and achievements or by the character of the collective groups to which one is more or less permanently attached” (O'Mara, Heacox, Gwynne, & Smillie, 2000; Smith & Bond, 1993)

These features can be used to study the influence of cultural differences in inter-group effectiveness and may be applied to organizations. Further studies conducted by Erez (1994) illustrated the importance of creating a scale through which to analyze components of the Hofstede Model. These changes became integrated into the Hofstede’s Cultural Orientation Model, allowing of the determination of differences in organizational cultures as follows:

- Power Distance (PD)
  - *High PD* - Associated with high levels of hierarchy, paternalistic managements, differences in status among employees and large salary gaps.
  - *Low PD* - Associated with an organization that tends to be more vertical, has little differences between salaries and status.

- Uncertainty Avoidance (UA)
- **High UA** – Existence of formal rules, rights, and duties, large number of specialists, avoidance of risk.
- **Low UA** – Associated with informal rules and procedures, more generalists, individual decision making, and risk taking.

- **Masculinity-Femininity (MF)**
  - **High M/Low F** – Management styles that stress independence, decisiveness, and assertiveness; Adversarial negations.
  - **High F/Low M** – Management styles that stress group cohesion and decisions; Problem solving negotiations.

- **Individualism-Collectivism (IC)**
  - **High I/Low C** – Workers act according to personal needs and interests.
  - **Low I/High C** – Workers act according to interest of their ascribed groups.

While Hofstede’s Model and similar scales have been widely used in the corporate world, there has been little application of the model to humanitarian endeavors. The models created by Hofstede (1980) and modified by Erez (1994), can be used as a theoretical framework to determine levels of differences and similarities between the organizational cultures of those organizations participating in collaborative humanitarian aid efforts. The same principles used to evaluate corporate agencies are believed to be viable in evaluating organizations that provide humanitarian assistance. Although there are other methods of evaluating an organization’s culture and dynamics, Hofstede’s Cultural Dimension Model, with the additions supplied by Erez (1994), appear promising.
in evaluating organizational culture, determining its role in both inter-organizational collaboration and the overall delivery of aid, thus fulfilling the objectives of this study.

The cultural dimensions highlighted in the Hofstede Cultural Dimension model convey behavioral distinctions that are important in determining the culture of an organization, as well as possible interaction between organizations. For example, the organizational culture of the military would generally tend to reflect an organization with higher power distance, uncertainty avoidance, and individualism when compared to a typical NGO. The military would also be considered highly masculine, compared to highly feminine NGOs. In comparison to NGOs, the military is characterized by the centralization of decision-making, a rigidly defined hierarchy, strictly defined procedures and specialized roles, characteristics essential for the highly assertive role of the military (O’Mara et al., 2000). However, structural and operational differences that exist between the military and other organizations providing humanitarian assistance may create a barrier to their interaction.

Robert Rubinstein (2003) further discusses these differences and defines several areas that culturally based differences have led to conflicts between military and civilian expectations. One of the most important of those areas, as touched on above, is the management structure. Relationships between supervisors and workers vary differently among organizations. In the military, the chain of command is structured to respond quickly and promote fast and efficient decision-makings. Responsibilities are clearly defined and manageable and thus, there is a large power distance (Rubinstein, 2003) (O'Mara et al., 2000). NGOs view management differently. They are characterized by
“camaraderie of command” (Rubinstein, 2003) and are defined as low power distance (O'Mara et al., 2000).

Another important organizational cultural difference involves the interpretation of the work that is being conducted. As a rule, humanitarian organizations follow the belief that assistance should be provided to anyone in need, regardless of politics, religion, or ethnicity. In contrast, decisions concerning the scope of military operations are determined through a political process and by reference to international law (Rubinstein, 2003).

Rubinstein also discussed the boundaries that exist between the military or NGOs and those to whom aid is being provided. Humanitarian assistance organizations tend to be impartial and not driven by a political outcome. Few boundaries, physical, political, or symbolic, are placed between aid workers and those they serve. Workers are in close contract with the population they serve. The military, on the other hand, establishes legitimacy through control and separation, with buildings guarded and entrances controlled (Rubinstein, 2003).

Cultural models of an organization manifest through the actions of the individual organization, play a role in creating the organizational culture of the military and humanitarian aid organizations. When organizations with various backgrounds interact, cultural conflicts can arise. For instance, differences in the values, beliefs, principles, and modes of action between the military and other humanitarian assistance organizations may be at odds. If so, cultural dimensions may lead to conflicts between the organizations, affecting their ability to interact and collaborate. Not recognizing possible areas of conflict may lead to difficulties in coordinating action and delivering aid.
Utilizing cultural models may help illustrate organizational expectations and norms, cultural dimensions, and possible areas of conflict. Therefore, cultural considerations must be taken into account whenever collaboration is to exist and a more thorough understanding of organizational culture may be essential for the effective delivery of aid.
CHAPTER III

METHODS

Introduction

This research study was designed to help improve understanding of organizations that provide humanitarian assistance. The purpose of this study was to determine the role of organizational culture in the effective delivery of humanitarian aid to refugees and vulnerable populations through the evaluation of bilateral, international and local and indigenous non-governmental organizations, as well as their collaborative efforts in providing humanitarian aid. This exploratory study was a qualitative analysis of humanitarian aid efforts, focusing on operations in which collaboration was an essential element, to determine the role of organizational culture in providing humanitarian aid, as well as the effects of group culture on collaboration efforts and the overall success of the initiative. The following chapter discusses the qualitative methodology that was used and includes discussion of the study design, study sample, data collection tools and procedures and a description of the process through which data was interpreted and analyzed.
The Research Strategy

This study was an exploratory study that used qualitative methods to analyze humanitarian aid efforts by (a) the U.S. military, an important provider of bilateral aid and participant in multilateral aid initiatives worldwide, (b) the International Federation of the Red Cross, an international non-governmental organization known for its involvement in complex humanitarian disasters, and (c) a sampling of local and indigenous non-governmental organizations. The purpose was to determine the role of organizational culture in the provision of humanitarian assistance, as well as the effects of inter-organizational collaboration on humanitarian action. While organization types are not all encompassing, they were chosen for their diverse size, background, methods of aid provision, and cultural differences. Organizations were evaluated as individual case studies in an effort to gain a clear understanding of organization types that provide humanitarian assistance, while also allowing for a systematic comparison across the three cases allowing for comparisons among organizations and aid delivery systems.

For the purpose of this study, each organization comprised a case study, consisting of in-depth interviewing, naturalistic observer studies, and reviews of records and reports. The decision to follow a case study design reflected the nature of the groups being studied, as well as the desire to identify organizational cultural differences between aid organizations. A case study design was also instrumental in determining the relationships that existed between the organizational culture of each group and the effect of group culture on the provision of humanitarian assistance and inter-organizational collaboration.
Keeping with the goals of the study, a research strategy needed to support both the documentation of organizational culture and the understanding of the role organizational culture plays in the delivery of humanitarian assistance, as well as in collaborative efforts. It was imperative that the strategy employed also answered the three objectives posed by the study:

- To determine the role of organizational culture in humanitarian aid efforts by the U.S. military and humanitarian aid organizations (HAOs) providing assistance to those affected by complex humanitarian emergencies worldwide.
- To identify and report areas of success, as well as potential barriers to current aid initiatives, in an effort to add to the literature on humanitarian assistance, organizational culture and inter-organizational collaboration.
- To assess the viability of the collaborative effort model as the primary model for supplying humanitarian assistance during complex humanitarian emergencies, through an in-depth analysis of the organizational culture of the U.S. military and HAOs, further determining the impact of organizational culture on inter-organizational collaboration.

The following section characterizes the research strategy, including utilizing a qualitative design, case study, and the tools that were used throughout.

Study Design

Qualitative research allows for the greater understanding of complex phenomenon in ways that numbers could not adequately explain (Kerlin, 1999). Qualitative data,
typical measured in words rather than numbers, has always been prominent in the fields of anthropology, history and political science (Miles & Huberman, 1994). However, this type of research has proliferated rapidly in the past decade and is now prominent in a broad range of both basic and applied fields. A source of well-grounded data with rich description, qualitative data allows for the detailed explanation of processes, as well as allowing one to witness events and their consequences in a manner that allows copious explanation (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Thus, utilizing a qualitative analytical approach when studying the effects of organizational culture on the delivery of humanitarian assistance was a logical choice, as this allowed for the elucidation of information regarding events as they played out in a natural setting and through the shared experiences of those who lived them (Miles & Huberman, 1994).

There are a number of basic assumptions associated with the use of a qualitative study. Some of those basic tenants of qualitative research as it pertains to this study include qualitative research as a holistic perspective, the incorporation of emergent design, the descriptive nature of the research, the dynamic and complex processes involved, fieldwork, the researcher as an instrument, how people make sense of their lives, and the inductive process involved. Understanding these assumptions as a driving factor in the present study is imperative. Therefore, each tenant will be discussed in more detail.

Experts in the field stress the importance of qualitative research as it allows for a more holistic perspective. In qualitative research, there is a basic assumption that the focus of the study is the phenomenon itself. Qualitative research takes on a more holistic approach and, as such, the researcher focuses attention on “nuances, settings,
interdependencies, complexities, idiosyncrasies and context” (Patton, 1990). For the purpose of the present study, utilizing a qualitative framework allowed the research to pay greater attention to the phenomenon as a whole, allowing for a more holistic understanding of organizational culture, its role in both the delivery of humanitarian assistance and inter-organizational collaboration.

Another tenant of qualitative research is the incorporation of emergent design. The research design must be fluid and open to changes following the onset of fieldwork. In qualitative design, understanding of the phenomenon develops and evolves during data collection. Through this process, the systematic collection of data and analysis guides the collection of additional data and further analysis, allowing for emergent design while creating greater depth of understanding (Patton, 1990). The present study is exploratory in nature. Therefore, it required a level of flexibility, which allowed for the evolution of my understanding of humanitarian action, the organizations involved and the role of organizational culture in aid delivery systems.

One of the basic tenants of qualitative research is that it is descriptive in nature, which allows one to focus on understanding a phenomenon in great detail, gaining a clearer understanding of the individual intricacies of that phenomenon. Additionally, qualitative research allows for a detailed account and description of the context, processes, activities, and participants associated with the phenomenon of interest (Patton, 1990). A goal of this study was to provide a descriptive analysis of organizations that provide humanitarian assistance, their organizational cultures, and the efforts on the overall delivery of aid and thus qualitative research, with thick and rich data, was a logical choice.
The focus of qualitative research is typically the dynamic and complex processes involved in understanding a particular phenomenon, more so than the actual event itself (Patton, 1990). This was an important facet of the present study, which focused on humanitarian assistance as supplied by three organizations in Haiti. However, while looking at this event or outcome, the true aim of the study was to look at the effects of organizational culture on the delivery of humanitarian assistance and organizational collaboration. The goal was not to understand the product, aid delivery in Haiti, but rather the process that occurred and the nuances, allowing for the better understanding of aid delivery as a whole.

Fieldwork is vital to qualitative research and is typically an important part of study design. Fieldwork insures more direct and personal contact between the researcher and those being studied, again adding to the complexity of the research and the overall understanding of the phenomenon (Patton, 1990). The present study employed in-depth semi-structured interviews and naturalistic observation, both of which required me to conduct fieldwork and have direct contact with participants. During this time, I was able to see, firsthand, the effects of aid delivery on a population in need, while witnessing the impact of organizational cultural on decision making.

Another tenant of qualitative research includes the role of the researcher as the primary instrument for data collection. Qualitative research assumes that the researcher is the primary instrument for data collection. Therefore, the researcher guides interviews, conducts observations and thus mediated the process of data collection. (Patton, 1990). In the present study, data was collected through interviews, naturalistic observation, and examination of documentary evidence.
Qualitative research is typically interested in how people make sense of their lives, how they interpret experiences, and how they structure their social world. A qualitative researcher assumes that there are multiple ways of dealing with situations, various interpretations, and differing values (Patton, 1990). These multiple views drive the researcher’s need for deeper understanding. The present study aimed to understand individual perceptions and beliefs regarding organizational culture and the delivery of humanitarian assistance. It looked at perceived successes and barriers, with particular attention placed on individual interpretation.

The final tenant relates to the inductive nature of qualitative research. One of the primary purposes of qualitative research is to conduct exploratory research and thus this type of design focuses primarily on discovery (Patton, 1990). The main goal of this study was to explore the processes associated with the delivery of humanitarian assistance. It is not necessarily concerned with generalizability or predictive power but rather exploring the process and gaining a clear and thorough understanding to guide future research initiatives.

Due to the nature of the study, the intended outcomes, and the nature of the sample, it was determined that qualitative methods best met the needs of this study. The use of a case study approach to evaluate the role of organizational culture in the delivery of humanitarian assistance further complemented this approach, as it allowed the researcher to collect data with thick and rich descriptions of organizations, their cultures, humanitarian aid missions and collaborative endeavors. Qualitative research seeks to understand situations in their uniqueness, as well as in context with the intricacies that are inherent to the subject being studied. This study attempted to do exactly that by
evaluating organizations in their uniqueness to determine how aid was delivered. Just as with all qualitative studies, this study did not attempt to predict what may happen in the future, but rather sought to understand the nature of what is happening in current aid operations. The study also attempted to look at why certain situations occur or behaviors happen and the meaning behind these events or actions. The study also sought to illustrate an event in a particular setting, in this case humanitarian assistance. Furthermore, the analysis seeks to communicate such findings, while attempting to understand the data on a deeper level (Patton, 1990).

In communicating findings, this study also took the widely accepted approach of using the first person. The use of first person is widely accepted and supported in the writing of qualitative studies (N. Denzin, 1997; N. K. Denzin & Lincoln, 2000; Holliday, 2001; Stewart, 1998) and will be used throughout this study. While criticized by some as being unscholarly, qualitative researchers support the use of first person as a “powerful, personal authorship” (Holliday, 2001) which allows the researcher to relate experiences, perspectives and ideologies, while acknowledging the researcher and his or her relationship with the study (Holliday, 2001). The use of first person also allows the voice of the writer to emerge, fitting with the tenants of qualitative research and resulting in an authentic voice.

A Case Study Approach

This study utilized a case study approach, with each humanitarian aid organization type serving as a case study to allow for in-depth examination into a phenomenon of aid delivery (R Yin, 1994). Case studies are useful in exploring the
complexity of a case, in this instance organization types that provide aid delivery (Stake, 1995). Yin (1989) characterized the case study research as empirical inquiry that allows of the investigation of a contemporary phenomenon within a real-life context, utilized when boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly defined, and in which multiple sources of evidence are used. He further emphasizes the importance of case study research in understanding complex social phenomena.

A case study enables multiple methods of data collection and analysis, allowing the researcher to answer specific research questions, while gaining an understanding of the complex whole. Case studies also seek a range of evidence that must be abstracted. Cases may be comprised of individuals, groups (family or class), institutions (school or workplace), or communities (Gillman, 2000; Stake, 1995).

Yin (1994) argues for the importance of case studies for research that attempts to improve understanding of a phenomenon while preserving the “holistic” and “meaningful” characteristics of the phenomenon. Thus, this approach is particularly useful when analyzing situations or events in which the researcher has no control, in this case complex humanitarian emergencies and the events that unfold, but desires a holistic approach to data collection and the understanding of events. Furthermore, in adapting a case study approach, the aim of this study is to illuminate general incidents by examining a particular case (Denscombe, 1998). This study focused on a particular incident, humanitarian assistance to Haiti, for the purpose of drawing out emergent ideas that affect all aid delivery programs. During a case study, few examples of a phenomenon are intensively investigated. For the purpose of this study, three types of organizations that provide humanitarian assistance will be analyzed to determine the role of organizational
culture in the delivery of humanitarian aid. Therefore, multiple cases: (1) the U.S. military, (2) the Red Cross and (3) local and indigenous NGOs were evaluated. The primary sources of data collection were semi-structured in-depth interviews, complemented by observations and review of relevant records, reports, news and social commentary. Each data collection tool will be discussed in more detail in the following sections.

**Data Collection Tools**

This study employed multiple methods of data collection to determine the role of organizational culture in the delivery of humanitarian assistance. The methods utilized in this study included: (1) in-depth semi-structured interviewing, (2) naturalistic observer studies, and (3) review of records, reports and relevant news media and social commentary. The following section will discuss the strengths and limitations of each tool in regards to data collection.

**In-depth Interviews**

While Charles Booth (1886) is credited as being the first researcher to develop a social survey that utilizes interviewing, the process of interviewing can be found as far back as the ancient Egyptians (N. K. Denzin & Lincoln, 1998). Today, many researchers employ interviewing as a prominent means of data collection. Interviews can be either face-to-face or by way of the telephone and serve to enrich either qualitative or quantitative data collection. Interviews are important components of research, allowing
one’s individually constructed perceptions, understandings and meanings regarding personal lived experiences to be explored in rich detail (Neuman, 1997).

Three main types of interview proceedings exist: (1) unstructured, (2) semi-structured, and (3) structured. This study utilized semi-structured interviews to analyze the role of organizational culture in the delivery of humanitarian assistance. Semi-structured interviews are typically used in situations where there is only one opportunity to interview the participant and the researcher is attempting to gain a great deal of information in a short time period. To aid in this process, an interview guide was also utilized, helping to ensure that essential topics were covered and to allow some uniformity of results. Probing techniques were also used to draw out additional information regarding topics of importance (Bernard, 2000).

Each interview type was evaluated for its usefulness in meeting the objectives of the present study. The use of structured interviews is typically employed when the researcher has a predetermined concept for which the interview will provide answers. The structured interview process utilizes this predetermined concept to guide questions. Each participant in the study is asked identical questions. The questions follow a set pattern, are closed-ended and often include forced choice responses (Bernard, 2000). On the opposite spectrum are unstructured interviews. Such interviews are versatile and are typically utilized by researchers with a rich hermeneutic tradition or a positivists tradition (Bernard, 2000). Unstructured interviews are important tools in ethnography, particularly when the goal is to expound on lived experiences. It allows the researcher the opportunity to build rapport with participants and often is the predecessor to more formal interviews. During unstructured interviews, the researcher has only a list of domains to
be covered but no set order or structure (Bernard, 2000). These interview types appeared either too rigid or too flexible respectively to meet the needs of the study. Utilizing a semi-structured interview allowed for some uniformity, with the flexibility of probing where needed and, thus, was the choice best suited for this study.

Utilizing semi-structured interviews as a means of data collection and the creation of the interview tool was guided by the objectives of the study and the nature of the data collection procedures. Semi-structured interviews, the most common types of interviews conducted, allowed for more freedom in data collection then more traditional structured interviews. However, this tool set also allows for control over interview flow, an important issue when interviews necessitate efficient use of time, as was the case in this study. Additionally, the participants in this study had varied life experiences and, therefore, a structured interview would have lost much of the detail needed for a case study rich in detail and description. While it was believed that an unstructured interview would enable me to collect thick descriptions regarding the delivery of humanitarian assistance, it was too flexible in design to meet the needs of participants in the present study. Thus, utilizing a semi-structured approach helped to meet the needs of both participants and researcher.

*Strengths and Limitations*

There are a number of benefits to conducting semi-structured interviews. Semi-structured interviews are not highly structured and do not consist of closed-ended questions. However, they are not completely unstructured, allowing for totally free response. Instead, they offer topics and questions that have been carefully designed to
meet the needs of the study while letting the respondent feel like they have some control over the flow of the interview. In general, semi-structured interviews tend to be less intrusive to the participant. Instead of forced responses, the semi-structured interview encourages two way discussions between the researcher and the participant. This type of two way discussion is more natural than a structured interview and often makes individuals more comfortable, particularly when discussing sensitive topics. Semi-structured interviews also allow for the collection of rich detail. Often respondents will provide not just an answer to the interviewers questions but also the reasons behind their response (N. K. Denzin & Lincoln, 1998).

One must also be cautious when conducting semi-structures interviews. With the opportunity for some free response comes the opportunity to go off track. Thus, it is the responsibility of the interviewer to keep the conversation on track, to probe where necessary, and to move the conversation along. It is also important to note that a lot of superfluous information tends to arise during such interviews. Therefore, interviewers need to be extremely skilled in interviewing to avoid leading questions, failure to probe, properly, failure to judge answers, and asking vague or insensitive questions. The researcher must also be prepared to handle overwhelming amounts of information during data analysis, as an abundant amount of information, both useful and irrelevant, will be collected (N. K. Denzin & Lincoln, 1998).

Implication for Research on Organizational Culture and Humanitarian Assistance

The role of organizational culture in the delivery of humanitarian assistance is an understudied phenomenon. While the area of organizational culture has received
extensive attention in business and management and has gained attention in other fields, few studies have attempt to compare the organizational cultures of multiple organizations in a practical sense. Little is known about organizational culture and its practical application to the phenomenon of humanitarian assistance delivery or its role in organizational collaboration. Thus, the use of semi-structured interviews is an appropriate tool. While the study was guided by business and management research and hypotheses can be drawn from lessons learned from the field, this study is exploratory in nature, as the phenomenon of organizational culture as a guiding force in humanitarian assistance is a relatively new area. Thus, semi-structured interviews allowed me to guide the questions to accept or reject the current hypotheses, while still allowing additional insight into the role of organizational culture in the delivery of humanitarian assistance and in collaborative aid efforts. Open ended questions allowed the respondent to provide context and meaning to processes. In addition, this technique allowed for further exploration of behaviors and actions of individual organizations and for comparisons among the three case studies.

_Naturalist Observer Studies_

Naturalistic observations require going into a social situation and observing. This takes place in a naturally occurring situation without any participation from the researcher. During naturalistic observations, the researcher makes a detailed record of the situation context, events that occur and apparent relationships between events. Such observations are essential in determining key variables and critical relationships. Observations can be used to expound on information collected in the interview process,
helping to provide additional insight into thought and perceptions of the interview respondent (Bernard, 2000). Naturalist observations also allow the research to paint a descriptive analysis of respondent’s work environment, further elaborating on the organizational culture of groups being studied.

Gold (1958) outlined four methods of collecting observational data: the complete participant, the participant-as-observer, the observer-as-participant, and the complete observer. It is widely acknowledged that the more intermediate of these roles, observer-as-participant is most useful in balancing the detachment, familiarity and strangeness of the differing approaches (N. K. Denzin & Lincoln, 1998). However, for the purposes of this study, a non-participant naturalistic observer approach was taken, as the other approaches were not feasible. I used observational techniques to witness organizational behaviors and to draw inferences about culture within organizations. Particular interest was paid to setting, interaction among employees, and emersion of cultural components through behaviors and actions. For the purposes of this study, it was not possible to become a participant in organizational interactions. Instead, the purpose of the observations was to gain insight into organizational culture and interactions in an effort to complement information collected through the interview process. By serving as a non-participant naturalistic observer, I could go virtually unnoticed and limit the affects of my presence on behavior changes in those being observed to help reduce bias.

**Strengths and Limitations**

Qualitative interviewing and observational methods often go hand in hand (N. K. Denzin & Lincoln, 1998). One of the greatest strengths of observational methods is the
ease through which researchers can gain access to and collect data. Data collection is unobtrusive and does not require direct interaction with participants. Thus, collection of observational data can occur inconspicuously (N. K. Denzin & Lincoln, 1998). Observation, like other data collection techniques, also draws strength and weakness from its design. Observations are not conducted based on predetermined categories. Rather observers construct theories and generate categories as the process progresses. Throughout the process, the researcher may alter the problem or topics being observed to gain a deeper understand of the phenomenon being studied. As Denzin and Lincoln (1988) acknowledge that when compared with more structured data collection methods, the flexible nature of observations are well suited as they can provide insight into phenomenon, changing the ways the researcher looks at the incident, event of phenomenon. When combined with other data collection techniques, observations can also produce great rigor. Such designs allow for a natural setting and context of occurrence, which are especially valuable in cross-checking or triangulation of findings, particularly those findings from the interview process. While bias exists in observational techniques, when added to another method of data collection yielding depth or breadth, observation enhances both the consistency and validity of a study (N. K. Denzin & Lincoln, 1998).

As with any data collection method, there are a number of limitations associated with naturalistic observations. Observational interaction can be both tentative and situational (N. K. Denzin & Lincoln, 2000). Observational research may also vary depending on personal characteristics, the stage of the project, the setting, and relationships between the observer and participants (N. K. Denzin & Lincoln, 1998).
Another major criticism of naturalistic, non-participant observation is associated with validity. During observations, the researcher relies on their own perceptions of actions or events. Subjective interpretations are prone to bias and may also lack reliability. Furthermore, in observational situations, researchers are unable to confirm that their findings are real and not merely the effects of chance. However, as in the present study, when data is used in combination with interviews, quotes from the interview respondents enrich and either confirm or refute the researcher’s observations. Through the systematic observations, the researcher can also enhance the credibility or reliability of findings.

Implication for Research on Organizational Culture and Humanitarian Assistance

For the purpose of this study, observations of participant work settings and activities, including a refugee camp, trainings, and exercises, were conducted. While observing participants working in the immediate disaster recovery phase would be optimal, this type of observation was unrealistic for the scope and means of this study. However, observations at participant’s work setting (e.g. office or organizational structure) proved to be extremely useful as they provided insight into organizational differences and confirmed or, in some cases, refuted what was being discussed. Observations were conducted to enrich the data collected throughout the interview process. Seeing employees act and interact, as well as viewing workplace setting, while not a crisis setting, helped to provide additional insight into organizational culture, expounding upon issues raised in the interviews. This further allowed for the elaboration in the descriptive analysis of organizational culture and factors affecting organizational collaboration.
Review of Documents, Records, and Reports

Throughout the study, I collected available relevant records and reports regarding the organizations participating in the three case studies: (1) the U.S. military, (2) the International Federation of the Red Cross and (3) local and indigenous NGOs. In an effort to better understand the situations discussed and the context in which humanitarian assistance was delivered, information was also collected on any complex humanitarian emergencies that emerged throughout the interview process.

Written text are organizational artifacts that provide documentation of past events. Collection of documentation is often used by researchers to gain a clear understanding of a phenomenon or to provide detail to events that one was unable to witness (Stake, 1995). Collection of both records and reports were important in this study to provide a historical understanding of prior aid initiatives, as well as providing additional insight into the organizational culture of those that participated in the study.

The differentiation between documents and records, as described by Lincoln and Guba (1985) proved useful. Records were considered formal pieces, while documents were described as materials prepared for more personal interactions, including memos or notes. Based on the differing origins of records, reports and other media, it became important to understand materials in the contexts in which it was written. In research, the investigator must identify the background of the document to determine the basis on which it was written, including whether it was written firsthand, through secondary resources, solicited, signed or edited (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).
Data Collection Procedures

Measures of Instrumentation

Variables of interest were measured primarily through semi-structured in-depth interviews. All questions were open-ended in an effort to avoid influencing participant responses. The interviewer asked questions to elucidate information concerning the organizational culture of the study groups. Participants were asked questions regarding current aid missions, collaborative efforts, issues of trust, the organizational culture of the individual’s organization, perceptions of the culture of other aid organizations, and recommendations to improve collaboration among agencies. Participants were also asked about their perceived interactions between organizations, perceived successes and failures, and participant’s beliefs regarding their organization’s role in providing humanitarian assistance.

Questions presented through the interview tool were designed to assess the culture of each organization. The interview tool was informed by the Hofstede Cultural Orientation Model (1980) with modifications by Erez (1994), a tool used to measure organizational culture. I used this model as the theoretical framework for analyzing the role of organizational culture in the provision of aid, as well as its subsequent effects on organizational collaboration.

Hofstede and Erez provide scales for the comparison of the organizational cultures of groups providing humanitarian assistance. The Hofstede Cultural Orientation Model divides organizational culture into four components: (1) Power Distance, (2) Uncertainty Avoidance, (3) Masculinity/Femininity, and (4) Individualism/Collectivism. The additions supplied by Erez allow for a scale comparison ranging from high to low.
Analyzing the results of the interview allowed me to determine where along the continuum of these models the organizational culture of each participant’s organization operates. Bearing in mind the dimensions of the Hofstede Cultural Orientation Model and utilizing Erez’s scale dimensions, questions were developed to determine if barriers exist between organizational interactions based on the organization’s placement on the continuum. The model was used as a theoretical framework to determine levels of differences and similarities between the organizational culture of the U.S. military and HAOs in regards to humanitarian relief efforts.

The interview tool was pilot tested to ensure clarity of questioning and optimal response. A convenience sample of eight participants from the sampling frame participated in the pilot test including the mini-pilot (2 participants) and the actual pilot (6 participants) testing interview process. The pilot test took place in Tampa, Florida, and participants were recruited through the Center for Disaster Management and Humanitarian Assistance (CDHMA) at the University of South Florida College of Public Health. For the actual pilot, two participants were chosen from each organization type, (1) the U.S. military, (2) the International Federation of the Red Cross, and (3) local or indigenous NGOs.

Pilot testing was conducted in three phases: (1) preliminary review, (2) mini-pilot, and (3) pilot test. During the preliminary review, a group of colleagues with expertise in humanitarian assistance and collaborative initiatives, as well as an understanding of organizational culture was asked to review the interview tool to identify major flaws in procedure, order, wording, or approach. Based on their feedback, changes were made to the interview tool. During the second phase, the mini-pilot, two people from the pilot-
testing sample were chosen to participate in an interactive interview. During this interactive interview, participants were asked to provide feedback, question by question. During this process, the interviewer probed to determine if there was anything substantively wrong with the wording of the questions and with the interview tool in general. Participants were asked what they perceived each question to be asking, reactions to each question, and suggestions for improving the tool. Language, an important aspect of organizational culture and organizational understanding, was also discussed to ensure use of proper terminology. Due to differential use of terminology between HAOS and the military, when appropriate, terminology was modified per group to help ensure clarity. Based on feedback from participants, changes were made to the interview tool to help ensure the face validity of the instrument.

Once the changes identified through the mini-pilot were completed, the interview tool was pilot tested. A sample of six subjects, similar to the target population, were interviewed from each of the groups: the U.S. military, the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, and local or indigenous NGOs. Careful notes were taken on the reactions and performance of participants. Following the interview, participants were debriefed and asked for feedback, including their opinions regarding the interview and its content. Responses were analyzed to determine consistent patterns and themes and each question was scrutinized to determine relevance to the study and reliability of response. Based on the debriefing session and comments from the participants, modifications were made to the interview tool. Specifically, questions that could easily be answered through available documentation and were not necessary
indicators of organizational culture were eliminated from the interview in the interest of time. Once final changes were made to the interview tool, data collection commenced.

Participants

The target population for the study included military personnel and aid workers from humanitarian assistance organizations (HAOs) who provide humanitarian assistance during complex emergencies and disasters. The sampling frame consisted of U.S. military personnel who have provided humanitarian relief and personnel from selected humanitarian assistance organizations who have provided assistance either in collaboration with or in the same area as the U.S. military. Requirements for inclusion in the study included: (1) active participation in humanitarian aid initiatives through the military or HAOs during the past five years, (2) having worked in collaboration with or in the same area as other HAOs or the U.S. military during the past five years, and (3) having provided either medical assistance or non-medical humanitarian relief services during complex emergency during the past five years. To prevent any language barriers, all participants also had to be English speaking.

To obtain the sample, cluster sampling was conducted within each of three organizational types: (1) the U.S. military, (2) the International Federation of the Red Cross and (3) local and indigenous NGOs. Specifically, the organizational hierarchy was used to divide participants by rank and leadership position. This sampling technique was extremely beneficial to the study, as it allowed me to look at responses across the data set to determine differences among aid workers operating in the same organizations, thus highlighting valuable findings regarding subcultures within organizations. I had initially
proposed to further randomly sample within clusters. However, due to sampling constraints, the inability to randomly select from a sample of participants constantly traveling and moving throughout the world on assignment and organizational limitations, convenience sampling was used within clusters.

Due to the political nature of the organizations involved in the study and the situations being discussed, confidentiality was considered a potential issue and deterrent from participation in the study. Therefore, my ability to assure all participants complete confidentiality became a critical issue. I followed the strictest of guidelines, as presented by the Institutional Review Board at the University of South Florida. Each participant was informed about the purpose and goals of the study. Participants were assured complete confidentiality. Before interviewing, I reviewed the confidentiality policy with all participants verbally and went over the IRB approved consent form. Participants were given the opportunity to ask any questions and were asked to sign an informed consent before the interview could proceed. To further ensure confidentiality, information such as names, dates, and demographic information that came about through the course of the interview, was immediately stripped of any identifiers.

Participants for the study were recruited using a clustered sampling of the U.S. military, international and local and indigenous non-governmental organizations, who have taken part in collaborative aid efforts during the past five years. Military participants were recruited from United States Southern Command in Miami, Florida. Recruitment from a single command was a strategy employed to allow me to focus on disaster situations in a particular part of the world. United States Southern Command (SOUTHCOM) was chosen due to its involvement in Latin America and the Caribbean,
an area that is no stranger to complex humanitarian disasters. The study focused particular attention on the island of Hispaniola, an island comprised of the countries of Haiti and the Dominican Republic, which has been devastated with flooding, mass displacement, destruction and death. Focusing on Latin America and the Caribbean allowed me to narrow the scope of the study to ensure that participant’s responses could be compared. A study with too broad of a focus has the potential for disconnect between organizations, areas of operation and overall experiences. Providing detailed insight on a few disaster situations allowed for specific comparison between organizations while still allowing for generalizability across disaster situations and collaborative efforts.

Participants were chosen from clusters within predefined groupings. Military clusters were divided as follows: (a) Non-company Officers (E1-E9), (b) Company Grade Officers (2nd Lieutenants, 1st Lieutenants and Captains), (c) Field Grade Officers (Majors and Lieutenant Colonels), (d) and Colonels. One general was also interviewed as leader in a humanitarian mission.

Participants from humanitarian aid organizations were recruited from the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), an active International NGOs in current aid initiatives. In an effort to determine differences that existed between HAOs, particularly local and indigenous NGOs compared with larger, more established aid organizations, a cluster of participants from local and indigenous NGOs were also recruited. Local organization types consisted of organizations that worked directly with the community and consisted of indigenous organizations, or those who were endogenous to the community in which they worked, and those local organizations that were exogenous, or established through forces external to the
community. For this study, local organizations working with Haitian populations were chosen. Efforts were made to sample from indigenous organizations, however, due primarily to language barriers but also the need to sample from organizations that have met the criteria of this study, some of the organizations sampled were local organizations that were established through U.S. based entities. Each organization had a primary site in a local community in Haiti, which was operated by locals from the community. However, in this case, the director of the organization was U.S. based. This situation was found to be quite typical of NGOs working abroad, particularly in Haiti. The clusters for humanitarian aid organizations utilized a similar recruitment structure as that of the military. The clusters were divided as follows: (a) Volunteers, (b) Relief aid workers, (c) Mid-level officials, (d) High ranking officials.

A minimum of five interviews were conducted at random in each of the aforementioned clusters. However, actual sample size within clusters was not predetermined. Rather theoretical sampling was utilized. The aim of this method was to allow sampling to occur within clusters until identified categories (values, beliefs, perceptions, etc.) were saturated, new information no longer emerged, and thus, theoretical saturation had been reached. Data collection and analysis were done simultaneously and continued until new interviews no longer provided additional data, confirming saturation. (Please see Table 1). To determine saturation, I worked with an independent reviewer, conducting regular debriefing session. Once it was agreed upon by both the independent reviewer and I that saturation had been reached, the process stopped.
Table 1. Sampling Matrix*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Aid</th>
<th>Leader</th>
<th>High-ranking officials</th>
<th>Upper Mid-ranking officials</th>
<th>Mid-ranking officials</th>
<th>Low-ranking officials</th>
<th>Totals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>U.S. Military: Southern Command</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International Federation of the Red Cross (IFRC)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local and Indigenous NGOs</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key informant</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1. Key

Military
- Leaders = General
- High-ranking officials = Colonel or those highest in command
- Upper Mid-ranking officials = Field Grade Officers (Majors and Lieutenant Colonels)
- Mid-ranking officials = Company Grade Officers (2nd Lieutenants, 1st Lieutenants and Captains)
- Low-ranking officials = Non-company Officers (E1-E9)

Humanitarian Aid Organizations (IFRC and Local/Indigenous NGOs)
- Leaders (Director those highest in command)
- High-ranking officials
- Upper Mid-ranking officials
- Mid-ranking officials (Ground relief aid workers)
- Low-ranking officials (Volunteers)

Semi-structured in-depth interviews were conducted between October 2004 and July 2005. Each interview was approximately one hour in length. All interviews were recorded then transcribed verbatim. Interviews were arranged at the
convenience of the participant. Recruiting and interviewing were conducted at the following areas:

- Miami, Florida to meet with military and humanitarian officials in attendance of the INTERHANDS Conference to discuss aid missions, conduct interviews, and gather information. Additional interviews and meetings were at Southern Command.
- Tampa, Florida to meet with officials from the military and local HAOs to discuss aid missions, conduct interviews and gather information.
- Washington, DC to attend the Global Health Conference, to meet with military officials and those working with HAOs in the area. Interviews were conducted and information gathered.
- Haiti-Dominican Republic Boarder to observe the effects of natural disaster and complex humanitarian emergencies, as well as to meet with officials working as part of the relief effort. Interviews were conducted and information gathered.
- Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic to meet with officials from the military, the IFRC and local HAOs as part of PKO North, as well as those located locally in the Dominican Republic, to discuss aid missions, conduct interviews and gather information,
- City of Knowledge, Panama to meet with officials from HAOs to discuss aid missions, conduct interviews and gather information.
All interviews were conducted in English by myself, the primary researcher, utilizing the semi-structured interview guide as previously discussed. This interview guide allowed the flexibility to ask follow-up questions to the initial prompts and use probing questions to elicit information related to the research topic. Basic demographic information including gender, age, education, job title, and years with the organization were also collected. The participant was informed that demographic information was needed for statistical purposes only, as this information was important to the understanding of additional correlations that exist between organizations and subgroups. I also took in-depth field notes regarding general observations, the interview setting and important concepts covered in this dissertation. Field notes were also used to record my observations and overall impressions. Field notes helped to construct the context in which interviews were conducted and were vital in explaining important components of organizations typology. An audio recorder was used to tape all interviews. A transcriptionist then transcribed all interviews verbatim. Transcriptions were read for accuracy and prepared for analysis and review.

Key records were also collected and analyzed to ascertain a clear picture of organizations that provide aid and reviewed reports of previous aid missions and objective and success measures, as reported by each organization. Reports varied in length, depth, and format and consisted of everything from annual reports to monthly newsletters to donors. Historical analysis was used to review other relief missions, comparing the level of interaction between the U.S. military, the IFRC and local and indigenous NGOs and success of the operation.
Theoretical Constructs

To meet the aims of this study, a number of constructs were defined and operationalized.

*Inter-organizational Collaboration*

Simply defined, collaboration is the act of working jointly. It is synonymous with co-action and cooperation and is often associated with coordination. For the purpose of this study, organizational collaboration during the delivery of humanitarian assistance includes those circumstances in which multiple organizations supply aid to a vulnerable population. Formally defined by Gray (1989, p. 5), organizational collaboration is “the process through which parties who see different aspects of a problem can constructively explore their differences and search for solutions that go beyond their own limited vision of what is possible.” Ultimately, collaboration involves an amalgamation of various perspectives and approaches in dealing with complex issues (Gardner et al, 1999; Gray, 1989).

Accounting for the existence of organizational collaboration is crucial to each of the specific objectives of the present study. To understand organizational collaboration and the collaborative effort process, it is necessary to analyze interactions of structure, process, outcomes, and interpersonal relationships. For this study, both the interview tool and analysis of historical data, including records, reports and relevant news media, were utilized. The actual occurrence of inter-organizational collaboration was documented through the use of historical data. Historical data was used to draw inferences regarding the outcomes of such efforts. During interviews, participants were asked questions
specific to the process of collaboration. I also made inquiry into participant’s feelings and perceptions of collaboration, including perceived feelings of trust and power equity in collaborative endeavors. Participants were asked questions regarding the perceived successes or failures of collaborative efforts and the factors leading to either success or failure. Questions regarding organizational culture and the general delivery of aid and in collaborative efforts were also included. For instance, participants were asked how their mission and values matched with that of other organizations with whom they worked collaboratively. Informants were also asked to explain how similarities or differences of organizational mission and values affected collaboration. See Interview Guide in Appendix A.

Organizational Culture

Organizational culture is defined as “the deeper level of basic assumptions and beliefs that are learned responses to the group’s problems of survival in its external environment and its problems of internal integration; are shared by members of an organization that operate unconsciously; and that define a basic ‘taken for granted’ fashion in an organization’s view of itself and its environment” (Schein, 1992, p.2). Conceptualized as “normative glue, preserving and strengthening the groups, adhesing its component parts and maintaining its equilibrium” (Sleutel, 2000, p. 53).

Organizational culture is the central construct for the present study, affecting how organizations act, as well as how an organization interacts with others. Thus, organizational culture may play a role in the delivery of humanitarian assistance. Organizational culture may also affect collaborative efforts, a central theme of current
humanitarian aid endeavors. To identify the role of organizational culture and organizational collaboration in aid delivery, three important humanitarian organization types were identified. Operationalizing organizational culture in each of these organizations was a difficult task. However, utilizing the constructs of culture, including the values, norms, rites, rituals, symbols, and shared beliefs of an organization, will prove helpful in achieving this objective. Furthermore, the present study wished to compare the organizational culture of three distinct organizational types, the U.S. military, the IFRC, and local and indigenous NGOs. Utilizing tools that measure organizational culture and organizational behavior helped in operationalizing the features of organizational culture.

During the interview portion of the present study, the Hofstede Cultural Orientation model (Hofstede, 1980) was used to operationalize organizational culture. This tool has been used by many to assess components of culture model. The model covers the dimensions of Power Distance, Masculinity-Femininity, Uncertainty Avoidance, and Individualism-Collectivism. Participants were asked questions created to assess these dimensions. Additionally, participants were asked questions regarding important aspects of culture, including values, norms, symbols, and shared beliefs, which have been shown to be important in the assessment of group culture (Hofstede, 1980).

*Humanitarian Assistance*

Throughout this paper the terms humanitarian assistance, humanitarian aid and humanitarian interventions were used interchangeably in discussion regarding complex initiatives to save lives, reduce suffering, and help victims return to self-sustained life. For this purpose and in accordance with the United Nations Guidelines (2003, p. 3),
humanitarian assistance was formally defined as “aid to an affected population that seeks, as its primary purpose, to save lives and alleviate suffering of a crisis affected population.”

To provide the historical background for humanitarian interventions discussed during the interview process, historical data was used. This provided insight into the roles and missions of organizations operating to provide humanitarian relief. Multiple media accounts were also collected to eliminate bias and ensure reliability of findings. Interviews were used as a means of elucidating data regarding current humanitarian missions and the organizations that provide aid. To ascertain this information, organizations were asked questions regarding both the role of their organization and their individual role in particular events that required the delivery of humanitarian assistance. They were also asked their perceptions and beliefs regarding current aid delivery systems. Discussion of humanitarian assistance and organizational roles in such endeavors provided the framework for additional questions concerning organizational collaboration and humanitarian assistance in an effort to meet the objectives of the study.

**Humanitarian Assistance Organizations**

Organizations that provide assistance during complex humanitarian disasters or other humanitarian crises are varied in nature and background and may include multilateral, bilateral, and international and indigenous non-governmental organizations. For the purpose of this study, humanitarian aid organizations included organizations that provide humanitarian assistance in an effort to alleviate suffering, starvation, and death resulting from complex emergencies or other crises. The study focused primarily on
three organization types: (1) the U.S. military, a form of bilateral aid, (2) the International Federation of the Red Cross, an inter-governmental organization (IGOs) and (3) a sampling of local and indigenous non-governmental organizations, including both indigenous NGOs and those funded through exogenous forces.

Organizations that provide humanitarian assistance can be collectively labeled as Humanitarian Assistance Organizations (HAOs). This term collectively encompasses all players involved in complex humanitarian emergencies. The term humanitarian assistance organization is used as a label for the Red Cross and local NGOs throughout the study. For the purposes of clarity and differentiation, the U.S. military, a provider of bilateral aid, is labeled as U.S. military or referred to as the armed forces.

Complex Humanitarian Emergency

A complex humanitarian emergency (CHE) is “a humanitarian crisis in a country, region or society where there is a total or significant breakdown of authority resulting from internal or external conflict and which requires an international response that goes beyond the mandate or capacity of any single agency and/or the ongoing UN country program” (CDC, 2003. ¶2). These situations, typically exacerbated by natural disasters, require a systems wide response. CHEs require complex initiatives that include military, peacekeeping, humanitarian relief, and diplomacy. Understanding of the multi-causal nature of the emergency is imperative in determining the multifaceted response required to alleviate the emergency situation (Obaja, Leonardo & Leonard, 2002). This study focused on multifaceted responses. Therefore, discussion and emergence of complex humanitarian emergences were important constructs for this study.
The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s definition of complex humanitarian emergency were utilized and CHEs allowed me to focus on aid that typically requires a multifaceted response. This permitted further insight into the collaborative effort model and the role of organizational culture.

**Collaborative Effort Model**

The collaborative effort model is a model that supports civil-military relations during complex emergencies, including multifaceted responses from a variety of organizations with differing backgrounds. Faced with an increase in complex humanitarian emergencies, organizations that provide humanitarian relief have responded with significant changes in methods of aid delivery, including a push toward a model of collaborative effort. Due to the dramatic increase in types and mere numbers of organizations working to deliver aid to needy populations, the viability of this model should be tested.

To date, this model has met with mixed results. Collaborative efforts have proven successful during Operation Restore Hope in Somalia, in Iraq, and in other war torn areas. However, similar efforts such as those in Kosovo and Bosnia have been far less lucrative. While the viability of the collaborative effort model, or even coordination efforts, may be a very subjective measure, past initiatives, such as the ones mentioned above, may be helpful in creating a standard measure. For instance, in Kosovo, there is anecdotal evidence that competing priorities between military and humanitarian missions may have hindered success. By asking questions regarding the missions and objectives of organizations collaborating during a complex emergency, the interview tool was used
to draw out important characteristics of an effective collaborative model. Lack of authority and a clear hierarchical structure was also cited as hindering the success of collaborative missions, while successful collaboration has been tightly linked to a clear chain of authority and communication structure such as the one present in Somalia. Thus, questions regarding structure and function or process and procedure during coordination and collaborative efforts helped to gain additional insight. Questions regarding communication with and among organizations were also important. It was my belief that understanding organizational culture would also provide additional insight into the success and barriers of the collaborative effort model. Therefore, responses to many questions helped to elucidate a clear understanding of multiple constructs, in this case organizational culture and the collaborative effort model. In addition to their beliefs regarding the collaborative effort model, participants were asked their recommendations for creating a viable model for the delivery of humanitarian assistance during complex emergencies.

**Success**

Success is defined as “an event that accomplishes its intended purpose” ([Hyperdictionary](#), 2003). However, measuring success is a very complex task, as determination of success is a subjective issue. Therefore, perceptions were gathered and analyzed to determine the participant’s perceived success of humanitarian aid endeavors. For the purpose of this study, “perceived success” was measured as success and was defined as the belief or conceived notion of a participant that an event accomplished its intended purpose. Particular attention was paid to collaborative humanitarian aid
endeavors. Attainment of high levels of satisfaction from the participant, recipients of aid, and the organization as a whole are all indicators of success.

The indicators of success reported by the present study were defined, through the interview process, by the various respondents and the organizations participating in the study. Additionally, questions such as “was there consensus or conflict during the collaboration process? How did this relate to the perceived success of the aid delivery strategies?” were asked. Analyzing historical data, records, reports and media or social commentary reports are also utilized to provide additional insight into possible areas of success.

Barriers

A barrier is defined as “any condition that makes it difficult to make progress or to achieve an objective” (Hyperdictionary, 2003). Barriers were defined as individual and organizational factors that negatively influence the success of individuals, their organizations and the corresponding mission. Another subjective issue, perceptions were gathered and analyzed to determine barriers perceived by participants in of humanitarian aid endeavors. Again, particular attention was paid to collaborative humanitarian aid endeavors.

During past aid initiatives, barriers to the provision of humanitarian aid initiatives included poor communication and collaboration between organizations, lack trust and inadequate resources. Questions concerning these factors were asked during the interview process. This process was guided by historical analysis. Conducting the historical analysis provided additional insight into structural and functional barriers to aid
delivery. While numerous theoretical barriers to the delivery of humanitarian assistance exist, the indicators of potential barriers reported by respondents including those determined through interviews, was used to define barriers to the delivery of humanitarian assistance, as well as barriers to inter-organizational collaboration. Particular attention was paid to the role of organizational culture as a potential barrier to aid delivery systems. Participants were asked questions such as “were there any barriers to the aid delivery process? Which barriers do you perceive to be the most detrimental the delivery of humanitarian assistance? What can be done to overcome these barriers?” Historical data, records, reports and media or social commentary will also be used to provide additional insight.

Data Analysis

Qualitative data analysis is essentially a search for patterns or emergent themes and ideas that occur as a result of data collection (Neuman, 1997). Qualitative researchers seek to understand the complex interrelationships that exist (R. E. Stake, 2000). This is a complex, iterative process that essentially begins with the commencement of data collection. Through this process, the researcher examines words within their context, assigning meanings based on responses and the theoretical base (Stake, 1995).

This study aimed to delve into the role of organizational culture in the delivery of humanitarian assistance and organizational collaboration, through the words and actions of those who lived the experience. The study employed three major data collection tools (1) semi-structured in-depth interviews, (2) naturalistic observations and (3) records and
reports. While the focal point of this study was the interview process, both the
naturalistic observations and the review of the media, records and reports were important
to the study and our overall understanding of humanitarian assistance, organizational
culture, and organizational collaboration. Thus, combined analysis of data collected
helped to create a better understanding of humanitarian endeavors and the aid delivery
process as a whole. The following section will discuss that process in more detail.

Miles and Huberman (1994) define qualitative data analysis as a process that
consists of three activities: (a) data reduction, (b) data display and (c) conclusions and
verifications. The purpose of data reduction is to make the data more manageable. This
process includes the coding of text. Through this process, specific chunks of data,
representing important themes are extracted from the data. The data is then displayed in
a format that better enables interpretation. In most cases, this includes the display of
coded data in matrices. The data displays are then used to aid in interpretation, a process
that includes the determination of relationships and patterns and in-depth explanations of
what the data means (Miles & Huberman, 1994). This framework was used to guide data
analysis, which consisted of three ongoing phases: transcription, analysis, and
interpretation.

Transcription

Semi-structured in-depth interviews were conducted with all participants in this
study. Each interview was transcribed verbatim by an outside transcriptionist. The
accuracy of transcripts was imperative to increase dependability and confirmability
(Miles & Huberman, 1994). Therefore, all interview text were reviewed and checked for
accuracy. All transcriptions were completed in Microsoft Word and then transferred into Ethnograph v5.0, a qualitative software program. Ethnograph, a software program that creates, manages, and analyzes semi-structured qualitative databases, is widely used and credited with coding and retrieval abilities (Grbich, 1999). Upon researching other software, it was determined that Ethnograph met the needs of the present study. Utilizing this software, each participant was entered as an individual case and responses were segmented to allow for the extraction of themes and a comparison of participants. While this program allowed me to enter each interview as an individual file, it also allowed me to search across all interviews or select groupings, increasing its utility for this study. This was important because it allowed me to search across organizations and sampling frames. The program also allowed me to insert memos into the files as coding was being done and to print codes individually to be interpreted.

**Analysis of Interviews**

The next phase included analyzing the data. When one attempts qualitative research, it is recommended that analyzing and data collection go hand in hand and is imperative with the copious data gathering (Grbich, 1999; Miles & Huberman, 1994). Therefore, throughout the study, extensive field notes were written. Immediately following all interviews, a section was added to these notes, regarding thoughts, impressions, issues that emerged and important themes or ideas that arose. The interview tapes were then sent to an independent transcriptionist. Once the tape and text were returned, I again went through the interview, checking transcriptions for accuracy and
memoing important findings. This process was done for each interview and memos began to build emergent theories and ideas.

Following this process, all interviews were coded in Ethnograph. To aid with this process, an initial codebook was created using the research questions and theoretical framework, and then open coding was used to identify the need for additional codes. The codebook also reflected important components of the Cultural Orientation Model (G. Hofstede, 1980). As coding began, new codes were developed and the codebook was continuously revised.

To help minimize bias, an independent researcher was asked to code 10% of the transcripts independently, helping to ensure inter-coder reliability. In total, the independent researcher coded eight interviews. At three points during data analysis (beginning, middle and end), the independent researcher was given three to four randomly selected transcripts to double code. The coded transcripts were matched to ensure reliability. Any discrepancies in codes were discussed and consensus was reached.

Upon completion of coding, Ethnograph v5.0 was used to segment text, allowing me to assess commonalities between participant experiences, components of culture and important themes. I then began to look for patterns in response and the relation of themes or ideas within the context of the interviews. Patterns and trends were examined and I continued memoing, while beginning to write up and interpret indenting.

Analysis of Records

Key records collected from the military and humanitarian assistance organizations were collected and reviewed. Records included reports of the military and HAO’s
mission objectives and success measures, as well as updates on current mission status, successes, setbacks, and future directions. I also reviewed SITREPS, military reports updating situational changes to current missions. Furthermore, I reviewed medial reports, journalistic reports, social commentary, and all scholarly literature pertaining to the relief operations. All information collected was used, along with a historical analysis of other relief missions, to provide a thick and rich descriptive foundation and framework for the study. The data provided a clear description of relief operations, allowed for comparison with other relief missions, and helped to identify additional components that effect the provision of humanitarian relief.

Analysis of Observations

Naturalistic observations were an important part of this study, carried out through observations at conferences and trainings, in a refugee camp, and in the office settings of all organizations that participated in this study. During observations, careful attention was paid to the overall environment, unspoken and overt indicators of organizational culture, interactions between group members and general observations of activities, efforts, and challenges observed. Observations were imported into Ethnograph and coded along with participant interviews. Observations aided in creating a descriptive base for the study but were also helpful in confirming, or in some cases refuting, participant responses. Through analysis of observations, challenges to organizational collaboration and differences between policy and practice emerged.
Interpretation

The final step of data collection included interpretation of the results. The purpose of interpretation is to draw conclusions regarding the patterns of data and the relationships that emerged. The goal of this process is to understand the meaning and the context of data and the relationship of that data to the research questions (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Interpretation drew upon the analysis of interviews, as well as field notes, memos, observations and reports and records.

Trustworthiness and Quality of Results

Lincoln and Guba (1985) discuss the importance of trustworthiness of results in qualitative data in terms of measuring the utility of a study. Trustworthiness represents several important constructs including: (a) credibility, (b) transferability, (c) dependability, and (d) confirmability. A description of these concepts and their importance to the present study will follow.

Credibility

An important indicator of trustworthiness, credibility of conclusions in a qualitative study is synonymous with internal validity in quantitative research. According to Lincoln and Guba (1985) and Miles and Huberman (1994), to ensure creditability, results must be scrutinized to determine if 1) conclusions were appropriate and made sense, 2) conclusions presented accurately described participants response, perspectives and beliefs and 3) conclusions are genuinely representative of the phenomenon being studied, in this case humanitarian aid delivery. In an effort to
improve credibility and corroborate results, researchers in the field often suggest triangulation (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Triangulation is used to enhance the trustworthiness of qualitative data by limiting both methodological and personal biases, while also enhancing generalizability (N. K. Denzin & Lincoln, 1998, 2000). In this study, multiple data collection tools and the employment of five key informant interviews were methods used to increase credibility and the overall trustworthiness of the study.

Transferability

Transferability, a concept synonymous with external validity in quantitative studies, is the determination if results can be transferred to other situations or have utility in different contexts (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Miles & Huberman, 1994). This study sought to enhance transferability by allowing for thick and rich description of the overall findings, participants shared experiences and perceptions, as well as the context in which data was collected. This was aided by detailed field notes, memoing and dissertation journaling, that allowed for greater description in an effort to enhance transferability.

Dependability

Dependability refers to the consistency of results over time and across researchers. This concept is similar to that of reliability in quantitative research (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Miles & Huberman, 1994). In an effort to address dependability, I employed a peer debriefer who assisted throughout the entire study. Regular debriefing sessions were held, more frequently during data collection an analysis to discuss
emergent findings. The debriefer was asked to review transcripts and tapes of interviews to determine any problems with data collection, particularly leading questions areas in need of additional probing and changes that needed to be made. At three points during data collection, the debriefer was given three tapes and transcripts to review. Additionally, beliefs and findings were discussed with the debriefer to determined in similar conclusions could be drawn based on these findings.

Confirmability

In qualitative research, it is assumed that each researcher has a unique world view and incorporates a unique perspective in their work. Therefore, confirmability, the degree to which results could be corroborated if conduct by an independent researcher or confirmed by the work of others, is important to trustworthiness (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Miles & Huberman, 1994). To enhance trustworthiness and confirmability, I continually went back to the data, reevaluating recurrent themes and emergent findings. Additionally, the peer debriefer and I discussed personal perceptions and bias and those biases were explicitly stated prior to data collection.

The Role of the Researcher

Inherent to trustworthiness and quality of results is the role of the researcher in data collection and analysis. Particularly with qualitative research, which typically includes observations and the researcher’s interpretation of thoughts, words and the actions of others, the potential for bias exists and the role of the researcher must be addressed. In qualitative research, the researcher must make an effort to view situations
and events without making value judgments and attempt to remain neutral (Fetterman, 1998). A challenging task, the researcher must build rapport, establish a sense of trust and gain the cooperation of participants. This is a difficult task, as researchers tend to ask sensitive questions and participants may be uncomfortable sharing answers (Neuman, 1997). Additionally, this attempt is increasingly difficult as all researchers bring with them personal beliefs and individual bias.

Nueman (1997) acknowledged six categories of interviewer bias: 1) errors by the respondent, 2) unintentional errors, 3) intentional errors by the interviewer, 4) influence of interview expectations, 5) failure to probe properly, and 6) the influence of the researcher on responses. Each of these categories was addressed in varying degrees in the present study. Overall, the experience and training of the interviewer was vital to the reduction of bias. Having worked on other qualitative studies and being trained to conduct both interviews and focus groups helped me to be comfortable in any interview setting, allowed me to provide the appropriate level of comfort and empathy to the participant and ensured proper probing techniques and methods of elucidating information. Experience also helped to reduce any unintentional errors, including sloppiness and failure to probe correctly (Neuman, 1999). Experience and training helped me to control my response to statements made during the interview, reducing error associated with participant response based on interviewer reactions. Additionally, being a well-trained interviewer helped to enhance the integrity of the study and there were no intentional errors.

To help reduce errors by the respondents, in particular not divulging information, support was gained from all organizations before any interviews were conducted. Due to
the sensitive nature of questioning, participants were also made aware of a general objective of the study, to learn more about how their organization provided humanitarian assistance. I also shared my background and orientation with participants and I constantly acknowledged my role as an outsider attempting to learn more. Throughout the entire process, I also took the stance of “knowing nothing.” While this was difficult task, it allowed the participant to take on the role of a teacher and teaching me about the organization eliminated any potential bias that would result from the participant believing I was an expert or that I was critiquing the organization.

While there were a number of methods for reducing bias that were valued in this study, the most important included implicitly stating my biases prior to conducting the research. Being mindful of any preconceived notions helped to control the effects of personal bias on questioning, ensuring that I was not letting bias come through in the interviewer. To aid with this, I worked regularly with a peer debriefer. The debriefer and I would meet to discuss potentials for bias and methods of overcoming that bias. For example, if I was feeling drawn to a particular methodology of aid delivery over another, I shared that with the debriefer and then made conscious efforts not to let that bias show in lines of questioning. To further ensure the neutrality of thoughts and statements, the debriefer was asked to read a selection of transcripts while also listening to the accompanying interview tapes. Any potential indicators of bias or leading questions were addressed. Throughout the study, I also kept a detailed journal of my thoughts, perceptions, and beliefs. In this journal, I acknowledged potential bias, implicitly stating bias and discussing the possible effect on the research and strategies for overcoming.
Funding

Funding for the proposed research has been granted through the Research Program at the Center for Disaster Management and Humanitarian Assistance (CDHMA), a program that aims to facilitate the discovery and application of scientific knowledge related to disaster preparedness and mitigation. This competitive grant program is funded by the U.S. Department of Defense (DOD) though the Office of Naval Research (ONR). The study was awarded a one-year, non-renewable grant totaling $30,000.00.

Dissemination of Results

The data collected as part of this study was used to complete the requirements for a doctoral dissertation at the University of South Florida College of Public Health. Results will also be published in peer-reviewed literature, in an effort to provide insight and understanding into the organizational culture of humanitarian aid organizations and the role of organizational culture in inter-organizational collaboration, while also building an empirical base. Additionally, copies of the study and results will also be supplied to those organizations and participants who were involved.

The Center for Disaster Management and Humanitarian assistance has expressed interest in the results of the study, as well as the presentation of results at their annual Interoperable Regional Humanitarian Assistance and Natural Disasters Seminar Program (INTERHANDS). This five day program is designed to provide military and civilian members with basic information about disaster management. Therefore, initial dissemination plans include presentation at the Integrated Regional Humanitarian
Assistance and Natural Disasters Training Program conference (INTERHANDS), as well as other training conferences such as Peacekeeping Operations Seminars (PKO), Fuerzas Aliadas Humanitarian (FAHUM) and other conferences geared to humanitarian assistance and organizational collaboration in relief efforts. The researcher also plans to summit abstracts for presentations at the American Public Health Association’s annual meeting and the Global Health Council’s Annual meeting.
CHAPTER IV

RESULTS: THREE CASE STUDIES IN HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE

Introduction to the Chapter

This chapter describes the results of data collected from in-depth, semi-structured interviews with personnel, staff and volunteers from three organization types prominent in the field of humanitarian assistance: 1) the U.S. military, 2) The International Federation of the Red Cross and 3) and a sampling of local and indigenous humanitarian aid organizations. The chapter begins with a brief overview of the study and the current situation in Haiti, the region of focus. The chapter is then divided into three case studies. Each case study begins with a critical incident from my field notes. Critical incidents are used to describe formative events that helped to develop an impression of the organization and its culture. Similar to techniques used by Gundry and Rousseau (1994), I will use description, details of the incident including details of those involved, observations and behaviors, and message, my interpretation of the event, to highlight some issues of major importance to the understanding of the aid delivery process by each organization type. In each case study, the critical incident will be followed by an overview of the organization, its background, and its mission. Throughout the case study, participants describe, in their own words, important facets of the organization including the organization’s roles and responsibilities in the delivery of humanitarian assistance, success and barriers to the aid delivery process, indicators of organizational
collaboration, and characteristics of organizational culture. References are also made to observations and organizational materials, including print documentation. A section is also dedicated to recurring themes within the organization type. The data presented in this chapter is used to guide the organizational culture analysis, presented in Chapter V.

Throughout each case study, “italics” is used to identify comments taken directly from participant interviews. Additionally, my field notes are referenced from time to time, typically in the form of a critical incident. These references appear in verbatim. To identify the text, field notes are given a title, are dated and appear as indented, single-spaced text.
Background

Almost daily, we are reminded of the devastating effects of disasters – both natural and man-made. During the course of this study alone, the world faced a possible humanitarian crisis associated with war in Afghanistan and Iraq, a devastating 2004-hurricane season for the U.S. and the Caribbean, wildfires, earthquakes, the December 2004 tsunami and a disastrous 2005 hurricane season. Disasters of this magnitude leave lasting impact on those populations directly affected, as well as those who look on in horror. They also leave many asking why – why are some spared, while others were devastated? Why does the hardest hit always seem to be the poorest or those already the most in need? While bringing up many questions, the disasters of late have also highlighted the need for effective aid delivery systems to help those suffering from the consequences of disaster, further illustrating the importance of this study and its findings.

The following passage is an excerpt from my field notes. It outlines my first thoughts and reactions after visiting a refugee camp along the border of Haiti and the Dominican Republic just weeks after devastating flooding in the area. The purpose of the passage is to offer the reader a better understanding of the situation, as I observed, and the context in which this study was conducted.

Critical Incident: The Refugee Camp

Jimani, Dominican Republic

I am not even really sure where to start. The refugee camp was nothing like I expected – so much better, so much worse. The trip out to the camp was very interesting. We went through Caribbean towns, typical tropical villages. We
went beyond, up into the hills, where the land becomes desertish, where you find nothing but cactus and sand. No sign of the tropical villages I had visited previously. The land was hard, as was the life. Piddy (my driver) showed me the mountains and shared their story. These mountains were a natural barrier between the Dominican Republic and Haiti. I had often wondered how so many Haitians got on rickety rafts and attempted to make it to Florida…I couldn’t fathom anything being that bad that you would risk your life to get on a raft, only to be sent home. And I couldn’t understand why they didn’t try to head to the Dominican Republic first. I knew the political reasons and the longstanding discontent for Haitians by Dominicans but I had no idea how rough and ragged the mountain range was as a deterrent. I was told it was a three day trip by foot, over a mountain range with no water. The conditions were desert-like and one’s probability of survival almost nil. I could not fathom this. I stared at the mountains looking, wondering. How could it be that bad? I asked how many made it and was told hundreds come across, it is a steady flow. But many die on the way and many more are returned home, typically to try again. Later in the day, I would witness this firsthand. I can still see those faces. Even before I knew their story, I could feel their pain. It was written in their eyes, you could see it in their face. Worry, fear, anxiety. These are feelings that translate in any language. Words are not necessary. It was a large yellow school bus, filled with people, dark in color, much darker than the Dominicans I was with, a sure sign the people on the bus were Haitian. I asked but already knew the answer. They were being deported. Three days, risking life and limb, a desert climb, fear, worry –
all for naught. To be sent home, a sentence worse than death, I thought to myself. How? How am I so fortunate? How have they been fated for such a life? How could it be that bad?? How would it ever get better? How could I help?

I was certain to find more sadness and the look of more pain in the faces I encountered. I was heading to Jimaní, the home to hundreds of Haitian refugees and as many displaced Dominicans. A small town on the border of Haiti and the Dominican Republic, many Haitians found refuge here. Unfortunately, their fate was not much better here than at home. In June, torrential rains led to flooding that destroyed the region. Destroyed. I had heard the word, I’ve seen things destroyed. I have seen it in pictures. Nothing prepared me for what I was to see. Just as we entered town, we stopped so I could take pictures. I almost couldn’t believe what I was taking pictures of. There was nothing. Nothing. Shreds of wood, trees, rocks - this area was once filled with homes. Now it shown like a riverbed missing the water needed to survive. How was this once an area filled with homes? How could they just be gone? It was incomprehensible to me. I never understood destruction before today.

We drove by a cemetery washed over. Graves exposed, crosses broken, headstones on their sides. I will never forget the feelings of grief and sadness that the place evoked. The flooding came through Jimaní late in the early hours of the morning. People woke only on account of the screams and the water. There was no warning and the force of the river overtook the town. I was told stories of entire families being washed from their beds and down to the lake. I heard stories of the Civil Defense attempting to save people from the crocodiles to no avail. In
my mind this was a wife’s tale. However, I was assured this was the truth. I am still not sure about the number of people who were eaten by crocodiles but the town’s people assured me - it occurred. Their stories confirmed by written reports and published news articles. One Haitian man told me, “We are not the only ones hungry.” His words struck me. Starvation and destruction…Jimani, the refugee camp, and the area where I stood were not the only places infused with starvation and destruction. Pockets throughout the entire country had a similar fate. I guess it probably isn’t much different from home. The richest of the richest reside beside the poorest of the poor. Disparity at its finest.

(July, 2004)

For many, including those Haitian refugees living among the border regions, the effects of natural disasters are amplified by political, socioeconomic and environmental factors which turn a natural disaster into a complex emergency of catastrophic proportions. The above critical incident, illustrates my first thoughts upon entering Jimani, a town along the Dominican-Haitian border affected by flooding in the region during May of 2004. In the region, more than 2,000 people were killed. Both sides of the border were impacted and the disaster was one of the hardest to hit the Caribbean in decades. Unfortunately, it was not the only disaster to affect Haiti or the Dominican Republic in 2004.

Hurricane Jeanne, a powerful September 2004 hurricane wreaked havoc in the Caribbean and Florida. This storm is another example of the compounding effects of a disaster in a country already in crisis. According to the National Hurricane Center
(2005), the final death toll in Haiti was more than 3,000, nearly 2,900 of which occurred in the coastal city of Gonaives. An additional 200,000 people in Gonaives alone faced the complete destruction of their homes, belongings, and livelihoods.

The death and destruction that occurred in Haiti was devastating, particularly when compared to that of other countries struck by Hurricane Jeanne. In those countries, there were only a handful of deaths: one in Puerto Rico, three in Florida and eighteen in neighboring Dominican Republic (National Climatic Data Center, 1999). While Haiti appeared to face the brunt of the disaster, the current health, ecological, economic, and political crisis already existing in the country can be directly linked to the enormous loss of life in Haiti, further illustrating the overwhelming devastation of complex humanitarian emergencies.

Disasters such as those that occurred in 2004 are examples of why it is so important to understand the aid delivery process, as well as the factors that aid or hinder that process. The devastation that occurred in Haiti following Hurricane Jeanne and the flooding that occurred earlier in May 2004 along the Haitian-Dominican border allowed an opportunity for me to experience a complex humanitarian disaster personally and to interview those that were active in the relief and recovery. It was my hope that by focusing some of the questions on one area, there would be greater opportunity to draw comparisons among participant experiences. To aid in this, all of the local organizations recruited for the study were either Haitian organizations or organizations that worked directly in Haiti, an area where both the International Federation of the Red Cross and the U.S. military have also been active, allowing for comparison among all groups.
Case Studies

Areas that are affected by complex humanitarian emergencies are often host to a number of organizations that supply aid and assistance. Active organizations often come from a variety of backgrounds and have varying missions. The following section will be broken into three parts, each consisting of a case study presenting a major organization type prominent in aid delivery. The three case studies will be as follows: (1) the U.S. Military, (2) the International Federation of the Red Cross and (3) a sampling of local and indigenous organizations.

Organizations that are called to deliver aid come from a variety of backgrounds, including multilateral, bilateral, and international and indigenous non-governmental organizations. Due to the complexity of issues surrounding multilateral or multinational aid, this study focused primarily on bilateral aid (the U.S. Military), an International NGO (the International Federation of the Red Cross), and a sampling of indigenous non-governmental organizations. These organizations, key organization types in the aid delivery process differ greatly in background, structure, size, management, leadership theoretical orientation, and approach to aid delivery. While each organization has their unique approach to aid delivery, all are credited with valued successes and severe downfalls. These areas will be discussed in more detail in each of the case studies. Their understanding is important as current trends push for increased collaboration between organizations, regardless of orientation.
The U.S. Military: A Case Study

The following critical incident is an excerpt taken from my field notes regarding an observation at a training conference for U.S. military personnel active in peacekeeping operations and humanitarian action. Conferences and trainings are used by the military to inform and train personnel regarding procedures, protocol, current “activity in the region” and lessons learned from previous operations. Many conferences are also broken up into two sections; one part is in lecture or seminar format and the other more practical in design. The practical portion is often a series of vignettes or table top exercises that allow the participants to work their way through situations that may occur before actually being confronted with that situation in the field. The following incident documents my observations as officers involved in a practical vignette grappled with protocol and procedures that could potentially impede a humanitarian mission.

*Critical Incident: Making the Right Decision*

Training is an important part of the U.S. military, particularly in regards to humanitarian assistance. The military appears to be making a conscious effort to train officers to fulfill humanitarian missions and to understand the organizations that they will encounter in the field. During many of these trainings, officers are given vignettes to help them work through issues they may encounter. To date, I have witnessed a number of these trainings, the closest that I will be able to get to naturalistic observations of military aid. Trainings have included everything from logistical issues to security issues to working with other organizations. For some of the officers present, these issues are new and foreign, to others they are old hat.
As a participant at the conferences and trainings, I feel that my participation is not affecting the interaction and discussions during the vignettes. In most cases, I feel as if I go almost unnoticed, particularly as there is a task at hand to be completed and my presence does not matter to the outcome of the assignment. Organizational culture at its finest!

Today, the groups went through a number of vignettes relating directly to humanitarian assistance. … I was very struck by the conversation in this vignette and what I witnessed as a humanitarian light bulb in the middle of a command and control exercise. The group consisted of 10 officers, only two of which had ever worked together before today. They varied as much in rank as they did in stature and disposition. Some prominent players instantly came to the forefront as leaders in the group – a soft-spoken but influential colonel, a loud and boisterous 2nd lieutenant that appeared to be very knowledgeable about military aid and the processes that must be adhered to, and a staunch major who appears to never fray from command and control and was skeptical of military involvement in humanitarian endeavors and working with NGOs.

The group was asked to deal with a difficult but probable scenario, one designed to make them question the process of aid delivery by the military, their mission, and the grey line between military involvement and military aid delivery. In this scenario, the group was given strict orders regarding the dispersing of supplies to a group in Country X, a war town area facing a complex humanitarian disaster. They were dropping supplies by helicopter to a group cut off from the mainland and facing the threat of a storm and subsequent starvation.
In typical military fashion, one gentleman, a major, gave a briefing on the scenario that was presented. His briefing was very factual in nature, concise and to the point. During his briefing, he reminded the group that in this scenario, they must adhere to UN guidelines. They were to provide logistical support only. Some of the members appeared a little confused by his comments and others commented that they needed more details. I thought that there was ample information to complete the activity but many of the group needed to know the mission and their duties, to the minutest details. Discussion followed for quite some time regarding UN guidelines and what the U.S. military is “slated” or “tasked” to do nationally. Initially, the discussion was about standing orders, resource availability, and budgetary constraints. However, as the vignette wore on, the military was faced with a unique problem. After dropping one load of relief supplies, it was determined that some critically ill patients needed to be evacuated to a hospital. While the mission was only authorized to fly “one helo,” there was not enough room on the helicopter for all those that were critically ill or wounded and it was apparent that a second relief trip would be needed to evacuate additional refugees and drop enough supplies to help the population sustain through the night. An ice storm was predicted to hit the area within the next 24 hours. The population was unprepared and could not survive with the supplies currently available. Authorization was not given for a second trip and there were concerns over the time allotment for the flight. The trip would take 4.5 hours each way, not including the time it would take to distribute relief supplies and load the ill patients. The next available flight could leave at 0900 hours. The
airstrip would close promptly at 1800 hours due to weather conditions and therefore there was not enough time to complete the trip.

Within the group, there was much discussion over flight authorization, commands, the number of authorized flight hours, the risk associated with attempting a flight without enough return time and methods of getting approval for the trip. At first, the conversation was directed to command and control issues and the logistics of trip. Discussion was very cold and it was almost as if the mission was detached from the recipients of the aid. Finally, one lieutenant brought up the potential deaths of thousands. The conversation turned. There was much discussion within the group over the population that was certain to starve and freeze to death if supplies were not delivered and those that were sure to die if not evacuated immediately to receive medical care.

The time allotment allowed only enough time for the trip there and back, with no extra time for allocation of food or loading the ill patients. One young 2nd lieutenant brought up the timing issue. He appeared to be very knowledgeable about helicopters and flight procedures. He stated his concerns about attempts to cut flight time and gain the necessary approval. Another lieutenant made a point about the differentiation in ways to interpret “getting approval” but acknowledged that timing is an issue. He appeared willing to sway from the roles but his comments always went back to command and control issues. A major commented about the lives that will be lost if a mission is not attempted. Another major firmly stated that he will “not risk an aircraft or crew for this mission.” I was amazed that risking the aircraft would even be part of his statement and there
was no mention of the innocent lives that were certain to be lost if there was no attempt to save them. The lieutenant repeatedly stated that there are people in need of supplies and urgent medical attention and that something must be done to help them. The group tried to find ways around the timing issues and utilize any resources within the refugee camp. It was determined that the only solution would be a second relief trip but the return trip was uncertain. There was much debate over whether or not there can be special arrangements made to keep the airstrip open.

The discussion in the group was dominated by four officers – a lieutenant, a major, a lieutenant colonel, and a colonel who appeared to have experience with similar circumstances. However, the group was pretty well versed and willing to share their ideas and opinions. It was interesting to see the varying degrees of experience and, how in some situations, a lieutenant had more experience with the process and procedures than a lieutenant colonel. In most cases, the group did not appear to be thinking outside the box. There was considerable discussion of using the helicopter “within the law.” A lieutenant recommended not conducting the mission and there was much discussion and argument over the final decision. Finally, a sergeant who worked in an air squadron acknowledged that maybe there was a way to extend the hours of the airstrip. However, the group did not seem to focus on this option, with little discussion of how to obtain the waiver. This did not seem to be at all related to his rank as his comments appeared to be as well received as others. It appeared to be more related to the fact that authorizing a trip was in violation of orders and did not follow the command. Instead, there
was discussion over how serious the critically ill were and if there was any chance the refugees could survive the ice storm without additional supplies.

After listening, making comments referring to orders and, asking questions, a Marine Corp colonel addressed the group and shared what he would do – in fact, what he did in the same situation. He discussed the risks and the benefits, the pros and the cons, command and control and the grey line of authority. Finally he shared with the group what he would do. I watched as junior officers and those lacking in practical experience took his advice and his wisdom to heart. And when he stepped up and firmly stated what he would do, he made a clear and poignant case for his action and the group agreed. Between every right and wrong decision lie political situations, protocol, standing orders, the need to do good and the people that you protect or hurt with your actions. Today, the group made the “right decision.”

(April 6, 2005)

The above critical incident highlights an important moment in my understanding of the complexity of military humanitarian action, the intricate details of which will be discussed in more detail throughout this case study. It was the first time that I, an observer, was able to witness the duality of military humanitarian assistance and the line between the desire to do good and the limitations of military protocol.

As illustrated in my field notes, military humanitarian assistance is often a complex process greatly impacted by protocol and procedures and dependant on chain of command decisions. The incident also illustrates nuances of U.S. military involvement,
as well as aspects of military culture in terms of values, organizational structures, management styles, and leadership. Noted components of culture were displayed in discussions directly related to the vignette scenario, as well as the manner in which the officers approached the scenario, and are important to the understanding of military humanitarian assistance. In this case study, facets of military involvement in aid delivery will be explored in more detail, with particular focus placed on the role of U.S. Southern Command, the unified command responsible for the area including Haiti and the Dominican Republic.

Background: U.S. Military Involvement in Humanitarian Assistance

The U.S. military has a long-standing tradition of providing aid and assistance during times of crisis. The mission of the U.S. military, as stated by a General who participated in this study and confirmed by the Department of Defense website is to “deter war and to protect the security of our country.” While military involvement in humanitarian action may not seem to fit into this mission, there is much support for doing so. Military involvement, however, is a complex and detailed process and will be discussed in more detail.

As the Cold War ended, the world was divided into commands to protect the U.S. from all potential enemies. Over time, the command structure evolved to meet changing needs globally. Today, it consists of five regional commands: Pacific Command (PACOM), Central Command (CENTCOM), Southern Command (SOUTHCOM), European Command (EURCOM), and Northern Command (NORTHCOM). The globe is divided to ensure proper coverage to each region of the world. The United States
Southern Command (SOUTHCOM), the focal command for this study, is located in Miami, Florida and is responsible for “the land mass of Latin America south of Mexico; the waters adjacent to Central and South America; the Caribbean Sea, with its 13 island nations, and European and U.S. territories; the Gulf of Mexico; and a portion of the Atlantic Ocean” (US Southern Command, 2006a). Southern Command’s “area of responsibility” or AOR spans 32 countries and 14.5 million square miles (Command, 2005). Southern Command also has nearly 3,000 permanently assigned military and civilian personnel, many of whom have worked to provide humanitarian aid and assistance to the region.

Following Hurricanes Georges (1998) and Mitch (1998), SOUTHCOM’s responsibilities within the region began to shift toward a more humanitarian mission providing a great opportunity for personnel to participate in humanitarian missions. Hurricane Georges ravaged the Caribbean and was responsible for almost 600 deaths (NCDC, 1999). However, it is also important to note discrepancies in reporting and that the final death toll was believed to be much greater due to the difficulties in reporting missing, unregistered, or migrant Haitian workers, as well as general reporting issues in poverty stricken areas affected by such widespread devastation (USAID, 1998). During the same year, Hurricane Mitch, considered one of the most devastating natural disasters to strike Central America in more than 200 years, left the region destroyed and highlighted some of SOUTHCOM’s inadequacies in their own AOR. Combined, Hurricanes Georges and Mitch revealed that the U.S. was ill prepared to deal with the imminent threat of natural disasters in the region. With political instability as the utmost concern for the U.S. military, this also refocused activities, shifting from monitoring
political factions at work in the region, to a more prominent threat to instability in the region - natural disasters. One participant, a colonel from the U.S. Army emphasized this shift to humanitarianism by Southern Command, stating:

"Prior to hurricane Mitch in Nicaragua, Central America was moving out of their internal regional wars, the contra war type, and you remember Nicaragua was a Marxist type government...Then Hurricane Mitch hit. The government of Nicaragua asked the U.S. for help. Ok. So that opened the doors [for a humanitarian relationship between the U.S. and Nicaragua], year after year and so on [we send humanitarian teams to the country]."

His comments are very telling of the shift to a more humanitarian mission in response to changing needs within the AOR. They also provide some insight into military involvement in humanitarian assistance and the rationale for military involvement in such activities.

Figure 1 is a copy of a chart presented at a military training, which identifies protocol for U.S. military involvement in humanitarian operations. A complex procedure, the initial request must always start with the country asking for assistance. Following a disaster, a request is made to either the U.S. ambassador, the Chief of Mission or local USAID or ODFA offices. The need can then be coordinated a number of ways and through a number of actors. USAID plays an important role in government provided disaster relief. While not under the direct control of the Department of Defense, USAID works to coordinate disaster relief and humanitarian action through cabinet or country teams. Additionally, USAID works through OFDA, the Office of Foreign
Disaster Affairs, which participates in planning at the operational level. For small scale or localized disasters, the local USAID/OFDA office can coordinate directly with the U.S. milgroup to provide assistance. Milgroups are U.S. military groups positioned in countries in Central or South America. Milgroups typically consists of U.S. military personnel, in-country support staff, and U.S. employees. They work for Southern Command, allowing a thorough regional focus and working in support of Department of Defense and Department of State goals to enhance regional cooperation. Disasters of a larger scale are typically coordinated through the head of the government, who asks the U.S. ambassador or Chief of Mission for assistance. Depending on the magnitude of the disaster and the scope of the response required, the Ambassador or Chief of Mission may coordinate directly with Southern Command for disaster relief. If the disaster is of a greater magnitude, the Ambassador or Chief of Mission will coordinate with OFDA Washington, who will request assistance through the Office of the Secretary of Defense, with response channeling through the Department of Defense to the appropriate level of operation.
The primary responsibility of the U.S. military in responding to disasters and providing humanitarian assistance is the establishment of security. Typical duties include securing the environment and providing transportation, communication, and security. During a complex crisis, the role of the military may evolve into more direct efforts. However, the military is never mandated to be the lead agency in an international response effort and always works in direct support of the host government and the relief efforts in country.

Another type of military humanitarian involvement particular to SOUTHCOM includes their Humanitarian Assistance Programs, developed in the mid 1980s due to the need for support and assistance in the AOR. These programs further evolved following Hurricane Mitch. The Humanitarian Assistance Program, known as HAP by the military,
was established and coordinated by Southern Command. This program is an attempt to support Latin American countries as they prepare for and respond to natural disasters. Another program known as HCA or the Humanitarian Civil Action, includes medical readiness training exercises, which provide medical, dental and veterinary assistance to areas in need. Yet another program, New Horizons, the most commonly mentioned humanitarian assistance program in this study, was designed in the mid-1980s as a training program. The program is intended to train military personnel in the areas of engineering and medical aid. The program has helped to aid in reconstruction efforts following devastating disasters in the region, including Hurricane Georges and Hurricane Mitch in 1998.

However, following Hurricanes Mitch and Georges, the program expanded to aid in recovery efforts in the region. Each of these programs is designed to be complementary, as they are important training tools for military personnel and provide lifesaving resources for communities in Central and South America. These programs also represent the commonly held expectation that the “military will continue to participate in humanitarian operations, especially those in which our [U.S.] interests are affected or threatened in any way.”

Mission

While working to fulfill the overall mission of the U.S. military, the individual mission of U.S. Southern Command is: “To conduct military operations and promote security cooperation to achieve U.S. strategic objectives. This mission has never been more critical than it is today, in the wake of the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks on
the United States. This mission has no more important focus than within our own hemisphere” (US Southern Command, 2005). To fulfill this mission, Southern Command, is guided by the vision of its commander: “to embrace the concept of preventive defense through constructive engagement. By promoting democracy, establishing good working relationships amongst all the countries of the region, and engendering a true respect for human rights, we believe that most conflicts can be resolved peacefully. This is the vision for Southern Command, a community of nations working together for the benefit of all their peoples. Southern Command believes that military institutions have roles as positive, non-political, defense-oriented elements of their societies. They provide the State the force required to protect sovereignty from foreign and domestic enemies. Absent such legitimate armed forces operating in support of their civilian-elected leadership, the possibility of internal conflict and chaos increases” (US Southern Command, 2005).

Unspoken in both the mission statement and the vision statement are the need for humanitarian assistance in the region and the role of the U.S. military in support of those needs. For those who work to provide humanitarian assistance in the area, the connection between the missions of both the U.S. military and Southern Command, as well as the tasking of personnel to participate in humanitarian missions is a “no brainer.” Crises and disasters undermine politics, local infrastructure, and human rights – opening the door to political instability in the region. Thus, humanitarian action in “the theater is a critical issue to the U.S. military.”

When asked about this, one lieutenant colonel said, “Our mission has nothing [in it] about humanitarian aid but it is one of the most important duties in our AOR [Area of
Responsibility].” Support for this comment was particularly common among senior officers, only one of whom questioned military involvement in the humanitarian process. Many examples were given discussing the importance of military involvement in humanitarian action within the region, in particular the New Horizons Program and the Humanitarian Assistance Program. Many of the participants of the military sample, about one-third, have participated in a New Horizons exercise. The program has been used as part of “SOUTHCOM’s dedication to aiding the vulnerable in the region, improving health status and positively impacting quality of life.” Participants are also quick to mention that the program does not just benefit the community. It is also beneficial to the troops who are able to “hone in on important medical skills, learn about working with disadvantaged poor and getting out into the region showing a positive presence,” further supporting the involvement of the military, as such training prepares personnel for war time.

Roles and Responsibilities of the U.S. Military in Aid Delivery

Recent shifts of U.S. military involvement in humanitarian assistance since the end of the Cold War are often cited. However, the military actually has a long-standing history of supporting humanitarian action. One colonel highlighted the role of the U.S. armed forces in humanitarian assistance, as well as part of the rationale for military involvement in aid delivery:

“When you look at the history of our nation, it has been the military that has delivered humanitarian aid during crisis. You know, during the Berlin Wall days,
after the first Gulf War, to northern Iraq, the Kurds. Mainly because, one we have the logistics infrastructure to be able to move large amounts of cargo, put it in planes, put it into vehicles, to move it. Ah, and to do it quickly. To be able to also move soldiers along with it, to protect it and so on. Something that we don't like is to stay long to do for long because we feel that our commitments are different.”

His comment, supported by interviews conducted with U.S. military personnel, touch on the numerous humanitarian missions worldwide through which those in uniform participate, as well as their focus on the initial response and recovery efforts. Other areas of involvement mentioned by participants in this study included Somalia, Kosovo, Central and South America and most recently the Tsunami of 2004 and Hurricane Katrina in 2005. Still, these are only a handful of examples of military humanitarian actions.

In terms of providing support for others, the military is credited with a number of key roles. Particular duties mentioned by participants include: control, security, transportation, medical, specialists, and engineers. Such duties are synonymous with military roles worldwide and are the duties typically tasked to military entities during humanitarian operations.

Throughout the interviews, there was much discussion about the capacity of the U.S. military in delivering humanitarian assistance. The military, themselves, were very critical of their role in aid delivery, often citing their logistical abilities and the importance of security operations but acknowledging weakness associated with their cultural sensitivity, an important factor when dealing with a vulnerable population. One
lieutenant colonel acknowledged that the differing approaches to humanitarian assistance and military objectives can sometimes serve as a barrier to providing assistance but also noted that the military is becoming more sensitive to working with other populations. His comments were supported by numerous others who have seen a change in military philosophy regarding humanitarian action in the past decade, possibly alluding to a paradigm shift.

“For example, setting up a refugee camp. The last group of people I would ask to set up a refugee camp is the Marine Corps. They are great at setting up tents but they know how to set up tents like a Marine Corps base – straight lines and things, not taking into account all the cultural issues, all the safety issues, all the different health related issues that would be applied to a population versus a troop camp. So just in that example I've learned a lot because a year ago I would have had that Marine Corps mentality of setting up a refugee camp. Now I have a completely different understanding. And if we were tasked to do that I could at least bring that to the planning table where before it didn't make any difference to me, put them in rows.”

- Lieutenant colonel

“I think we have leaned a lot. Hell, we’ve changed a lot. We do humanitarian missions through the HAP (Humanitarian Assistance Program). It is so different from our other hat but I love it. And we’ve learned a lot. You see little kids who are malnourished and we know what to do, how to act appropriate, be respective
of their culture. Before, we didn’t. You’d have male physicians working with
female patients in cultures that don’t tolerate that. We’ve really changed.

- 2nd Lieutenant

Comments such as the ones above are indicative of differing capacities of military
tentities, as well as a possible paradigm shift that is beginning to occur in the U.S. military
regarding roles, responsibilities, and methods of achieving a mission. The possible
paradigm shift can be credited to a number of events, including the end of the Cold War,
the increased severity of natural disasters and a moral imperative to support humanitarian
operations. However, it is important to note that this possible paradigm shift has been
challenged and perhaps stalled altogether following the events of September 11, 2001.
The terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center in New York challenged any shift in the
mission of the U.S. military, refocusing the mission back to “protecting our country” and
subsequent wartime activities.

When involved in humanitarian action, capacity and involvement are often
described as “well planned initiatives.” Unfortunately, these initiatives are often
misinterpreted and criticized by non-governmental entities, in part, due to their reliance
on “end date,” a preset determination of when the mission will be terminated and an
important part of the military planning process. One master sergeant described this
process:

“Well the military commander is going to look at it and say ‘Okay, what do I need
to do to set conditions for me to leave?’ He is going to define those conditions.
And it’s not that he is going to solve all the problems but he is going to stabilize the situation enough that the work can be continued by somebody else. But that gets back to collaboration. He needs to be a partner at the table with the state department and the NGOs that are going to take his place to fill those voids. The question is can you get that NGO to come to the table without their oath to being neutral and whatever. They've got to be integrated in the planning process and the military guy has to trust him, bring him into the planning process. I can't just sit down and write a plan that says ‘Okay, I've been to the country, phase I, I've established operations, phase II, I've stabilized the situation, phase III, and phase IV is transition and redeploy.’ I have to transition to somebody. And if the guy that's going to be staying is there they have to know what's going to happen in that long term stabilization.”

He brings up a number of important points supported by interviews with other personnel, including both the importance of end-dates in military planning initiatives and preparing for the transitioning back to the local community. This is often misinterpreted by others, as they see pre-determined termination dates as arbitrary and not mindful of the actual crisis at hand. To their non-governmental counterparts, there is “an important difference between us [NGOs] and them [the military]. It’s a job and they just plan to go home.” In contrast, participants in this study describe the military’s goal in the AOR as to complete the mission by the required end-date to allow for efficient transformation of command. All efforts are made to ensure a reasonable end-date and the structure set forth by this date is detrimental to the overall mission, as well as being driven by the culture of
the organization. Furthermore, while completion of the mission is of the utmost importance, the deadlines set are also reported indicators of success for the military, as well as an important planning tool. As a function of their reliance on end-dates and the planning of short-term work, military humanitarian missions also tend to be less involved in long-term sustainability and more concerned with stabilization of the environment and current situation.

Moreover, the military acknowledges that, in most cases, their humanitarian duties typically lie in the initial response and recovery phase of the crisis and their reliance on other organizations for long-term recovery and sustainability efforts. This was supported by the comments of members of the armed forces, providing insight into the military’s role, and is discussed in more detail in Figure 4. A lieutenant in the U.S. Army acknowledges initial recovery efforts as being the military’s primary role:

“To us, humanitarian assistance is often a lot about recovery. So we send troops to help make shelters, to help repair once it is safe. Our men do everything from clinical nursing in the shelters to handing out food and water. Basically whatever needs to be done, we do. And part of my job is ensuring the troops are trained and prepared for their orders.”

Although focused primarily on the initial recovery phase of disaster, the military is, however, also concerned about sustainability, in particular the impact of the disaster on stability of the region. This was of particular concern to those of higher rank and more senior officers. A general and each of the colonels that were interviewed discussed how important sustainability was to the long term survival of an area or region. However, throughout all military interviews, including the ones that mentioned the importance of
sustainability, it became apparent that “end dates” or “end states” are a necessary and important aspect of military aid, as one participant mentioned, “It’s the nature of our role.” Each mission is set with an end date, a timeline of sorts. With such emphasis on end dates, yet concern for sustainability and regional stability, someone must be relied on to fill the gap. One colonel shares, “You try to ensure that someone is there to take over when you leave.” It can be inferred that while the military is an important part of the aid delivery process, their role remains one that is involved during the emergency phase of a crisis and long-term sustainability is left to those that will continue to work in the region when the military pulls out. This supports the importance of organizational collaboration to the overall success of the mission.

Active in humanitarian actions worldwide, and credited with the logistical capacity to respond rapidly to disaster, military participants argue that their involvement in humanitarian missions is critical. Their role, however, is not without its critics. At the time of the interview, one colonel expressed his frustration with a recent article that was critical of military involvement in humanitarian action. In his words, the article stated that, “militaries had no business doing humanitarian aid and that was best left to NGOs and other organizations that really knew how to do the job and were more capable.” He disagreed vehemently with this comment and discussed many of the successes of the military in humanitarian missions. When asked how he would respond to the article, the colonel stated:

“I would say if that was the case, how come we still have a mess in Haiti? How come we still have a mess in your country, where Haiti is a country that has more
NGOs per square mile than in any other place in the western hemisphere? And the reason for it is because the temptation and I speak this from my own experience, when you get personally involved in humanitarian aid, it feels good because you are doing something that is bigger than you. It is bigger than yourself and you are helping people that are really in need. But by not tying it up to a bigger plan or a bigger picture, what you end up doing is becoming, and this is my own personal phrase, you become “Wal-Mart” for that country or that town or that village and I think we have to be careful that we self perpetuate the NGOs by the way they execute their humanitarian aid. Now certainly there are NGOs out there that are doing a significant amount of training and education so that that country and that village can be self sufficient in the future. I am not saying that all of them are the same but I am saying that a good number of NGOs out there fall under that category where all they are doing is being Wal-Mart for that village and when they leave, there is nothing else because nobody has assumed responsibility. So when you have a plan and work through that government, and somebody can argue that the problem is the government. … The lack of government is a problem in Haiti. Although it is a more complex problem because it is not just the government or the lack of but it is also the culture and their traditions and the way that the people in Haiti have been raised and so on. And how the country has been ravaged by their own culture, own beliefs and so on and so forth, that it is now incapable of sustainment or anything else. … If you are going to say, our church, or our club, or organization, or NGO group or whatever, our aim over the next five years is to help the people of country X.
When established a beginning and an end, and define what the end-state is going to be so that you do not self perpetuate yourself forever in that mission and it never ends.

The colonel’s comments refer again to the reliance by the military on “end-state,” while also alluding to sustainability concerns within the military, an important theme that will be discussed in more detail in future sections. His comments are also a very telling account of the grim picture of Haiti often painted of participants, as well as the lack of accountability that exists in the country. The colonel, along with other participants in this study, place blame on the lack of government in Haiti. He, however, also places some blame back onto the NGOs themselves, showing a lack of confidence in missions conducted by some NGOs working in the region. He also brings up an important concern within the U.S. government – the creation of a welfare state – and his beliefs that NGOs perpetuate this problem. Attitudes and beliefs such as these serve as a possible barrier to relations with those organizations and will be discussed in more detail in future sections.

While the military’s active role in the delivery of aid and assistance is undeniable and participants painted a clear and present need for the participation of armed forces in aid delivery to rebuff the critics in the humanitarian arena, there are even those among the ranks that believe it is not part of the mission. One participant, a lieutenant, commented, “Military, as far as humanitarian, frankly, I say do not do it. It’s ten times more costly.” A similar comment was observed during a training conference by a lieutenant colonel who mentioned not only the cost involved but also the mere difficulties of attempting to collaborate with others. As he made the comment, I noted changes in stature occurred
among conference goers. Top military officials and conference coordinators became what I noted as agitated and side discussions began to occur. Immediately following his briefing the lieutenant colonel was pulled aside by those coordinating the conference. I could only speculate on the nature of this discussion but it appeared to be in response to his comment and off topic remarks, as the goal of the conference was military humanitarianism and inter-operability. These comments were not supported by other conference proceedings or brought up in additional interviews. However, they represent beliefs that may still be prevalent within the military community. Although not prominent in the findings from the study, all of the participants in this study had experience with humanitarian assistance and thus were included in inter-operability training exercises, possibly affecting their feelings and beliefs regarding military involvement in aid delivery. Therefore, internal conflict regarding aid delivery, if at all widespread, needs to be explored in more detail, particularly if the desire is to experience a paradigm shift in the military’s role in humanitarian actions.

Regardless of criticism, the military participants in the study believed that the military’s role in humanitarian action will continue for the unforeseeable future. One female colonel shared her experiences with Operation Provide Comfort, a response to the Kurdish Refugee crisis of 1991. Upon returning from her deployment, she was filled with ideas about improving aid delivery and the need for additional training, training that she wished she had before deployment. However, at the time, she felt her concerns were met with disinterest. She recounted:

“They all said 'Well that will never happen again. The military will never use its medical resources to care for civilians in the way that they did in Operation
Provide Comfort.’ So I sort of said, alright, well nobody cares, I'll just go on about my business. But over the next 5 or 6 years, operation after operation after operation kept occurring and I kept seeing in dribs and drabs people being deployed, and then hearing their after action reports that they basically were asked to do the same thing.”

It was then she realized something needed to be done to change the way the military participated in aid delivery, particularly the training of the U.S. military to provide medical aid to civilian populations which are typically comprised of women, children, and the elderly, a population extremely different from those typically seen by most medics.

To the colonel cited above, as well as others participating in the study, it became clear that the military will become increasingly active in humanitarian missions as complex humanitarian disasters continue to grow in frequency and severity, causing a threat to the political stability of regions of the world. As a result, this particular colonel is now assisting with military humanitarian trainings for primary care physicians so that when they are deployed military physicians are better prepared to provide aid to civilian populations. The training also consists of cultural competence training for working with a civilian population and encourages interactions with NGOs.

The role and responsibilities of the U.S. military in humanitarian trainings is perceived as being of vital importance to their area of responsibility and the people they serve. While the roles and responsibilities are clearly laid out for participants, there appears to be a gap between the actual and perceived power of the military in aid delivery and, when discussing the roles and responsibilities of the U.S. armed forces in the
delivery of humanitarian action, a number of misconceptions arose. Misconceptions were noted in the interview process and supported by frequent observations during conferences and trainings. While there is consistency regarding the procedural actions of the military, there appears to be confusion over control issues associated with aid. For instance, among lieutenants and lower ranking officers, there was much discussion of “tasking,” a term for giving assignments or duties to NGOs by the military. Colonels and lieutenant colonels quickly squelched this kind of talk and tried to stress the importance of collaboration within all organizations, government and NGO alike. On many occasions, senior officers were required to clarify the role of the military to those less informed. For many the actual role of the military in support of humanitarian missions appeared to be new information, even among some who had already participated in military aid delivery.

One military advisor and key informant for this research clarified the role of the military stating, “The U.S. military is not an instrument of 1st resource in responding to humanitarian crisis. The DOD supports civilian relief agencies.” His comments were supported by numerous colonels and lieutenant colonels, with one colonel stating, “We understand our role, we are in support.” Another clarified possible reasoning for the confusion, “Because we are the first in the area and we have tremendous capabilities, people often look to us but we are really in support.” However, these comments may, in fact, be contradictory to that of mainstream thought. All senior officers had a very clear understanding of the military’s role in response efforts, the purpose of a civil military operation center (CMOC), and the process through which NGOs and military collaborate. Yet there appears to be much confusion between the actual power credited to the military
during a disaster, their required support of others, mechanisms for working together, and
the inappropriate desire to task others that emerged among junior officers. This may be
indicative of a lack of understanding among those who are inexperienced or have little
experience with the aid delivery process. While this concept was not overwhelmingly
apparent throughout the interviews, it was noted. It is also important to mention that
most participants in this study had substantial experience with aid delivery, possibly
impacting knowledge. It must also be noted that those with more experience, regardless
of rank, appeared to have greater understanding of the processes.

Role of Southern Command in Haiti

Military involvement in missions varies greatly, particularly when confounded
with political issues, regional concerns and the economic impact of involvement.
Therefore, it becomes extremely difficult to outline the roles and responsibilities of every
humanitarian mission. In an effort to narrow the scope and breadth of the study, military
involvement in Haiti was used as the focal point of this study.

The U.S. Military, while providing overall regional support has also played a role
in the situation in Haiti, through both the UN and SOUTHCOM supported missions. The
United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti, known commonly as MINUSTAH
(Mission des Nations Unies pour la stabilisation en Haïti) was established by UN
Security Council Resolution 1542 on April 30, 2004, in response to the possible threat to
security in the region by the instability of Haiti. Through its mandate, the United Nations
is required "to concentrate the use of its resources, including civilian police, towards
increasing security and protection during the electoral period" and "to assist with the
restoration and maintenance of the rule of law, public safety and public order in Haiti" (MINUSTAH, 2005). Again, the mission is related to security and stability in the region. Participation of U.S. forces in MINUSTAH is geared toward fulfillment of the mission of the U.S. military and Southern Command, while also allowing troops to participate in humanitarian missions in country.

Through participation in MINUSTAH and other Southern Command involvement in Haiti and the Dominican Republic, many participants have worked actively in the region. One major shared his experiences in Haiti, comparing it with other experiences in Somalia. He also discusses a perception of Haiti and the “lost hope” recurring in all interviews:

“With this last operation I kind of had hoped to go back to see what had happened over the last 10 years, although I had heard that pretty much the deterioration, deforestation, and everything. But it really struck me, I went to Somalia and there is thousands of years of history and culture. The nomadic lifestyle, those guys wander around, travel disputes. Then to throw drugs and weapons into the mix, you know, the warlords are not going to just go away. So that was one scenario. But in Haiti it struck me as quite different. It was only a year later, I guess, that I was there. There was genuinely hope in that population. When Aristed came back people were out in the streets painting rocks and taking tree limbs and planting them in freshly dug up dirt so they stood up like new trees. And they lined the main boulevard through town like that. And I mean people were waving and smiling and genuinely there was hope. This whole situation was
over and hopefully they were going to go forward and everything. But now look.

... Everybody says the U.S. has turned it’s back on Haiti, and I’m not a great historian, but we may have turned our back on Haiti but every time we do we end up coming back and paying twice as much. So, I’m just wondering, what the world is going to do about Haiti?”

His question is an important one, the answer to which appears distant to all those who worked in the area. In fact, nobody seems to have the answers but the situation continues to deteriorate and, while there is much focus in the region, efforts almost appear to be for naught. Another Staff Sergeant discussed the role of Southern Command through New Horizons in Haiti, “We delivered humanitarian relief supplies. We delivered supplies to schools and orphanages damaged during Jeanne. We did what we could, we tried to provide a little hope.” Unfortunately, in Haiti it appears that those working in the area are constantly providing pieces of hope, but the goal is never achieved. Hope is never restored in Haiti.

**Commonly Expressed Aspects of Military Humanitarian Assistance**

During interviews, a number of commonly expressed aspects of U.S. military involvement in aid delivery emerged. In the following section of this case study, stories and accounts shared by participants will be discussed, providing support for the importance of each aspect in military humanitarian assistance. The facets of military aid delivery discussed in this section were expressed as crucial elements for group involvement in aid delivery and will be presented in an effort to highlight their role in
military humanitarian assistance, group culture and their impact on organizational collaboration.

The Importance of Command and Control in Military Aid Delivery

Command and Control, as defined in Joint Publication 1-02 (2005), is “the exercise of authority and direction by a properly designated commander over assigned and attached forces in the accomplishment of the mission. Command and control functions are performed through an arrangement of personnel, equipment, communications, facilities, and procedures employed by a commander in planning, directing, coordinating, and controlling forces and operations in the accomplishment of the mission” (JP 1-02, 2005). Understanding the reliance on command and control, often referred to as C2 by the military, is essential for the understanding of military involvement in aid delivery, as it is one of the most perceptible aspects of military aid and an important part of group culture. The features of command and control guide the structure of military involvement and are essential to the adherence of principles associated with chain of command and the conventional hierarchy on which the military relies. Participants in this study credit command and control with the “highly structured” nature of military deployments and initiatives, as well as the “efficiency” through which the military acts. One Sergeant shared, “It’s chain of command. The orders travel downward.”

The impact and reliance on unity of command emerged through interviews with junior officers and non-commissioned officers and staff, who brought up interesting points regarding chain of command. Many of their comments were indicative of the
prominence of command and control in day to day operations, as well as the decision making associated with those operations. A sergeant who participated in humanitarian missions in Croatia, Bosnia, Afghanistan, and Iraq disclosed his position in the command structure while sharing a story of aid delivery. In this particular instance, the sergeant knew that they were delivering humanitarian supplies for the Red Cross but did not know what was being delivered, whom it was going to, or any of the details. His part of the humanitarian mission was transportation, which was all he knew. He stated:

I was involved in a situation where we were moving supplies for them [The Red Cross]. I was involved in an operation in Croatia. We started in Hungary, went to Croatia, to Bosnia-Herzokovenia. We were moving some of their supplies by train and by truck. It was coming all the way from Germany. But that is the extent of it. We moved it [the supplies] and guarded it. That was my duty, transport. I couldn’t tell you if I opened it and oh gosh, it was this. I couldn’t tell you at all. My duty was transport and we made sure it got there, got there safe. But I never opened anything.

As he shared his story, it became apparent that at no point did he, nor would he, question orders or seek more information about the assignment. That simply was not part of his mission. The comments made by this sergeant were confirmed in five other stories shared by either junior officers or non-commissioned offices. Each shared an obligation to the job at hand and a reliance on the command structure. For these participants, their
job was clearly defined and it appeared to be out of their realm of responsibility to outwardly question any of those orders.

While command and control are part of the guiding principles of the U.S. military, their impact on military aid and organizational collaboration can be detected, not only through observations of missions, protocol and procedural operations, but also through careful analysis of comments made by the U.S. military. In some cases, command and control may create challenges for interaction with other organizations, possibly serving as a roadblock to collaboration, particularly when attempting to collaborate with those fearful of government structures or control. For instance, comments made by a number of participants expressed a desire to control or attempt to have control over situations in which aid is delivered. For instance, one lieutenant colonel stated, “One of the challenges with NGOs is keeping them out of harms way.” Another colonel shared similar feelings when discussing the situation in the aftermath of the flooding in Jimaní. He stated, “NGOs want to do it their own way. We asked NGOS that when they arrive they register so we know where they are. Many of them didn’t. They do their own thing...”

The military feel there are sound reasons that justify having tight control of operations. In Jimaní, following the flooding the May 2004, there were a number of instances in which organizations found themselves in personal danger or overwhelmed by the needs of the community. The colonel stated, “…One of those organizations went to the area where they were flooding. Eight hours later they were requesting a helo evac, those people, to take them out of harms way.” In an instance such as this, the need for security and the opposition to being “controlled by the military” created a situation in
which the deliver of aid ended up needing military resources to save themselves. Such stories are also examples of frustrations that the military have with other organizations, in particular those with differing organizational structures, particularly those with less authoritarian management structures. Military personnel readily shared stories of NGOs jeopardizing themselves or others through refusal to submit to the planning and direction provided by strong command and control mechanisms.

*Military Adherence to Protocol and Procedures*

As implicit through their reliance on command and control, the military has established protocol and procedures from which members do not deviate. Deemed a positive aspect of military aid delivery during times of crisis, reliance on protocol and procedures was often expressed as a frustration by those from organizations with less authoritarian management structures. Military protocol is sometimes a major concern and often misinterpreted by non-military counterparts. One member of the Red Cross shared his perceptions of working with the military, “Sometimes there seems to be a lack of the willingness to get someone to make a decision.” The Red Cross worker expressed what he perceived as an unwillingness to make a decision and expressed his perceptions as a source of frustration when working with the military. These frustrations were consistent with those of others who had worked with the military. Furthermore, the nature of their frustrations were reaffirmed by their military counterparts, who have observed their strict adherence to following protocol are often misconstrued as an unwillingness to make a decision to those that do not understand military chain of command and decision making processes. One officer discussed the steps that must be
followed and the frustrations often felt by those outside of the chain, waiting for supplies or relief:

“We gotta go through the steps. It sounds like a flippant answer, but we are the federal government...It’s the old cliché, hey, we are the government, we are here to help. It’s true. That’s what the government is there for. But it comes with strings attached, and the strings are you pretty much have to give up that sense of local control to the Feds because the Feds have all the money...They have a big, giant checkbook and it’s their job to write a check to Joe the iceman, and Sally the water supplier. The upside is if you go through this chain and you follow the chain of command then [the government] writes a big check out and you get all the ice for free. That’s the great thing...It’s just that you have to go through that [the process]. [people think] that if you do it on your own something might happen a little faster, but it’s a short term solution. The long terms solution is you go through these chains and it’s going to be consistent and you’re going to get services provided and somebody else is going to pay for it and everything will work out in the end.”

While his comments point out the frustrations of those that must go through the process, they also illustrate his trust in the system, something shared by others in the sample. Ironically, however, this participant used an example where a group was trying to obtain ice, a similar story to one shared by a local volunteer for the Red Cross. The volunteer shared, “We needed ice. We had a company set to deliver the ice, it was all
arranged, it was on the truck and they [the military] couldn’t get anyone to clear it. I couldn’t believe it, as they were trying to figure it out, the ice melted. So much for that process.” His frustrations, a byproduct of the procedural issues associated with an extremely hierarchical organization, were shared by others who reported more flexible organizational protocol.

Ironically, one colonel discussed her own frustrations with protocol and procedure.

“We were in Honduras on a mission [part of a Humanitarian Assistance Program through Southern Command to provide medical assistance to a remote community there]….I watched our program go through this just the incredible frustration, we had to stand around for an hour and talk to the local guides and stand up and negotiate our ways through a plan that everyone agreed upon. And, well all the folks who were on my team, who want to get the job done, are just chomping at the bit. Like, why aren’t we moving, why aren’t we doing something....so that’s really institutional culture or societal culture but also institutional in the military is very goal-oriented and you want to kind of go in and get it done and get out.”

Out of context, this colonel’s frustrations appear to mirror those of the NGOs whose culture is in sharp contrast to the U.S. military. However, in this instance, the colonel is discussing frustrations in working with another type of culture, the culture of a population. The frustrations here come from a need, expressed by the community, to discuss what the military will be doing and to incorporate the community in the planning process. This particular colonel felt that, as medical professionals, the team knew what
needed to be done and they wanted to begin. Their own protocol satisfied, they were impatient with the protocol and procedures of others, signifying differences between group processes and the frustrations linked to those differences.

*Resources*

The military proclaims a unique advantage over other aid organizations, particularly during immediate response and recovery phases of humanitarian deployments. Participants discuss the vast amount of resources available for military aid endeavors: “we sent 26,000 troops,” “we have the man power to dig wells, do relief work,” “drop aid and assistance by the tons,” “we have the vehicles – the cargo planes, helicopters to get in there quickly, immediately after the disaster. We don’t have to wait for the road to be cleared.” Undeniably, the military has the resources and capacity to fill the immediate needs of a disaster situation. The have unique access to assets unavailable to civilian populations, as well as the manpower to utilize those assets.

In terms of disaster relief and humanitarian assistance, personnel also mention their ability to pick up where other humanitarian aid organizations are unable:

> *For them (NGOs), there are just not enough resources. They don’t have the capability to respond to just any crisis. For us, we need orders. But when asked to assist, we can fulfill that role. They get called in but simply do not have the resources. We do. So it works well.*

- Master sergeant, U.S. Army
With the Red Cross the collaboration is very straightforward because they are able to identify very specific needs that they have. We need medical personnel here...We can fill a very clear void for them.

- 1st Lieutenant, U.S. Army

U.S. military personnel cite the availability of resources as vital support to those organizations who wish to work with them and who are in need of assistance. The U.S. military also credits itself in the number of specialty areas (i.e. medical staff, engineers, biologists, etc.) that are available for deployment during a humanitarian operation. One lieutenant pointed out, “A nurse is a nurse is a nurse. They can do it anywhere.” He goes on to discuss how deployment of large numbers of medical staff can reduce the burden on health infrastructures following a disaster. The military has the ability to set up its own clinics and hospitals and provide staff and supplies those clinics. These resources are cited as “priceless during a disaster of great magnitude.” Overall, many perceived the greatest asset of military humanitarian action as resource availability.

Recurring Themes

Throughout the interview process, a number of themes regarding military aid consistently emerged. Understanding these themes and their relevance to group understanding is vital for the understanding of military involvement in humanitarian assistance. The following section will present emergent themes as expressed by participants. I will then discuss how these themes impact aid delivery, as well as the impact of themes on other organization types that provide assistance. Additionally, each
of the themes is discussed as an essential element of the group and will be used to draw conclusions important to the aid delivery process, as well as to show a connection between the themes and group culture.

*The Need for Security and Safety in Aid Delivery*

Along with its vast number of staff and resources, the military is able to provide another reportedly valuable asset during humanitarian operations – safety and security. Throughout this study, the need for security in disaster situations was repeatedly emphasized. While expressed in all case studies, this theme was most prominent in the U.S. military case study. Military personnel told stories of violent riots during the delivery of food aid, situations in Kosovo, Somali, Afghanistan and Iraq in which aid workers were placed in danger and needed the protection of the military. One Army major stated, “*Increasingly NGOs have become the target of violence. In some areas of the world, it doesn’t matter who you are, you are in danger.*” This participant reported a string of recent UN bombings in Iraq in which non-partisan aid providers, members of the UNHCR and those from non-governmental organizations became the targets of attack. Another colonel stated:

“*This is not new [attacks on aid workers]. If you remember, workers were forced out of Rwanda during the genocide, some killed. Somalia. You have it everywhere. But it does seem, with the bombings in Iraq, one killed the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights [Sergio Vieira de Mello]. Suddenly, it is no longer safe to be in a UN marked vehicle. It used to be, you have that white UN vehicle, you were ok. No longer. Security has become an*
issue for these people [those that provide aid] and we are often asked to fill that role.”

A lieutenant colonel who participated in aid relief missions in Haiti shared a more intimate picture of aid relief and the threat to NGOs working in regions impacted by complex humanitarian emergencies, instability, and threats of violence. His comments are typical of experiences voiced by others. He stated:

“The people were desperate. Desperate for food and water. They were throwing rocks at us, shaking the truck, screaming, rioting. Some people were being trampled. Everyone was pushing. And you didn’t know, they started throwing rocks but when would it escalate? People do desperate things in desperate times. They were [volunteers from the Red Cross] terrified, you could see it in their eyes. There was a need for security and, in my opinion, it was a good thing we were there.”

The above story paints a strong picture of the need for security during humanitarian actions, for the recipients and the donors of aid, a need perceived as being of the utmost importance by participants in the military case studies. Interestingly, this concept was both confirmed and rebuffed by other organization types and will be discussed in more detail in the other case studies.

Typically involved with the provision of security during periods of unrest, one might assume that discussion of security would not be consistently noted when discussing
military assets themselves. However, security and the safety of personnel, or “force protection” is, in fact, an important issue within the military. Force protection includes measures that are used to help reduce risk to military or armed forces. It also includes efforts to minimize “damage to assets.” The theme of force protection and overall concern for the well-being of staff were noted often in the interview process and through observation. As part of this study, I observed numerous planning sessions for military training and conferences. Throughout the planning stages, the overall safety of the military was of top priority. There were “recon missions” sent to determine foods, restaurants, and areas deemed “safe” for personnel to visit. Upon arrival at the conference or training, all personnel attended a security briefing which included discussion of everything from prominent diseases to terrorist factions in the area. They are also provided with a list of safe areas to visit, restaurants to eat in and made aware of any safety concerns in the area. In many cases, personnel are not allowed to leave the compound without an armed convoy. This is done for the safety of the unit.

When a group is deployed to an area to deliver aid or assistance, attempts are made to provide proper attention to the health and safety of the troops. While not always possible, officers strive to guarantee that their troops are well taken care of and supported. Additionally, participants reported attempting to provide activities including relaxation times, football, baseball, or other sports when appropriate. Senior level officers reported making efforts to prevent “burnout” and to ensure the “psychological wellbeing” of personnel. During training missions and exercises, attempts are also made to arrange “cultural events” for the troop. The goal of these events is to allow troops a
view of the culture in which they are operating, while providing the safety of a controlled
environment.

Language Differences and Aid Organizations

Language is an important identifier for any organization. Through the use of
language members of the organization communicate with one another and with members
of other organizations. The U.S. military has terminology that is particular to this
organization type. For instance, the U.S. military uses terminology such as “tasked,”
“embedded,” “downloading supplies” and “netroll.” Such terms are foreign to someone
outside the military. The AOR or “area of responsibility” is also considered a “theater.”
In the military, the use of foreign names and acronyms is also very prominent and in
some cases may provide barriers to communication with others that do not speak the
same “language.” For example, the military utilize process such as “the RSOI” processes.
For those without a background, this term would be impossible to define. However, a
term mentioned in numerous interviews, it is typically used in response to resource
distribution and stands for “reception, standing, onward-movement, and integration.”

The examples of language differences are numerous and were commonly
mentioned during interviews. The military does acknowledge the difficulties associated
with language differences. A General acknowledged some important concerns regarding
communication systems and the role of language. He affirms, “We all have different
languages, we all have different cultures and we probably have, we do have, different
systems of communication. How do you bring them together so any Army person can talk
to another Air Force person?” Interestingly, the General was talking about language
barriers between the military services themselves. While there are many noted differences between services, collectively the services tend to be much more similar one another than to other humanitarian aid organizations. In addition, these groups understand others’ procedures and protocol, helping to aid in communication. Therefore, if language is a barrier between services, it can be assumed that the barriers are even greater among organizations that are not accustomed to the use of acronyms, names, protocol, and military jargon. This will be discussed in more detail in Chapter V.

The Effects of Turnover on Aid Delivery

Turnover is another issue that affects the military. By the nature of their job alone, military personnel are constantly rotating in and out of positions. Most personnel are assigned to duty stations for three years. During that time, they can be deployed for six to twelve months to other areas. They are then transferred to the next assignment, which reflects a new home and possibly a new position altogether. For example, one lieutenant colonel was interviewed as the Humanitarian Affairs Division Chief. However, during the course of the study he was rotated and is now working on fuel supply lines in another region of the world, a far cry from his original humanitarian position. This creates issues with training and the establishment of rapport, two factors determined by this study to be of importance in the collaboration process.

This constant turnover is something for which personnel are well prepared. However, constant turnover is not without its difficulties. While military service typically comes from a philosophy of preparedness, turnover of staff creates an interesting dichotomous, as staff are cycled in and out of positions of familiarity and forced
to learn through doing. One lieutenant stated, “I am a believer in baptism by fire. I think the best way to learn something is to go on a mission.” Most working in the area of humanitarian assistance will have to accept this process of learning through doing. However, with this come important difficulties. First, whenever military units are participating in aid delivery, portions of their personnel are participating for the first time. As members cycle in and out, there is no benefit of prior lessons learned, other than anecdotally. Additionally, while military personnel are prepared for turnover, this process can frustrate non-military aid providers who rely on an established rapport in aid delivery efforts.

**Trust**

Trust was an important theme, expressed in almost all interviews. For many, trust could be either a barrier or a successful component of aid delivery. The importance of trust emerged on numerous levels. Trusting who you were working with, individually or organizationally, was widely identified as fundamental. An Army colonel stated, “The one thing you need is trust. We have to trust them [other humanitarian organizations] and they have to trust us.” Another lieutenant colonel stated, “we worked together in Kosovo, so I knew and trusted her [an agent from the Red Cross].” Likewise, mistrust was noted as an important obstacle. One Marine Corps captain stated, “The military often has a hard time gaining their [other humanitarian organizations] trust. It stems, in part, due to all of our classified information. Leads them to believe we are hiding something.”

Being trusted by the population you serve was also noted as an important factor for the U.S. military but one that was difficult to achieve. Participants who had
participated in humanitarian missions in Haiti, for example, mentioned the need to establish a trust with the population to ease their perception of a possible “occupation.” The most common references to trust within the population being served occurred in stories from participants who had served in Iraq. These participants discussed the importance of establishing trust to gain support for humanitarian missions, as well as providing safety for themselves and other aid organizations. Participants also discussed how violence in an area and the U.S. military’s role in this violence impacted trust among the civilian population. One lieutenant mentioned, “Trust is an important issue. In Iraq, when we first arrived, we had the trust of the Shiites. Months later, with the uprisings, it was no longer safe for them and the trust was gone.” He goes on to say, “that really sets things back. They no longer feel safe with you and once allies become enemies.” This comment, supported by numerous others, illustrates the importance of trust in the humanitarian realm.

Intricately tied with organizational background and culture, participants believed that trust is often established through the provision of safety and security. In regards to this, a general that participated in this study stated, “It’s hard being an American out there right now and people are down on us, there are still those that see the American flag and believe that help has come. Around the world, we still stand for democracy.” His comments reflect a belief that American ideals often provide an entrée into aid delivery. Comments made by others also cite the importance of the security provided by armed forces as an initiator of trust.
Stigma, the Uniform and Humanitarianism with a Gun

With the current state of the world, U.S. military involvement in political issues worldwide and the state of humanitarian aid, there is much suspicion regarding military involvement in humanitarian action. Suspicion was observed in news commentary, supported in interviews with non-government providers, and reported as a problem by military personnel. Suspicion regarding military aid is a challenge to both the delivery of aid by the U.S. military and any efforts to collaborate with other humanitarian organizations. One lieutenant stated, “I understand, it’s suspicion. It is at the bottom of it all. I am a soldier. For many, that leads to suspicion.” Suspicion of military activities was a prominent theme in many of the NGO interviews. One key informant shared, “Part of the problem is, from the viewpoint of an NGO, what do you expect? Civilians who do not understand the military and vice versa, it leads to suspicion.”

Misunderstanding and lack of previous interaction creates distrust. Overcoming suspicion is a problem that will continue to haunt the military, particularly with its continued involvement in political interventions while also increasing the scope and capacity of humanitarian operations. Unfortunately, due to its political nature and background, overcoming suspicion and creating a sense of trust, even when operating solely in a humanitarian capacity is difficult.

Suspicion is irrefutably linked to the stigma associated with the military. For some, there is a stigma associated with being a soldier. This stigma is often associated with wearing the uniform, a powerful armed forces symbol, and an important element of military culture. Through the uniform, one easily displays service, rank, command, and experience. The uniform sets the military apart from those with whom they are working.
and those who they are attempting to aid. The uniform helps to provide a clear distinction between the services personnel and those they serve. However, to many, the uniform and the weapons that are often synonymous with the uniform are antithetical. To them, the uniform is often associated with discrimination or political alignment and not the impartiality through which many believe aid should be provided.

Thus, it is no surprise that civilian groups often cite the uniform as a barrier to the aid delivery process. However, military participants often cited the uniform as an important tool:

“I think it makes a great deal of a difference for a lot of reasons. First of all, I think from a personal perspective it encourages a solidarity and unity of a service.”

-Major

I have found that the uniform and the rank makes my job as an inspector quite a bit easier because not only do people have a respect for the fact that you are there to enforce the law, but you have the inherent respect on the basis of wearing the uniform.

-Major

There is an assumption that people respond poorly to the uniform and I think, at times, there is a stigma attached with the uniform. But I think, during times of crisis, the uniform give a sense of ease to people. They look for it.
- Lieutenant

*It separates us from them. It’s just the nature of the job and what we do. We are a different entity and part of our duties include being dressed in uniform. That uniform changes, fatigue, dress, but we always wear them.*

-Sergeant

Many of the military participants in this study discussed the stigma associated with being a soldier and providing humanitarian assistance or the varying perceptions of the civilian population on the military’s ability to provide aid. For many, people in uniform who carry weapons are associated with law enforcement and trigger fear of violent force. This is symbolic of the disjunction between weapons that harm and aid that helps. Even among those who deliver aid, separating these entities is difficult. Prior to giving a presentation on military aid, one lieutenant predicted, “*There will be a number of NGOs in the room who will be surprised to see the uniform (at a presentation regarding humanitarian assistance). So many think, ‘Oh they are here to talk about humanitarian aid? You are kidding, where’s the gun.’*” Many participants discussed this incongruity associated with being a soldier who carried a gun while engaging in altruistic acts. The consequences of such apparent contradictions will be discussed in detail in subsequent sections.

Ambivalence towards the military on various levels was also noted. For instance, there was a perception commonly reported by military personnel that the same uniform
that typically evoked fear and distrust often provides a sense of ease, particularly following major disasters and times of national crisis. One major discussed his perception of the uniform as reassuring. He stated, “After September 11th, people have become much more understanding of the work that we do...that was the first time that I felt a sense of, people were assured to see a uniform. There was some sense of ease that we were there.” For some, reaching that level of assurance is difficult, particularly with the discrepant symbols of the uniform. The situation in Haiti is a prime. In Haiti, people often associate the uniform with violent force and many are distrustful of the military. However, during the recent missions to Haiti, it was those wearing uniforms that were providing assistance. One officer who participated in the exercises there stated that, “In Haiti, following the crisis, the blue helmet was such a prominent symbol. There people had to become familiar with symbols.” His comments are indicative of the uniform as a symbol, and its use in aid delivery. He noted that once the population in Haiti became aware of the “blue helmet,” indicating a UN worker, they were able to identify aid sources and a symbol with a typically negative connotation became a positive symbol once suspicion was overcome. This further illustrates how a symbol can be interpreted as both a benefit and a barrier and how understanding discrepant symbols is vital to the operation.

Military Perceptions: Misconceptions, Misbelives and Misunderstandings

During interviews, participants were asked to share their experiences, opinions, and perceptions with aid delivery. One’s perceptions and beliefs are telling indicators of culture. However, as participants shared their views, misconceptions and
misunderstandings emerged. For instance, there were a number of misconceptions among military personnel regarding the work of other aid organizations, some related to coordination issues that arise through working with those organizations. Some military personnel felt the job of coordination should be managed by other organizations or a coordination structure. For example, during a conference, one lieutenant was observed asking, “Why can’t NGOs be coordinated through the Red Cross?” The desire to have a coordination structure for NGOs illustrates a lack of understanding of the different missions of NGOs and their varying organizational structure. The comment also illustrates a general trust in the Red Cross among military personnel. A UN participant responded to this officer stating, “UN OCHA’s mandate is to coordinate actions regarding humanitarian support for organizations in the UN. It is the focal point for NGOs worldwide. But there is no mandatory requirement to participate through the UN. The Red Cross family is another case. There are no ways to force NGOs to coordinate.” His response illustrates the desire on the part of some military personnel to have a regulatory body responsible for NGO actions.

Another area of misunderstanding related to the nature and background of many prominent NGOs and government organizations. Interviews with military participants, particularly junior officers and non-commissioned officers, revealed a widespread understanding that USAID is an NGO. In fact, it is a government organization, a branch of the U.S. Department of State. Correcting such misconceptions and misunderstandings are crucial to better understanding of those that deliver aid.

Another misperception pertains to NGOs who are willing to work with the military. One major, just back from Iraq, stated that “NGO’s will not be comfortable
working with the military” and that “nobody wants to be associated with the military.”

His comments were in contrast to some of the personal stories that were shared by study participants who had recently served in Iraq and Afghanistan, who witnessed NGOs and the military working together. The major’s comments do, however, illustrate the perceived stigma associated with working with the military and presumed apprehension on the part of some to do so. They are also indicative of assumed barriers to collaboration by the U.S. military, though not always confirmed by their non-military counterparts.

Other misconceptions emerged through a desire to create a coordination mechanism. For example, one major stated, “NGO’s prefer to work without military assistance. But why not use the military as part of a UN multi-national force? They are neutral.” While the major shared his belief that NGOs prefer not to collaborate with the military, he suggests using a neutral platform to bridge the work of the military and NGOs. However, his “neutral” platform is that of a UN multi-national force. These forces often combine humanitarianism, peacekeeping, and reconstruction and are political in nature. While through this capacity, the military may provide only in certain instances, the UN remains a political entity. Additionally, from the comments of those NGOs that refused to work with the military, they refuse to do so in any capacity. To these participants, the military would never be seen as neutral.

The Collaborative Imperative and Failed Proceedings

A major goal of this study was to assess the viability of the collaborative effort model as the primary model for supplying humanitarian assistance during complex
humanitarian emergencies. The needs for collaborative efforts, as well as the challenges associated with them were noted in written documentation, observations, and interviews. Particularly striking were comments made at conferences and trainings and the contrast between the ideal and the real. Each of the observed trainings was focused on interoperability, cooperation, collaboration and interaction during humanitarian action in the Americas. Conference topics and resource materials support collaboration, or at least coordination. Furthermore, in each of the trains, I observed a slide in a presentation, commentary, or discussion regarding the following principle: “The scene of a disaster is not the place to meet fellow responders for the first time.” In some cases, the words changed but the meaning was always the same. The concept was typically noted early on in training, often in the welcome convocation, and was cited as capturing the rational for collaboration. However, careful observation of the audience showed that, in fact, this concept is idealistic. There are few, if any, opportunities for such interaction in real life. Even at trainings where interaction is simulated between military and NGOs, participants consist of higher ranking officers and the few NGOs that are present. These participants are typically not “ground workers” but rather managers, directors, or those in leadership positions. Therefore, if those on the ground are not in attendance, they will be continually required to meet their military coworkers on the ground. Additionally, because of high rates of military turnover and job transitioning, sustained involvement with disasters within an AOR does not ensure repeat contacts among aid groups. Without changes in policy, organizations and individuals working on the ground will continue to struggle with each other’s protocol and procedure and to work through organizational differences as they arise in the field.
It is also important to note that though these trainings are hosted by the U.S. military, they are intended to increase collaboration among organizations. A theme expressed often during conference proceedings was the need to form “strategic alliances.” While important for dealing with all groups, the military most often refers to strategic alliances with other governments or government agencies. For example, a military group was discussing the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Response Agency (CDERA) nations. There was much talk of forming strategic alliances among Trinidad and Tobago, Jamaica, and Antigua. However, there was no mention of alliances with the large number of NGOs or other organizations working in those areas. Interestingly, the primary role of CDERA is to respond to disasters that impact member states but Haiti is not a member.

Summary

This section focused on the complex process of military involvement in humanitarian assistance. Throughout data collection, a number of important findings, central themes, successes, and impediments to aid delivery were reported. Overall, participants reported that the military has access to vast resources and the capabilities to transport those resources to remote areas, facilitating humanitarian initiatives. A highly structured organization, the military perceives itself to be a vital part of the aid delivery process. Currently, the armed forces work throughout the world to provide security and resources to those in need of assistance. Particularly in Latin America and the Caribbean, activities are designed to sharpen medical skills while providing needed assistance to neighboring countries, an activity perceived by the military as mutually beneficial. The
military also acknowledges some impediments to aid delivery, namely issues associated with procedural differences and the lack of skills to provide long-term sustainability programs, confirming the military’s predominantly response and recovery roles in humanitarian assistance.

During this case study, a number of themes emerged. Key themes included a strong belief by military participants regarding the need for security during aid delivery, barriers associated with language differences among aid organizations, the effects of turnover in aid delivery, the effects of stigma and suspicion on military supplied aid and the impact of wearing a uniform while providing humanitarian resources.
The International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies: A Case Study

The following critical incident was taken from an excerpt in my field notes of a visit to a refugee camp and meetings with workers from the International Federation of the Red Cross following the May 2004 flooding in Jimaní. This incident illustrates a moment in which I personally experienced the importance of the timeliness of aid and the Red Cross’s relationship with the community. A tale of hope in a desperate time, this experience provided me with a visual backdrop for the perceived importance of the Red Cross to individuals and communities often expressed during interviews.

**Critical Incident: Clinging to Hope**

“The Red Cross has a sound structure in the Dominican Republic. We are able to respond instantly to crisis in both the Dominican Republic and along the border with Haiti.” I heard these words shortly before arriving in Jimani but until that moment, I had no idea how important the Red Cross structure could be or the difference those early volunteers could really make.

In May 2004, torrential rains caused massive flooding in Jimaní. The flooding occurred at about 3AM on a Monday morning, May 24, 2004. The whole town and surrounding villages were asleep and totally unprepared for the wave of water and mud that would wash away their homes. I stood in the riverbed and stared at the “river.” How could this little river, in a desertish area cause so much destruction? The Soleil River, called the Blanco River on the
Dominican side, it was not much, but it caused severe destruction to the entire area, which became virtually closed off from the rest of the country.

The Red Cross, however, reported being among the first on the scene. They credited their local volunteers located in communities throughout the country. They are set up in teams similar to those of our own CERTs, Community Emergency Response Teams. There are phone and message chains and when a crisis occurs, volunteers are quickly activated. Those volunteers were the first in the area following the flooding. They helped with the immediate response and at the height of response efforts had in excess of 700 staff and volunteers in the region providing aid and relief.

In disaster relief and recovery and humanitarian assistance, we often talk of the need for immediate response and the benefit of resources and mobility. One story that captures this for me was told by a volunteer, still working with the community in Jimaní more than two months after the flooding. He shared a story of the rescue of a small child. The child was washed from her bed during the flooding. She reported being scared and screaming. She was grasping to anything she could but she kept being pushed further and further down the mountain. She was finally able to grab hold of something. When the Red Cross volunteer and a member of the defense civil found her, she was holding with all her might to a cross in the cemetery. They were amazed as they realized that the cross belonged to the little girl’s very own grandmother. The girl reportedly had a very special bond with her grandmother, who had just passed away the month prior. It was a miracle they assured me. The scientist in me instantly wondered
the number of people in the town, the rate of relations, and the probability that a
cross in this cemetery belonged to a family member but another part simply
smiled. At times like this, people need miracles. (Jimani, Dominican Republic,
July 2004)

Background: International Federation of the Red Cross in Humanitarian Assistance

The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies Movement
consist of the International Committee of the Red Cross, the International Federation of
the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies and 183 National Red Cross and Red Crescent
societies. There is also a Council of Delegates and a Standing Commission that help to
guide the organization. A complex structure, each entity is independent, yet connected to
others. These entities are united through principles, symbols, a shared governance
structure and the underlying objectives which guide actions. Figure 2 depicts the complex
relationships that exist within the organizations, including the interlocking connections
between the International Red Cross and the Red Crescent Movement.

As one participant stated, “each entity has their own duties and responsibilities
while still working together as a family. The Movement, we are a family. We are
working to the same ends.” The ICRC operates under International Humanitarian Law in
its mission to “protect the life and dignity of victims of international and internal armed
conflicts.” The ICRC adheres strictly to the principles of neutrality, impartiality, and
independence, each of which will be discussed later in more detail.

The International Federation of the Red Cross aims to coordinate the different
national societies within the Movement. The Federation works on an international level
to support the national societies, to help with disasters and large-scale relief efforts and to help guide programs of the national societies. The National societies, which exist in almost every nation, work within the laws of the country to support the Movement. Each national society has varying capabilities and capacity and thus takes on diverse humanitarian roles within the community.

Figure 2. International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement Relationships *

* Taken from FM 100-23-1. Multiservice Procedures for Humanitarian Assistance Operations (FMFRP 7-16; NDC TACNOTE 3-076; ACCP 50-56; PACAFP 50-56; USAFEP 50-56). 31 October 1994. Figure 2-7.
The Federation has a regional delegation located at the City of Knowledge in Panama and the sub-regional office located in Port of Spain, Trinidad. These offices serve sixteen national societies in the following countries: Belize, Bahamas, Cuba, Jamaica, Haiti, Dominican Republic, Antigua and Barbuda, St. Kitts and Nevis, Dominica, St. Lucia, Barbados, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Grenada, Guyana and Suriname Red (Caribbean Red Cross, 2005). Many of these national societies, including the Dominican Red Cross and the Haitian National Red Cross Society, were active and involved during the May 2004 flooding along the Haitian-Dominican border and the disaster in Gonaives following Hurricane Jeanne.

This case study focused primarily on the International Federation of the Red Cross and member nations active in the relief efforts in Haiti, referred hereafter as the Red Cross or the Federation interchangeably. Founded in 1919 by representatives from five national societies (Britain, France, Italy, Japan, and the U.S.), today the Federation is credited as being the world's largest humanitarian organization and arguably the most recognized. Published documentation highlights the mission of the Red Cross to help vulnerable populations, its focus on relief operations following disasters, and its concentration on improving development in an effort to strengthen the capacities of National Societies. To fulfill its mission and goals, the Federation focuses primarily on four areas: promoting humanitarian values, disaster response, disaster preparedness, and health and community care (IFRC, 2006a). The Federation’s mission of helping the vulnerable and the core areas of focus were highlighted across all types of interviews in this sample and study results underscored the many successes of the Federation in these areas. They will be discussed in more detail in subsequent sections.
Mission of the Organization

Explicitly stated, the mission of the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent society is “to improve the lives of vulnerable people by mobilizing the power of humanity. Vulnerable people are those who are at greatest risk from situations that threaten their survival, or their capacity to live with an acceptable level of social and economic security and human dignity. Often, these are victims of natural disasters, poverty brought about by socio-economic crises, refugees, and victims of health emergencies” (IFRC, 2006a).

Noteworthy is the consistency observed across interviews in this organizational sample, when compared with other respondent categories. There was also marked homogeneity in other expressed organizational views. The IFRC states, “Promotion of humanitarian values is an intrinsic part of all Red Cross and Red Crescent activities” (IFRC, 2006a). The consistency of responses echoing this level, as well as the importance of the organization’s mission and values to the organization underscores the centrality of humanitarian values to this organization.

Roles and Responsibilities of the Red Cross

The work of the International Federation targets four areas: (1) promoting humanitarian principles and values; (2) disaster response; (3) disaster preparedness; and (4) health and care in the community. The Federation puts forth ideals and standards, encourages and supports planning, and guides decision making within the National Societies. Activities are then adopted and carried out by the National Societies (IFRC, 2006b). The four target areas are essential to health and well-being throughout the world.
and the activities of the Red Cross span the globe. The Red Cross is active not only during disasters or in poverty-stricken areas but in almost every country of the world. Activities target the needs of individual countries and vary greatly between Societies.

One responsibility of the Red Cross, and an underlying goal unspoken in every action, is related directly to its mission and the fundamental principles on which the Red Cross was formed – promoting humanitarian values and principles. Through their actions, programs and behaviors, the Red Cross attempts to promote individual and community humanitarian values while advocating respect for all persons (IFRC, 2006b). Another role includes provision of basic health services and health education. Much of the Red Cross’s funding is directed toward health and care in the communities served. The Federation works to enable communities to reduce vulnerabilities (to both diseases and disasters) and to prepare for and respond to crisis (IFRC, 2006b).

Capacity building is another important role of the Red Cross, often mentioned in interviews with participants from the Federation’s Regional Delegation in Panama. Activities aimed at capacity building include the management and training of volunteers, supporting National Societies, planning, fundraising, and networking among brother Societies (IFRC, 2006b).

While the roles and responsibilities discussed above are an important part of its work, the Red Cross is more closely identified with disaster response and recovery efforts. National societies have emergency response units that respond to disasters within their own country and aid in disaster recovery to other National Societies. With an increase in the number of natural disasters, Societies worldwide are working to increase
preparedness and make communities aware of the risks and methods of reducing vulnerability, along with providing mechanisms for coping with disasters (IFRC, 2006b).

**Roles and Responsibilities of the Red Cross in Haiti**

For those working in the regional office and for senior level staff, Haiti is considered a “priority country.” These staff members are continually engaged in activities within the country from reporting and updates to meeting emergency needs and discussions with donors. To staff focused on the area, the situation in Haiti is described as grim:

“*Our work is not easy in Haiti. Our work is hard. It is hard but we have to do it. And we believe that each day we are making progress. The Societies, ICRC, and the International Federation are determined to strengthen and obtain an environment in which it is possible to carry out independent humanitarian work and respond to the most pressing needs of the population.*”

- Senior level Red Cross staff in the Dominican Republic

*Haiti is trapped in a vicious cycle of poverty and emergency and of course we suddenly have an obligation and a responsibility, we do want to respond to that emergency, we certainly do it’s a humanitarian imperative.*

- Senior level Red Cross staff in Panama
You know, when you cut all the trees, there is nothing to really absorb the water because it is just mud. If there would be vegetation the waters as on the side of the Dominican Republic would have been absorbed. But on the Haitian side, it just creates a mountainous amount of mud and mudslides. Then of course the land that floods first are usually the most marginal land here the poor tend to live. So it's no coincidence that the poor are the most affected because they live in the most marginal land.

- Senior level Red Cross staff in Panama

The comments above illustrate just a handful of the problems that face Haiti and, as a result, impact neighboring Dominican Republic. Therefore, the International Federation of the Red Cross has been supporting the country in the areas of disaster preparedness and response, medical and social assistance, regional sustainability and development and institutional restructuring and development. Additionally the International Committee of the Red Cross, the division of the Red Cross family that works to helps the victims of conflict and internal violence, have been working in Haiti since the early 1990s. In Haiti, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) focuses efforts on those detained by the authorities following recent violent uprisings, particularly since 2004. Members of the ICRC pay regular visits to detainees throughout the country to monitor adherence to standards set forth by the Geneva conventions. The ICRC is also working with partners from the Movement to help strengthen operational capacities of the Haitian National Society.
Established in 1934, The Haitian National Society has been undergoing many changes and revisions in recent years (Red Cross Profile, 2003). Some participants describe the Society as “still in its infancy” or “growing, but not without its difficulties.” One participant from the Haitian National Society described some of the struggles faced by the society, “Every time the government in Haiti changes, we face uncertainty. While we are not in any way tied to the government, but having a stable government aids the work that we do.” He acknowledges the political difficulties whose impact on national health and well-being was regularly cited in the study. At best, an unstable political situation creates important challenges for agencies attempting to alleviate suffering in a country in turmoil.

“In Haiti, nothing is secure, nothing safe. The Red Cross is no different, another entity in a country with a defunct government. You have to respect them for trying, but you cannot expect too much. Not until the situation changes.”

- Haitian National Society official

Services provided by the Haitian National Society are described as “sparse” in comparison to other National societies. They are most well known for blood-transfusion services and the ambulance centre in Port-au-Prince. In regional areas much work has been done to revitalize the network and develop local branches to assist with community-based disaster preparedness training, including first aid training and AIDS prevention education, and there are efforts to improve the scope of services.

During times of crisis National Societies rely on each other for support. When a society becomes overwhelmed, as was the case in 2004, “brother” or “sister” societies, as participants tended to refer to other societies, send in reinforcements. During the
disasters of 2004, staff and volunteers from other Societies, including the United States, Spain, the Dominican Republic and Canada, provided aid and assistance to the people of Haiti and supplemented the services of the Haitian National Society.

The Dominican Red Cross was impacted by and actively involved in the 2004 floods and other major disasters that have affected the island. A number of key differences were detected between the Haitian and Dominican societies, particularly in their structure and programming. The Dominican Red Cross has comprehensive community disaster response teams that are able to maintain a strong presence throughout the country. However, while the Dominican Red Cross and the Haitian National Red Cross are two very different societies, with differing organizational structures, they are considered “brother nations” by those interviewed. Due to their countries’ shared border, environmental problems, and political impacts, a relationship has forged between the two societies. In 2002, a formal partnership was established between the societies “so that [they] can contribute to and improve the quality of life of the people.” This senior level staff member credited this agreement with the successful coordination of Red Cross services along the border following the May 2004 flooding.

Interviews with the Red Cross also illustrate a resolve to improve the local situation and to fulfill the larger mission of the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent societies. The resolve of these organizations became apparent following the flooding in May 2004 along the border. Within minutes of the crisis, volunteers were being sent to the area to provide assistance. The director of logistics stated, “In Jimani, the volunteers were affected, everyone was affected. We had to send volunteers in from the surrounding areas to help. In many cases, they were the only ones
that could get there. They could go by foot; the roads were washed out so far below. It was like the area was cut off.” At times such as this, a strong network of volunteers, and rapport with the community enabled the Red Cross to provide aid and assistance effectively.

Commonly Expressed Aspects of Humanitarian Assistance

Within the Red Cross sample, aspects of aid delivery specific to the Movement emerged. These features are vital to the goals of the Red Cross Movement. They help to explain how and why aid is delivered and the processes through which the Red Cross operates. Each is intrinsic to the nature of the International Federation of the Red Cross and will be elaborated below.

The Seven Fundamental Principles of the Red Cross

The International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies are guided and linked by seven Fundamental Principles, established in 1965 (IFRC, 2005). Website and print documents credit the seven Fundamental Principles with ensuring “the continuity of the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement and its humanitarian work” (IFRC, 2005). Fundamental Principles are as follows: Humanity, Impartiality, Neutrality, Independence, Voluntary service, Unity, and Universality.

Each of the Red Cross participants in this study discussed, unprompted, the importance of the seven principles. The salience of the principles provides insight into the core values that are important to Red Cross personnel. One participant stated, “I think everybody who works for the movement identifies with the seven principles…I think those
are basic human principles. Every person is born with those values. They are inherent to the human person.”

Each of the principles has an important role in the Red Cross Movement and in the ability of the organization to fulfill its mission. The significance of the principles is reflected in both commonly expressed aspects of Red Cross aid delivery and in prominent themes consistently mentioned in participant interviews regardless of status in the organization. Furthermore, the seven principles provided a common thread woven through the many stories and experiences that were shared.

The principle of humanity forms the basis of the Red Cross Movement was formed and expresses the most important goal of the Red Cross Movement – “the need to act in order to prevent and alleviate human suffering” (IFRC, 2005). This theme was prominently expressed in many interviews in comments such as “we gave a commitment to work with the most disadvantaged and the most needy sectors of the populations, which in Haiti involves a lot of people, to improve their lives.” Another participant poignantly stated, “Our role is to give with dignity. To treat with respect, not pity.” For those interviewed in the Red Cross sample, this ideal served as the backbone of the Red Cross work, to delivery aid with dignity and respect.

The principle of impartiality is related to the Red Cross’s core value of non-discrimination (IFRC, 2005). This guiding value was the most frequently cited fundamental principle, and was described as both a benefit to those that the Red Cross serves and a potential barrier to collaboration with other organizations. One mid-ranking official stated, “Red Cross principles do not allow us to be seen with people who are armed or in uniform. This affects our impartiality.” Participants discussed the antithetical
nature of expressing non-discrimination while working with someone who has a weapon or uniform, often indicative of political passions and partiality. The Red Cross does work with people in uniform. However, some believe it is their interaction with those in uniform that may be potential barriers, particularly if interaction is perceived as affecting their non-discriminatory image among aid recipients.

Neutrality is the principle that prevents the Red Cross from taking sides in any conflict. Part of the Red Cross’s global identity, the public perception is that the organization remains neutral during all conflicts. The importance of this principle is outwardly apparent through the words and actions of Red Cross personnel, was implicit in many interviews, and is the principle that the public most closely identifies with the organization. Even the perceived violation of this principle could be detrimental to the mission of the movement, as it is this principle that underlies the perceived trustworthiness of the organization, as well as the expectation of neutrality. This principle is linked to each of the other principles (IFRC, 2005). One employee stated, “I still get great satisfaction by helping people and knowing that what I do has a purpose, and that regardless of your political feelings, they need help, they need assistance. They have personal crises. So that’s what we do. Politics is out of it.” Her comments are indicative of a culture value of helping others regardless of political orientation, religious beliefs or differing value systems. The fundamental principle of neutrality and the desire to safeguard this role sets the Red Cross apart from other entities in humanitarian assistance.

The principle of independence states that the Red Cross must always remain autonomous. While the Red Cross must adhere to the laws of the countries in which it operates, it must remain independent. It is partially through this independence that the
Red Cross has the ability to act in accordance with the Fundamental Principles (IFRC, 2005). While reference to this principle was not frequent or explicit as reference to other principles, the importance of autonomy was an underlying theme in many of the comments made by participants. One employee stated, “We are not a government entity, we are not political. We do not belong to a military. The Red Cross is independent. We are independent.”

The Red Cross is also a voluntary movement, and the action of volunteers is considered to be the “heart of the concept of the Red Cross.” Following the battle of Solferino in 1859, Henry Dunant, has led a group of women in caring for those wounded in battle, wrote a book about his experiences. His championing of the volunteerism concept inspired the movement. There are two aspects of this concept, the voluntary nature of the movement in all countries and the importance of volunteers to the Movement. Volunteerism rejects the desire for personal gain as motivation behind supporting the Movement (IFRC, 2005). One volunteer stated, “We do what we do for others, not ourselves, not for money. This is a volunteer operation. No one is in it for the money, we are here to help our brothers.” The theme of volunteerism is examined further in a later section of this case study.

The principle of unity states that there can be only one Red Cross or Red Crescent Society in a county, that the society must be open to all, and that humanitarian action must be supported throughout the country (IFRC, 2005). This principle is important because it encourages members to be united in their work, regardless of differences that exists between them. Additionally, the acceptance of a Red Cross emblem, either a cross or a crescent, symbolizes the solidarity that exists. This principle was not typically stated
outright but more indirectly, helping to encourage the “tight knit family” accredited to the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. The importance of this principle was illustrated in stories of helping “brother” or “sister” organizations. It is implicit in references to the “Red Cross family,” a title used by the Red Cross, the U.S. Military and NGO participants alike in describing this organization.

The final principle is that of universality. This principle supports the Movement’s goal to ensure that all Red Cross societies have equal status, share responsibilities, and are located throughout every region of the world. The Movement credits much of its success to this principle, and more specifically to the distribution of societies throughout the world and the strength that the Society gains from its numbers. The Society also reports benefiting from the solidarity among societies, which helps to aid in collaboration and coordination among countries (IFRC, 2005). Interestingly, however, not all societies appeared equal in terms of programming and resources. In some countries, the Red Cross is a complex network with hundreds of employees and volunteers (i.e. the United States, Dominican Republic, Canada, Italy, France, England, Germany, etc.). However, in other countries, programs are narrow in scope and focus, with few employees and volunteers (Haiti, Afghanistan, Iraq, Paraguay, etc). Thus, while Red Cross National Societies may have equal status, the same responsibilities are not shared worldwide. Additionally, while the Federation reports solidarity, some Societies are forced to pick up when other societies are unable to fulfill their countries needs. Again, an example would include the flooding of 2004 in Haiti. When staff became overwhelmed, other National Societies came to supplement services.
The seven Fundamental Principles of the Red Cross were repeatedly noted in interviews. However, they were also visually evident in every office visited. In each office, while extremely variable in design, offices received visitors into a lobby area where the Principles are individually displayed in framed posters. The posters include pictures that represent the Principles and touching scenes with children, victims of disasters and Red Cross workers. Multiple renditions of the principles were observed. Artwork with the Principles was also displayed in hallways, in individual offices and in conference rooms. During interviews, many staff also reached for a written copy of the principles to share. The constant visual reminders of the seven Fundamental Principles may help encourage their constant mention. This may be indicative of both the importance of the principles to the Federation, as a visual stimulus for recalling the principles without fail.

**Code of Conduct**

“In the International field, we have to have a Code of Conduct.” The importance of this comment becomes clear as participants begin to talk about threats to the organization and its mission by the actions of those who do not adhere to the same guiding principles. To the Red Cross, its “good name,” impartial image and fundamental beliefs are instrumental to success. The Code of Conduct for the Red Cross helps to insure these are never jeopardized by laying out guidelines for behaviors and actions. Promoting a Code of Conduct among employees, volunteers and all those with whom the Red Cross works is a vital step in the effectiveness of the mission. In some respects, the Code of Conduct is similar to the military’s concept of command and control. Both guide
organizational structure, interactions, processes and participant action. A code of conduct also underscores a set of values that the organization would like to instill in all collaborating organizations.

Table 2. Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and NGOs in Disaster Relief*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Principle Commitments:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. The Humanitarian imperative comes first.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Aid is given regardless of the race, creed or nationality of the recipients and without adverse distinction of any kind. Aid priorities are calculated on the basis of need alone.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Aid will not be used to further a particular political or religious standpoint.</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. We shall endeavor not to act as instruments of government foreign policy.</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. We shall respect culture and custom.</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. We shall attempt to build disaster response on local capacities.</td>
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<tr>
<td>7. Ways shall be found to involve programme beneficiaries in the management of relief aid.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Relief aid must strive to reduce future vulnerabilities to disaster as well as meeting basic needs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. We hold ourselves accountable to both those we seek to assist and those from whom we accept resources.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. In our information, publicity, and advertising activities, we shall recognize disaster victims as dignified human beings, not hopeless objects.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Taken verbatim from the *International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement Code of Conduct*. Available at: [http://www.ifrc.org/publicat/conduct/index.asp](http://www.ifrc.org/publicat/conduct/index.asp)

Table 2 illustrates the Code of Conduct for International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and NGOs in Disaster Relief. As with the seven Fundamental Principles, these points were noted in participant interviews with surprising consistency. These behavioral codes are espoused in the words and accounts of those who work within the organization, reflecting a prominent component of the organizational culture.

One participant stated, “*We have a Code of Conduct. We give ourselves to others. Use discretion. We give aid regardless of race, creed or nationality, especially to our*”
neighbors. We are impartial but of course, this depends on urgency. We must prioritize. We must respect local customs. We must satisfy basic needs and ensure accountability toward victims.” While in her own words, she touches on each of the commitments unprompted, illustrating the importance of a code of conduct to both those working for the Red Cross, as well as those they serve. Populations being served by the Red Cross have come to expect the Red Cross’s reliance and outward portrayal of these commitments.

Importance of Volunteers

Participants in this study stressed the importance of volunteers to the mission of the Red Cross and to its success in aid delivery. Interestingly, almost a quarter of Red Cross staff interviewed reported starting as a volunteer for the organization. For them, what was originally their attempt to do “something for the greater good” turned into long-term involvement. This would explain why there are so many working in the Red Cross that espoused the theme of “doing something for the greater good.” It also helps to explain the close connection between the attitudes and beliefs of those working for local NGOs and those working for the Red Cross, as many local NGOs are comprised mostly of volunteers. Starting as a volunteer and moving into a career would also explain similarities in the values and beliefs between volunteers and paid employees.

Volunteer action provides labor resources for the Red Cross and Red Crescent societies, but it also is linked to an important principle. Red Cross doctrine states that volunteering benefits both those being served and those volunteering for the organization and “contributes to the development of the society, strengthens humanitarian values,
reduces conflicts and promotes peace” (IFRC, 2000). Without exception, paid Red Cross staff mentioned the importance of volunteers to the organization. While the Red Cross has a clearly defined hierarchy, reminiscent of a slightly more flexible military command, volunteers tend to be a separate group. As on professional shared, “The majority of the Red Cross consists of volunteers; they are part of the community.” These volunteers come from the affected community, or neighboring communities, and thus support the ideal of working interdependently with the community. They are defined by the paid staff as the “backbone of the organization” and “the heart of the organization.” Volunteers operate shelters and provide relief during crisis. They also work daily to train community members, help conduct health education classes and extend the mission of the Red Cross.

The Affects of Turnover on Aid Delivery

Challenges associated with transitioning are not a problem unique to the military. Turnover and transitioning was identified as a challenge for the Red Cross, especially in interviews with senior level staff. Typically, Red Cross employees are sent to disaster areas for a set period of time. While there is typically a national Red Cross society already in the area, some areas do not have a society and others become overwhelmed during a disaster or crisis and need assistance from the outside. For instance, Red Cross workers have been going to Iraq and Afghanistan, where the societies are either nonexistent or in need of assistance. When the Dominican and Haitian National Societies became overwhelmed in 2004, member nations came to their aid. Some workers stayed for weeks, others moved into the area for months. A typical assignment is four or five
months during recovery efforts and, if needed, replacement by someone from another Red Cross society.

Interestingly, turnover identified as an issue with both senior levels staff working on an international level and with volunteers. These groups are very different in nature, and likewise, turnover and transitioning affected the groups differently. With the senior level professionals, a lot of movement was noted between the offices in Geneva and Panama, as well as in and out of disaster areas such as Haiti. Such transitioning is directly related to the job, growth in positions and the changing needs of the organization.

On the volunteer level, however, this issue was more related to retention. Some staff expressed problems with ensuring constant volunteer support. They noted that during large-scale crises such as Hurricane Jeanne, the 2004 Hurricanes in the U.S., the Tsunami, or Hurricane Katrina, donor support and volunteerism increases dramatically. However, once the crisis falls from the front pages, support begins to dwindle and volunteers go back to their day-to-day lives. Interestingly, while the problem was perceived as a problem by the paid staff, volunteers expressed a long-term dedication to the cause. “10 years, I’ve been here for 10 years, proud to be.” Other comments were reminiscent of those of local NGOs, especially discussion of how service “gets into your blood. You cannot stop. It feels great to help others.” Still other participants cited long-term volunteer service such as “20 years volunteer service” or “never plan to stop [volunteering] – I love the Red Cross.” Their professed dedication echoed that of volunteers from local NGOs and signaled the value volunteers place on commitment to an organization.
Regarding turnover, one senior level Red Cross profession stated, “It’s like a business. There are a lot of people who have been with the Red Cross for ten years, in this chapter for 6 years. Some of us have been here for 20 years and then there are those who are here early in their careers or they use it as a career builder….I think it’s typical. We probably have more people that stay longer than most industries.” His comments, supported by the length of time with the organization and commitment cited by employees, suggest that retention is a complex issue. Another participant provided some perspective stating, “Either it works for you, long hours, little pay in return for helping your fellow man or the compensation is not enough. You either stay and you are in it or you get out right away.” While his comments could not be substantiated, intuitively this would justify reported lengths of employment and would also explain the contradiction between retention issues reported by staff and the perceived long-term dedication by volunteers. Simply, those volunteers that were interviewed had a commitment to the organization, similar to that of the 20 year employee.

Recurring Themes

The Emergence of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Symbols

The Red Cross’s most distinguishing feature is its familiar logo, the red cross. Participants in this study noted the importance of the logo, particularly during a disaster. During times of need, the red cross (or red crescent in Muslim areas) is a prominent symbol. Senior level participants noted the importance of branding and the significance of the cross during aid delivery. Interestingly, all Red Cross participants noted its prominence, as well as the vast majority of military and local participants. One volunteer
stated, “[People see] the red cross as a beacon during disasters.” Others described it as a “symbol of hope” or a “sign that help has arrived.”

It is important to note the emergence of this symbol and its importance to the Federation. The symbol is meant to represent impartial aid. It represents neutrality and signifies the fundamental principles of the Federation. However, there exists some debate in the literature regarding the perceived Christian orientation of the red cross emblem. Still, Red Cross publications deny any religious orientation behind the cross, which was adopted as a symbol of the Movement to honor founder Henry Dunant's Swiss nationality. Thus, the Swiss flag with reversed colors, a red cross on a white background, was chosen as the symbol of the Movement ideals.

Spurred by an interest in the possible unspoken meaning being the cross, I attempted to find a religious linkage. I was able to ascertain information on the beginnings of the Swiss flag, stemming to the 13th century and the Christian symbolism behind it. However, the Swiss flag traditionally stands for freedom, honor and fidelity. In fact, in the 18th century, the motto "Honor et Fidelitas" was inscribed on the cross. More recently, the flag has been associated with Swiss policy and is now viewed as a symbol of neutrality, democracy, peace and refuge (Encyclopedia Britannica Premium Service, 2006), the reported inspirations for the Movement.

The Federation acknowledges that the emblems are “sometimes wrongly perceived as having religious, cultural, or political connotations.” However, the Red Cross maintains that there is no linkage between Christianity and the red cross or, for that matter, the red crescent and Islam (many Islamic countries have adopted this symbol because of the connotation of the cross) (IFRC, 2006b). Therefore, in official
documentation released on November 10, 2005 in Prague, the Red Cross stated, “officially, the Red Cross and Red Crescent – the current emblems of the world’s most important humanitarian movement – have no religious connotation” (Tomiuc, 2005). Nevertheless, the symbols have been differentially adopted by countries based on their dominant religious orientation, with predominantly Christian countries adopting the cross and Muslim countries adopting the crescent. In an attempt to put an end to the debate, the Movement offered another symbol, the red crystal (a red diamond shaped object with a white center) as a politically neutral emblem. In December 2005, the Diplomatic Conference of the State Party to the Geneva Conventions approved this additional emblem. In 2006, the Statutes of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement will be adapted to allow use of the new emblem within the Movement (ICRC, 2005).

Figure 3. Emblems of the Red Cross

![Emblems of the Red Cross](image)

*Working with the U.S. Military*

During military trainings, members of the Red Cross are usually present. I observed evidence of rapport between the two groups. While this may be a function of repeated meetings, since the same Red Cross members tend to attend multiple trainings, it
suggests that a relationship exists between the military and the Red Cross. One participant simply stated, “Well, we work very closely with the military.”

The strong working relationship of the Red Cross and the military emerged through discussion with participants and observations at conferences and training in which both groups trained together. The military and the Red Cross often work together on the international and nation levels during times of crisis. Many described this as a “good working relationship.” One participant discussed some of the benefits to collaborating with the military: “They [the military] are usually part of coordination in disasters. Local military. Because they do help in evacuations. Sometimes they provide helicopters for doing visuals. A lot of times they provide security in different areas.” Another participant shared “we do a lot of work with them [the military]. They get to know us, how we work.”

Red Cross participants were observed working with military counterparts and appeared to have a good working relationship and sense of rapport with them. While this observation was limited to my observations of participants that attended military trainings exercises, it appears that working and training with the military eases this relationship. Additionally, there are many similarities between the military and the Red Cross, particularly in terms of organizational structure and hierarchy. This factor undoubtedly facilities a good working relationship.

The collaborative relationship between the Red Cross and the military was noted in both samples and, in most cases, given credit for positive outcomes. However, some study participants believe the military impedes the work of the Red Cross and there should be less of a relationship between the two. The biggest perceived threat was to the
seven Fundamental Principles and, therefore, to the overall mission of the Red Cross. A Red Cross worker of 17 years expressed opposition to military aid in general. “I strongly do not believe that military aid concentrates on the seven Principles of the Code of Conduct. Because their mission is completely different. They have been trained for different things. For example, discrimination...government decisions versus beneficiary needs is practically impossible to follow impartially.” However, much to his chagrin, the individual acknowledged the daily work of the Red Cross with the military. “There are wonderful stories in terms of support of the military to our operations. We don’t have a problem per say. What we could have a problem with is when military decisions could affect one of the principles of the Red Cross.” He remains firm that military aid effort “are not working on the section of dignifying human beings, involving human beings into their own recovery, ensuring proper participation or concentration in terms of what they want, etc., etc., etc. And that is why I see difficulty.”

This participant’s comments appear to be indicative of a silent few who do not support the concept of military aid and question the wisdom of a relationship between armed forces and the Red Cross, an organization based on impartiality and neutrality. These same participants were quick to cite the principles that are jeopardized by Red Cross involvement with the military, most notably the principles of impartiality and neutrality. By the nature of their involvement alone, the military is not and cannot be impartial, even when delivering aid. This creates obstacles to organizational collaboration in providing aid to vulnerable populations worldwide.

While the Red Cross is largest and arguably the most well known NGO in the world, it appears that a number of misconceptions about the organization exist, possibly
fueling some participant’s fears concerning neutrality and impartiality. For instance, many people believe that the Red Cross is part of the government. “People, the general public do not understand the difference between a government entity and the Red Cross.” One of the participants, a senior professional in a national society described a situation outside a shelter where people were upset at the amount of time it was taking for the Red Cross to respond. “People in the line were saying, ‘well, this is our tax money, we need it. We deserve it.’ And I said, ‘Oh no, it’s not. This is voluntary contributions.’” Correcting this perception is an ongoing challenge for the Red Cross. A multifaceted organization, visible during virtually every crisis, the Red Cross has a complex structure and multiple layers of involvement. Thus, there is much room for misunderstanding. One participant stated, “Society has come to depend on us [the Red Cross].” This expectation, compounded with high visibility, creates opportunity for criticism. In addition, strong working relations with government entities and ubiquitous presence during times of national crisis make the organization appear to have a link with the government.

To many, it appears as if the Red Cross is almost a “pseudo government organization.” This, in part, is due to the similarities between the organization in terms of delivering assistance and the closeness with which they work with government organizations. As one volunteered stated, “In every disaster of a national magnitude, the Red Cross is there.”

Working with the Community
The vast majority of participants, regardless of organization type, acknowledged the reputation of the Red Cross for working closely with the communities they serve. There are a number of reasons why this is considered so important, from empowerment and community buy-in to long-term sustainability. One mid-level Red Cross professional stated, “The population needs to be part of the aid delivery. This helps to avoid reliance on humanitarian assistance.” One staff member commented, “It’s a lot of interaction with people. It’s hard sometimes. You see people who tend to become desperate after a few days of lacking the minimum basic things for survival like water or shelter.” The Red Cross promotes working directly with communities in need. Sometimes, their entry point into the community is their own volunteers, members of the community themselves. Other times, they come from afar to help an overwhelmed community. However, regardless of rank, all report seeking to maintain close relations with the communities in which they work.

My job changed [because of a promotion] but I still deal with the clients, either on the phone or in person. It’s still very rewarding.

-Mid-level staff

We have very solid community relationships in the entire northwest. We have been there working with the government and NGO counterparts and with the communities themselves.

- Senior level staff
Security Issues

Security and related problems were mentioned across groups as a concern. However, the focus of discussion regarding security issues varied across Red Cross interviews. Some participants mentioned that security was a problem for any organizations working in a disaster region, including the Red Cross. Many stated that, at times, military support was necessary. One local employee told a story about being held captive while trying to deliver aid to a very impoverished and starving community. A volunteer at the time, he was delivering aid to a desperate population along the Haitian-Dominican border. While attempting to reach the community in a supply truck, he was stopped in another community impacted by the disaster. Resident became furious when they learned that the aid was not intended for them but was to be delivered elsewhere. The locals kidnapped the aid worker and the driver of the truck and confiscated all of the supplies and resources for their community. The interviewee called this a “riot over the food” but further comments revealed an understanding of why the community reacted this way. “I was scared, yes. But they, they were desperate. People do different things, out of character when they are desperate.” Such empathy and caring were commonly expressed among NGOs. The aid worker was released unharmed a day later and has continued to work for the Red Cross, eventually obtaining full time employment as director of logistics.

A key informant from the Delegation noted the importance of security in unstable areas such as Haiti, but he also acknowledged efforts to stay in country. “Security is an issue with the Red Cross. Sure. But we only ever pull out of a country if security is not provided for. If we are still able to work securely, we will not leave. For example, the
delegations in Peru and Haiti. In Haiti, we never pulled out completely. Sometimes we had to freeze activities if we were not able to do duties but we tried to stay active and involved in the region regardless of hostilities.”

Others discussed how the Red Cross was relatively protected from some of the security related concerns affecting their counterparts. They perceived security as a problem that does not really affect the Red Cross, cited their relationship with the community as a protective factor in overall safety. Similar comments were voiced by local participants who work closely and live in the communities they serve. Participants believe this provides them with an added level of protection.

Differences across the Red Cross Sample

While core values, principles, beliefs, and themes were fairly consistent across interviews, some differences were noted across the Red Cross sub-samples. For instance, there were a number of specialty areas among Red Cross workers. It was not uncommon to find someone in a national or local office that had a special skill such as accounting or marketing, and who worked directly with the beneficiaries of aid. This was analogous to specialization within the military. Specialized staff was more frequently found in mid-level samples, as those in higher positions reported holding numerous positions in the past and more varied experience with organizational operations. In contrast, volunteers tended to have unspecific roles, as many worked in shelters, aided with the delivery of food, and filled in wherever necessary.

The focus of different subgroups also varied. For instance, among higher status staff, long-term sustainability and theoretical approaches are commonly discussed.
However, with volunteers and support staff, long-term goals and future outlooks are not as salient. Generally speaking, volunteers and support staff are more focused on the immediate provision of aid and their individual responsibilities. As one travels up the organizational hierarchy, staff became less specialized. This may be a function of experience but it is also indicative of a culture in which power distance exists, a theme explored in Chapter V.

*Competition*

Competition emerged as an important issue for NGOs but many denied that competition was a problem for the Red Cross, perhaps because it is antithetical to many core values. One senior level officer shared his belief regarding the minimal impact of competition through a story of collaboration with the Salvation Army,

“I think the only thing that I would say probably with a big organization like Salvation Army is that there is always, just like we want our name to be, we want people to know that we are helping, they do too. So there is maybe a little bit of competition with you know, we were there too, and did they mention us or did they not?...We usually don’t [do anything about it]. If they mention us, fine. The only time that we would let’s say contact the press is if there is misinformation. But if we are not, if they don’t mention us and we are helping...we usually don’t do anything.”

In his opinion, the competition to receive credit is linked to competition for resources, particularly for those dependent on donor support. However, this informant
stated that he believed people would give “to an organization they identify with” and so notoriety may have very little effect when the two organizations are associated with different identities, such as the religious connotation of the Salvation Army and the impartiality of the Red Cross.

Interestingly, when competition was discussed in the Red Cross sample, it was discussed more so in the context of barriers to collaboration with other organizations. During interviews, many participants spoke about competition in terms of access to resources and impact on organizational interaction. While a greater issue for smaller not-for-profit organizations, it is also a concern for the Federation. One Red Cross senior level participant acknowledged the importance of competition to the Red Cross in terms of clientele, including volunteers and donors. He stated that competition could be an important barrier to collaboration even with larger organizations, because they fear “you are after their clientele. You have to prove that you are not after their donors; you are not after their volunteers. You just want to work with them.” Interestingly, loosing clientele or volunteers appears to be just as important as losing donors, underlining the importance of volunteers to the Red Cross and other not-for-profit organizations. Thus, in some cases, competition may be a serious challenge to collaborative endeavors.

Labor of Love

Multiple Red Cross workers described a “sixth sense of wanting to help” or being driven by something engrained in you. This theme, common mainly in Red Cross workers and local NGOs, acted as a driving force behind the motivation to work with an NGO. Many comments illustrated this desire engage in a labor for love:
We are not here for the money. The people that come to the Red Cross have a humanitarian spirit, whether they are working with the holocaust survivors, trying to reconnect families, or volunteers that provide meals to someone or help after a tornado or hurricane or flood...Without that conviction, it wouldn’t make sense to work here.

- Mid-level Red Cross staff person

There are always those who decide to join a humanitarian aid organization such as the Red Cross, or any for that matter, who basically, I would say, we do it because we want to help somebody.

- Junior level Red Cross staff person

It’s [our services] completely free. It is done completely out of the goodness of peoples’ hearts [the volunteers and donors], and that’s how this organization started. And one hundred something years later it is still why people work here. Most people know that non-profits are, you are not going to get paid here. It’s a labor of love. I didn’t understand that until I got in it.

- Red Cross volunteer

Along with these comments emerged another related theme regarding a sense of mission versus a sense of job and how that impacts the work of an organization. One senior level participant spoke to this stating, “Sometimes it seem the volunteers have
more, they put more heart into what they do than sometimes we do. Because it’s just our job, really, whereas to them, they have to, they are not getting paid to come here, they really come here because they really want to and they really like what they are doing.”

Her comments are indicative of the value placed on volunteers by the organization and the duality between mission and job that will be discussed in more detail in Chapter V. She, however, was a strong proponent of the importance of an internal mission drives one to do good. This was supported further by numerous others who believed without that drive the organization would not succeed and certainly would not be as effective. For them, the sense of mission was much more important than the job.

Summary

The International Federation of the Red Cross is arguably the most well known humanitarian organization in existence. Spanning the globe, the Federation has member nations in almost 200 countries. Participants state that, “wherever there is crisis, we are there.” Comments indicate a well-respected organization, trusted by both aid recipients and providers. The Federation is a complex organization with varying roles and responsibilities and have served as a leader in disaster relief and recovery efforts. While important in disaster recovery, the Red Cross also works to ensure sustainability and long-term recovery following disasters. A number of important themes emerged including the issues with the symbol of the Red Cross and its recognition, relationship of the Federation with the military and community partners, its role in working with the community, issues surrounding security, the impact of competition and the labor of love that is perceived by many as a driving force behind Red Cross aid delivery. These
themes provide a glimpse into the organizational culture of this organization and the impact of that culture on organizational collaboration, areas to be explored in more detail in Chapter V.
Hope Abounds International:
A Case Study of Local Non-Governmental Organizations in Haiti

There are diverse types of organizations that provide humanitarian assistance. A portion of this study focused on local and indigenous organizations that provide disaster relief in Haiti. The following experiences reflect a tour of a hospital funded, in part, by one of the organizations that participated in the study. It provides a glimpse into some of the many issues faced by smaller organizations, especially those that are dependant on donor support. The critical incident below portrays a hospital dealing with shortages of staff and resources. It also portrays small non-profit organization that provides vital aid to dependant populations and the challenges faced by recipients of aid, foreign donors, and those working directly in the region through the support of others. While this experience is an extreme experience, it was vital to my understanding of local and indigenous organizations and the situations of aid as it truly exists, unglorified and uncensored. It was my first glimpse at the sometimes egotistical nature of aid and the quality of care that is greatly impacted by resource availability.

Critical Incident: A face with no name

Today, I witnessed a birth. Not my first but maybe one of the most unforgettable. Absolutely incredible. Any childbirth is, but words cannot describe what I saw or the awe of the moment as that tiny little girl took her first breath. Already a survivor of one of the country’s largest disasters in a decade
[the May 2004 flooding in Jimani], she was born into the most primitive conditions. Yet she was one of the lucky ones, she was a survivor.

I just happened to be touring the [name removed to ensure anonymity] Clinica as they were prepping a woman for childbirth. It would be a Cesarean Section and they asked if I would like to observe – of course! So I was asked to scrub up. Oy! I was handed a pair of scrubs from a tiny closet. I am sure that these scrubs were washed in the same manner as the ones I witnessed being washed on the rooftop and hung to dry. The closet was filled with everything from scrubs to instruments to lunch. There was no sterilizing here! I was never asked to wash my hands or cover my hair, only to wear the scrubs and a mask. I witnessed the doctor, overwhelmed and rushing from patient to patient. He washed his hands in the adjacent room (which had running water) but touch things along the way to the delivery room, finally drying them off on a towel deemed clean. Sterile? I didn’t imagine so.

The next thing I knew, the woman was doused with iodine. She lay completely naked on a plastic sheet, folded so that all of the fluids would drain down into a garbage can (and I do not use the term lightly. The can had notes, remnants of lunch, garbage and soon bodily fluids). Finally after about 15 minutes or so, a nurse came in and covered her naked body. I couldn’t believe that she lay there naked for so long but everyone was rushing around, doing multiple jobs. They almost seemed to have forgotten her.

In the delivery room was only a doctor and a nurse. When I later asked about this, I was told that they were very short on staff, funding had been cut and
their other nurse left. I was amazed by the lack of equipment in the room around me and hoped that all would go well with the delivery. I’ve seen complicated deliveries before and I was uncertain what would occur if additional assistance or supplies were needed. There didn’t appear to be any. There were no monitors on either the mother or the baby and the only supplies were the birthing tools positioned on a metal tray next to the woman.

When the doctor began the incision, I was in awe. I watched as a dark patch of hair appeared as the doctor sliced through the placenta. I held my breath as I saw first hair, then a head. The doctor pulled the poor little head, then shoulders, finally an entire little body. Then the cry! Once the child was out, the doctor yelled for another nurse who came in to take the baby. She walked through to the room with the scrub closet and began to clean the baby, weigh her, etc. Multiple times, the baby was left naked and crying on a table, by an open door, while the only nurse attended to something else that had come up, the cries echoing down the hall announcing to the world that a new baby had arrived. I went back in to the delivery room. The mother had been cleaned up but still lay on the table. There was no room available to move her to and no staff to move her and she would have to wait. The one nurse was still processing the baby and working with other patients.

Still, 20 minutes after her baby was born, she had yet to hold daughter. I smiled at her and said, “Usted tiene una bonita hija.” She smiled back and said, “¿Es una muchacha? Una muchacha.” She appeared relieve to know that all was well and I was shocked to know I was her first contact. We talked a while longer.
This was her first child. She was displaced following the flooding in Jimani and had lost everything, everything but her husband and her newborn baby girl. As I left, I knew that her face and the face of her newborn child would be forever etched in my mind, a beautiful face with no name.

…The tour of the clinic was so interesting. On a July afternoon, the hospital was sweltering. Doors were propped open to help circulate some air. The hospital was crammed with patients, some sitting or lying on the floor. Each room contained multiple patients and their families. At one point, we arrived at a door marked “Privado,” Private. The doctor did not knock, just opened the door, and motioned for me to walk in. In front of me lay a woman very despondent. She was staring at the wall. I greeted her quietly, smiled gently, and then diverted my eyes from where her leg once was as she tried to cover herself. It was to no avail, the doctor instantly pulled back the sheet to show her leg to me. I quickly learned her name and entire situation. She was Haitian. She was swept away during the flooding. Her leg was so badly damaged and wounded that by the time she was found, it had to be removed. She had lost both children in the flood and her husband was still missing, presumed dead. Her mother was with her. At no time did the woman speak or make eye contact. In fact, her eyes never diverted from the wall. She had obvious signs of trauma and shock. Still there appeared to be no regard for her mental health or even her desires. Even if there had been concern, I do not believe there were the resources to do much for her. As she continually moved to hide her absent leg, never looking away from the wall, the
doctor persisted that I must take a picture. I refused. I felt awkward, even terrible to be bothering this poor grieving woman. I knew the last thing that she wanted was a picture taken of her “sin pierna.” However, the doctor persisted and I knew snapping just one picture was enough to appease the doctor and I could leave. I obliged for the sake of the woman and carried on with my tour.

Recent years have seen a proliferation of local and indigenous organizations active in humanitarian action. These organizations vary greatly in size, structure, mission and overall group cultures. They also vary greatly in resource availability. Some of the organizations, like the one discussed above, face challenges associated with limited resources and funding uncertainty but are structured enough to have a fairly large staff and work with multiple sectors of the community. Others are much smaller in size, more limited in resources and more focused in scope. To ensure a clear understanding of the aid delivery process within this organization type, while being mindful of the variance, I sampled from four prominent local organization types working in Haiti. The first group was a medium sized faith-based organization. This organization, discussed in greater detail in the following chapter has been working in Haiti since 1987. The next organization was a small faith based organization that was founded in the early 1960s. The main office for the organization is located in Cap Haitien but the organization strives to work throughout the northernmost part of the country, an area they believe has been widely ignored by other donors. Another organization that participated in the study was a philanthropic organization whose mission was to increase the quality of life for Haitians, through education, nutrition, and healthcare. The organization was started in the late
1980s by a US philanthropist with a desire to help the impoverished country. The final group was a community-based organization, comprised of Haitians with a desire to give back to their community and improve health and education. The organization works as an alliance with other Haitian organizations to provide aid and assistance throughout the country.

Each group was purposefully selected based on organizational diversity, size and background, as well as similarities in the work conducted within the organizations. To aid in comparisons with the other case studies, this case study will focus in-depth on only one of the organizations, a mid-sized faith based organization, Hope Abounds International (a pseudonym). Data from interviews within the other organizations will be incorporated to amplify key themes. Discussion of other organization types will also compare and contrast local and indigenous organizations to reveal important areas of commonality and divergence.

Background: Hope Abounds International and Humanitarian Assistance

Hope Abounds International (HAI) is a non-profit, Christian organization that seeks to aid and assist the poor worldwide. Activities include providing food, shelter, and education, with the overall goal of ministering to the spiritual needs of the population. HAI currently works in six nations impacted by complex humanitarian emergencies. Haiti is one of those nations.

Hope Abounds International started from a desire to make a difference, similar to that of other humanitarian organizations in this study. In his own words, the director and founding member shared this background:
Hope Abounds International was founded in 1987 and it kind of floundered for a couple years because there was no full time director, it was just something that the founder and president of HAI, Dr. Everoude, knew that he wanted to get started but he did not necessarily want to be the person to run it day to day. So through a meeting with him, I mean we had had a relationship, he came to me and asked me if I would pray about coming and leading the organization. As a result of that I retired from the Navy after 23 years and I’ve been here ever since.

... Hope Abounds was started with 13 children in Haiti. The picture is right back there where we started...But that was started as a result of one of our missionaries who is now in the Ukraine going down there and saying ‘We’ve got to do something about the poverty in this country and these children that have no food, their education is lacking.’ So we started with 13 children, and that grew from 13 children to as many as 300.

...Well, the program again got started because of those 13 children who were not going to school, were very lethargic and very hungry. Haiti is a country that still relies on word of mouth communication. So it doesn’t take very long if you have a program available that offers assistance for that program to grow. We’ve had over the years when we first started, we had to limit the number of children that we took. Yeah, the need is greater than we can ever fill. So you have to decide, are you just going to provide food, or do you want to have some quality of life for these children? So our decision was that we would have a limited number of children that we could really build into their lives instead of, you know it’s the
old philosophy ‘Give a man a fish and he eats for a day; Teach him how to fish and he eats for a lifetime.’ So that was the kind of mentality. We wanted to have an input into these children’s lives so that they become productive members of their society. These are the future leaders of Haiti. These are the kids that are going to make a difference in what happens in their country, hopefully. So that’s how we started. And growing to 300 was, we could have enrolled 3000. And so we had to really pray and make sure that we were doing the right thing and not just having a feeding program, but having a program that was really making a difference in the lives of the children.

Today, Hope Abounds International has educational programs, including academic education through Grade 5 and bible schools, two orphanages, feeding programs, and three missionary families who live and work in Haiti to support the mission of the organization. HAI has also started similar programs and initiatives in five other countries.

Mission

Not explicitly stated on their website or other documentation, the director articulates the mission of HAI as “serving the physical needs of the world’s poor to gain the right to spread the Lord’s love and minister to the spiritual needs of those we serve.” This is done through the provision of food, shelter, and medical care in the regions of focus. Humanitarian work is done with the overall goal of spreading the “Lord’s word” and ministering or “preaching his word.”
Participants in this study shared varying but similar mission statements. One mid-level staff member cited the mission as “to spread Christ’s love while helping to feed, cloth and shelter our neighbor.” Most participants were those that had worked directly in Haiti and to some, their perceived mission was more locally related to the work in Haiti, including “to help Haitians live a better life through education, nutrition and health care.”

Roles and Responsibilities of the Organization in Aid Delivery

Hope Abounds International works in a number of ways, from arranging mission trips to countries, providing support to missionaries who work and live in areas, providing food and medical aid to populations in need, and responding to crises within the countries it serves. Roles and responsibilities vary based on the needs of the country, the capacities of the missionaries working there and donor support.

In each of the countries supported by HAI, at least one orphanage has been built. Additionally, at least one family has been sent as long-term missionaries to the area. These families will live in the country for a minimum of 2 years; some have lived in country for as long as 10 years. It is through these families that short-term missions, humanitarian assistance programs, and suitable programs are organized. This is done based on ties the families have formed with the community. Understanding the needs and desires of the community facilitates Hope Abounds ability to meet those needs.

Hope Abounds International relies on the work of missionaries to fulfill their mission. Missionaries are coordinated through Hope Abounds International to go to Haiti from the United States. Missionaries are typically associated with a church that has
adopted a community in Haiti through the Hope Abounds mission program. All travel arrangements and the actual activities that missionaries will be a part of (i.e. building schools, churches, orphanages or participating in medical missions or nutritional programs) are coordinated by HAI. Missionaries tend to go to Haiti for one to two weeks, to help fulfill the mission of HAI. Many of the missionaries interviewed reported participating in a number of missions and intended to continue this work in the foreseeable future. One volunteer, recently back from a mission recalled:

*For me this is my fifth mission trip I’ve been on. I’ve been to Cuba, Romania. I’ve been to Cuba twice and then Haiti twice and I’ve gone on building trips, evangelistic trips, milk run which is for a while we took bags of powdered milk in big duffle bags and gave it to orphanages, we would only go for 3 or 4 days just go and drop it off, stay for a day, and come back. There are a lot of things we can do mission-wise. I do not know what I am being called to do yet but I will continue with these missions.*

The work of Hope Abounds is dependant on donor support and the voluntary efforts of missionaries like the one quoted above. These missionaries not only donate their time, but they pay to participate in the missions. An average short-term mission trip is between 7-14 days and cost between USD$800-1400, excluding the cost of airfare. Despite the costs, HAI conducted more than fifteen missions last year alone, and the numbers continue to rise.
Roles and Responsibilities of the Organization in Haiti

A mid-level professional firmly stated, “We know with all the other priorities in the world, Haiti certainly is not one of them.” Therefore, it has become the mission of HAI and hundreds of organizations like it to focus efforts and priorities on the country. In Haiti, the organization’s focus on a broad range of services, including the missionary program, management of two orphanages, a child sponsorship program, and nutritional, educational, and medical assistance programs. In addition, two families of long-term missionaries have moved to Haiti from the United States to work directly with the organization and the local community. The families also worked, through Abundant Hope, to organize humanitarian missions following the recent disasters. These families work in different areas of the country, one located in Port-au-Prince, the other in a more remote area near Gonaives.

Interestingly, these families and the volunteers that joined mission trips to note the regional disparity that exists in Haiti. One volunteer recalled differences in the children living in the orphanage in Port-au-Prince, stating that the children appeared to be healthier and did not suffer from malnutrition like those in Gonaives. She recalled:

As far as physically, the kids in the orphanage a lot of them were malnourished, you’d see a lot of orange hair, bloated stomach...I think the one in Port au Prince it was different because they got more support just because they were in the nice part of Haiti. The one in Gonaives, people just look over it.”
Another staff member discussed a water filtration system that was being implemented in remote regions of the country:

You see a lot of malnutrition, malnourishment [in the remote areas of Haiti]. You could see about the water they drink, they go into the river and get it and everybody bathes in the river, pigs bathe in the river. You can see why it’s happening. They [the in country missionaries] were working on projects to build water filtration systems with rocks. Basically you can get water out of mud, you layer the rocks, big ones to small ones until you get to the tiny ones and you pour water through, and there is a layer of bacteria that eats away all the other bacteria and it goes through and it comes out clean water. But the thing is they don’t get it. If you pour five gallons of water in this thing you only get out four, so what’s the point to wait so long to only get four gallons, not five.

This participant provides a glimpse into what is going on in Haiti, while also highlighting some of the frustrations experienced by those working in the country.

Commonly Expressed Aspects of Humanitarian Assistance

Organizational Structures

One aspect that sets local organizations apart from other organization types is organization structure. Smaller organizations of this type tend to have looser organizational structure and tend to lack the hierarchy and complexity of their larger counterparts. In some of the smaller organizations, in particular HAI and the three other organizations in this case study, the confines of organizational structure are blurred as
employees share roles and responsibilities, and, with the exception of the director, there was no clear delineation in the organizations hierarchy. Organizations vary in the degree to which organizational structures are blurred. However, the emergence of differing leadership patterns, organizational structure, size, and background of smaller NGOs, when compared to other organization types is an important finding of the study.

Based in discussion with participants from the organizations in the local NGO sample, it appears that there are variations among structural forms in local NGOs, more so than in either the military or Red Cross. However, further analysis and discussion with key informants suggest that this loose knit structure and limited hierarchy may be more related to necessity than intent. Essentially, this loose hierarchy may be a result of resource scarcity. Ironically, this pragmatic view of organizational culture appears to be one that many resist. The findings of this study suggest an attempt by many of these organizations to change the organizational divisions and also illustrate a struggle to achieve a hierarchical structure. For example, in this particular organization type, task sharing, and community decision-making was noted. However, three of the organizations that participated in this sample discussed a desire to expand and the importance of organizational growth in fulfilling gaps created by the current structures. It appears that this growth is leading them toward more structure and more specialized roles. This finding was supported by informal discussions and observations with larger faith-based organizations that operated in the same region, as well as two key information interviews with large NGOs who reported more hierarchal design and greater numbers of staff. If this is the case, one can assume that while organizational structures tend to be cumbersome,
they provide some benefit and are a desirable goal toward which other smaller, more loosely structured organizations work.

**Tasks and Specialties**

Another important indicator of local organization involvement in aid delivery is the tasks and specialties they encompass. It appears that Hope Abounds International may vary slightly from other local and indigenous organization in the geographic range of their operations, as their work around the globe provides assistance in five countries. The other local organizations worked only in Haiti. However, like the other organizations of this type, Hope Abounds International focuses on particular needs and not comprehensive services. Additionally, HAI also has a major focus is Haiti, where they dedicate regular mission trips and place families in county year round to support their local programs. These “missionaries” are on 2-5 year assignments and they help to arrange projects for missions that link volunteer experiences with the needs of the community. While the number and range of programs appears to be numerous for a mid to small organization, such diversity was commonly reported among some of the local organizations that do a variety of tasks and have a variety of specialties. For instance, one of the groups interviewed, actually the smallest organization in the group, had a nutrition clinic, an orphanage and a burn hospital. They also do a number of smaller short-term projects in the communities in which they work. As the founder stated, “*We found a need and filled it, as needs changed so have we.*” In this organization, it was apparent that workers and volunteers moved between these different entities as needs changed.
With the nature of the work provided by the organizations, I became attentive to training issues. One woman, a 20-year-old Haitian woman adopted and raised in the U.S., discussed the medical care that she provides to patients in Haiti. By them, she is actually referred to as “Doctor.” However, when asked about her background, she had no more than a high school education and no formal medical training of any kind. The participant had no issue with the gap between her formal education and the duties she fulfilled. She even appeared surprised I would question her background stating, “I just know what needs to be done and I do it. There are a lot of doctors. They come and go and I learn from them.” Confirmed in multiple interviews with participants, this raises important issues regarding education, training, and the quality of care provided by volunteers working from the U.S. who are outside the confines of the U.S. health system. It is also indicative of resources available to these organizations. They work in resource deprived areas that have serious needs to be filled. It leaves one asking the question, at what point does an organization throw formalized training to the wind and just “do the best we can with what we have.”

Working with the Community

While many of the local NGOs were proponents of working in the community, for Hope Abounds International it is a necessity. Their work is directly dependant on their relationships with the community and many of their programs are actually staffed with community members. “We send people to live in country. Those that have had a calling, they get to know the people and the community. We use them to identify what needs to be done, what the community wants. We always include the community.”
While bringing the organization closer to the community they serve, there are also a number of reported challenges that result. For HAI and other organizations in this study, offices are set up both in the United States and in Haiti. Participants told stories of clinics being looted by their own employees, hired from the local population, for items such as toilet paper and light bulbs, everyday necessities unavailable to many living in Haiti. One participant stated, “You have to watch them like a hawk. You have to have checks and balances.” Such comments are also indicative of a high level of frustration that emerged through this study, as providers of aid often reported being frustrated with those whom they serve. He goes on to describe his understanding of the situation, “It’s probably [the same] with any third world country where you are dealing with a lot of poverty. They are going to be opportunistic if they have a chance for making a living.”

While comments were indicative of an understanding and rationalization of employee actions, these comments are may also suggest an organizational subculture espoused by those employees whose financial situation is similar to those they serve. This may be further perpetuated by the gaps between the have and the have-nots. Unfortunately, this study was not able to delve into this subculture, a group that words for the organization due to financial need, an apparent deviation from the cultural norms established by the core groups of “giving your all to help others.” This also illustrates differences in missions and values of those that provide assistance and those that work for the company out of necessity, for example a paycheck and not a desire to perpetuate the mission.
Formation of Compounds

The formation of walled compounds was an issue specific to local and indigenous NGOs and was not previously noted in the study. These compounds were discussed in interviews by both organizations that have compounds in Haiti and those that do not. Hope Abounds International does not believe in the use of compounds and they, along with some of their smaller NGO counterparts, criticize organizations for forming compounds in the areas they work. Those that have compounds report utilizing these measures for security. Everything that the organization needs is found on the compound including their homes, work, and stores for food and supplies. However, those that criticize compounds actually identify them as a barrier to aid delivery, stating that it creates a “better than though” consciousness between the NGO and community members. This may be particularly difficult for those that are trying to increase community support. Moreover, some critics claim that efforts to keep staff and volunteers safe may actually turn them into targets. A director of Hope Abounds International mentioned, “The thing that makes it kind of safe for us is we do not have a compound or a village that’s ours. We don’t have any kingdoms down there.”

Many report that locals perceive these compounds as mini-kingdoms, more than merely segregation from the community they serve, but empire building. Therefore, they become targets of violent acts and looting. It is important to note that the targeting of such compounds was confirmed in the interviews with a handful of participants who lived on a compound. These participants reported having increased security in and around the compound to prevent such attacks.
Recurring Themes

A Personal Touch

While local NGOs varied greatly in the nature of work conducted, there was one common theme among all, a theme I dubbed the “personal touch.” In general, interviews with local groups were very different in character and tone from that of other organization types. The overall interview settings, while always in an office, were much more personal in nature than military interviews and even had a different tone and feel than the Red Cross interviews. My observation of Hope Abounds International’s office provides some insight into this, as well as other prominent organizational characteristics:

The office is itself perhaps one of the greatest indicators of organizational culture. The office was located in a group of warehouse type buildings and, at first, I felt like I was quite lost. Surely, this warehouse could not be the international headquarters for Hope Abounds International. I was a little hesitant to enter the office, as around me were construction and plumbing warehouses. When I entered the office, a converted warehouse, I was greeted by a young looking blonde woman who sat behind a counter with a glass window (similar to a doctor’s reception area). She invited me to sit on one of the couches in the reception area while waiting for my appointment with Hector, the Director of Hope Abounds International. I instantly began taking notes of what I saw.

Directly across from me was a rather large book shelf, filled with books about religion, children, health, and developing countries. The bookshelf was stacked full. Along one wall was a map of the world. In each of the countries
where Hope Abounds International works, there were pictures of the current missionaries that live in country and brief stories about each of the families. It was visibly apparent that Hope Abounds International was very proud of their missionaries and the work that they do, symbolizing high levels of femininity and increased levels of collectivism.

Along another wall are pictures of children, Haitian children, Kosovan children, Ugandan children. The wall was covered with smiling faces, starving children, tear-filled haunted eyes and eyes filled with innocence. There is such an array of pictures. Edemas, Vitamin A deficiency, missing limbs, healthy children. There was also a glass case, which included artifacts from the regions in which Hope Abounds International works. I instantly recognized a number of Haitian artifacts. The case was almost museum like and showed an important respect and understanding for culture. Along the couch in front of me, there was a table with brochures about Hope Abounds International and two large photo albums. The albums contain more pictures of medical missions, building missions, Americans interacting with cultures throughout the world. The pictures ranged in date from the early 80s (guessing from the film, clothing, etc.) to last December (based on the date in a picture). The pictures were all arranged scrapbook style...very decorated and it is obvious that someone put a lot of work into the book. I later leaned that this was a group effort, regularly maintained and updated by office staff who worked collectively to present the work of Hope Abounds International.

When looking at the album, I was struck by a number of things. Of particular interest were the people in the pictures. At first, they all appeared to be
white, middle class people. However, as I flipped further along through the book, the diversity really seemed to change. As the pictures became more recent, there were more and more racially diverse groups providing aid. It was later explained to me that Hope Abounds International works through churches to arrange missions so it would make sense that the groups were as ethnically diverse as the church populations that conduct them.

When I was finally brought back into Hector’s office, I found much of the same décor as the outer office. I walked back through a hallway with about 4 offices on either side, all were decorated with borders of pictures, artifacts and remnants of mission trips. His office was a very large office with a desk and computer desk at the very back. When you first entered the office, there were two couches facing one another with a coffee table in the middle. It looked more like a living room than an office and was a comfortable setting to conduct our interview.

The walls of the Hector’s office were lined with pictures of children and families receiving aid, being taught, etc. There were pictures of schools, children in the schools, clinics. I was told that a number of pictures were the first children that were ever helped by Hope Abounds International. And I was surprised at how much the pictures meant to Hector. It was as if each picture was a name and a story to him, one he remembered vividly. As he shared stories, he repeatedly pointed at the pictures, even becoming overwhelmed with emotion as he shared some experiences.

(May 2005, Hope Abounds International Office)
The above experience and observations were not atypical and were actually of the norm for all interviews conducted as part of this sample. Virtually every participant worked in offices lined with pictures and memories of their work in the community. As respondents shared their experiences, each one pointed to pictures and made the experiences come alive as they relived them.

Aside from outward exterior, the content of interviews was also vastly different from other groups interviewed. When participants of local groups were asked to describe their experiences, they told stories that were very vivid and very detailed. All accounts were personal in nature, even when asked to discuss their first experiences delivering humanitarian assistance, in some cases more than twenty years ago. The description often started with what they saw or smelled or heard. It always included a discussion of how they felt and how the experience changed them. When members of the military were asked to discuss their experiences, they tended to focus on instrumental aspects of the emergency situation, the logistics, or other factors that affected the mission and its goals. It lacked the personal tone indicative of a more feminine culture with low levels of power distance.

With only three exceptions, at the conclusion of interviews with local organizations, I was extended a goodbye hug. At no point did this occur with interviewees from other organization types. I noted this pattern early in the study and attempts were made to avoid differing body language or behaviors encouraging this greeting. I was very careful to act consistently across all interviews, concluding the interviews with a thank you remark and waiting for an indication from the participant for
the culturally appropriate response. Consistently, military participants extended a
handshake as the culturally accepted greeting. However, members of local groups often
extended a hand then pulled me into a hug or proceeded to kiss my cheek. This
movement was enabled by the physical settings of the interview, as military personnel
were typically seated across a desk, in contrast to the couch or table settings of the local
NGOs. Similar to other indicators of organizational culture, the Red Cross had a mixture
of those that greeted with a handshake and those that greeted with other forms of
affection, indicating a culture somewhere between that of the military and local NGOs. I
noted that the majority of Red Cross participants, all but 4, greeted with a handshake and
greetings that are more formal. In the four that greeted with other forms of affection,
national culture may have played an important role, as the participants were Latin
American women, members of a culture that tends to be more outwardly affectionate.

Sustainability

Another theme frequently noted as an overarching goal for most local
organizations is sustainability of programs. Local and indigenous organizations tend to
work in a region for years. For example, Hope Abounds International has been working
in Haiti for nearly two decades, and founders have worked in the country for more than
30 years. Another organization in this sample founded clinics in Haiti in the early 1970s.
Yet another has been working in Haiti since 1989. Thus, it is understandable that
sustainability would be an important concern among participants from these
organizations. When asked how one could better provide humanitarian assistance,
comments tend stress providing aid that is sustainable. Participants from HAI were very
critical of those that do short term aid and have limited long-term involvement. However, this organization regularly schedules one and two week missions in the areas. The difference, I was told, has to do with those that live in the country. “We have Jefferson, he lives in Haiti. He knows the area.” Long-term programs are sustained by these individuals, and smaller missions play a specific role in the larger scheme.

Linked to sustainability was a fear of over-reliance on aid. As reported in the literature and cited by participants in this study, all too often the recipients of aid became dependant on that assistance for survival. For many, it is imperative that something be done to make the population independently sustainable, otherwise, dependency on aid organizations will continue. Interestingly, local and indigenous NGOs are often the ones criticized as perpetuating this cycle of dependency by both the military and the Red Cross. Even members of these organizations themselves acknowledge the problem. Others cite the importance of knowing the population and spending an ample amount of time in the community. While this varied by organization, many participants appeared to think that it was important to spend a significant amount of time near the population, getting to know them. One participant stated, “Don’t just fly in and out. You really have to know the place.” This allows the organization to have a better understanding of the population and be more prepared to fulfill local needs. Furthermore, if an organization spends time with residents, they are less likely to drop off resources and quickly leave the area, contributing to a dependence on aid.
Competition

Competition was a common theme mentioned in both local organizations and the Red Cross, and acknowledged as a problem by the military. Competition, however, appeared to be a particularly important issue for local and indigenous organizations or those lacking in resources. The following military interviews brought this theme to the forefront:

“Even though you invite and have NGOs at the same table, you must remember they are competing – they will not share all that they know or have.”

- Colonel

“I think some for the reasons NGOs have trouble is because they are vying for the same funds.”

- Major

After hearing these comments, I began to probe into the topic of competition, confirming that this was a problem, particularly for the smaller organizations attempting to secure vital resources. However, it is important to note that no NGO, including the International Federation of the Red Cross, was spared completely from the effects of competition.

One Director of Programs for a local organization told a tragic story from Gonaives, following Hurricane Jeanne:
“What happened was when Gonaives happened, it was the big thing, the big
disaster of the month. So now there had money trying to flow in but World Vision
and all those different organizations, CARE, now they had to compete for the
money. They all went to Haiti to try to fight for their turf [prior to the disaster,
the speaker alludes to them working without competition]. Gonaives was CARE’s
turf. CARE is very big in Haiti, so Gonaives was CARE’s thing. CARE was out
there saying, ‘hey, hey, hey. Back off. This is my thing. Anybody wants to help,
you gotta give me, funnel the money to CARE because we are the ones doing the
work.”

Such “turf wars” are not uncommon, particularly as funds become scarce or there
is a massive influx of funds following a disaster, leaving organizations scrambling for
their piece of the pie.

Turf wars, while multifaceted in nature, are linked to organizational reliance on
donations for survival. This is particularly the case in smaller organizations who vie for
the same resources. It becomes a challenge to collaborate with those attempting to
acquire the same funds, even if those organizations are similar in mission, structure, and
background. Looking at reliance on donations also provides a glimpse into complexities
within the organization, and provides insight into activities and materials valued by the
organizations. An office staff member stated, “We have to make sure that we recognize
donors, that we thank them for their donations….we have to make sure that we
acknowledge them for the donations they have sent in so that they continue to send those
donations.” This person went on to show me the pictures of smiling children that would accompany the letters.

The Importance of Culture

Ironically, while strongly advocating cultural understanding, in some interviews a strong ethnocentric bias became apparent. Found more often among those in positions of higher authority, comments such as “you will teach them how to have better lives” were recorded. Others talked about the lack of morals in the communities in which they work, citing examples such as the looting noted above. Still others walked around and through the clinic with an ominous power. There was much irony in hearing these words and seeing contrary actions from the same participants that stressed the importance of working with the community and involving them in planning their future. Comments were most commonly noted among group directors and those who help in the development of programs and were never noted in volunteer interviews. Unfortunately, the interview guide did not question specifically for cultural biases in participants. Findings may be a factor of the types of discussion common to those in higher positions. Thus, comments may not necessarily be an indicator of group differences. For example, those in higher positions are involved in program development, opening the door to discussion in which ethnocentric thoughts can emerge. However, this may also be indicative of ethnocentrism within some local organizations, creating an interesting dichotomy between organizational ideas and barriers that obstruct their attainment.

Avoiding one’s biases and immersing oneself into a culture is difficult for anyone doing international work. However, some organizations realize the importance of doing
this. For many smaller NGOs, including Hope Abounds International, putting aside ethnocentric ways is essential to the success of their programs. Participants report that when they choose to work in another country, it is imperative that they learn to live in a culture that is different from their own. However, both the ethnocentric comments noted and the formation of compounds put into question how well some of these organizations succeeded at truly immersing themselves in the culture. Cultural complexities make this difficult to achieve. Many participants discussed their personal struggles in this arena, and personal stories and reflections helped to highlight the road to understanding.

Many claimed that one’s first instinct when helping tend to be sharing how they, themselves, would do something. Even while claiming working toward cultural competency, trying to share one’s personal strategies were commonly expressed. However, some participants acknowledged that in some settings American ideology simply does not work. What sets Hope Abounds International apart from some of the other organizations was their desire to move toward cultural competence and to truly understand the culture of Haiti, as well as other areas in which they worked. Participants from HAI reported barriers between them and the communities they served and relying heavily on live in “missionaries.” The president, not of Haitian descent commented, “It took me a while to stop making them Americans...I had to stop trying to make them fit our mold and I had to be more adaptable and fit into their mold.” This is a challenge often reported by organizations working with a different culture, in this case the local organizations that were exogenous. One director stated, “You get there by a lot of knots and bruises and fights and a lot of things that don’t go right and a lot of disappointments
and discouragements. And finally, somewhere along the way you figure out, ‘You know what? Maybe we ought to try it their way’. It’s just a birth process.’

An important part of Hope Abounds International’s mission is to teach Americans about other cultures. Those responsible for coordinating youth trips report that there are a number of unique challenges associated with sending a mission of youth or teenagers. It is often difficult to get them to understand the culture. One mid-level staff and youth coordinator stated, “That’s the neat part. You take them over there and make them uncomfortable.” In his opinion, making them (or anyone on a mission) uncomfortable gets them to open up and experience other ways of life and other methods of doing things. It is the first step toward cultural awareness for these volunteers. However, it became apparent that understanding and knowledge of the culture is often lacking until they are tossed into the work. Many have no idea of the political climate or even an inkling of the situation they will find. They have little knowledge of the country and its background, other than it is an area in turmoil or “in need of help.” One mid-level support staff shared her own inexperience when first becoming a volunteer. Before leaving for a 2 year mission to Haiti in the 1970s she knew nothing about the area. “I thought they were sending me to Tahiti” she recalled, “Imagine my surprise.” Such surprise can be attributed to a lack of preparation that may greatly impact the effectiveness of an individual or organization when first entering a country.

Importance of Self-Growth

Unique to local and indigenous organizations and those that provide missions was the theme of promoting self-growth. This theme was particularly common among senior
staff, as they reported a desire to promote self-growth among volunteers and mission participants. Reports of self-growth were also cited as a benefit of participating in relief missions by volunteers. While many volunteer their time and resources from a genuine desire to do something for the greater good, their motives are not always altruistic. In fact, possibly unbeknownst to them, many volunteers report personal growth on mission trips as being the greatest benefit. While all claimed to have successful missions, I was able to ascertain varying degrees of success within their projects. While some discussed successful projects and the goodwill achieved, many noted incomplete projects, yet all discussed the impact of the trip on their lives and how it had changed them. In fact, much of the conversation with volunteers reverted to this theme of self-growth and life change. One young college student who had just returned from a mission trip shared:

*We were supposed to help build a school but we didn’t have the right supplies. Instead, we worked at an orphanage. Seeing the kids like that, it rally changed my outlook on my own life – on theirs. I looked at things so differently when I came home.*

Reflections on how missions altered one’s outlook on life were common in volunteer interviews. Comments such as “*it changed my life forever*” or “*I will never be the same*” were common. This contrasts markedly with the experiences of other organization types, who report the benefit of their work to the community. This phenomenon is often criticized by staff from other organization types, who question whether short missions are beneficial to the community. One critic stated, “*Missionaries,
it is arguable the good they do. They go for a week, often working for two days, once you get through all the hoopla. Their hearts bleed for the poor; they leave money, shoes, everything they have. And they go home changed. But what did they change?” His doubts were supported by accounts from missionaries themselves, who reported failure of missions cut short due to problems with customs, lack of supplies and roadblocks. Many, however, reported the interaction with the community as life altering and leaving things behind was a significant part of the experience.

Many comments also related to the perceived impact of relief work on the population being served. Most participants felt that their experience had been beneficial.

> To this day we are still talking about a mission trip we went on a couple months ago, four months ago, and it’s like we are still getting laughs out of it and joy out of thinking about the little kids that we impacted.

- Mid level staff that hosted a mission

> It’s like they had no hope, but us simply being there and showing up simply gave them so much hope because that whole city they feel like is under a curse because no other city in Haiti was hit as badly from the hurricane and I guess us coming in to see us it was like why would you give up your time in America to come here to this deserted city in Haiti. That just shows them that people do care.

- Volunteer
It is important to note that reports of life changing experiences occurred throughout this organization type. However, it was only touched on slightly by Red Cross volunteers and this theme never emerged through interviews with paid staff, suggesting important differences between staff groups. Also, in other organization types, comments regarding impact to the community were substantiated by discussion of services, facts, and hard data. However, with the local organization type, just a presence and a perception of making a difference were often noted.

*Differences between Sample Categories*

In Hope Abounds International and other smaller NGOs that participated in this study, participant interviews highlighted differences based on employment status. For instance, the concerns of those in positions of higher authority varied greatly compared to volunteers. Many of those in senior positions talk of social, political, or environmental consequences to health and express a desire to implement programs that encompass global issues affecting health. Sustainability is on the forefront of thought and discussed as vital to the mission. This, however, is not evident through discussion and interviews with support staff or, in particular, with volunteers. This may be due to a number of factors, including differences in job requirements and responsibilities between directors and support staff. It is their job to think through the larger issues, to be educated in factors that affect health, and to have the foresight to improve the next mission. In comparison, volunteers tend to be more focused on their individual roles and responsibilities and the work that is being conducted.
Importance of Religion

For many NGOs, religion is an important aspect of their work and drives the overall mission. One of the directors began working for Hope Abounds International following a military career. He likened the decision to do this as “...going from the U.S. Navy to the Lord’s Army.” And many do see their work as being a part of the “Lord’s Army” or “spreading His love and protecting those who believe.” For those NGOs with a faith based background, “witnessing” or attempting to convert persons to a particular faith and sharing the “Lord’s love through our work” was very important and often identified as the main reason why the participant was involved in humanitarian action. Examples include the following:

“Well, being a Christian, the fact that there are people that have spiritual needs as well as physical needs is always something that is part of my faith. Part of anyone’s faith who believes in Jesus Christ. So this was just kind of natural to be able to assist, to be a part of meeting those two basic needs that we all have, which are physical needs and spiritual needs.”

- The director of Hope Abounds International

“Our philosophy has not been to feed the masses but to have quality input in the lives of those who God put before us. We minister to those that God brings and do not actually do and find others.”

- Senior level staff Hope Abounds International
“Going and building a house when you are a faith based organization. You are doing it as obedient to what God has called you to do”

- Hope Abounds International Volunteer

Another important characteristic of faith-based organizations is the regular reporting of witnessing miracles. While interviewing participants from faith based organizations, numerous stories of miracles were told. These miracles were always reported as the result of a prayer session or faith healing or following one’s acceptance of Christ. One volunteer shared:

“I witnessed two miracles; one was a little girl that had typhoid. She had been sent home to die and was helping her mother make breakfast the next morning after a prayer session. So my first trip was a real initiation. I have been doing it ever since.”

Such miracles were reported by faith-based organizations alone. Those who witnessed these miracles also reported its impact on their desire to continue work with the organization. At no other point during interviews were “miracle” type activities reported.

Proverbs

In all of the organization types that participated in this sample, there was a common theme among all overarching principles, which I labeled as proverbs. A proverb is defined as “a condensed but memorable saying embodying some important fact of
experience that is taken as true by many people” [hyperdictionary, 2003]. Regardless of religious orientation, each of these organizations utilized an adage or a proverb as a guiding principle. For example, one of the larger religious organizations utilizes the following bible passages on documents, websites, and doctrinal materials:

“Defend the cause of the weak and fatherless; maintain the rights of the poor and oppressed. Rescue the weak and needy; deliver them from the hand of the wicked.” Psalm 82:3-4

"Go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teach them to obey everything I have commanded you.” Matt 28:19-20

Another organization that does not overtly identify itself as religious utilizes the following passages on websites, with references to these precepts surfacing in staff interviews:

"What good is it, my brothers, if a man claims to have faith, but has no deeds? Can such faith save him? Suppose a brother or sister is without clothes and daily food. If one of you says to him, "Go, I wish you well; keep warm and well fed," but does nothing about his physical needs, what good is it? In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by actions, is dead.” James 2:14-17
“For I was hungry, and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.

Then shall the righteous answer him saying, Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you? When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?

The King will reply, I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me." Matthew 25:35-40

Religiously founded proverbs are distinct to the Evangelical mission and illustrative of the missions supported by local faith-based organizations. These organizations report seeking to feed, clothe and shelter the poorest of the poor. For many, the work that they do is “the Lord’s work” and the underlying mission, or in some cases, the overt mission, is to witness and to convert to Christianity.

A third organization, one that rebuffed religious orientation, mentioned a secular type of proverb. Following an interview, I was given documentation with the following adage. The essence of this adage, responding to a need, whatever that need may be, was also discussed in the interviews with this organization:
“If it’s barren, plant a flower. If it’s broken, glue it together (Or even make something new) with the pieces. If it’s garbage, make compost. If it they are fighting, sing a song. If they are sick, sit with them on the bed. If they are hungry, make soup.”

The use of proverbs, regardless of religious orientation, provides insight into the guiding principles, of the group. The mission of these organizations is often more general in nature and relate to the personal desires of members to do good.

_Evangelical Aid Delivery_

For many participants in this study, faith was an important part of who they were and the work they did. Christianity was a driving force behind every action, including humanitarian work. Evangelical aid delivery, while criticized by many, consists of a large number of organizations that work worldwide and in particular, in Haiti. Evangelical missions differ in scope and capacity. Most work to provide food, clothing and shelter to “the Lord’s weakest” and all do this while “loving God with all our heart, mind, body and soul and loving our neighbor as our brother.” The primary purpose of these initiatives is to spread the word of the Lord. Typically, this is done through administering food, medical care, clothing, or providing for other necessities.

A related facet, unique to the faith-based sample, was the notion of being “called” to participate in a mission.
“Well, for me it was a calling. The first time, it was like God is calling me to go on a mission trip. And the second time it was like I’ve done this before, I really want to show the guys how to experience this and kind of prepare them a little bit because I had been before. But I think that someone, if you want to go on a mission trip, then God is calling you. I don’t think you can go on a mission trip to Haiti and not have been called and without having the passion, coming back with the passion to help others.”

Many participants in the faith-based organizations reported providing food after prayer sessions, handing out bibles during meals and praying with and for patients. Through their stories and the observations and reports of those from other organization types, the importance of evangelism in their mission is paramount. However, this approach is often criticized by those for which faith is not a driving factor in aid delivery. One participant from the U.S. army stated, “You have to question it [faith based methods of aid delivery], we will give you food only if you take our bible, only if you accept Christ. To me, it ain’t right.” Another colonel from the Marine Corps mentioned the unique issues faced by evangelical organization in areas where Christianity is not the predominate religion. He reflected, “In Iraq, the people weren’t exactly happy to see us, any of us. And then you had church organizations with their bibles. The people didn’t want that. They wanted food, water, liberation not Christianity, certainly not a Bible.”

Those that participate in evangelical missions acknowledge the difficulties and opposition that they often face. There appeared to be much controversy associated with the witnessing aspect of aid delivery. Some participants even told stories of how this
could potentially affect host government’s willingness to allow them into the country. One volunteer for Hope Abounds International alludes to this while also sharing how many overcome such obstacles:

“We had to hide what we were taking in, basically. We were bringing bibles, New Testament bibles in big old tubs and we would stick, about 2 feet deep, and we had to stick all the bibles on the bottom and put everything else on top so if they [customs agents] just sifted through the top they wouldn’t get to the bottom and see the bibles because some stuff they won’t allow.”

The Politics of Non-governmental Organizations

Many interpret non-governmental organizations as being exactly that, an organization that is not a government organization and, therefore, making the assumption that these organizations are apolitical. However, particularly in Haiti, a very different picture arose. During observations at the refugee camp, I had the opportunity to talk with some of the recipients of aid. While not part of the study sample, their comments were very telling of an underlying issue – the politicalization of aid. During my observations, I noted comments by Haitians regarding the political alignment of certain local NGOs. Two Haitian women commented that a director of a local NGO was just a politician in disguise. These comments supported my own observations just days prior. The field notes below were written following a day spent with the director of a local faith-based organization active in the recovery efforts following the May 2004 flooding in Jimaní and represent the politics of aid.
My conversation with Raul [the director of a local faith based organization] was an interesting one. According to him, coordination between the relief organizations was working extremely well. They appear to have a system in place in which there is open communication between organizations. He, self-proclaimed, is the reason for this open communication and for the success of the project. After spending some time with him, it seemed that Raul liked to toot his own horn. I felt like all of my time with him was time on the campaign trail. He seemed like a very good man and very sincere about what he was doing to help the people of Jimani. However, at times, I felt very much like he was giving me a political speal. And everything, everything, revolved back around to money, how much he needed and what I could do to get that money. At times, I felt like I was leading him on. But I was open and honest and repeatedly reminded him that I was just a student, I had no tie to any money and could make no promises. I was just there to observe. I will say, however, when I think that message finally sank in, I think he was less sincere towards me. I understand that this man needs money and resources and people’s lives are dependant so he is doing what he must to survive. I was just a little disappointed at the political hews of his actions. No matter what we did, or where we went, I felt more like I was with a political candidate than with the director of a prominent faith based organization. It was almost disappointing.

Raul took me on a tour of the entire camp….It took hours. We toured all of the houses, from those just being built to those in the final stages. I was told that a house could be completed; start to finish, in 3 days. The men work in teams
to complete the house. It was a very interesting set-up and the system seemed to work rather well. Each man had a job, going from house to house competing the task. As we walked back out to the truck, we made numerous stops. At each stop, Raul would ask the person how he/she was doing, what was going on, how they were feeling, or something to the like. However, each time, I felt like he was through listening before they said what they had to say. It was almost like an empty question. Almost as if he didn’t want to hear the answer and more like, he was doing it because it was the right thing to do. Other times, he would talk over people. I just didn’t get the feeling he was listening. But they listened to him! When we entered a room, everyone’s attention was on Raul. When he issued a command, people listened and responded. And everyone, everyone wanted to be near him. It was very likened to the campaign trail.

~ Jimaní, Dominican Republic, July 2004

These observations were further supported by comments from participants of local organizations who were of Haitian descent. According to these participants, the proliferation of NGOs in Haiti is not always altruistic. In fact, many of these organizations were perceived as being an instrument of political action or self promotion. They attribute this to the situation in Haiti, the constant struggle with survival and the relentless nature of the Haitian people. One Haitian participant commented, “Haitian people will do whatever it takes to survive. All Haitians, we are entrepreneurs, we find a way [to] survive.” However, with this need for survival and reported politicalization, comes an inherent mistrust of organizations that emerge as a result.
One Haitian participant gave a little background on the proliferation of Haitian non-profit organizations. A founding member of a community based organization aimed at improving the lives of Haitians, this participant stated:

“‘It’s a business. It’s not nonprofit in the traditional sense. There are some people that mean well but in Haiti the motto is ‘Help your family first, help yourself first, and then try to help everybody else.’ A lot of times once they get some funding they forget about helping everybody else. They are like ‘Oh man, this is good, let me just help myself.’ See what I mean? I’m not trying to judge them. They are in a situation where there is no industry, there is no export, there is nothing. Haiti is just a place with people there. No tourism, nothing. What are those people supposed to do? Hey man, I heard this guy is doing this nonprofit and he’s making money. Oh, really? I’m going to get my nonprofit too. Haitians are very resourceful people. Very resourceful.”

Another Haitian participant in this study confirmed the above ideas regarding the proliferation of NGOs focused on “helping Haiti” and its consequences. She commented:

“Haitians [living] in Haiti are very cynical about people. They see nongovernmental organizations, which is what they are called in Haiti, as just a lot of time most of them are just another money making scheme. Somebody comes here or has ties to Haiti and goes to an organization or foundation or whatever and they say well, we got people dying and everything and we want to help. They
put in a proposal, get their grant, and when they come to Haiti most of the money is going to “indirect costs.” Not much of each dollar invested goes to actually the people that need it. I can even tell you frankly that a lot of the collections that were done for Gonaive, people were down there saying most of it did not make it.

Due to the focus of this study on Haiti, it is difficult to determine to what extend this problem is unique. Many participants defined Haitian as an “entrepreneurship” or a country whose people will do anything to ensure their own survival. Thus, it is difficult to assess the impact of this perception of an entrepreneurship by Haitians and the desire to expand business as a motivation for survival. It is important to note that comments were derived only from participants of Haitian descent. Thus, comments may allude to a situation as unique and complex as the country itself. However, without further exploration in areas other than Haiti, I am unable to determine if comments were specific to Haiti, or if these issues are typical of other areas facing a similar fate.

Deception and Aid

Smaller NGOs that provide humanitarian assistance vary greatly. Due to their heterogeneity, there is a lot of criticism among organization types regarding the work others do and their method of aid delivery. Among participants in this study, faith based missions were criticized most and many were quick to point out the deception that sometimes occurs with local populations when a small NGO comes in to do a “mission trip.” As some reported, things are not always what they appear. Short term mission trips were dismissed as “feel good” projects, a term that would be rejected by those that
provide short term missions, but yet whose detailed discussions supported the validity of this label. One participant stated that:

“In Haiti, and probably other counties too, the local population gets used to them doing that (short term missions) and it becomes a show. Cape-Haitian literally has orphanages that are run by the pastor of the week and whoever is going to have a group gets to use the orphanage. They go down and gather up a bunch of street kids and put them in the seats and all they have to do is repeat what the teacher says and they get a meal. And when the group is gone, the kids all go back out on the street and the pastor back in his church, with money in his pocket. They (those on the mission) felt so sorry for these kids, they’ve left their clothes, they’ve left the rest of their money, and they’ve left him everything that they could spare because he did touch their hearts, but the money goes in his pocket.”

Numerous comments were made by other participants that allude to such occurrences, including the frequent changing of the names on orphanages, clinics, and even churches. One participant from the Red Cross even claimed witnessing the repeated repainting of a church wall, as different groups took pictures of their “new” church to send a donor and then repainted the wall with another name for another group and donor.

Summary

Non-governmental organizations that provide humanitarian assistance come from a variety of backgrounds. In this sample alone, there were four dramatically different
organization types. These organizations shared many important characteristics, most notably their desire to do good. NGOs, particularly smaller NGOs, face a variety of difficulties not faced by their governmental counterparts. For instance, these organizations rely heavily on donor support and thus competition becomes an issue. Organizations also report difficulties with resource availability and the uncertainty of a donor reliant financial base. Still, grassroots organizations credit themselves as being extremely important to the communities in which they serve. Many are not paid for the work that they do, and some even pay for the opportunity to provide aid. They cite their relationships with the community as being of vital importance and have made long-term commitments to these areas. Particularly in Haiti, a growing number of organizations have a vested interest in working to improve the situation affecting the Haitian people. Themes prominent to this group, varied from that of the other organization types, indicating differences in organization culture. For example, prominent themes included the focus of local NGOs on sustainability, the effects of competition, the importance of culture, the desire for self-growth, the drive of proverbs and the impetus of religion, the challenges of evangelical aid delivery and the politics of NGOs and the deception of aid. These differences will be explored in more detail in Chapter V.

Humanitarian Aid Organizations: How the case studies fit together

When asked about their roles in the delivery of humanitarian assistance many similarities and differences among organizations emerged, along with the themes prominent to the various groups. Generally speaking, each organizational type fit into its own category of humanitarian involvement. For instance, a lieutenant stated:
“People cannot survive without water for three days. You have that hierarchy of survival. We help with the immediate needs – basic survival. We are often the front line. We drop food, water, supplies. From there you work on helping communities survive. Mostly, we leave that to them [other humanitarian organizations].”

This lieutenant acknowledged the strength of the military in the initial emergency response phase of the disaster, shown as a dark red color in Figure 4.

In many cases, the role of the Red Cross overlaps with both the military and counterparts in local organizations, as they are involved with “the immediate disaster recovery” and long term sustainability. One participant stated:

“We are often the first ones there. People say all the time, the first thing I saw was the red cross, our logo. And we stay; we stay long after others have gone. We stay to ensure the population is able to survive. We implement sustainability programs. We are in it for the long haul.”

This was interpreted as a bridge, the constant in the region, helping with both the disaster and the long-term suitability of the area. The dual role of the Red Cross may also account for its relations with both military groups and local NGOs. This role is indicated by an orange color, greatly blurred with both the red and yellow of the military and local NGOs respectively, on Figure 4.

In general, speaking, most local NGOs do not have the resources or capacity to help during a major disaster. The local organizations that participated in this study focused more on long-term development projects within the community geared toward
sustainability. Organizations in this type are often focused on their programs, which typically utilize the strengths of the organization. However, participants often report not having the resources to be as active as desired in emergency relief efforts. Additionally, those local NGOs that live in country are often also impacted by the disaster. Being impacted by a major disaster was reported by two local organizations that lived and worked in Haiti, particularly following Hurricane Jeanne.

“After Hurricane Jeanne, there really wasn’t much that we could do. We didn’t have the resources. We wanted to help but we were just in the way. We didn’t have food or water to share, only enough to keep our programs going. We were deeply impacted, we lost staff. Initially, there was not much that we could do. It was unsafe for us to even try. But now we are involved, expanding our programs into the area, rebuilding, helping to restore life in the area.”

- Mid level staff, local faith-based organization

“Hurricane Jeanne was terrible. There wasn’t anyone spared. Our people there, they did what they could in the relief effort but they, they were victims too. We lost 7 people that day. We had families living at the office. They had nowhere to go. Everything was flooded, they lost everything. They got into the effort. It was amazing how they helped their neighbors when they, themselves lost everything.”

- Senior level staff, local organization
The sample of NGOs that participated in this study was not all-inclusive. Many local NGOs are actively involved in disaster recovery. However, all of those participating in this study were focused on implementation of projects geared toward long-term sustainability and community based programming. These activities are indicated by yellow in Figure 4.

* Colors represent organization involvement in Humanitarian Action. However, in most cases involvement overlaps more than one phase, illustrated with a blurring of colors.
CHAPTER V
RESULTS: ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE AND COLLABORATION

Introduction to the Chapter

Using the preceding case studies for comparative purposes, each of the three organization types were analyzed to determine the role of organizational culture in the delivery of humanitarian assistance. Using organizational culture as the theoretical orientation for this study, it was proposed that organizations have distinctive group cultures, espouse similar values, and share common belief systems. Guided by organizational culture theory, this study attempted to describe the context of organizational culture through the experiences of those working within the organization in an attempt to discover differing aspects of organizational culture and the impact of those aspects on the overall aid delivery process. In this chapter, I will compare the organizational culture of the three organization types presented in Chapter IV and will systematically apply concepts and interpretative frameworks from the literature. I will then analyze the role of organizational culture in aid delivery and attempt to address the impact of organizational culture on organizational collaboration and the overall aid delivery process.
Overview of Organizational Culture

Culture is a broad social process which includes tangible objects (uniforms) to implicit values (the Seven Fundamental principles) and observable behavior patterns (witnessing to aid recipients) (Gundry & Rousseau, 1994)(Rousseau, 1990). The elements of culture vary nearly as much as the lenses through which they are observed. For example, Schein (1984) argues that culture is expressed through the unconscious beliefs and actions that guide an organization, while Martin, Feldman, Hatch & Sitkin (1983) and others focus on stories and their ability to generate rich detail regarding practices, procedures, and organizational uniqueness. They utilize these stories and the rich detail they elicit to provide a glimpse into the make-up of the organization, providing insight into factors that drive group culture. Other researchers focus on dividing organizational culture into measurable domains (Hofstede, 1980) or analyzing behavioral norms and common practices across cultures to draw conclusions (Cooke & Rousseau, 1988). With each angle a unique but important look at organizational culture emerges. Therefore, the present study borrowed from each of these methodologies when looking at the role of organizational culture in the delivery of humanitarian assistance.

Edgar Schein (2004) discusses the levels of culture, as well as how these levels can be analyzed to observe cultural phenomena. According to Schein, the levels of culture are divided into three core areas. On the surface are the artifacts, or those components of culture that are most easily observed. Artifacts include clothing, mannerisms, organizational structures, and those observable elements of the organization. On a deeper level are the espoused beliefs and values of an organization. Still deeper are the underlying assumptions that drive an organization’s values and beliefs and allow the
artifacts that represent the culture to emerge. These levels of culture were used as the overall framework for analysis and the framework was utilized to outline the chapter.

Borrowing from Martin and her colleagues (1983), I asked participants to share stories in an effort to help generate rich detail regarding the aid delivery process, helping to draw out both artifacts and assumptions that are vital to organizational understanding. In addition, participants were asked questions that elucidated organizational values, group behaviors and norms and common procedures, additional indictors of organizational culture, processes used by Schien and borrowed by others. Participants were also asked questions relating specifically to measurable domains including Power Distance, Uncertainty Avoidance, Masculinity/Femininity, and Individualism/Collectivism, cultural indicators developed by Hofstede (1980) and modified by Erez (1994).

Field notes, observations and media reports, and organizational media were also used to compare across organizational structures. I also used critical incidents to help present these observations and provide insight into the organizational culture of groups that provide humanitarian assistance. Following Gundry & Rousseau’s (1994) suggestion, the critical incidents included either descriptions, or detailed accounts of the event, and messages, or my interpretation of the event. These events were used to provide insight into the overall organizational culture, to confirm or refute points made during interviews and to help confirm my interpretation of statements made by participants.

This study focused on three organization types: the U.S. military, the International Federation of the Red Cross and local NGOs. These organizations varied in size, structure and organizational background, culture, beliefs and modalities of aid delivery.
It is through the comparison of these organizations that a clear picture of the aid delivery process can be painted, allowing for a better understanding of those that provide aid in an effort to improve the aid delivery process.

Accepted Definitions of Humanitarian Assistance

Many of the individuals interviewed stated a belief that there are often different accepted definitions of humanitarian aid. Many even stated that it is sometimes hard to understand the actions of others if you do not understand what is guiding them, in this case, potentially varying definitions of humanitarian aid. Ironically, while the definitions of humanitarian assistance did vary, all definitions were consistent in reporting the overall principles of humanitarian assistance. Table 3 shows a selection of accepted definitions of humanitarian assistance as reported by participants in the study. Definitions were chosen because they appeared to embody the essence of definitions reported by the cohort. For comparison, definitions were also divided by organization and member grouping.

Most definitions, regardless of organization type, embodied the essence of “helping others” or “providing the means for survival” or “reaching out to those most in need and providing food, water, shelter, whatever they need to survive.” While asked to give their own definition of humanitarian assistance, all of the participant’s responses were in accordance with the accepted definition provided by the United Nations (2003): Humanitarian assistance is “aid to an affected population that seeks, as its primary purpose, to save lives and alleviate suffering of a crisis affected population.”
While commonalities exist among reported definitions of humanitarian assistance, it is important not to overemphasize those similarities. For example, reported definitions of humanitarian aid by participants from the armed forces tended to highlight those areas of military involvement, including the provision of food, water, and security. Military participants also tended to mention a crisis or disasters as a catalyst to humanitarian assistance. Additionally, military involvement was referred to as more reactionary in nature. Red Cross participants tended to be broader in their definitions of aid, with more discussions of the population being helped and less focus on logistics. There was also mention of the cycles of poverty and emergency and not just disaster as a mechanism for initiating aid. Similarly, the local organization sample was much broader and generic in its definitions of aid, often reducing it to simply helping others, placing no limit on the scope of work. The local organizations were the least likely to mention an emergency or crisis as the initiation point into aid delivery.

Additionally, the need for sustainability and the desire to implement such programs did not seem to cut across organization types or to be fundamental to all organizations that provide humanitarian assistance. For example, the military does not focus on sustainability or underlying issues of poverty often associated with complex humanitarian emergencies. This aspect only emerged in the Red Cross and NGO definitions, when discussion of sustainability programs and attempt to improve the long-term health and well-being of refugees was prominent.

Overall, individual definitions of humanitarian assistance, in general, matched reported organizational values. Ironically, while participant and group backgrounds varied greatly in terms of organizational structure, mission, and goals, noteworthy
commonalities existed. Participants reported organizational values that were guided by similar principles, including “to do something for the greater good,” the essence of helping others. While the importance of doing something for the greater good and the impact on job choice varied by organization type, this was a recurring theme throughout all interviews, regardless of the participant’s background. As exemplified through the case studies and in Table 3, it appears that those working in the field of humanitarian assistance share similar accepted definitions of humanitarian assistance on a broad level. Additionally, commonalities in their value systems also exist.

Again, however, it is important not to overemphasize the commonalities that exist. While all organization types report placing value on doing something “for the greater good,” the values that tend to drive organization types differed greatly. Accepted definition of aid and reported values varied by organization type, the underlying theme and different nuances were appropriate when noting overall group fit. For example, military values and their matching definitions of aid tend to be related to performance and excellence in the job and highlight the driving values of command and control. In comparison, the Red Cross’s values that influence aid delivery focus predominantly on the Seven Fundamental Principles. These values emerge through participant definitions of aid which highlight humanity, providing impartial aid and helping others. Local organizations tended to be focused on the individual recipients, changing lives and helping others. In many cases faith was also overtly displayed. The local organizations in this sample also projected the importance of “doing what is in your heart” and doing something that is more than just a job or an assignment but something that you do out of pure goodwill to help others. These values were not displayed in the military, who
reported doing a job, and were greatly blurred among the Red Cross sample, a sample comprised of staff and volunteers.
### Table 3. Accepted Definitions of Humanitarian Assistance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Definitions of Humanitarian Assistance</th>
<th>Military</th>
<th>Red Cross</th>
<th>Local Organization</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>M1</td>
<td>Well the way we define it here is that this is aid that is provided to a distressed area based on some sort of catastrophic event whether it be war, whether it be natural disaster or whatever.</td>
<td>N1 It is helping those trapped in a vicious cycle of poverty and emergency. We have an obligation and a responsibility, to respond to the emergency. It’s a humanitarian imperative. We also have to look at longer term solutions and see how we can crack this vicious cycle.</td>
<td>L1 It is something that you give to another. Sometimes it is food or shelter. Sometimes it is a home, your time, work, money. But always it is something that comes from your heart and is done for the goodness of humanity, to help your brothers.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Military</td>
<td>Red Cross</td>
<td>Local Organization</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>M2</strong></td>
<td><strong>N2</strong></td>
<td><strong>L2</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There is what I call, I think is a continuum. There is no set definition in my opinion. Humanitarian aid can be what is supplied in a complex humanitarian emergency, Somalia or Sudan for example. You provide food, water, security. The entire spectrum. Then you move down that continuum. The cases are less severe, down to providing supplies or equipment. This is all ad too. It is all-important, they need it all. It all varies depending on what the situation is. Sometimes it is very severe, you have people starving, you have a need for supplies, food, water to be moved quickly to an area. Haiti is an example of this. It is necessary to move a mass amount of food and supplies into the area. It is a crisis. You need security; you need to be sure that trucks are not being looted. Otherwise what good are you? If the supplies go to the looters, you did not achieve. You need to work rapidly to mobilize your troops and supplies.</td>
<td>I think it really comes down to providing services that are meaningful to people that help people through a tough time, to provide the kind of assistance that they need. It depends on the areas that you are focusing on. You can say humanitarian here in the U.S. for that matter, but in the case of Haiti it’s not just programs to increase the educational level of those suffering in those countries, but also we bring medical supplies, medication…And this is real humanitarian aid.</td>
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</table>
Table 3. Accepted Definitions of Humanitarian Assistance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Military</th>
<th>Red Cross</th>
<th>Local Organization</th>
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<tr>
<td>M3</td>
<td>N3</td>
<td>L3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Humanitarian aid, if you go strictly with the Red Cross or the UN definition is humanitarian assistance without any differentiation, political affiliation or taking sides in terms of who is going to receive whatever the aid is. Specifically to provide humanitarian food, water, medical care for pure humanitarian's sake. Humanitarian assistance is reducing human suffering with dignity and respect. You can define it in many different ways, you can apply it in many different ways, but the bottom line is that it reduces somebody's pain and suffering and it does so in a dignified manner.</td>
<td>Humanitarian assistance, for me, is just helping people that have suffered any kind of, I don't know, I don't want to use the word disaster because it's not only during disasters it's people that need medical attention because of sickness or things like that. Addressing, assessing, and responding to needs of human beings that are in distress or in crisis. Humanitarian aid for me is just helping people in need that have vulnerabilities and we need to help them overcome those vulnerabilities. It's protecting the human dignity. So that's basically it. We will do anything to help the more vulnerable to become safer and with dignity.</td>
<td>Humanitarian is considered more regarding emergency situations, an earthquake or the tsunami, so there is a need for humanitarian support, emergency support. But the plan could be defined more in terms of development or a more toward longer term sustainability. Attending the needs of the vulnerable.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Military</td>
<td>Red Cross</td>
<td>Local Organization</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>M4</strong></td>
<td>Help people that are having any kind of problems, hunger, illness, disaster. Help them by mobilizing the power of humanity. Reaching out to those most in need and providing food, water, shelter, whatever they need to survive.</td>
<td>Food, medicine, health care. It is anything you do for your fellow man to get through hard times, to help them survive and live a better life. Simply helping others.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It's any help that we can give back to the community. Now, we also consider for us, also trying to safeguard the humanitarian workers out there doing their job. Providing means for survival</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>M5</strong></td>
<td>Helping as many people as you can in whatever way possible. It can be from as small as giving someone a meal to eat to big like giving them shelter. Anything that is needed. If we can give we try. It's helping people in a time of crisis.</td>
<td>When you are doing stuff such as going somewhere and helping people to eat or to build a house, orphanages, working with people to help improve their situations. It is something you do out of the goodness of your heart to help others.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Providing assistance, food water, security, to those that are unable.</td>
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</table>
Table 4. Commonly Reported Values of Humanitarian Assistance Organizations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reported Organizational Values</th>
<th>Military</th>
<th>Red Cross</th>
<th>Local Organization</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• The Four Cs</td>
<td>• The 7 Fundamental Principles</td>
<td>• Do what is in your heart</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• C2 – Command and Control</td>
<td>• Giving back to society</td>
<td>• Above all do no harm</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Professionalism</td>
<td>• Above all helping others</td>
<td>• Share the love of Christ</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Integrity</td>
<td>• Contribute to the community</td>
<td>• Act with purpose</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Honesty</td>
<td>• Basic human principles</td>
<td>• Dedication toward making a difference</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Service</td>
<td>• Sharing the humanitarian spirit</td>
<td>• Faith</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Excellence</td>
<td>• Helping regardless of politics</td>
<td>• Trust</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Provide the resources</td>
<td>• Improving the lives of the vulnerable</td>
<td>• Service</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>necessary for survival</td>
<td>• Helping all regardless of race or creed</td>
<td>• Learning through doing</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Sacrifice</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Love my neighbor</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Trust</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Changing lives for the better</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Credibility</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Working for the greater good</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Truthfulness</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Strengthen the community</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Mission of the Army,</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Giving people dignity</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Marine Corps, Air Force,</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Ensuring universal rights</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Navy.</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Do something fulfilling</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Serving something</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Honesty</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>greater than ourselves</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Educate without changing the Haitian culture</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Commitment</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Matthew 25:35-40</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>• James 2:14-17</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>• Psalm 82:3-4</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>• Matt 28:19-20</td>
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Differing Cultures

The following section will analyze important aspects of organizational culture as expressed through the stories and words of participants. This section will discuss the differing mission of organization types, providing insight into the overall group cultures. I will then go into more detail on the values espoused by groups to compare organizational cultures. I will then discuss emergent symbols and artifacts, outward indicators of organizational culture, again drawing comparisons between groups. I will briefly discuss languages and jargon, with reported differences among organization types. This section will then conclude with discussion of the Cultural Orientation Model (Hofstede, 1980) and discussion of how organizations align with the continuum.

Missions

An important aspect of this study included looking at formal mission statements and participants’ own interpretation of the mission, as well as the perceived mission of other aid delivery organizations. The mission of an organization was cited as being of great importance to aid delivery processes and successful efforts. Mission statements, important indicators of organizational culture, are described by Schein (2004) as related directly to organizational strategy. Essentially, the organization’s mission illustrates the strategy through which organizational goals are obtained. To achieve goals, individuals working in an organization must share assumptions regarding the overall strategy of the organization. Further, if organizations wish to collaborate, the overall assumptions of those organizations must align.
Table 5 compares each organization’s missions, as articulated by employees, to the actual mission of the organization. The commonalities expressed in the missions, as articulated by employees, organizational types and general consensus on the mission of the organization is an indicator of a group that has a shared sense of mission. This is the first step in being able to move from an abstract concept, the organization’s mission, to the fulfillment of the concrete goals of the organization.

As outlined in the case studies, the mission of the U.S. military is to “deter war and to protect the security of our country.” Participants identified this mission, while also acknowledging the importance of delivering humanitarian assistance in the fulfillment of this mission. The mission of the Federation is essentially “to fulfill the needs of vulnerable people.” Again, all participants in this study identified and exemplified this mission. Nearly ever response either directly or indirectly mentioned vulnerable populations. The missions of the local organizations that participated in this study varied. Therefore, I will focus on the mission of Hope Abounds International, whose mission reflected the religious orientation of the group and included “serving the physical needs of the world’s poor to gain the right to spread the Lord’s love and minister.” Reported missions all included helping a neighbor or more specifically, Haiti, and discussion of such always had a religious orientation.

While there appeared to be congruency among participants within an organization type, important difference between organizations emerged. Organizational differences, alluded to in their definition of humanitarian assistance, are further supported by differences in both reported and actual mission statements. For example, the military’s mission appears to be focused on U.S. interests. Humanitarian projects assist with the
training of U.S. military professionals, a wartime interest. Additionally, providing aid is a method of ensuring stability in the region and, thus, the mission reflects the values of the military aid. The Red Cross is more altruistic in nature, focusing on vulnerable populations regardless of politics or religious orientation, as well as focused efforts on sustainability. The mission of the local organization focuses on bringing help to Haiti and alludes to suitability efforts. Interestingly, however, much of the focus of local and faith-based groups related to evangelism and, while many local organizations claim to be benevolent, the mission of Hope Abounds International reflects alignment with those of particular religious orientations.
Table 5. Organizational Comparison: Mission Statement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Missions statements as articulated by employees</th>
<th>Military</th>
<th>Red Cross</th>
<th>Local Organization</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The purpose of military humanitarian assistance projects are that of providing training to our doctors and nurses and personnel, our units …while helping our AOR.</td>
<td>To help people prevent, prepare for and respond to emergencies.</td>
<td>To help vulnerable people of the world and to also help the national society become a better national society.</td>
<td>To get people involved so they can help Haiti.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USSOUTHERN Command: Mitigate the effects of disasters with the intent of capacity building within the region.</td>
<td>To help vulnerable people impartially and basically be there whenever needed regardless of where you are from, what you do.</td>
<td>To spread Christ’s love while helping to feed, cloth and shelter our neighbor.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.S. Military: To fight the nation’s war and to act as a diplomat in representing our country.</td>
<td>“To deter war and to protect the security of our country.”</td>
<td>To help Haitians live a better life through education, nutrition and health care.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mission Statements</td>
<td>“The Federation's mission is to improve the lives of vulnerable people by mobilizing the power of humanity. Vulnerable people are those who are at greatest risk from situations that threaten their survival, or their capacity to live with an acceptable level of social and economic security and human dignity. Often, these are victims of natural disasters, poverty brought about by socio-economic crises, refugees, and victims of health emergencies.” (IFRC, 2005)</td>
<td>“To serve the physical needs of the world’s poor to gain the right to spread the Lord’s love and minister to the spiritual needs of those we serve.”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Espoused Values

Cooke and Rousseau (1988) and O’Reilly, Chitman and Caldwell (1991) support comparing cultures through the identification of pre-established values and norms. To compare organizational culture utilizing values as espoused by members of the organizations, participants were asked questions regarding the values inherent to their organization. To aid with this a technique discussed by Trice and Byer was also used. Trice and Byer (1993) believe that unexpressed beliefs and ideologies can be uncovered and by probing into the member’s unconscious the (p.41) “gap between overt, superficial statements and actions and their underlying cultural meanings” can be deciphered. Therefore, this technique of exploring member’s stories, beliefs and experiences in their own words and through their sharing of stories was also used to determine if expressed values matched that of print organizational material to determine differences between the overt presentation of the organization and reality.

While many participants reported values that were similar in nature across the board (See Table 4), each organization type espoused one core group of guiding values. These values reflected the distinct organizational culture of the group and were consonant with the type of aid delivery systems utilized by the group.

The United States military is guided by a strong value system that includes the Four C’s: Command, Control, Communication, and Coordination. These values underlie each of the additional values that were mentioned during interviews and are embedded in the thoughts, actions, and beliefs of the military professionals who are guided by them. For instance, trust and credibility, two commonly mentioned values, can be achieved through successful communication and are essential to the coordination of efforts. In
terms of providing humanitarian assistance, the military uses the Four C’s to guide aid delivery systems. Aid is delivered through unity of command with the essential communication and coordination between militaries and groups delivering assistance to the vulnerable population. Additionally, command and control are reported as the essential elements and often the 4C’s are reduced to these two points.

The International Federation of the Red Cross places value on the Seven Fundamental Principles: Humanity, Impartiality, Neutrality, Independence, Voluntary Service, Unity, and Universality. All of the values mentioned during the interview process tie directly into these fundamental principles. It is important to note that every Red Cross interview consisted of unsolicited mention of the Seven Principles. During the interviews, participants discussed the principles and how they guided the organization in the delivery of humanitarian assistance. It is apparent that these principles are intrinsic to member’s image of the organization. This also implies that employees are well trained in the principles and their articulation is important to one’s identification with the organization. The organization strives to alleviate human suffering and protect life and health. It seeks to provide aid to all those in need, regardless of race, religion, or political position. The movement is neutral in all crises and is an independent organization. The movement must be voluntary, open to all, and strive for equal status and equal responsibilities worldwide. While the core principles of the U.S. military and the Red Cross were consistent across interviews, guiding principles varied slightly among local and indigenous organizations based on organization type and background. However, there was a common theme among all overarching principles, labeled for the purpose of this study as Proverbs. For the purpose of this study, and based on a dictionary definition
of Proverb, this term is being defined as “a condensed but memorable saying embodying some important fact of experience that is taken as true by many people” [hyperdictionary.com, 2003]. Proverbs have also been utilized by Trice and Beyer (1993) to define components of organizational culture. Additionally, proverbs have been discussed in the organizational culture literature as a statement, phrase or short story that “captures something people in the organization deeply believe in” (Deal & Kennedy, 1982).

Interestingly, regardless of religious orientation, each of the organizations in this sample utilized an adage or a proverb as a guiding principle. These were identified through reviews of organizational materials and observations among organizations. These include passages from the Bible, such as Psalms 82:3-4, Matthew 28:19-20 and 25:35-40 and James 2:14-17. All of these passages referred to feeding the weak or the poor. One passage included a commonly used adage “whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me” Matthew 25:39-40. Even organizations that renounced religion as a guiding value, utilized a proverb in written material and products. These organizations, while rebuffing religion, utilized adages with connotations similar to the above quoted bible passage. The most popular passage provided by this organization referred to fixing something or someone that is broken, taking care of the sick and feeding the hungry.

A systematic comparison of the values espoused by the participants in each of the case studies showed cohesion among values accepted by members of a group, while also revealing important differences between values systems of different organization types. The differing values embraced by the organization types are indicative of differing
organizational cultures. The values are representative of how organizations provide humanitarian assistance. Each has a different method and driving force. However, it is important to note that in each organization type there was mention of concepts including “doing something for the greater good” or “helping others” as values that guided the organization. Thus, while organizations have different methods for the work they do, the end goal is perceived as similar.

Participants were also asked questions regarding the values of other humanitarian aid organizations to determine gaps between perceptions and reality. Nearly three quarters of the participants believed that all organizations shared, at a minimum, the desire to help others, further supporting individual perceptions that they were working for the betterment of others. While acknowledging this desire, many were still critical of the work of others. This complex process revealed that regardless of whether the participant believed in the organization, its mission, or its methodology, they believed the essence of the underlying drive was the same. Participants were, however, quick to mention the differences between theory and practice and discussed how core values are not always the ones through which the organization ultimately operated. One participant mentioned, “I think some organizations are very similar in theory but in practice, it is very different.” This comment, supported by the comments of numerous others illustrates the similar principles guiding humanitarian aid organizations, as well as the differing methods of delivery assistance; a duality influenced in part by the organization’s culture and influenced how aid is provided by that organization type.
Symbols

Symbols, one of the most prominent and outwardly apparent cultural forms, are often discussed in the organizational cultural literature. Defined by (Firth, 1973) as “concrete indicators of abstract values” (p. 54) symbols are an ostensible representation of organizational culture within the groups that participated in this study. For instance, the uniform is a prominent symbol of the U.S. military. While each branch has its own uniform and each rank their own identifiable pins, patches and medals, the uniform is a powerful symbol of U.S. military culture. With few exceptions, it is protocol for the military to be in uniform while conducting a mission, thus reinforcing the associated meanings with each appearance. Many of the study participants criticized the military for always wearing the uniform, saying that the uniform is associated with “a warrior” and, regardless of the presence of a weapon, military personnel wearing a uniform are perceived as “a show of force.” For many organizations, particularly those faith based organizations that participated in the study, the uniform alone, was a deterrent to collaboration because of this association. Many even went so far as to cite the uniform as being a danger to them. This was noted in interviews with HAOs, including a Red Cross member who stated, “Sometimes it [the uniform] brings into question, are they really neutral? For us neutrality is number one. We cannot jeopardize that, and sometimes being seen with a uniformed person puts you into question.” Furthermore, the uniform, which often symbolizes political affiliations, may also symbolize coercive power, something in itself antithetical to the values of humanitarian assistance.

The Red Cross is linked to an equally familiar logo, the red cross. This logo is distinguishable in any disaster scene and has come to be expected by both victims of
disaster and those that have come to help. Red Cross participants in the study perceived the logo to be “a sign that help has arrived” for those impacted by disaster, and each go on to discuss important personal stories that illustrate this belief. With this symbol, comes an inherent belief that impartial aid will be provided to all those in need, as the symbol represents neutrality, one of the founding principles of the Federation. This symbol, the red cross, was the least likely to be criticized in the study. However, there was some debate in the literature regarding the Christian orientation of the red cross symbol. While this issue did not emerge across interviews, there is some debate over the red cross as an impartial symbol. In recent years, some have debated the religions orientation of the cross. As a result, another symbol, the red crystal is being offered as a truly neutral symbol of aid delivery. Time will tell if this symbol will be accepted.

While not as salient, local and indigenous organizations have symbols of their own. The Bible is a customary symbol associated with many faith-based organizations. Both faith based organizations that participated in this study reported supplying bibles and “witnessing” to the recipients of their aid. Additionally, while on mission trips, they typically wore identifiable shirts with their name and a picture that depicted their mission, often a bible, a crown of thorns, and a Christian cross. To some interviewed, this practice created a great deal of concern and criticism over “witnessing” during the delivery of aid.

Figure 5 emblematizes the some of the observable symbols of the three organization types participating in this study. Through this model, the observable gradients and apparent polarization in organizational comparisons become apparent. Through the symbolism of the cross and its link to Christianity, some commonalties in symbolic interpretation are embodied by the Red Cross and local organizations.
However, in this case, the crosses have differing connotations. Neutrality is implied by the Red Cross symbol and it has come to be expected by those who are familiar with the symbol. Thus, the partiality illustrated by the symbols of the military, its uniform and political agenda that it represents, or the local organization with the bible, righteous beliefs and supported agendas. These differences, illustrated in the most basic form of organizational culture, organizational symbols may be ominous barriers to interaction between these organizations and serve as an overt indicator of cultural differences.

Figure 5. Organizational Symbols

| U.S. Military          | International Federation of the Red Cross | Local Faith-based NGO |

Organizational Languages and Jargon

Part of being socialized into a group is understanding the group’s jargon. Each group or organization has its own language, and these languages may be vastly different from those of other organizations. Language provides a lens that allows one a glimpse of the spoken but often masked organizational culture. In the military, the use of foreign names and acronyms is also very prominent and in some cases may provide barriers to communication with others unfamiliar with such terminology. As mentioned in the case study, the U.S. military uses terminology that is often foreign to someone of a different background. Not only are these terms foreign to those from other groups, they are indicative of cultural differences between organizations.

The military was the organization type most often criticized for its differing terminology. Criticisms and frustrations with the jargon of the military emerged through discussions with local organizations. One director from a local organization stated, “We don’t talk that way, it’s just a bunch of jumble.” While there was a greater understanding for military jargon among the Red Cross, participants still commented on their inability to always understand military jargon, particularly the acronyms. One Red Cross participant shared, “I call it alphabet soup.” Another commented, “Sometimes you get lost in a sea of letters, you have no idea what they are talking about.”

Participants in the military sample were the first to acknowledge the difficulties associated with language differences, in particular their use of acronyms. Participants even discussed how language barriers impacted communication within the military itself, as different branches had different terminology and acronyms. Organizational cultures vary between services, however, as a collective whole, the U.S. military tends to embody
a similar culture, and the different branches have more in common than to cultures of other humanitarian aid organizations. Therefore, it can be assumed that if language is a barrier between the services, it will serve as an even great barrier outside of the military structure.

Through the use of language, cultural characteristics begin to emerge. The military was founded on the principles of command and control and those principles are apparent even in the language of military personnel. One officer discussed a desire to “redirect some of the NGOs working in the area to perhaps partner with them.” While her overall comments were in regard to a desire to work together, her terminology and word choice is reflective of a desire to exert control. This is an example of an indicator of organizational culture, the need to have some control. It is also an example of terminology that would be easy to misinterpret, possibly turning off any humanitarian aid organization to the idea of working together.

Language and jargon were not cited as issues in understanding local organizations or the Red Cross but more so an issue in understanding the military.

Cultural Orientation Model

The Hofstede Cultural Orientation Model (1980) was used as a framework for the systematic and cross-cultural comparison of humanitarian aid organizations. When studying organizations, one must look at the values, thoughts, beliefs, underlying assumptions and actions of the organizations to create an understanding of the complexities of organizational culture. The Cultural Orientation Model is divided into four dimensions (Power Distance, Uncertainty Avoidance, Masculinity/Femininity, and
Individual/Collectivism) that provided a framework for systematic comparison of the organization types. Participant interviews were analyzed using the characteristics of each dimension. Participant’s words or their observed actions were then used to compare organization’s existence along the continuum of dimensions.

Informed by other experts of organizational culture, the first section of this chapter focused on the values, mission, and other overt cultural characteristics. However, the Cultural Orientation Model, with a high/low categorization, helped to draw out those less obvious but equally as important components of culture, a necessity when attempting to analyze cultural differences. Further, this model served as a guide to measure the degree of cultural convergence or cultural divergence among organization types.

In his work, Cultures and Organizations: Software of the Mind, Hofstede (1997) divides the key points of each dimension into tables, signifying the dimension as high or low. He then uses those tables to expound upon the dimensions. The idea for the following tables presenting each dimension can be credited to his work. Additionally, the characteristics of each dimension were taken from Hofstede’s (1997) indicators of each dimension. In each section, a table will illustrate the criterion as either high or low for that dimension. Utilizing these criteria, each transcript was analyzed. Based on the high to low scale, excerpts from interview text were coded for cultural dimensions. Textual segments were then classified as high or low and assigned a number between one and five. Segments were then categorized into organization type to allow for the identification of convergence or divergence among groups. A schematic was created to help the reader visualize where along the cultural continuum an organization lies. This same process was used to analyze each cultural dimension, allowing me to draw
conclusions regarding the culture of humanitarian aid organizations and their impact of culture on aid delivery.

Power Distance

Power distance is defined as “the degree of inequality among people that the populace of a country considers as normal” (Harzing & Hofstede, 1996, p. 304). For the purpose of this study, the work that Hofstede conducted on national cultures was adopted to determine levels of power distance that occur within humanitarian assistance organizations. Hofstede (1997) lists a number of characteristics that embody the essence of power distance (PD). These components, presented in Table 6, were used to guide the comparison of PD in each organization type.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>High Levels of Power Distance</th>
<th>Lower Levels of Power Distance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Extremely hierarchical</td>
<td>Loose hierarchical structures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Inequality among staff is expected and desired</td>
<td>Inequality among staff is minimized</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Those with less power are dependant on those with more power</td>
<td>Interdependence between positions or varying power</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Subordinates expect to be given orders</td>
<td>Subordinates consulted in decision making</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Privilege and status symbols for bosses is expected</td>
<td>Privilege and status symbols are frowned on</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Centralization is popular</td>
<td>Decentralization is popular</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

One aspect of power distance that sets organizations apart is organizational structure. The military, for example, is extremely hierarchical in design, relying on chain of command for virtually ever aspect of their work, including the delivery of humanitarian assistance. The International Federation of the Red Cross also reports a
hierarchical design. While not relied upon as strictly, such a hierarchical design is important to the structure of the Red Cross. In comparison, local and indigenous organizations vary in the degree to which their organizational structures are hierarchical in nature. This variance tends to be related to size but, generally speaking, local organizations rely much less on hierarchical structures.

Another important indicator of PD is simply the power differentials that exist within an organization. Once again, with the military, this is linked to their reported reliance on command and control, in which power is an important component. Those with less power (i.e. enlisted members or those of more junior rank) must answer to those with more power, typically measured by rank. Further, inequality among staff is a defining characteristic. These power differentials were apparent in observations and picked up through interviews in which rank and chain of command was readily discussed.

The Red Cross has a similar bureaucratic structure to the military. As with the military, they report a chain of command and orders travel from those in positions of higher status to those with lower status. However, there is less dependency on power differentials than with the military, and inequality among staff is not as prominent as with the military. While variation exists among the local sample, the organizations that participated in this study, all small in size, exhibited more interdependence between positions, and the inequality among positions appeared to be minimized. For instance, observations and interviews showed that in many cases, positions were inter-related and the offices acted as cohesive units, with lower levels of power differential than that reported in other organizations.
Within the military structure, subordinates are expected to receive orders and they do not expect to be consulted on these orders. A perfect example of this is the participant that had no idea what type of supplies were being moved by his unit. He had been given orders and he followed those orders without question. Such behavior is typical of military personnel. Levels of this common characteristic of PD varied within the Red Cross structure. Participants reported a chain of command. However, comments were also illustrative of a willingness of superiors to allow subordinates to have a say in the work that they do. Numerous planning meetings were both reported and observed, during which people occupying various positions within the organization attended. During these meetings, all participants were allowed a voice. Similar decision-making processes were reported within the local sample. For instance, observations at a Hope Abounds International weekly staff meeting provided a great deal of insight into the low levels of PD within the organization. At this meeting, all office staff was invited, including volunteers. All were part of the decision making process. There was complete inter-relation between staff, their duties, and their roles and responsibilities. If an observer had no idea of the individual’s status, one would be unable to determine the director from the volunteer.

Privileges and status, another characteristic of PD was noted among the military sample, particularly in observations. All military professionals wear their rank on their sleeves. This is an unspoken way of informing those around you of your rank, ensuring that the privileges of rank are adhered. Those privileges include greetings and salutations by those of junior rank. Senior level staff also receives preferential seating and treatment, while being shown the utmost respect. Simply observing interaction, an outsider can
easily determine differences in rank and stature within the military. These same observations were not made in other organization types. For instance, merely observing either the Red Cross or local NGOs would not allow one the privilege of determining differences in status. Additionally, members were not greeted by position and, in many cases, even doctors were greeted by first name. However, one could observe status differences through more visible indicators including office space, furniture, and other physical features. Observations within the Red Cross showed that those with greater status have the more preferred offices (i.e. those with windows or nicer furniture). However, the differences awarded by status were not as overt as with the military. Within the local organizations interviewed, the differences were even less prominent as participants shared offices, worked in very small spaces, and showed little or no differentiation.

Another important indicator of PD looks at outward expression of PD on those that are served by the organization. For example, military personnel separate themselves from those whom they serve. They wear uniforms to stand out from the population. Staff resides on bases or in camps and do not socialize with the recipients of aid. This is attributed to safety concerns as well as a function of their job. Red Cross staff, however, are often themselves members of the community they serve. While they wear emblems to identify themselves, they report interacting directly with the communities that they serve and place no barriers between themselves and aid recipients. Many perceive this as a factor that aids in their success and provides added protection. Among local organizations, variations exist. Some acknowledge being community based and participatory in nature. They work and reside in the community and attempt to make it
their home. These participants spend a great deal of time in the community, even through it is typically not their country of origin, and build a sense of trust and rapport with those who have come to depend on them. Others, while claiming or attempting to be one with the community, put up barriers between themselves and those whom they serve. These organizations report building compounds in which employees, staff or volunteers can live. The staff have no need to leave the compound, and all people that come and go are monitored, thus placing a power differential between the organization and those whom they serve.

Based on these findings, it can be determined that differing levels of PD are espoused by the organizations that participated in this study. To visualize these differences, as I interpreted them, Figure 6 was created. Based on the characteristics of PD, each organization type was given a number to indicate a high or low level of PD. While it is impossible to put a nominal measure on PD, organizations were ranked in comparison to each other and extended a number between one and five, with five indicating greater PD. These indicators were graphed to illustrate my interpretation of the overall differences in levels of PD within organization types that provide aid. The figure helps to illustrate the high levels of PD expressed by the military. It also illustrates a moderate to high level of PD expressed by the Red Cross and lower levels of PD articulated by local organizations that participated in the study.
Uncertainty Avoidance

Uncertainty avoidance is defined as, “The degree to which people of a country prefer structured over unstructured situations. Structured situations are those in which there are clear rules as to how one should behave” (Harzing & Hofstede, 1996). Another indicator of national culture, UA has been adapted to determine the levels of UA in a group or organization. Applying UA to organizations is important as it has been noted to be an important indicator of organizational culture and striking differences occur between organizations. Table 7 lists some of the major characteristics of uncertainty avoidance (UA) that were coded for and used to analyze the levels of UA within humanitarian aid
organizations. These characteristics were then used to systematically compare levels of uncertainty avoidance across organizations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strong Uncertainty Avoidance</th>
<th>Weak Uncertainty Avoidance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1  Strict rules and regulations</td>
<td>Adherence to rules based on group consensus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3  Punishment feared</td>
<td>Descent is generally accepted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3  Low tolerance for deviance</td>
<td>Tolerance for deviant and innovative ideas and behavior</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4  Organization very detailed oriented</td>
<td>Organization less detailed oriented</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5  Low tolerance for ambiguity</td>
<td>High tolerance of ambiguity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6  Conservatism</td>
<td>Moderation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Perhaps the most important indicator of uncertainty avoidance is the importance placed on rules within an organization. The more valued placed on rules and regulations, the higher the levels of UA, as rules are methods through which organizations can prevent uncertainty. In organizations with high uncertainty avoidance, there are a number of rules, both formal and informal, that control the rights and responsibilities of staff. This is typical of the U.S. military and a strong indicator of an organization that seeks high levels of UA. The military ranks system ensures that in all interactions there is a clear hierarchy and dictation of who gives orders to whom, reducing uncertainty. Such characteristics are prominent in the U.S. military, as discipline and accountability emerged as two important characteristics of military culture. In every interview with the military, the reliance on command and control also emerged. Also an indicator of PD, this reliance stressed the need for rule and order. Based on interviews, documentation and media, it was noted that, within the military, there is strict adherence to rules and regulations and even the rules of engagement for humanitarian endeavors is well laid out...
and must be adhered to. Another example would include a rule that requires all military staff to wear their uniform. Not only must the uniform be worn at all times, but also strict rules surround what is appropriate and what is not. For instance, I witnessed a major get reprimanded by a colonel at a humanitarian training for wearing the wrong belt with his uniform. Majors are fairly senior officers, so one being reprimanded for an accessory such as a belt illustrates the strict adherence to rules and procedures and the intolerance for deviance.

The Red Cross also exhibits strict adherence to rules and regulations. The strictest of rules tend to related directly to the seven Fundamental Principles. These values cannot be violated and there is no tolerance of deviation here. This topic emerged during interviews but there was little talk about the punishment associated with violations of rules. More commonly, participants mentioned the values placed on the seven Fundamental Principles and the embodiment of these principles by all members. They also discussed how principles were vital to the mission and survival of the Red Cross. The International Federation of the Red Cross also has in place a standing Code of Conduct that must be adhered to by all members, as well as all those they work with. This Code of Conduct is a function of organizational culture, in particular, one with a high degree of uncertainty avoidance and an overall desire to reduce uncertainty within group behavior.

This implies that deviance would not be tolerated. However, with the Red Cross rules of engagement and other more organizational structured rules appear to be less strict. Unlike the military sample, at no point during the interviews were rules discussed and there appeared to be more tolerance for a less structured set of rules and regulations.
Local organizations lie much further down the continuum. The rules and regulations in such organizations appear to be more fluid in nature, from an organizational standpoint and their rules of engagement, in many cases, include no more than a desire to help. Examples would include the lack of a uniform, the relaxed office environments, and the freedom that employees report in conducting their everyday duties.

Punishment and questions surrounding the tolerance for deviance were not specifically questioned. While discussion of tolerance for deviance emerged, punishment was never discussed forthright during interviews. However, with the levels of adherence to rules and the strictness through which rules are enforced in organizations, one could infer that the level of concern over punishment would equal the level of rule adherence.

Intricately tied with strict levels of rule adherence are reported levels of tolerance for deviance. These are typically inter-related, the stricter the rules, the less tolerance for deviance. In the military, reported by the news media as an extremely conservative organization with many rules, there appears to be little room for deviant behavior. However, as organizations become less conservative and more liberal, there is greater tolerance for deviance. Based on religious orientation, it can be argued whether local NGOs are liberal or conservative in nature. Looking beyond the organizations background and applying a liberal/conservative stamp to the methodology through which aid is delivered provides a different look within NGOs. The means through which they supply aid tend to be indicative of a more liberal stance on aid delivery. For instance, aid is often delivered in the remotest of areas and participants are given freedom to how, when and where they will deliver aid. One participant from a local NGO stated, “I’ve heard that people humanitarian workers fit into a handful of categories, misfits,
“miscreants, mercenaries and missionaries. I wonder where that leaves me.”” Her comments are indicative of a commonly held belief within the humanitarian realm that those who work for NGOs tend to be nonconformists in nature and often do not fit into the confines of an overtly structured organization.

Another indicator of strong levels of UA is the detailed orientation through which the organization works. This was the indicator with lesser variation between organizations. Typically, humanitarian endeavors require a great deal of organization and attention to detail, possibly responsible for differences in variations between organizations. Organization and detail is something that is apparent in every aspect of the military, from the planning of complex issues to the determination of where troops will eat their next meal. Everything is well planned. The level of organizational structure of the Red Cross is also indicative of an organization that is detail oriented. This is further supported by the detailed layers of programs implemented by the Federation. The complex initiatives discussed during interviews, the planning meetings and the very nature of their work imply a strong need for a detailed orientation. Local organizations that participated in this study also shared the details of intricate planning for aid delivery, illustrating a level of detail orientation. Through the examination of stories told by participants, levels were slightly less than that of the other organizations. For example, participants in the local sample reported deciding that they “had to do something. So we set up a food drive and arranged to get the supplies there [Haiti following Hurricane Jeanne]….We had some difficulties because we didn’t have a means of getting what we collected there but it eventually worked out.” This is indicative of a lesser level of planning than that illustrated by the other organizations in this study, as
well as a theory of “act now.” This is in contrast to the well planned initiatives of both the military and the Red Cross. Another example would include the lack of supplies at a local NGO run clinic and the work that is done, day to day, based solely on availability of supplies. For this clinic, there is no way to plan when or from where the next donation will come, and so the group learns to tolerate uncertainty.

Indicators of UA are also apparent in the planning procedures of the organizations involved. As discussed in the case study, the military has well planned initiatives, which include end dates or the planning of when the military will exit. Other larger NGOs, including Red Cross disaster programs, also report an “exit strategy.” Levels and details of such plans vary by organization. It became apparent through key informant interviews that having a plan for exit was much more common among larger, more structured organizations whose long-term goal was to turn back the program or area to the community. Long term involvement in country, with no plan to exit was more common among the smaller organizations that participated in this study that planned to continue services, and if a problem got solved, they just moved to the next problem. By the scope and magnitude of their work alone, it can be inferred that establishing an end to the program would be next to impossible, particularly in the region of focus, where baby steps have yet to be made.
Figure 7 illustrates the high levels of uncertainty avoidance projected by the U.S. military, an organization that relies heavily on rules and regulations. It also shows the moderate to high levels of uncertainty avoidance of the Red Cross, an organization who allows flexibility to their work but also sets forth principals and codes of conduct that must be followed. Local and indigenous organizations that participated in this study exhibit lesser degrees of uncertainty avoidance, most outwardly apparent in their less formal projection of roles and responsibilities when compared to other organization types.
Masculinity/Femininity

Masculinity/Femininity, another characteristic measured by the cultural orientation model is defined as: “The degree to which values like assertiveness, performance, success, and competition, which in nearly all societies are associated with the role of men, prevail over values like the quality of life, maintaining warm personal relationships, service, care for the weak, and solidarity, which in nearly all societies are more associated with the role of women” (Harzing & Hofstede, 1996). This dimension was one in which important differences and possible incompatibilities between organizations emerged. Masculinity/Femininity (MF) was the second strongest indicator of cultural differences in this study. Table 8 compares the characteristics of masculinity and femininity. Organizations with characteristics exuding high levels of masculinity would manifest low levels of femininity. The two characteristics of this dimension are essentially polar opposites.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Masculinity</th>
<th>Femininity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Militaristic</td>
<td>Pacifistic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Ideal society: Efficient, performance oriented</td>
<td>Ideal society: Welfare, service oriented</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Masculine characteristics supported</td>
<td>Feminine characteristics (i.e. Providing for the needy is supported)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Dominate values are material success and progress</td>
<td>Dominate values include caring for others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Staff are supposed to be assertive, ambitious and tough</td>
<td>Staff are supposed to be modest, caring and concerned</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Emphasis is placed on equity, competition and performance</td>
<td>Emphasis is placed on equality, solidarity and quality of work</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Throughout the study, many important differences directly related to this trait emerged and differences were of greater magnitude than some of the other characteristics.
of the cultural orientation model. For instance, one of the most prominent indicators of masculinity is being militaristic. Without a doubt, the military fits into this category. Organizations that remain neutral such as the Red Cross and those that do not believe in war, such as all of the local organizations that participated in this study, did not portray this characteristic and are, therefore, more feminine in nature. Organizations that exhibit characteristics that are more feminine are more likely to be considered pacifist. This characteristic is exemplified in the stated mission of the Red Cross. Similarly, many of the local groups rebuffed war or militarization. A second indicator is one in which the ideal society would run efficiently, effectively and would be performance oriented. Again, the military would rate extremely high on this scale. Herein lays some differences, however. For instance, the Red Cross seeks to “create outcomes and changes that enhance lives.” Participants cite wanting to help the community to sustain development. This indicates a desire toward performance outcomes. However, the Red Cross is very service oriented and a desire toward improving the health and well-being of aid recipients is the underlying concern. This concern is similar in nature to that of local organizations, whose efficiency in initiatives can be argued. Performance can be criticized; multiple participants discussed mission trips in which the proposed projects were not completed but time was spent providing care to those in need. However, participants reported serving the welfare of society, reporting comparable indicators as the driving force behind their mission.

Additionally, masculine characteristics are supported by the military. In terms of providing support for others, the military has a number of key roles. Particular duties mentioned by participants include control, security, transportation, medical, specialists,
and engineers. Such duties are synonymous with military roles worldwide. These positions are a strong indication of a masculine organizational culture. The defined duties, as reported by participants, are masculine in nature, particularly when compared to the duties of their NGO counterparts. Those counterparts tend to embody characteristics that are more feminine in nature. Caring for the poor and the needy, nurturing, and supplying the essence of survival are characteristics more common in the Red Cross and local organizations, also emphasizing the dominant values of caring for others.

It is important to note, however, that in some cases, duties between the NGOs and their military counterparts are similar or even the same. However, the language used to describe those duties by the military are highly masculine when compared to the other organization types. For instance, one major described a situation, stating “our role was medical. We opened a makeshift clinic and provided care. We saw hundreds of patients each day.” Her words were extremely matter of fact and an indicator of an efficiency orientation. Another Red Cross participant that participated in a similar exercise described his experience, stating, “our goal was to provide as many health services as we could to those in need. We took care of open wounds, gunshots, you name it. We provided immunizations, general health care, even health education when we could. They were in bad shape, we just tried to help.” The differences in their discussion, detail and focus were apparent throughout the interviews and reflected differences in their cultural orientation. During military interviews, this efficiency orientation and masculine characteristics of aid continually emerged, while other humanitarian organizations displayed more feminine characteristics of aid, with greater discussion of compassion and
the personal affects of aid. Additionally, by analyzing such comments, the impact of culture on organizational framing of activities became apparent.

Other indicators of Masculinity-Femininity were found in office work space. This was, perhaps, the greatest overt indicator of MF orientation. All of the interviews conducted in the office of military personnel revealed very well kept offices. In many cases, the offices were minimalist in nature. Some had a picture or two. On occasion, participants had artifacts from around the world, but typically, the office space was more barren with a desk, neat piles, and order. This was very different from observations in the local organizations, in which pictures of children with whom they worked or artifacts from the areas they had visited accented the office setting, giving the space a homey feeling. The stories shared by these participations often related to the people themselves, not the mission emphasized in military interviews. The people, often the same ones in the photos, were constantly pointed to or identified. I interpreted such office décor and interview settings as being very feminine in nature, particularly compared to the defined masculine characteristics of the military office. Interestingly, participants from the Red Cross fit somewhere between the two organizations in terms of this characteristic. The offices of some participants closely matched that of the local NGOs, with pictures displayed throughout, as did the discussion of the individuals with whom they worked. Others more closely matched that of the military, with a much more clean office space and interview details were very goal oriented.

While the desire to do good is often reported as an underlying force in both the Red Cross and indigenous organizations, the caring aspect of aid is not often reported in the military. For instance, many military professionals who conduct humanitarian work
do so as part of a job. However, many cycle in and out of positions frequently. With the other humanitarian organizations, however, participants have chosen to provide aid to help others as a vocation. Because of these differences, a debate emerged within the sample as to what made a better worker, being paid or doing what you love. While this debate is not easy to resolve, participant discussion illustrated important differences between those that provide humanitarian assistance out of a sheer love for the work (whether paid or volunteer) and those for whom it is only one portion of their job. Discussion also highlighted differences that exist even among paid staff in NGOs as compared to volunteers.

Another relevant characteristic was the overall demeanor of staff. Staff in a masculine organization is supposed to be more assertive in nature. They are defined as tough and ambitious. These same characteristics were actually used by the military to describe himself or herself or the type of person that works for the military. One example of this assertive force included a story by a lieutenant colonel who stated “One of the challenges with NGOs is keeping them out of harms way.” This statement, indicative of strong Power Distance and a deeply Masculine organizational culture, implies assertiveness and the desire to control another organization. This is an example of command and control, and stories such as this illustrate the frustrations that the military have in collaborating with other organizations, in particular those who might put themselves in harms way or are less assertive in nature. Military personnel readily shared stories of NGOs jeopardizing themselves or others in an effort to do good. This is something that, in their opinion, that could have been avoided with more assertive,
performance orientated behavior, better planning, and increased levels of control, indicating cross cutting cultural barriers that create frustrations among organizations.

In contrast, organizations that are more feminine in nature report having staff that are more modest and caring and genuinely concerned about the welfare of those with whom they work. This closely defines many of the local organizations that participated in this study. The overall demeanor of the group was what I interpreted as “caring.” Furthermore, many of the participants displayed characteristics that are more motherly. In each interview with a local NGO, participants were “touchier,” even hugging me as I left.

Figure 8. Levels of Masculinity – Femininity

![Figure 8: Levels of Masculinity – Femininity](image)

Characteristics of Masculinity-Femininity

Figure 8 indicated varying levels of MF as expressed by the organization types in this study. Overall, the military expresses a strong masculine culture, one in which
militaristic style, performance and assertiveness were valued. In contrast, local organizations showed a much more feminine culture, exuding characteristics that embody traits such as care and concern and providing for the needy. The culture was also much more service oriented. Comparing these opposing cultures, the Red Cross, which espouses characteristics of both masculine and feminine cultures, lies somewhere in between.

*Individual/Collectivism*

Individual/Collectivism is defined as, “Whether one’s identity is defined by personal choices and achievements or by the character of the collective groups to which one is more or less permanently attached” (Smith & Bond, 1993). Of all the dimensions of the cultural orientation model, Individual vs. Collectivism (IC) was the most difficult in which to find group fit. This was not necessarily due to difficulty measuring the characteristics but more so due to difficulty with the overall label. For example, if asked outright, the military would quickly respond that they work as a well-oiled machine, implying a collective nature. However, based on the scale as presented by Hofstede (1997), they actually exert many characteristics that are Individualistic in nature. Table 9 compares prominent characteristics of individualism with that of collectivism.
Table 9. Individualism - Collectivism

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Individualism</th>
<th>Collectivism</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Individual thought is predominant</td>
<td>Group thought is predominant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Management tends to be of individuals</td>
<td>Management tends to be of groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Individual identity</td>
<td>Group identity (identity based on social network)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Confrontation excepted</td>
<td>Desire for harmony not confrontation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Relationship based on work relationships, contact, and advantages to self</td>
<td>Relationship of group considered “family-like”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Tasks more important than relationship</td>
<td>Relationships more important that tasks</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Interestingly, all groups posed characteristics that appeared to be collective in nature, discussing their *unit* (military), their *branch* (Red Cross) or their *mission* or *cohort* (local NGOs). While members of the military were the only ones to discuss pay and their job being a positive incentive for the work that they do, at no point did individualistic thought truly emerge beyond talk of a paycheck.

Another characteristic of the IC dimension is management. Those groups that are more individualistic tend to manage individuals as opposed to groups. Again, all organizations espoused more of a collectivist attitude, in that all groups that were managed tended to be group oriented. Individual identity is another important aspect of the IC dimension. This dimension was best illustrated through discussion by participants of the work that they did with aid recipients. In their work, local NGOs were able to insert their own identity. Participants skilled in particular areas worked in those areas, i.e. a volunteer with a background in contracting helped to build a school or a mid-level staff member with a nursing background coordinated all medical missions to the area. This allowed a more individualistic approach to aid delivery. Similar characteristics were
seen to some degree with the Red Cross sample. In contrast, the military worked as a single unit, following orders, with a collectivist approach.

Another indicator of IC is expected levels of confrontation. Yet another indicator that is difficult to ascertain, there was no clear line of distinction. For instance, while there is not necessarily a desire for “harmony” in the military, there is no room for the questioning of orders and confrontation is taboo. In both the Red Cross and the local NGOs that participated in this study, participants revealed an openness to share their opinions, ideals, and beliefs. Thus, when there are differences among group members it is acceptable for members to share those differences. Still, there is a desire for “harmony” within the group and participants, particularly in the faith-based NGOs, discussed avoidance of confrontation.

The dimension of IC is also reflected in the relationships that group members possess. An organization that is more individualistic in nature would be one in which relationships are based on work roles and contacts are used for advantage to self. This characteristic emerged in the military sample. Participants in this sample discussed work contacts, some even discussing how contacts were helpful in getting their next placement. While not directly related to humanitarian assistance, this is revealing of a characteristic component of IC. However, while this did not directly emerge through the interviews, discussion with participants showed a loyalty to their unit that was almost family-like. In comparison, participants from the Red Cross and the local groups that participated in the study reported close, often long-term personal relationships with colleagues. One senior level Red Cross participant stated, “It’s an incredible opportunity to learn from other national societies, and vice versa, they learn from us. You know of course making
connections with people that you will always have a connection with.” A director of a local NGO shared with me that he was a childhood friend of the founder of the organization and discussed how that relationship helped to foster the growth of the organization. Another Red Cross member shared “battle stories” from the field and commented on the lifelong friendships that were formed as a result.

Another indicator of IC includes the relative importance of tasks or relationships. In an individualist group, tasks are cited as more important than relationships. This is a characteristic embodied by the armed forces, whose members cite completing the task regardless of barriers. To a lesser degree, the Red Cross also shares this belief. However, in discussions with participants from local NGOs, it became apparent that the forging relationships were much more important than the completion of a task. Examples include mission trips that had gone awry yet valuable relationships were established and the desire of the director of Hope Abounds International to change people’s lives.
Figure 9 illustrates reported levels of IC by the three organization types. Unlike the other cultural dimensions, group fit, in terms of degree to which an organization embodies a characteristic, was not nearly as pronounced. In fact, organizations appear to be inter-related along this scale. In his work, Hosfstedee notes (1997) that if there is to be convergence on any dimension between cultures it is most likely to be on this aspect. This may illustrate a convergence of group culture along this dimension.

Personal Characteristics and Individual Perspectives

The previous section discussed the dominant group characteristics expressed by organizations participating in this study, helping to illustrate the divergent cultures of
humanitarian organizations. Although organizations have distinctive features, organizational cultures are not entirely homogenous. In fact, entire bodies of research have been dedicated to the study of organizational subcultures. In this study, while cohesion among cultural types was noted, variations could not be overlooked. For example, in general the organizational culture of the military was tightly consistent across interviews. However, it became apparent that some military personnel have a very personal basis for the work that they do and their individual perspectives vary somewhat from that of the overall group culture. For instance, one colonel came from a strong military background. Members of his family, including his grandfather and father, have served in the military and he was what is referred to as a “lifer,” someone who retired from the military. Yet, he expressed cultural traits more feminine in nature than that of the larger group. For example, he talked about helping “your fellow man,” working “toward the greater good” and working while “respecting the culture of aid recipients.” His comments differed from that of other military participants in their focus on the aid recipient and not the mission at hand, thus reflecting beliefs, values, and ideas more similar to that of other organization types. This implies that individual variations exist among those who work within an organization. While this study did not attempt to determine personality type and cultural fit, it appears that certain personality types may be attracted to certain organizations. For instance, this person fit the personality profile of a male, military officer, yet individual choices in terms of aid efforts may have been personally driven. People have different reasons for joining and staying in the military, including finances, education and the need for structure and discipline, and while those
reasons may provide a good group fit, on the individual level there may be notable variations from the group norm.

Similar to other organization types, those involved with the armed forces often express a desire to fulfill their need to help others. However, the organizational structure of the military does not often lend well to this desire. Therefore, many seek other outlets through which they pursue this passion. An example included a lieutenant who had an absolute passion for humanitarian assistance. She took leave each summer for 2 months and spent her time volunteering through an NGO in Africa. She was an Army nurse and reported taking any free time to use her skills to help others. She reported taking her “leave to get out of the office and do what I love,” supplying medical care to children in Africa. Other participants expressed a commitment to humanitarian assistance and reported being part of coalitions within the community to provide humanitarian assistance to countries in the Caribbean, while still others do volunteer work with organizations both at home and abroad. As one lieutenant stated, “medical people are medical people.” Such testaments suggest that there may be a “type” of person that seeks to engage in humanitarian actions. These individuals may choose differing organizations based on group fit but share an overall personality type with those that provide humanitarian assistance. This also suggest an occupations subculture, associated with healthcare, that cross-cuts the organization types.
Subcultures

The Culture of Medicine

Much of the literature on organizational culture stresses the importance of subcultures within organizations. For example, in the larger organizational types, subcultures, while not directly explored, were observed. Both the Red Cross and military had numerous departmental breakdowns. Based on the literature, it can be expected that subcultures would emerge through these departments or within specialties. While subcultures such as Information Technology (IT) and Public Relations (PR) became apparent through observations with the Red Cross and the military, the study did not focus on these groups or other potential subcultures. The study focused only on those involved in humanitarian action. However, even though efforts were made to look at culture through the lens of an organization, one prominent subculture emerged. At least five participants from varying backgrounds brought up the culture of medicine. In some cases, the culture of those that provide medical aid and assistance was merely discussed. In other cases, it was cited as a barrier to collaboration. A lieutenant in the U.S. Army poignantly shared this story:

“If I’m a physician, I’m top dog. I have my staff. Ultimately, I make the call, I make the decisions, and nobody should question me. Organizationally that’s difficult if you take that person out of that structure and say, ‘Oh, you have to follow this chain of command to start making decisions.’”
This participant alludes to the culture of medicine, a culture in which physicians expect to be in control of situations. Other interviews credited this cultural type to organizations comprised mainly of physicians. On participant from a NGO who has worked in the field for years stated, “They have a distinct culture, one of I would say arrogance.” One can extrapolate and conclude that this may be a problem when attempting to work with various aid organizations, as many humanitarian aid organization have some background in medicine and either employ or depend on the voluntary services of physicians. Reported barriers to organizational collaboration, including turf wars, control issues, and procedural differences may be complicated by the involvement of a physician socialized into the culture of medicine. This leads to questions concerning occupational versus organizational culture and which one dominates.

Collaborative Effort Model of Aid Delivery

“If there is ever a time for collaboration and communication, it’s the next 10 years. Disasters will be a principle threat to democracy. Take a look at areas with regime instability – look at the impact of diseases on those areas.”

- Key Informant, UN

The above comments from a key informant interview illustrate the importance of collaboration, particularly at a time where disasters are increasing in severity and intensity. Still, effective collaboration often appears a distant dream. This informant goes on to state, “It doesn’t get more important than this. However, the problem is putting all the coordinating mechanisms together. It is a mess. You have all of these
organizations; they all have their own agendas, their own protocols and procedures.” His comments are a reality in the humanitarian aid arena and were supported by both the actions and the comments of participants in this study. Discussions at conference proceedings and participant stories alluded to problems with coordination mechanisms, varying agendas and barriers associated with protocol and procedural differences among organizations.

Support for the Collaborative Effort Model

The most critical moments of a disaster are those immediately following the event. In some cases, hundreds or even thousands of people may be wounded or dead, there may be total disruption of infrastructure and there is a desperate need for assistance from the outside. This is when collaboration, or at the very least, coordination is crucial. However, it is at this same time point that both the military and the Red Cross report the greatest challenges to collaboration. One colonel stated, “When natural disasters occur, you have a total collapse, no authorities, nothing. Initial coordination, it’s difficult.” He goes on to say, “NGOs are slated to arrive gradually so coordination is difficult. Then you have thousands of bodies, no one is responsible. It is difficult.” A major, who made similar comments, went on to note, “After the situation clears up, that allows for the arrival of humanitarian agencies.” These comments allude to issues associated with the initial chaos of the disaster scene, organizational responsibilities, and the impact of size and resource availability on the initiation of aid delivery. Those organizations with more resources (personnel, funding, etc.) are able to arrive on the scene sooner and are thus thought of as critical to the collaboration process. A major goal of this study was to
determine factors that affect organizational collaboration. A number of themes related to this objective emerged and will be discussed in more detail in the following section.

Collaboration Identified

Participants were asked a number of questions relating directly to organizational collaboration. As disasters have increased in complexity and severity, there is a push toward collaborative aid delivery. Such a desire makes intuitive sense and many discussed its importance:

“I learned early on doing this that the job was too big for me or this organization. So we collaborate with many different organizations. Not just in Haiti. Hope Abounds is a member of an organization called Technical Exchange of Christian Healthcare. TECH. There are 100 medical ministries that belong to that organization. And what it is is a fellowship. It’s an affiliation of like minded ministries or organizations that help each other.”

- Director, local faith based NGO

“If you look at what different groups bring to a table, you know, DOD brings security, they bring excellent logistic support. The Red Cross brings instant response. The Public Health Service brings a whole cadre of public health professionals not really found anywhere else in the world. The NGOs have their own unique areas of expertise and specific aspects of humanitarian aid. Everybody has got something slightly different that they can bring to the table.”

- LT U.S. Army
“We had a daily meeting with the UN in the UN Headquarters [in Haiti following Hurricane Jeanne] and with all other agencies about what was going on, how we were working together, who is providing what. Those things were not happening 10 years ago. So I think those are very positive signs. And I hope that that spirit of coordination and collaboration will continue. I think it will. I am confident it will. Because it’s the only way out. And that’s involving again not just nongovernmental organizations, but with the government, accompanying the government, supporting the government, providing capacity building to ministries. Because it’s the only way. Otherwise, again in six months we will just be back to exactly the same emergency and it will be a tragedy. Haiti deserves better and it deserves that we finally get it right. We need to get it right this time. It cannot continue this way.”

- Senior professional, Red Cross

Comments made by these participants embody the essence of collaboration, supported by their counterparts in this study. They express both a need and a desire to advance collaborative efforts. Still, a resistance to collaboration was noted among smaller organizations. Some mention that collaboration occurs only as a necessity. As one participant from a local organization stated, “It’s not so much of a competition. It’s almost like they have no choice but to kind of get together to use each other’s resources. Each organization is very limited. There is probably like one person doing everything.”
Others mentioned a hesitation toward collaboration out of what appeared to a fear of losing one's identity or the impact of competition. Additionally, while all participants expressed the importance, many noted the barriers to collaboration. One military participant stated that the only potential drawback is “getting us all to the same table.” However, barriers appear to be much more complex and will be discussed in more detail in the following section.

The Impact of Organizational Culture on Collaboration

Many participants discussed how important similar backgrounds are in the delivery of humanitarian assistance. One participant stated, “Our sense of mission is similar, we can support their mission, they ours. We complement nicely.” Others agreed that when you know and understand one another’s background, you are better able to work through difficulties that may arise. Organization backgrounds are guided by indicators of organizational cultures, crediting the importance of organizational culture in the collaboration and delivery of humanitarian assistance. However, while it would appear that this benefit to collaboration was directly linked to organizational culture, further analysis shows that differing cultures can be overcome and successful aid delivery can occur even if group cultures do not match. The key factors to ensure successful collaboration and overcoming differences were open channels of communication and rapport. Both factors were commonly reported as mechanisms to overcome barriers set forth by organizational differences. Each will be discussed in more detail.
The Importance of Rapport

While a number of factors aided in reports of successful collaboration, rapport was the most common and consistently reported factor. The importance of rapport between organizations was noted in almost every interview. Rapport benefits collaborative efforts because organizations begin to “know and understand one another,” aiding in the success of the mission. A number of important comments regarding rapport were noted:

Relationship. I don’t think you can overcome it [organizational differences] any other way. I have to get to know the person and they get to know me before they are actually able to believe that my goals and my interests are the same. We just have different ways of accomplishing it. But that doesn’t mean that he is evil or am I. We have to be able to come to that place.

- Director Local NGO

I think just more interaction [will help organizations to overcome their suspicion of working with organizations whose background is different than their own]. Unfortunately, that’s hard to get started, I guess, but I think through regionally positive experience in one country, it spreads.

- Colonel U.S. Military

At first, you are adjusting to each other. How are they going to react, what are they going to do? What is their procedure? But once you feel each other out, it gets much easier. The next time, you are already beyond the learning curve.
Now, of course, turnover is an issue. You are never working with the same people, very rarely. I do in the command center but in the field you are always running into newbies. But still having worked with the organization helps, you know how they operate.

- Lieutenant U.S. Military

I do have, I must admit, certain prejudices, and I don’t think that the military are necessarily great people. So I came in [to the situation in Gonaives following Hurricane Jeanne] with lots of prejudice. And I was very pleasantly surprised by the professionalism of the forces. I saw soldiers sharing their ration of food with someone who needed it, and eating half of what they would have eaten that day and sharing it with others. I say that they [the military] were genuinely concerned about the people that they tired to avoid violence in any way. And only used tear gas is some instances to disperse crowds when otherwise many people could have been hurt in the crowds. I saw them working 18 hours a day and sleeping 6 and doing an amazing job...So I was pleasantly surprised and I could say that for me, personally, this was a very personal thing to be concerned with because I saw them doing really, really working with a humanitarian objective in mind, with no military objective whatsoever. It left an impression...I would be much more open to working with them in the future.

- Key Informant, Large Faith based NGO
Over the years, we’ve built relationships with all the Guard and Reserve Units, which really benefits all of us because we have the relationship and they know who we are and they know what we do.

- Mid Level Staff, Red Cross

I think it [working together] is just a matter of relationship building.

- Mid Level staff, Red Cross

Rapport, however, was not always discussed on the organizational level. Further complicating matters, some participants linked personality and individual rapport with success. A director from a NGO stated, “I have never seen a good coordinator. It relates to personality. If the leader has a good personality, people will go to coordination meetings. If not, none, especially NGOs, will go.” These comments and the emphasis placed on the importance of a solid rapport imply that there is more to the coordination process than just meeting the protocol and procedural requirements for working with others. It implies a personal and individual aspect also linked to an established rapport, further increasing the complexity of organizational collaboration.

Importance of relationship building and establishment of rapport in collaborative efforts illustrate ways in which organizational differences that can be overcome and thus are vital to organizational collaboration and future aid delivery efforts.
Communication

Communication is another key ingredient of successful collaboration. When organizations do not already have an established sense of rapport, communication is the first step toward successful collaboration. Communicating your differences and similarities helps ease into the working relationship, allowing for organizational understanding.

Regarding how to work with the other organizations, an NGO participant said, “the most important thing is communication; it is to hear what is being said.” Her comments resonated through this study. Many organizations reported difficulties understanding one another’s background and culture, issues that can lead to withdrawing from collaborative efforts. However, successful communication can help to abate any conflict that might otherwise arise, allowing communication to bridge the gap between organizational cultures and differing backgrounds.

Communication is an important factor in any collaborative effort. Effective communication is essential to overcoming cultural barriers between organizations. However, communication is sometimes a difficult and complex process. For instance, with the military much of their information is classified. This creates a problem during collaboration and coordination meetings, possibility leaving others to feel deceived when all information is not shared or when information is “blacked out,” meaning parts of reports and documents have been deleted to make the material appropriate for unsecured sources. Unfortunately, this aspect of their organizational culture is virtually impossible to overcome and there is little hope of changing procedures regarding “classified information.” Therefore, communicating this barrier and the reasoning behind it become
important to collaborative unions with the military. Otherwise, distrust abounds, preventing collaboration from occurring.

_Credibility_

Credibility was another important factor in collaboration and, similar to rapport and communication, is inextricably linked to trust. When asked whom they would choose to work with, participants often referred to an organization’s credibility as being a key determinant. Interestingly, credibility was often linked to organization size. Larger, better-known organizations were often cited as being credible. Even those organizations that have recently been cited for funding issues and other issues that may affect credibility remained at the top of participant’s lists, size often denoted as the reason. Other factors reported to enhance an organization’s credibility included their “good name,” the length of time that they have worked in an area and their standing within the international community. Some participants also noted the importance of a strong professional relationship. The Red Cross was the most commonly mentioned credible organization, cited by all organization types, including their own. When asked about working with the Red Cross, one lieutenant stated, “I think that people like the Red Cross, they are very professional.” Another NGO participant stated, “The Red Cross, everyone trusts them. People think of aid, they think Red Cross, not just victims but those of us who provide aid.”

Another important note concerns variations within organizations that operate in a multitude of areas. It was noted, through review of the literature, documentation and organizational material, and interviews with participants that, in terms of NGOs,
particularly the larger ones that operate in multiple regions of the world, there is variation from country to country. For instance, in Southern Command’s area of responsibility some countries have very strong Red Cross units. However, in other areas, the Red Cross may not be such a strong organization. This is the same with other organizations; in some countries Habitat for Humanity, World Vision or CARE are very strong organizations, in others they have very limited access and impact. This is an important factor to note, particularly as rapport and credibility emerged as key components for collaboration. If differences exist from organization to organization and within organizations from country to country, it becomes impossible to rely solely on reputation as a guide to collaborative efforts.

*Partners in Collaboration: Where to look*

While size may be an indicator of credibility to some, it also appears to play an importation role in organizational collaboration. When asked to discuss collaboration, size inevitably emerged, particularly when participants were discussing those organizations they with whom they would choose to work. The desire to collaborate is often limited to large, better established NGOs. Even a participant from a small faith-based organization stated, when looking for a group to work with “we work with the larger ones, the big guys out there, World Vision, Red Cross, CARE.” Organizations larger in size cite specialization as being a characteristic of smaller organizations. Therefore, it can be inferred that they sometimes specialize out of an area or they do not have the resources and capabilities to make collaboration beneficial to the larger group. The more established organizations also cite competition between the smaller
organizations as being a frustration for them, something that hinders the collaboration process. Overall, participants in this study perceived their organizations as wanting to work with larger, better established entities, particularly ones that were well known within the international community.

The Challenge of Collaboration

While all organizations cited collaboration as an important goal, one that could benefit aid delivery, a number of important challenges emerged, both pragmatically and ideologically. Collaboration was often mentioned as a goal for the U.S. military. One colonel alluded to this, while supporting the importance of collaboration among organizations. He stated, “Historically civilian organizations are [on] one side and military on the other. There needs to be more integration. There is a push towards that.” This colonel, along with the majority of other participants in the study, believed that collaboration was the way of the future and there would continue to be a push toward such.

It is important to note that when asked about collaborating with other organizations, the military always discussed other government agencies. Interestingly, when asked about the work that they do with NGOs specifically, participants still report collaboration efforts with government organizations such as USAID first and then open discussion to other well known organizations. This supports a gradient among the working relationships between larger organizations and the military/government structures.
There were a number of factors linked directly with organizational culture that created an overt barrier to organizational collaboration. More specifically the goals of the project, the amount of time dedicated to the project, the aim and depth of the project, and completion of deliverables were factors by which one organization was deemed more successful or more desirable to work with than others. For example, organizations that worked in the community, had established relationships, had a clear mission, and had achievable goals were more likely to be respected by other organizations than one that spent limited time in the area, had limited community involvement and unrealistic ideals. These are factors directly associated with organizational culture and provide insight into the types of organizations with whom others would wish to collaborate.

**Collaboration: A concept misunderstood**

Interestingly, the vast majority of participants reported participating in collaborative efforts of aid delivery. Unfortunately, I did not directly ask participants to define collaboration. However, it became apparent through discussion and emergent stories that participants had varying ideas regarding the activities that entail collaboration. For the purpose of this study and in accordance with accepted usage, collaboration was defined as “the process through which parties who see different aspects of a problem can constructively explore their differences and search for solutions that go beyond their own limited vision of what is possible” (Gray, 1998, p.5). However, asked to discuss collaboration, the vast majority of those interviewed responded that they had worked in collaboration with other organizations. When asked to talk about this experience, it often came out that they were not truly collaborating. For instance, one high level local NGO
stated, “Sure we do. We have rented vehicles from other organizations when we are short a vehicle.”

Participants also appear to use terms such as coordination and collaboration interchangeably. For the purpose of this study, coordination is defined using Mulford and Rogers (1982, p.16) quotation of Warren et al. (1974) as “a structure or process of concerted decision making or action wherein the decisions or actions of two or more organizations are made simultaneously in part or in whole with some deliberate degree of adjustment to each other” (Warren et al., 1974). This terminology has a very different connotation and using terms interchangeably dilutes the true meaning of activities and shows a misunderstanding of the processes. For example, one participant, when directly asked about ‘collaboration’ stated, “Coordination, for us, is extremely essential.”

However, coordination and collaboration mean two very different things. In fact, what is often described is neither. Interestingly, while answering a question regarding ‘collaboration,’ this same informant talked about, in his words, ‘coordination,’ but essentially discusses ‘communication’ among organizations. This participant was not alone. Many of those participating in this study appear to lack an understanding of the levels of interaction between organizations.

Further, based on my observations, it appears that in most cases, true collaboration is never reached. Coordination often occurs but, more frequently, the process that is referred to as ‘collaboration’ is no more than communication. As part of my observations, I attended regular meetings with local organizations active in disaster relief. The meetings were called “collaboratives” and were designed to aid local and faith based organizations in working together, particularly prior to or following a disaster.
While these meetings were informative, they were in no way collaboratives. Each member shared the status of his or her organization. Occasionally, members asked for or offered assistance, but in my six months of attendance, nothing collaborative occurred. The organization had a web-based news group in which members posted information, asked questions and offered assistance. Again, through these mechanisms, communication between organizations occurred. At times, organizations assisted each other, but mainly they worked in solitude. These observations appeared typical of the experiences of others, were reported in interviews, and illustrate important differences between the ideal collaborative efforts and the realities that face humanitarian organizations.

*Organizational Culture, Organizational Collaboration and Barriers by Design*

One cultural characteristic affecting collaboration included the mere nature of NGOs alone. Discussions with participants reflected assumptions and stereotypes that staff have about other organization types. For example, one key informant from the Pan American Health Organization stated, “*NGOs by definition do not want to be coordinated by a government.*” Her comments were supported by interviews with NGO participants in this study. By definition, NGOs are non-governmental. Some report fearing being forced to work under a government structure and losing their anonymity or neutrality as a barrier to coordination or collaboration with government entities or the military. This key informant went on to state that “*80% of NGOs in Haiti are doing work without any collaboration.*” While this statement could not be substantiated, if the comments are accurate, it suggests that much greater collaboration is needed. Additionally, this
highlights the need for a better understanding of why collaboration is not occurring. As organizations and staff continue to express a desire to work together and as acceptance for this model appears widespread, such a lack of collaboration, or at the very least coordination, is counterintuitive. By its very nature alone, collaboration among humanitarian organizations remains a challenge. Whether by belief or interpretation of action, the perceptions of other organizations act as a barrier to successful collaboration. These comments are also illustrative of challenges associated with implementing a governing body to help with collaborative mechanisms. Such governing bodies or coordination through the UN are often mentioned in military interviews. However, while collaborative mechanisms have been known to work for those organizations that participate, a large number of indigenous organizations, smaller in structure, size and resources, report being leery of participation. Many organizations are simply not willing to collaborate.

Funding is reported as another barrier to collaboration. As one NGO participant stated, “It is not just you anymore. So there must be a mechanism in place to get supplemental funding or the promise of.” As always, it appears that money is the bottom line, which means it is the largest barrier to successful collaboration. Without proper funding an organization cannot make progress and collaboration, itself, is an expensive process. Thus, the practicality of results is further impacted by monetary issues as noted, “collaboration is not cheap and people do not want to particulate if it’s not truly a benefit.”

Language and terminology related to organizational collaboration can provide insight into the collaboration process, in particular challenges that may exist. A Red
Cross participant stated, “We are open to it; we are open in terms of coordination with UN agencies and other agencies.” However, he goes on to say, “I would say it is a constant fight between all the organizations to coordinate ourselves.” The utilization of the word “fight” is an interesting, yet telling word choice. His comments are indicative of the difficult process surrounding collaboration. He goes on to say, “What is difficult is a practical output.” His comments, while not commonly identified through this study, were supported by the literature. It can be implied that working together makes it difficult to achieve practical results, as the collaborative model is hindered by the cumbersome mechanisms put in place to aid the process, organizational procedures and varying protocols.

All respondents acknowledged the importance of collaboration or at a minimum coordination. However, yet another barrier is coordinating the mechanisms that already exist. Currently, there are a number of coordination mechanisms in place to aid NGOs. Additionally, each organization has their mechanism. As one key informant stated “We saw it in Iraq. It is a mess. You have all of these organizations, 15,000 INGOs. They all want to be involved. They all can name their own reasons. They all have their own coordination mechanisms.” This participant and a handful of others also discussed how, once the war began, thousands of NGOs wanted a piece of the “humanitarian pie.” According to military participants who witnessed the early days of the war in Iraq, there were a number of organizations that wanted to be involved. Some were coordinated with the UN or through SPHERE, while others coordinated among themselves and some went it alone. However, in the opinions of these respondents, the situation was a very chaotic one, with little control or coordination among groups.
In terms of collaborating with NGOs, the military is often criticized. The military tends to have a very detailed plan and a well developed mission. When asked about efforts to integrate NGOs into that plan, most acknowledge the need for collaboration or coordination. Often, participants mentioned a UN initiative to establish this. One colonel stated that “lack of coordination with military elements is a real problem. CARE and IFRC are permanent in many communities (in Haiti) and have contacts for humanitarian relief and distribution. Then you have other NGOs, the first thing they were saying (after Hurricane Jeanne) was that there was no support from us but we recommended that they coordinate with us. You have NGOs with a limited attitude and lack of cooperation. It created a serious problem for us and for the population.” These comments are very telling of an unspoken theme that ran throughout the course of the interviews and observations. The colonel, and in fact, the vast majority of those interviewed, stated that coordination is key to any humanitarian action and acknowledges the problems that occur when coordination is not successful. However, he goes on to state that “… we recommended that they coordinate with us.” His use of language is both authoritative in nature and shows an arrogance that may serve as a barrier to working with others. Comments such as this are indicative of a very masculine culture and one with a high level of power distance, so much so that it affects relations with other aid organizations.

Comments such as the one above also reveal the importance of “turf issues” among those that deliver aid. When asked about civil-military coordination, a key informant from the UN strongly stated, “Coordination of humanitarian aid is done by civilians, it’s done by OCHA. The military should not take the lead.” He was emphatic about this. However, other military interviews suggest that often military personnel feel
“forced” to take the lead. Throughout the interviews, there were varying opinions over control and leadership. Many military officials acknowledged that coordination should be left up to the civilians or that the military should be in support of civilian groups, in accord with military protocol, which states, “the military should be in support.” However, even to the observer, it often looks like the military takes the lead in humanitarian actions. This may in part be due to a number of factors driven by organizational culture. For instance, wearing a uniform is an important part of military culture. Being perceived by the general public, recipients of aid, or other organizations as acting authoritatively may be due in part to the identifiably of military due to the use of uniforms. Similarly, the Red Cross, another easily identifiable uniformed group, is often the first to be identified at the scene of a crisis. Thus, visibility may impact perception of who is in control.

Additionally, the notion of being forced to take the lead can be traced to a masculine culture, one that provides security, force, and strength. Typically, in a disaster setting, the first resources needed are security and sheer force. Once the area is secure, those organizations that rank lower in masculine characteristics can enter the area. Still, the resources, capacity and strength of the military, again associated with strong masculine characteristics, are necessary to fulfill tasks in the immediate disaster response phases. This may greatly affect perception by members of the military, allowing them to feel “forced to take the lead,” as well as by others.

However, considerable debate on who should rightly take the lead exists. Many participants noted a need for a structure that would enable collaboration. Participants suggested the UN, UNOCHA, and the Red Cross, among others. However, there was no
consensus on either the need for a collaborative structure or who should head such a this structure.

_Intra-organizational Collaboration_

A major aim of this study was to determine the role of organizational culture in organizational collaboration. However, a unique concept emerged in interviews with participants from both the military and the Federation – the need for intra-organizational collaboration. The Federation is comprised of almost 200 national societies, each of which consists of varying numbers of local branches. Such complexity produces an intricate weave of organizations working together and attempting to collaborate. While each of the societies adheres to the same values and principles and are guided by the same mission, variations do exist between societies. As with any organization, cultures vary slightly between “Brother Institutions” or “Sister Institutions,” as societies are sometimes called. Some are more stable, have a more sound structure and therefore working with these organizations is easier. Others face organizational barriers associated with growth or leadership struggles, making working with them a difficult task.

These challenges are similar to those faced by the U.S. military. The military is divided into five armed services – the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard. Additionally, it includes the Commissioned Corps of the U.S. Public Health Service and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). These entities, while working toward a common goal, have different structures, protocols, procedures and terminology within of the Department of Defense. Each entity essentially forms a subculture within the overall culture of the military while these branches espouse
many of the same values, ideals and beliefs, there are many differences between commands, especially between the armed services and the commissioned corps. This study focused on the armed services in general, to help minimize some of the challenges, and did not deliberately look for subcultures. However, further research into the various branches would likely reveal important heterogeneity within the military. Two key informants were, however, from the U.S. Public Health Commissioned Corps. The purpose of these interviews was to confirm suspected differences from the armed services and allowed me to speculate on gradients of culture convergence and divergence.

Due to their organizational structure, the Red Cross and the military often find themselves in a unique quandary – overcoming challenges associated with attempts to collaborate within their own organizations. These problems may be unique to larger entities, as they are left dealing with collaboration issues within organizations, as well as between organizations. This also raises an important question. If organizations cannot work effectively within, can inter-organizational collaboration ever be achieved?

Conclusions about Collaboration

For collaboration to work, it must be mutually beneficial for the organizations involved. Many organizations report working collaboratively with hospitals or clinics in the area of need. Collaborations that were judged successful were often those in which organizations worked together out of a direct need. For instance, one organization had a need for assistance with medical services among the children in an orphanage. Another organization had a group of doctors that wanted to go to Haiti and provide aid but they could not get into the communities and they needed resources and a location through
which to conduct the clinics. Working together was mutually beneficial for both organizations. They each had something that the other needed, and there was no competition between organizations, so the partnership worked and continues to work.
CHAPTER VI
DISCUSSION

Introduction to the Chapter

This chapter provides discussion of the organizations that participated in this study and their role in aid delivery. The chapter discusses areas of success and potential barriers to the current aid initiatives. The chapter also discusses the role of organizational culture in the delivery of humanitarian assistance, noting both the impact of organizational culture on organizational collaboration and the overall aid delivery process. I will present my interpretation on the current state of humanitarian affairs and the viability of a collaborative model of aid delivery. The chapter also discusses key lessons identified, the public health implications of the study, and concludes with recommendations for research and public health practice.
Study Summary

*Background*

During the past two decades, there has been a dramatic increase in the number of complex humanitarian emergencies. In response, there has been an increase in the complexity of aid operations, particularly as greater numbers of donors participate in humanitarian endeavors. Because of this expanding complexity, the collaborative model of aid provision has become increasingly important to the delivery of humanitarian assistance. If the future of aid delivery is to continue in this collaborative direction, it becomes imperative to gain an understanding of the types of organizations that provide assistance and their guiding ideologies. One approach to understanding an organization is to study its culture. This allows for the understanding of what drives an organization, providing a glimpse into possible convergence or divergence of cultures that may attempt to collaborate. Thus, determining the role of organizational culture on the delivery of humanitarian assistance provides insight into the dynamics of aid delivery and the impact of group culture on organizational collaboration. In an effort to guide more effective and efficient aid operations in the future, this study investigated organizational culture in three distinct types of humanitarian assistance organizations.

*Purpose of the Study*

Current initiatives cite the importance of inter-organizational collaboration in providing humanitarian assistance and improving health in areas affected by complex humanitarian emergencies. A deeper understanding of the factors underlying the success of such initiatives is imperative. It is likely that the way organizations operate and
interact is impacted by the influence of organizational culture. Thus, the specific objectives of the study were:

1. To determine the role of organizational culture in humanitarian aid efforts by the U.S. military and humanitarian aid organizations (HAOs) providing assistance to those affected by complex humanitarian emergencies worldwide.
2. To identify and report areas of success, as well as potential barriers to current aid initiatives, in an effort to add to the literature on humanitarian assistance, organizational culture and inter-organizational collaboration.
3. To assess the viability of the collaborative effort model as the primary model for supplying humanitarian assistance during complex humanitarian emergencies, through an in-depth analysis of the organizational culture of the U.S. military and HAOs, further determining the impact of organizational culture on organizational collaboration.

Overview of Methods

The purpose of this study was to determine the role of organizational culture in the provision of humanitarian assistance and to determine the effect of organizational culture on inter-organizational collaboration and humanitarian action. Being a relatively uncharted area, this study took an exploratory approach, utilizing qualitative methods to analyze humanitarian aid efforts by (a) the U.S. military, an important provider of bilateral aid and participant in multilateral aid initiatives worldwide, (b) the International Federation of the Red Cross, an international non-governmental organization known for
its involvement in complex humanitarian disasters, and (c) a sampling of local and indigenous non-governmental organizations.

In meeting with the aims of this study, organization types were evaluated as individual case studies, which consisted of in-depth interviewing, naturalistic observer studies, and reviews of records and reports. Participants from each organization type were recruited using a non-probability cluster sampling technique. A minimum of five interviews were conducted in each cluster, with data collection ultimately driven by saturation. In total 75 semi-structured interviews and observations were conducted between October 2004 and July 2005. Each interview was approximately one hour in length. All interviews were recorded and transcribed verbatim for analysis. An iterative process, data collection, and analysis occurred simultaneously, aiding with the building of emergent theories and ideas. Once transcribed, all interviews were coded into Ethnograph v.5.0 and analyzed. An initial codebook, informed by the research questions and theoretical framework, was created to help with this process. Then a process of open coding was used. As the need for new codes arose, the codebook was continuously revised. Through this process, patterns and trends were examined and important themes emerged.

Key Findings

Success and Barriers of Humanitarian Aid Organizations

Organizations that provide humanitarian assistance to those in need are multilateral, bilateral, international and local or indigenous non-governmental organizations. In an effort to identify and report areas of success, as well as potential
barriers to current aid initiatives, this study focused on three of those key organizational types: 1) the U.S. military, 2) the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies and 3) a sampling of local non-governmental organizations. The study confirmed that organization types differed in background, structure, size, management, leadership, theoretical orientation, and approach to aid delivery, all factors that contributed to the degree of success in aid delivery. Organizations reported differing guiding missions and values, as well as distinctive approaches to aid delivery. Likewise, the focus of organizational efforts and the methodology through which they deliver aid was as different in nature and design as the organizations themselves. However, understanding organizational similarities and differences and the factors that influence success is an imperative, particularly as the need for more effective and efficient modes of intervention become evermore apparent.

The U.S. armed forces have a longstanding tradition of providing humanitarian assistance, boast many strengths imperative to a humanitarian mission, and report successful humanitarian endeavors. Participant comments supported strengths often discussed in the literature and credited to the U.S. military, including logistical capabilities, resource availability and sheer force (Dunivin, 1994; Johnson, 2000; Rubinstein, 2003; Tomlinson, 2000; United States Institute of Peace, 2000; Winslow, 2002). During interviews, the need for security during aid delivery also emerged as an important factor of military aid delivery. Their capabilities allow the U.S. military to be an important provider of aid during emergency situations and logistical capabilities allow the military to respond in the earliest and most unstable of circumstance. Amid such strengths, the military perceives itself to be a vital force in the delivery of humanitarian
assistance and currently, the military works worldwide to provide aid and assistance to countries in need. Many of these humanitarian activities are in direct response to a disaster while others are arranged as humanitarian endeavors to help sharpen medical skills while providing needed resources to neighboring countries.

The strengths of the U.S. military, as noted by both military and non-military participants, supported the anticipated continued involvement of the armed forces in aid delivery, which to some was an indicator of a shift in focus for the military. As the military became more involved in humanitarian assistance, beginning in the 1990s, there was talk of a possible paradigm shift (Johnson, 2000). Proponents of this paradigm shift cited the increased involvement of the U.S. military in goodwill missions worldwide and the humanitarian work that was being done. Propagating these beliefs were increased efforts in humanitarian trainings and a shift in focus toward improved humanitarian capabilities following Hurricanes Georges and Mitch in 1998. While it appeared a shift might occur and that policies and procedures may be oriented to better meet a humanitarian mission. The terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 challenged the nascent paradigm shift, refocusing the mission of the U.S. military on deterring war and protecting the security of the United States (US Southern Command, 2006b). Today, the U.S. armed forces work in fulfillment of that mission. As the military continues to operate in a humanitarian capacity, the purpose of these efforts remains to ensure regional stability, essentially protecting U.S. borders and interests. Thus, it can be inferred that in the foreseeable future, the U.S. military will not likely focus on a strictly humanitarian mission.
With safety, security, and regional stability on the forefront, many of the expressed barriers to aid delivery will remain problematic for the U.S. military, particularly as the U.S. military continues to embrace what the literature cites as a “Combat, Masculine Warrior paradigm” (Dunivin, 1994). The structures and forces of the U.S. military are built around combat activities, and services are organized and trained around combat roles. Thus, the image of the military is synonymous with the image of war and the deeply ingrained “cult of masculinity” is complemented by masculine norms, values, and lifestyles that encompass U.S. military culture (Dunivin, 1994). While the current paradigm is almost undeniably embraced, when faced with operations other than war, this core value creates a perplexing dichotomy.

Furthermore, while the capacity of the U.S. military and its extensive resource and logistical capabilities remain advantageous to aid delivery, barriers cited, including communication, language barriers, constant turnover, and trust issues, will remain challenges facing military humanitarian relief. If the current system remains as is, further difficulties with collaboration or coordination due to the complex military structure and hierarchical pitfalls will continue to plague military aid delivery, as each is inherent to the nature of the U.S. military, a political entity whose mission is to protect the U.S. and its borders. These characteristics make military aid so complex and controversial. The rational for military involvement in aid delivery is clear but the paradox between these missions continues to foster debate.

The International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies was founded on the principles of humanity, impartiality, neutrality, independence, voluntary service, unity, and universality. These principles are fundamental to the mission of the
Federation and are actively displayed in all areas operated by the Red Cross. Interestingly, the Fundamental Principles were commonly noted and emerged in every interview, unprompted. The Fundamental Principles were constantly displayed in office settings and numerous copies were given to me during data collection. The degree of congruence among participants in the Red Cross sample was striking. The principles were used to guide Red Cross action within the 183 National Societies, the Federation and the International Committee of the Red Cross and Red Crescent, all part of the Movement, to provide aid to vulnerable populations worldwide. The Red Cross participants boasted many successes, crediting itself with its commitment to and bonds within the communities they serve. Often perceived as “a sign that hope has arrived,” Red Cross workers believed populations are dependent on their services, particularly during disasters, and they work to ensure sustainability within the population.

A larger organization by design, the Red Cross shares many similarities with the U.S. military, including a very strong hierarchical structure. One important difference, however, is the Red Cross reliance on volunteers, a level of the organization that is cited by employees as being the “backbone” of the organization. While decisions and policies are sent down the chain of command, there is much greater opportunity for volunteers and field workers to express their concerns and influence decision making. The reliance on volunteers and their importance to the community they serve, as well as the overall mission of the Red Cross was credited with much of the organization’s success.

Interestingly, the Red Cross was considered by some to be a pseudo-government structure. This may be, in part, due to the close working relations between the Red Cross and government and military entities. Due to its size, structure, and records of
accomplishment in complex humanitarian emergencies, the Red Cross appears to have gained the trust of the military. When discussing the need for collaborative mechanisms, some military respondents even went as far as recommending the Red Cross for this role, illustrating levels of trust and respect for the Red Cross by others. However, this relationship was not without its difficulties. Differing missions and the apolitical stance of the Red Cross guided by the seven Fundamental Principles, makes trusting the military difficult for the Red Cross. It appeared through interviews and observations that this relationship is essential for future aid delivery and, thus, the two have learned to work together. Additionally, through trainings and standing agreements with the military, efforts are being made to overcome challenges that arise when working together.

The Red Cross also has the unique position of large structure and privileged status within the international community. Still they hold true to their NGO roots, sharing some of the characteristics of other NGOs in aid delivery, including a desire to help others, understanding of looser power structures, and the need for donor support to continue operations. It is likely that this type of relationship enhanced the ability of the Red Cross to work with different organization types.

Local and indigenous organizations were chosen as a sample for this study because of the importance of local, grassroots NGOs in aid delivery. In Haiti, for example, there has been a proliferation of such organizations and some even report this “business” as being one of the few sources of livelihood in the country. Organizations in this sample not only differ among one another, they are also vastly different from the other organization types in this study. One of the important differences among local NGOs concerns resource availability, an important factor in organizational success.
Some of the organizations discussed challenges associated with limited resources and funding issues. As a result, resource availability also dictates the scope and magnitude of services that an organization can provide and, in some cases, donor support influenced the type of aid to be supplied and the mechanism through which this occurs. This led many smaller NGOs with limited resources to be more focused in service delivery. Interestingly, however, the smaller organizations reported attempting to grow to fill in the necessary gaps in aid delivery. These small organizations, with limited numbers of employees, volunteers and resources reported providing many services to aid recipients. This is directly linked to their involvement in sustainability efforts.

To ensure a clear understanding of the aid delivery process within this group, while being mindful of the variance, I sampled from four different NGO types that were currently working in Haiti or with Haitian refugees along the border of the Dominican Republic. The groups included a medium size, faith-based organization, a small faith based organization, a philanthropic organization, and a community based organization. The medium sized, faith-based organization and the philanthropic organization were exogenous in nature. While identified as local organizations working in Haiti, it was quickly determined that these organizations were not indigenous but rather guided by funding sources and leadership that was U.S. based. Still, organizations in this type reported the same challenges, namely competition for funding and limited resources, and successes, typically linked to their close working relationships with the community, as their indigenous counterparts.

Local and indigenous organizations credited themselves with a number of important characteristics imperative for successful aid delivery. Many believe their
greatest asset to be their heartfelt desire to do good. Organizations reported working in
the most isolated of areas and in the direst of conditions. An important theme dubbed
“the labor of love” was the guiding principle among participants from the local sample.
Participants cited the importance of this value and criticized those that conducted aid
work as part of a job, believing that for the latter their heart could not truly be in it. This
labor of love was detected among Red Cross participants, an organization with staff
comprised of both paid employees and volunteers, but not within the military sample.
Ironically, however, those who were paid to do a mission felt that this improved success
as it was a job and not something that one could quit. There is only anecdotal evidence to
support which side of the debate may hold the most merit and, in fact, this perceived
benefit of mission or desire may be linked to the mission of the organizations themselves.
For example, participants from the U.S. military reported having a sense of mission and
being paid for a job as a factor that would ensure more successful aid delivery. The
military has a focused mission, standard procedure and protocol, and a deployment
strategy. Deployment home is considered successful completion and pullout is indicative
of a “job well done.” In contrast, many local NGOs have a broader scope in the overall
focus of their programs (i.e. long term nutritional and education programs), which have
no clear end dates or timeline to relinquish control of the program. In most cases, there
are no plans to relinquish the program and the group aims to continue working in their
community indefinitely. Guided by this labor of love, participants often volunteer or
even pay to work in dire situations. Many will leave and return multiple times, while still
never seeing the completion of the mission. Typically, the overall mission will continue
for years, as the goal tends to be geared toward long-term sustainability, with a long term
commitment from the organization to aid in this goal. The nature of these missions and their perceived success are extremely different, as are the possible rational for citing “truth” to the debate. In fact, both sides bring necessary resources to the donor community and merit for their organization’s involvement in aid delivery.

Along with the mission to do good, many local organizations also embraced an evangelic mission. This further increases the complexity of aid delivery and often results in criticism similar to that evoked by political organizations that provide aid. For example, the U.S. military is controlled by political agendas, the type of aid delivery and the areas of focus are driven by politics and the goal of protecting U.S. assets. While based on a completely different mission, many local or indigenous NGOs are as equally driven by forces other than altruism. More so, their drive includes spreading Christianity and often conversion. Interestingly, an organization such as the Red Cross, which strives to insure complete neutrality, finds almost equivocal barriers working with either organization type, as both politics and religion tend to be emotionally charged and socially aligned debates, threatening the neutrality and impartiality of the of the Red Cross.

_The Role of Organizational Culture in Humanitarian Aid Organizations_

The primary objective of this study was to determine the role of organizational culture in humanitarian aid efforts by the U.S. military and humanitarian aid organizations. Schein’s (2001) conceptualization of organizational culture as the “the deeper level of basic assumptions and beliefs,” (p. 6) including perceptions, languages, and thought processes, that are shared by members of an organization serves as the
founding theoretical framework for the study. Others in the field conceptualize organizational culture as “normative glue” (Sleutel, 2000) and place focus on important organizational components such as mission, values, norms, rites, rituals, and symbols (Cooke & Rousseau, 1988; O'Reilly, Chatman, & Caldwell, 1991; Schein, 1992, 2004; Trice & Beyer, 1993). Therefore, this study looked at how these cultural components helped to inform us about an organization, providing reference for comparison. Still other researchers discuss the importance of story-telling (J. Martin, Feldman, Hatch, & Sitkin, 1983). Borrowing from this ideology, individuals were encouraged to share personal stories of their experiences delivering humanitarian assistance, as it was believed that stories told within organizations would be useful in articulating organizational frames of reference and would help to convey cultural meanings (Davey & Symon, 2001). Each was extremely beneficial in guiding the identification and analysis of components of culture, allowing for a greater understanding of organizations that provided humanitarian assistance. Additionally, combined with the Cultural Orientation Model (G. Hofstede, 1980), identifying these components provided for a more holistic understanding of aid delivery.

Overall, the study lends support to the general principle that organizational culture plays an important role in the delivery of humanitarian assistance. Important differences in group culture emerged. It is believed that differences are indicative of the varied cultures of prominent aid organization types and results support prior organizational analyses of the military and NGOs in aid delivery (Cross, 2003; Rubenstein, 1999; Tomlinson, 2000). Unlike other studies, however, this study attempted to delve deeper, utilizing a more in-depth sampling matrix, dividing organizations into clusters, and being
mindful of the array of NGOs that participate in aid delivery. A comparison was done to
determine crosscutting cultural components, as well as the divergence of culture.
Through the analysis of missions, values and symbols, it became apparent that, while
there was group consensus and overall group fit in organizational clusters, group culture
varied greatly among the aid organizations. While similarities between organizations
existed, there were a number of important differences, each indicative of differing styles
of aid delivery. Overall, organizations expressed a similar, broad definition of
humanitarian assistance and all organizations espoused core humanitarian values.
However, each definition and the core values of the organization were informed by the
culture of the organization and the components of culture that made the organization
unique. This became evident in military definitions of humanitarian aid, which included
protocol, procedures, and the desire for efficiency and excellence; in Red Cross
definitions, which included mention of the Fundamental Principles; and even in local
NGO definitions, which alluded to the proverbs that guide the organization. Thus,
through this discussion, differences in the nature of aid and its goals across organizations
became apparent.

The study also looked at overt components of organizational culture, such as
symbols and artifacts. Important deviations between organization types existed: the
military represented by a uniform and gun; the Red Cross by the Swiss cross symbolizing
neutrality and impartiality, and Hope Abounds International with the bible and Christian
cross. These overt symbols of culture illustrate major differences. In many cases, it
appeared that the military and the NGOs were situated at the extremes of a continuum,
with the Red Cross lying somewhere between the two. Such variation was examined
more closely through a systematic comparison of organizations using the Cultural Orientation Model (Hofstede, 1980).

Before discussing the results of analysis conducted using the Cultural Orientation Model (G. Hofstede, 1980), it is important to discuss the utility of the model for the present study. Considerable debate has occurred over the use of Hofstede’s Cultural Orientation Model. One of the main criticisms of the model is its attempt to “measure” culture (Chiang, 1995; Lewis, 1998). It is important to discuss my stance in the measurement debate. Overall, I believe that this criticism is well founded and I support the notion that culture is a social phenomenon, not an item to be quantified, but rather a phenomenon to be observed in an attempt to understand its influence.

Strong rationale has been provided for Hofstede’s use of qualitative measures, in particular when studying national cultures (G. Hofstede & Neuijen, 1990). Additionally, his studies have been translated into an analysis of the British military (Cross, 2003; Tomlinson 2000). However, each of these studies consisted of closed ended questions designed to elucidate a set pattern of responses, linked to an ordinal scale. The patterns of response were then compared. In such cases, Hofstede’s methodology has merit. In the case of this study, a closed ended, forced response survey would not meet the needs of the study and would not lend well to attempts to gather thick and rich data to aid in the understanding of the influence of group culture on aid delivery. To meet the needs of this study, open ended, free range of response was required. Thus, I did not believe in quantifying dimensions of culture and the practice did not lend well to a qualitative, exploratory study. The Cultural Orientation Model (Hofstede, 1980) model and the dimensions provided a theoretical framework for the systematic comparison of cultures
and was found to be extremely useful. In this study, cultures were compared using the core dimensions of the model. At no point did I attempt to “measure” culture or cultural differences. Rather, the dimensions were used to guide interview questions during data collection, while also providing a theoretical basis for the analysis of interviews and observations to elucidate relative similarities and differences between the cultural dimensions of each organization. This also allowed for interpretation of how similarities and differences affect the delivery of humanitarian assistance and organizational collaboration.

Figure 10 provides an illustrative look at the Cultural Orientation Model, as expressed by respondents in this study. The table shows a polarization between organizational culture of the U.S. military and the local organization types that participated in this study. Along most dimensions, these organization types exhibit cultures that differ greatly. Supporting prior work conducted by Rubenstein (2003) and Tomlinson (2000), this study found the U.S. military to be characterized by high levels of power distance. This was expressed in the hierarchical nature of the organization, with the emphasis placed on chain of command and decision-making. Through their reliance on command and control, the military has established protocol and procedures, which allow little deviation. Closely associated with this feature are the levels of uncertainty avoidance found within the institution. Organizations with higher levels of uncertainly avoidance tend to report strict rules and regulations and low tolerance for deviance. The U.S. military also has an extremely masculine orientation. It relies on power and authority, strives for performance and excellence, and reports completing a mission as an indicator of a job well done.
In comparison, the local organizations that participated in this study manifest lower levels of power distance. Many reported very loose organizational structures. Smaller organizations tended to lack the structure and hierarchy of their larger counterparts. Loose structure and organization leads to low levels of power distance, allows more room for individual decision-making, and enables the group to form personal bonds both with employees and those they assist and with whom they interact. In some of the smaller organizations, in particular Hope Abounds International and the local NGOs in this case study, job positions, roles and responsibilities, which typically result in dynamic hierarchical structures, are looser in nature, as job sharing and organizational equity are common and differences among employees and status within the organization are minimized. The findings of this study suggest a belief that organization size tends to be a determinant in the level of hierarchy within the organization, with hierarchy needed to manage increased numbers of personnel. The degree of complexity appears to vary from organization to organization, likely linked primarily to size, a notion supported by the organizational literature. The literature reports more role consensus and great breadth in individual responsibilities among smaller organizations when compared to larger counterpart (E. Thomas, 1959). Further, empirical studies have shown relationships between size and organization structure, with complexity increasing with organizational size (Hall, Johnson, & Haas, 1967).

The local NGOs that participated in this study also expressed a more feminine nature than their armed counterparts. These organizations reported “doing what was in their heart” and providing nurturing, caring services to those with whom they worked.
Motivation to complete a mission reflected a sense of something that was guiding them, as opposed to seeking the financial security of a paid position.

Based on the findings of this study, significant levels of cultural dissonance were reflected in comparisons of the military and local NGOs. The U.S. military and the local organizations in this study exhibited contrasting cultural characteristics. These differences were irrefutable when comparing the cultural dimension of Power Distance, Masculinity-Femininity, and Uncertainty Avoidance. Not surprisingly, these two groups report the most difficulties when working together, and collaborative arrangements between the military and smaller NGOs that participated in this study were rare. It is likely that organizational differences, which are influenced by organizational culture, result in incompatibilities when these organizations attempt to come together. Additionally, findings also supported the limited interaction between the military and local NGOs as reported by participants and observed in conferences and trainings and reviews of relevant media. Ironically, based on the findings of this study, this same limited interaction between the military and local NGOs may perpetuate difficulties between organization types, as one of the key findings in ability to collaborate was an established sense of rapport. Therefore, to bridge these differences, it becomes imperative for increased interaction between organization types.

The results of this study indicated that the Red Cross typically fell between the other organization types along the Cultural Orientation Model (G. Hofstede, 1980). This group exhibited more moderate traits when compared to other organization types. Typically, the Red Cross expressed indicators of culture that lie between the military and the local NGOs. For instance, the Red Cross expresses moderate to high levels of power
distance, with a hierarchical structure and a bureaucratic chain of command similar to the military. However, efforts are made to minimize the inequality among staff and volunteers are given a prominent role in the organization. While privilege and status exist among members of the organization, mechanisms are in place to moderate this. In terms of uncertainty avoidance, the Federation reports moderate to high indicators, particularly in adherence to the Code of Conduct. The moderate characteristics of culture were most prominent in the Masculine-Feminine dimension. Federation personnel articulate attitudes of care and concern for those with whom they interact, exhibiting feminine characteristics including a pacifistic nature and a pronounced service orientation. However, by the nature of the Movement, its size, scope of services, international recognition and reliance on donor support through the constant critical eye of the media, the organization also exhibits masculine characteristics, including the assertiveness of staff and the values placed on success. With such a moderate orientation, the role of the Red Cross in aid delivery and its reported relationships with those that provide aid and assistance becomes clearer. Red Cross staff described carefully defined working relationships with both the military and NGOs. Conclusions can be drawn that this is, in part, due to the organization’s moderate position on a cultural continuum. Such an intermediate position may allow the Red Cross the insight into the driving cultural forces of their more extreme counterparts, helping them to more easily relate to organizations at the extremes. This may also help in the collaboration process, particularly at times when contrasting organizations become frustrated with those that do not share similar cultural features.
The results of this study and a systematic cross cultural comparison of the three aid delivery types indicate that the basic assumptions and beliefs that guide the organizations active in aid delivery vary greatly. A schematic, utilizing the cultural dimensions outlined by Hofstede (1980), allows us to see how cultures converge or in most cases diverge. The influence of this affects not only how organizations act but also how they interact with others. Through the identification and understanding of where components of culture diverge, creating organizational differences, allows the opportunity to better understand differing aid delivery methods, organizational decision-making and the impact on collaboration. This understanding will aid in attempts to bridge the differences among organization more effectively.

**Figure 10. Comparison of Cultural Dimensions**

![Bar chart showing comparison of cultural dimensions across different levels and organizations.](chart.png)
Organizational Collaboration Identified

Another goal of this study was to determine the role of organization culture in organization collaboration. Utilizing the proceeding cultural analysis and the shared experiences of aid deliverers, this study attempted to determine the viability of the collaborative effort model. Overall, the findings of this study showed support for the model with the vast majority of those interviewed supporting this approach. Even those who did not actively collaborate or were only at the level of coordination discussed the importance of collaboration in future endeavors. Additionally, most had either worked in some capacity with other organizations or desired to do so. While organizations varied regarding whom they would work with or wished to collaborate with, virtually all those that were interviewed agreed that collaboration is necessary in aid delivery, supporting this model. Participants cited a number of benefits to collaboration, including “not having to re-invent the wheel,” “sharing of responsibilities” and “utilizing the expertise of others,” all factors credited by proponents of collaboration in the organizational literature. Additionally, providing complementary resources contribute to efficiency.

The literature stresses the need for organizational collaboration in efforts to improve efficiency. This body of literature has been applied to business, education and healthcare, with positive outcomes cross-cutting disciplines (van Eyk & Baum, 2002) and the concept of collaboration has gained wide-spread support (Mackay, Soothill, & Webb, 1995; Rawson, 1994). Expressed support for this model, as well as the need to increase efficiency has led to increased partnership in the humanitarian arena. Participants tended to agree with the overall body of literature, acknowledging that collaboration allowed for greater efficiency, as each organization had their own specialties and resources that could
be shared. Collaborative efforts create a whole that was stronger than the individual organizations and their unique efforts. Particularly with smaller NGOs, collaborative efforts allow organizations to take on broader issues and increase their scope of service. To the military, collaboration efforts are “force multipliers.” Additionally, collaboration helps to minimize duplication of services. However, while much support exists in the literature and participant responses confirmed the importance of successfully executed collaboration, a number of almost insurmountable barriers exist. Possibly more important than acknowledgement of the benefits, was the emergence of the common gaps in the process and the failed efforts. The results of this study show that collaborative efforts are often hindered by process and procedure, particularly when the modes of operation of collaborating organizations do not mesh, or are undermined by suspicion and lack of trust. Numerous examples were given in which two organizations had differing procedures for obtaining relief supplies or delivering those supplies. When an agreement could not be reached, because organizational protocol could not be compromised, collaboration failed. Instances such as this appear to be fairly commonplace and lead to feelings of frustration, discouraging people from further attempts at collaboration.

For many, this frustration was outwardly apparent. When processes become too cumbersome, organizations concluded that it is best to go it alone. To these organizations, collaboration was difficult, costly and time consuming. Helping organizations to better understand components of organizational culture that fuel organizational differences and providing means to bridge those differences is imperative for minimizing confusion and frustrations. The present research suggests that a combination of limited understanding of organizations working in humanitarian action,
faulty assumptions and stereotypes and true barriers to collaboration because of cultural
differences exist.

Issues of trust and suspicion were also commonly reported and served as a major
roadblock to aid delivery. Examples were also given of attempts to work with other
organizations, without that established level of trust and the frustrations that resulted.
Participants cited instances in which they worked with another organization that did not
divulge all of the necessary information of the mission. This occurred within the military
due to the classified nature of some of its information. It was also cited by local NGOs as
an issue mainly associated with competition and the loss of power with knowledge
sharing. Regardless of the reason, these instances undermine trust and lead to suspicion,
blocking collaborative aid delivery.

Many organizations report making efforts to improve organizational
understanding in an effort to improve collaboration. A number of trainings and
conferences, directly related to humanitarian assistance, currently take place. The goals
of these programs are to bring humanitarian organizations to the same table, to talk about
common issues and to learn to work together. If done correctly, these initiatives could
greatly enhance aid delivery by simply introducing the actors before they arrive on the
ground, allowing them an opportunity to create a sense of rapport and understanding.
The findings of this study indicate that organizational understanding is the first step to
breaking down the barriers erected by organizational cultural difference. The next step is
working together to overcome organizational differences, the only way to allow for
effective aid delivery. Small steps are being made to improve understanding but limited
activities are aimed at actually overcoming the barriers that exist. In all, little is being done to enhance this tool.

Organizational Culture and Collaboration: A Closer Look

This research demonstrated that organizational culture greatly impacts inter-organizational collaboration. Based on comments and perceptions shared by participants and supported by stories of interaction, it appears that organizations that provide humanitarian assistance work best with those whose backgrounds and cultures are most similar. Organizations appear to have a greater understanding for those with whom they are able to relate. For instance, the military has a strong working relationship with the Federation. While their organizational cultures are extremely different, there are obvious similarities between these groups (their organizational structures, protocols, etc.). While their relationship and understanding of each other is in part a function of time spent working together, comparisons can be made between the necessities of missions, however varying, of both groups. Both groups also have very clear rules of engagement and even use similar terminology. While their rules of engagement or their missions are ultimately different, the clarity of those missions and rules make their protocols, procedures and actions something that the other organization can understand and respect. As organizations became increasingly different in organizational structure and culture, that common ground was harder to find and, as a result, collaboration became more difficult. An example would include collaboration between the military and a local faith-based organization. While working in the same area, with the same population, cultural barriers are difficult to overcome. A pacifist organization, the faith-based organization
that participated in this study reports not being able to overlook issues of war. In turn, the military has a difficult time understanding loose organizational structure and the lack of control. Thus, in some cases, cultural differences create frustrations that become insurmountable.

In an effort to determine the role of organizational culture in organizational collaboration, current collaborative relationships, and the challenges to initiation of collaboration were analyzed. Figure 11 represents a proposed look, based on the findings of this study, at the continuum of interaction as it currently exists. While the study aimed to understand collaborative activities, the continuum is labeled as interaction because it was determined that, in reality, true collaboration is rarely achieved. As collaboration was further explored, findings indicated that what many participants label as collaboration was in reality typically coordination. Still patterns became evident, most notably, in how organizations work together. Therefore, the term interaction is being used to discuss the varying degrees through which organizations work together, including collaboration, coordination, and cooperation.

To denote this, the continuum places the three organization types, illustrating their relationship to each other as determined through participant’s shared experiences, observations, and reviews of reports and records. The proposed continuum was then confirmed by interviews conducted with key informants and additional reviews of reports and records. The continuum represents the three organization types that participated in this study, represented by black text along the top of the continuum, as well as placement of other prominent organization types, supported by key informants and reviews of media, records, and reports, indicated by gray text along the top of the continuum. Each
organization type is also given a line, denoted by its name in white text, which bleeds red to white, indicating strength of relationship.

Through data collection and analysis, it became apparent that some organizations had stronger working relationships than others. Taking the example of the U.S. military, shared experiences, historical analysis, records, and reports indicated varying levels of working relationship with other deliverers of aid. The strongest relationship appeared to be with other government entities, supported by the regular mention of USAID and other bilateral partnerships, denoted by the grey line and with multilateral forces (not illustrated due to the complexity of these entities). Additionally, a strong working relationship with the Red Cross was reported and observed. There are some problematic barriers to the relationship, most notably the political alignment of the U.S. military and how that alignment has the potential to jeopardize the mission of the Red Cross. Still, this relationship was commonly noted, and levels of trust and respect were detected. On a more regional basis, other large NGOs were mentioned by military participants. In Haiti, particularly after the disasters of 2004, participants mentioned working closely with organizations such as World Vision, CARE, and Habitat for Humanity. However, these relationships were not as solid as the relationship with the Red Cross, and interaction was reported to be more infrequent and on a case by case basis. This was further supported by observations of participant interactions, as staff from these organizations were only observed sporadically at military trainings. Among local NGOs, a relationship with the military was uncommon. Among military interviews, mention of work with this organization type was rare and critiques were common.
The International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies fell along the continuum in the same pattern as with discussion of organizational culture and, interestingly, this continuum mirrors the cultural comparisons. The IFRC reported relationships with all organization types, discussing barriers working with both the military and local organizations based on the Red Cross’s need for neutrality and impartiality. Still, levels of interaction remained high with both organizations. Participants also mentioned working closely with other bilateral and multilateral organizations and reported strong working relationships with other well-known, larger NGOs, which worked in the same regions of interest. This was further supported by additional research of aid endeavors, partnerships, and memoranda of understanding with the Red Cross.

The bottom line on the continuum represents local organizations. While a limitation of this study was not further breaking out these organization types, allowing a place on the continuum for larger NGOs adds some credibility to these findings, as larger NGOs have differences in governance, resource availability and capacity for the delivery of aid. The local NGOs that participated in this study, all smaller in size, reported working with other NGOs, in many cases naming the larger organization in the areas they work. While competition affected this relationship, and often served as a deterrent, participants mentioned their work with other larger NGOs in which they worked or participated in a coalition or collaborative, particularly if that larger organization was not a threat to their funding. It is important to note, however, that NGOs were extremely critical of the work of others, and when choosing whom they would partner with, respect was cited as being of the utmost importance. NGOs supported discussion by the Red
Cross respondents and their working relationship, particularly in Haiti and the Dominican Republic following the disasters of 2004. However, less interaction with other government entities and the military was reported or observed, supporting the patterns in the continuum.

**Figure 11. Continuum of Organizational Interaction**

*Color gradients indicate interaction levels. Solid red is indicative of high levels of interaction. The fading of color represents decreasing levels of interaction.*

Based on commonalities between the Continuum of Organizational Interaction and the organizational culture comparisons, it can be inferred that organizational culture plays an important part in inter-organizational interaction. The similarities that exist between the two comparisons imply that the role of organizational culture in organizational interaction should not be overlooked. However, other important factors, which aided or challenged the collaborative process, also emerged. The consensus of the participants was that it is easier to work with organizations that have a similar governance structure, share similar missions and goals, and have similar mechanisms for initiation of aid delivery as one’s own organization, indicated in Figure 11.
It is important, however, to not overlook other contending factors identified through this study or to oversimplify the process of collaboration, as a number of other factors impact this continuum of interaction and the decision to partner. A major finding of this study was the impact of competition on NGOs. Smaller organizations, reported being highly dependent on donations and outside support. For these organizations, competition impacts their livelihoods. This finding supported the literature which identifies resources and funding issues as important barriers to collaboration (Gray, 1989; van Eyk & Baum, 2002). The impact of competition was such that many participants from local organizations reported preferring to work with organizations from a different orientation, in particular different funding sources and donors, adding selectivity as another factor to be examined in organizational collaboration. The rationale behind selectivity is logical, as donor loss could have serious consequences to the organization. While these findings do not negate the theory that like cultures would prefer to work together, they add to the complexity of decision to partner. These decisions are particularly difficult for those organizations that are more vulnerable to outside threats to their funding and overall missions.

The literature suggests that characteristics of “sociability” drive collaboration between small, grassroots organizations and those in need of resources. Essentially, like organizations act as “friends,” supporting each other through the coalition model (Butterfoss, Goodman, & Wandersman, 1993; Earley, 2001). However, the findings of this study contradict this as the only model. Findings identified interaction between the Military and local NGOs in Haiti following both Hurricane Jeanne and the May 2004 flooding along the border. Participants discussed the difficulties that occurred when
these organizations worked together, lending support to the solidarity model, which the literature suggests is embraced by unlike organizations (Earley, 2001). Ideally, participating in sociable networks was noted and favorably received. However, competition and other complex issues determined if organizations acted sociably. Solidarity is a term used to describe collaboration between unlike groups focusing on a mutual task (Earley, 2001). In many cases, these efforts are not sustained, but occur only out of necessity (Earley, 2001). Contradicting this model, Hofstede (1997) stressed difficulties that can occur when unlike organizations work together, stating that organizations typically only work together if forced and implying that these interactions occur only out of necessity. Necessity can be, in part, due to resource availability for local NGOs with limited resources and staff. Interpretation of these findings also helps to make sense of the collaborative agreements and partnerships between the military and NGOs, often deemed as “strange bedfellows” (Winslow, 2002). This supports a belief that to collaborate, organizations do not have to like each other. Instead, they merely need to reach a consensus or agreement, further illustrating the need to bridge differences as a method of overcoming barriers directly associated with organizational culture.

Overcoming Barriers: Trust and Rapport

Findings of this study brought out some important factors that enabled collaboration and helped to overcome the mistaken assumptions and stereotypes that led to perceived barriers to aid delivery, as well as those culturally linked organizational differences that acted as roadblocks to collaboration. An overwhelming majority of respondents mentioned simply having existing relationships with an organization greatly
aids in collaboration. One interviewee stated, “Once we know each other, it becomes so much easier. You know what to expect. You know where each other stand and how to overcome those differences.” This same sentiment was expressed by most interviewees. When probed, it appears that this relationship is most beneficial on an individual level, something that could remain a barrier as those working in disasters continue to cycle from position to position, disaster to disaster. However, others note being familiar with an organization, not just the individuals working for the organization, as being just as important. They express that while organizational cultures may vary, understanding those differences helps to aid the process. One respondent stated, “We can be different. All organizations are...as long as I know where you are coming from. We can work from there.” Such findings may imply that the understanding of differences can provide a foundation for trust and respect. These findings are important in understanding how even unlike organizations can collaborate. Trust is a central issue, considered to be vital for successful collaboration (Holton, 2001). Trust and respect, develops through interaction. As organizations interact during disasters and emergencies, they develop a sense of rapport, learning how each other operates. Then organizations reach an understanding and eventually earn trust and respect. Thus, a need for organizational collaboration during aid delivery is to provide mechanisms or stages to create awareness and understanding in an effort to foster trusting and respectful relationships, effectively bridging organizational differences.

Additionally, it was determined that there are gaps between reporting and reality in regards to organizational collaboration. For the purpose of this study, collaboration was defined using Gray’s (1989, p. 5) definition, “the process through which parties who
see different aspects of a problem can constructively explore their differences and search for solutions that go beyond their own limited vision of what is possible.” Interestingly, many organizations report having collaborated in past aid initiatives. However, when questioned in more detail about those collaborative efforts, or when “collaborative” efforts were observed, it was concluded that true collaboration, in most cases, is not occurring. In fact, often what is being reported is communication with other organizations.

Numerous examples can be noted. I interviewed and observed a group of local and faith based organizations that have monthly meetings to support their “collaborative efforts.” After interviewing members of a participating organization, who informed me about the collaborative efforts of these groups, I began to attend the monthly meetings. Meetings typically consisted of a prayer for the organizations involved and those that they seek to help, discussion of the current situations, and time for fostering collaborative efforts. In actuality, group collaboration consisted of a group representative sharing what they had done since the last meeting and what their future plans entailed. Often, attendees received advice, contact information, and suggestions from the other organizations at the table. However, it appeared that the meetings were the sole source of interaction and outside of this time, organizations were not collaborating on projects. Thus, at no point, does true collaboration occur among these organizations. Instead, attendees merely communicated about the current situation. On occasion, a need for assistance was raised. At that point, organizations would decide what pieces they could “make their own” and the work was divided up. This supports more interaction among
organizations and job sharing and suggests that reports are essentially an illusion of collaboration.

A push towards working models such as the one mentioned above are examples of the coalition model that has become popular in community development (Butterfoss et al., 1993). A coalition is comprised of individuals who represent various organizations that agree to work together toward a common goal. Organizations typically have diverse interests and are able to combine services to complement each other. They tend to be formal, long-term alliances (Butterfoss et al., 1993). While there is a push in public health and community development toward this model, the results of this study question the success and viability of these models for humanitarian aid organizations and pinpoint the need for mechanisms to overcome differences before this model or others like it can be effectively adopted.

Two Steps Forward Ten Steps Back

During the past decade, there has been an increase in military involvement during humanitarian operations. There has also been an increase in collaborative efforts and an increased awareness of military, NGO and IO involvement during humanitarian crises. However, as the political effects of war continue to impact our country, our lifeways, our thoughts and our beliefs – are we stepping backwards? In light of the findings of this study, it is important to discuss changing worldviews and the potential impact on aid activities.

During an observation at the 2005 Annual Public Health Association (APHA) meeting, new barriers to collaboration became apparent. This conference is the largest
gathering of public health professionals in the world. It is here that members go to share ideas and to learn new ways to improve public health. However, in a session on the public health impact of war, a debate began over the role of the military in APHA.

A public health professional stood up and asserted his belief that the military does not belong at APHA, and therefore, attendance by military personnel should be restricted. The basis of his reasoning was opposition to the current war in Iraq. However, there was no acknowledgement of humanitarian missions conducted by the military and, in fact, it was stated that some believed there was no benefit to military participation in APHA. Suddenly collaboration and discussion of such became focused “on our own kind” and strategies to improve public health during times of war would exclude those that were different. Instead of working to understand each other, talking, meeting and collaborating, protest became the answer.

In the audience were a number of uniformed military professionals. I witnessed the reaction of a colonel, a major, and a lieutenant colonel (all ranks clearly displayed on the shoulders of their uniforms). All became noticeably upset by the comments. One instantly flushed and another vehemently voiced opposition to the first speaker’s position. He cited his involvement internationally in Somalia, Kosovo, Afghanistan, and Iraq, as well as stateside, during Hurricane Katrina in New Orleans, Louisiana. He stated, “We save lives. (long pause) We save lives. Whether starting immunization programs, preventing diseases, providing resources, providing medical care, we save lives. Many here today paint a dismal picture but that is not all there is. There are a lot of stories that are not being told.” Others in the audience went on to express the importance of the military and uniformed services in public health initiatives – from public health
preparedness, military HAP programs, to hospitals in Iraq and treatment given to civilians and even armed combatants. Another colonel expressed his discontent with what was said, the importance of the work that he and his peers do, and the progress that was being made by working together with others involved in Public Health. He went on to discuss the educational aspects of military medical training and the issues with segregating military professionals that provide aid from their civilian counterparts. He discussed some of the problems with coordination and collaboration and the impact of segregation on such, commenting “look where it has gotten us.”

The following day, there was actually a protest against military involvement in APHA. While the major intent of the protests was to show contention with the current war in Iraq, protesters were cheering “Hey, hey, what do you say, no more military in APHA.” Unfortunately, it can be deduced that many of those involved in the protest have little knowledge of the role the military actually plays in public health and humanitarian assistance. As one Captain noted, “the mission of a soldier goes far beyond that of fighting our nation’s wars.”

The desire to ban the military from APHA highlights the lack of understanding of military involvement in humanitarian aid endeavors by non-governmental groups, as well as a lack of understanding of the essentials of humanitarian assistance by core public health officials. It further illustrates hostility by some toward members of the military, regardless of roles, confirming beliefs brought about by military interviews that other organizations simply do not want to work with them. Yet their desire to keep trying remains. In subsequent interviews, an Air Force Captain commented, “we will keep on. This is really not a setback, in fact, the protest has led people to ask questions and it gave
us the opportunity to get some information out there. People just don’t know. They don’t know all of what we do. I wear many hats. Unfortunately, one of those hats makes me carry a gun but the most important hat is the one that allows me to save lives.” He went on to say that the military is vested in the public’s health and that as they experience increased involvement in humanitarian issues both internationally and at home and they will continue, despite protests, to be involved in APHA. These experiences are indicative of issues that continue to plague public health and provide insight into the work yet to be done.

Lessons Identified

The following section is entitled lessons identified. So often in research, findings and conclusions are presented as lessons learned. However, upon careful reflection of observations, the emergence of prominent themes related to organizational culture, organizational collaboration, and humanitarian assistance, I believe that many of the important findings of this study have already been acknowledged by the humanitarian community. In fact, it was the presentation of Lessons Learned from previous operations at a 2001 INTERHANDS conference that sparked my desire to delve into cultural component that may impact aid delivery and collaboration. At that time, there was a call for better understanding of humanitarian partners, increased communication among organizations, and a reported need for collaboration. I believed that, if the challenges had been identified, then the root causes (organizational culture) had to be understood to initiate change. However, these challenges appear to have only been identified and not yet learned, as few changes have actually been made to policies and procedures and the
same challenges continued to impede successful aid delivery with limited positive
growth. There is still a need to increase communication among those that provide
humanitarian aid. Failures in recent humanitarian missions call for continued work in
increasing the effectiveness of aid delivery and the efficiency through which aid is
supplied. The humanitarian community still needs to foster trust and relationships among
potential partners and gaps between policy and practice must be overcome. While the
findings of this study indicate that organizational culture plays an important role in aid
delivery, it is the basic components of interaction, namely communication and fostering
trust in an effort to bridge organizational differences, which must first occur.

Through the identified gaps between policy and practice and the need for better
organizational understanding and interaction, it is apparent that education will be one of
the most important outcomes of this project. Interviews have confirmed the role of
organizational culture in the delivery of humanitarian assistance, as well as the
importance of collaboration in the aid delivery process. However, a general lack of
understanding among organizations that provide aid prevails and barriers to the
collaboration process remain. While there is much support for this model, without truly
understanding the factors that make this model possible or hinder its success, progress
cannot be made and its viability will remain in question.

This study highlights a need for more thorough understanding of organizations by
those that work side by side with them in the field. Throughout the study, it was
mentioned that one of the most important components of collaboration included a
preexisting relationship between organizations involved. Participants from all camps
cited the importance of trainings and conferences including INTERHANDS, the
Interoperable Regional Humanitarian Assistance and Natural Disasters Seminar, a program designed to provide military and civilian members with basic information about disaster management and related issues, and FA-HUM, Fuerzas Aliadas Humanitarian, an annual conference which seeks to improve strategies related to the improvement of collaborative efforts in dealing with natural and human made hazards and their impact on communities. Varieties of these conferences exist and have the potential to be great tools for encouraging collaboration and improving the effect aid delivery systems.

However, issues exist among these conferences as well. Observations at four regional conferences dedicated to humanitarian assistance and organizational interaction show only a small number of participants from the non-governmental sector attend. Additionally, observations at meetings with large numbers of non-governmental and nonprofit organizations dedicated to health and humanitarian assistance likewise are missing the presence of military personnel, and in fact even discouraging their presence. Work must be done to ensure the initiation and acceptance of those invitations on both ends. Observations at these conferences also show many repeat attendees or staff with high status. It can be implied then that those actually working in the field are not the ones benefiting from the interoperable trainings. More efforts must be made to reach these participants.

While trainings and conferences such as these help to ensure that organizations are familiar with each other and prepared to collaborate, this study shows that, what happens in the field is often very different than what is modeled in training scenarios. Therefore, building partnerships, education, and collaboration remain key areas in need of improvement.
Conclusions

People are motivated by fear. During 2004 and 2005, the world was plagued by some of the worst disasters in recorded history. These complex humanitarian emergencies have resulted in public outcry for effective aid delivery systems, as well as better disaster preparedness and response. Through the eye of the media, the world looked on in horror and literally watched as hundreds of thousands were washed away by the 2004 Boxing Day Tsunami and as thousands more drowned in flooding caused by hurricanes in the Caribbean and along the United States Gulf Coast in 2004 and 2005. Still others were faced by wildfires, earthquakes, draughts, flooding, and famine. Not a region of the world was spared. The world continued to watch as aid delivery systems failed the most vulnerable or did not reach intended recipients in time. With the threat of imminent disasters, we have a moral imperative to improve and enhance our aid delivery systems, enabling more effective and efficient humanitarian action.

Still the results of this study yield little new information. Almost ten years after Hurricane Mitch (1998), a pledge by the U.S. military and countless HAOs to humanitarianism, and the determination of the need for collaboration, we continue to grapple with the same lessons learned – the need for better communication, the importance of unity of effort in effective and efficient actions, and the need to strengthen relationships between the military and the NGO community (Mock & McGovern, 2001). We have yet to learn from our mistakes or to put those lessons into action. This leaves one asking, have these lessons become the new catch phrases following every humanitarian mission, a label for the challenges that are too difficult to overcome, or something to discuss in the literature? Have those working in the field stopped trying to
find solutions or make progress and just become resigned to the pitfalls of humanitarian action and organizational collaboration during aid delivery?

In a world plagued by disasters and the need for effective humanitarian interaction never more apparent, this is unacceptable. Research has shown there are differences between organizations that provide aid. It can be seen by the lay person and the results of this study clearly illustrate differences in organizational culture and the influence of cultural differences on aid delivery. It is time to take action and time to learn from the lessons presented. We must learn to bridge differences in humanitarian organizations, influenced by their various cultures, to improve efficiency and effectiveness of aid delivery. We must work to improve communication channels and to build rapport. These factors help to establish trust, a central theme to this study, with the eventual goal of enhancing collaborative efforts. It is time to make a change in aid delivery – for those who have lost their lives because of complex humanitarian emergencies and for those who remain vulnerable, continuing to live in fear.

Discussion of Study Limitations and Challenges

In presenting the findings of this study, it is important to acknowledge the limitations associated with this research, as well as the attempts to overcome some of those limitations.

With such a broad range of organizational involvement in complex humanitarian disasters, a possible limitation associated this research study included the selection of organizations and participants for inclusion, as well as the subsequent determination of those members who would actively participate. This problem, a factor associated with
selection bias of nonrandom study design, results in the threat that subjects will not form equivalent groups, creating a tremendous problem for the internal validity of the study (Neuman, 1997). The sampling strategy employed was chosen to help minimize the impact of such limitations. With a diverse group of organizations that provide assistance, something had to be done to assure consistency among study participants and organizations that provide humanitarian assistance in the field. Selecting only HAOs that have a large scope of services and international sites may have led to the exclusion and loss of problems associated by smaller-scale HAOs. For example, the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies often work in close contact with military groups. This relationship affects their perceptions regarding the military. It also has an impact on their sense of cohesion, communication, and their perceived relations with other groups providing aid. However, perceptions are extremely different in a faith based organization or other NGOs that operate on a smaller scale. These differing perceptions are extremely important to acknowledge and exclusion would jeopardize the credibility of the study. Therefore, the study employed multiple types of HAOs, including a sampling of local NGOs. It is important to note, however, that organization types were not all inclusive. Larger regional NGOs and multilateral organizations were not included. Additionally, studies should attempt to include these organizations, as their insight may be vital in further understanding issues associated with the delivery of humanitarian assistance.

Another concern related directly to the data collection tools utilized by the study. The study employed semi-structured interviews. This type of interview allowed me to have more control over questioning and enabled me to probe into the responses given.
The open-ended questions used in the interview process allowed for copious information gathering. Interviews are important because the information gathered may lead to the reconceptualization of previously held beliefs (Bernard, 2000). However, there are multiple challenges associated with this process. Interviews are both time consuming and expensive. They also introduce the risk of interviewer effects on the subject, effects that are amplified when the interviewer is considered an outsider.

Another limitation of the present study is associated with collection of data on organizational dynamics because I was an outsider. The goal of conducting interviews is to collect accurate information from another person (Neuman, 1997). However, the role of the researcher/interviewer may affect the collection of that data. This problem was particularly difficult in studies looking at humanitarian aid operations when the researcher is coming from a background other than that of an HAO or the military. The study sought to interview members of the military, the International Committee of the Red Cross, and a variety of HAOS, all groups to which the interviewer has no immediate relation. I initially believed that this would be of particular importance, especially as I came from academia. In fact, I found that most participants were very open and forthcoming, regardless of organizational background. The ones that did appear uncertain of my intent seemed to be concerned that I might relate to one group over another. Therefore, it became important to build a rapport and gain the trust of those individuals. Additionally, interviews typically occur between two strangers. They are short in length with the sole purpose of this social interaction being the obtaining of information from one by the other. When there is no relation between the two
individuals, as was the case in this study, establishing credibility and this reducing bias, was vital (Neuman, 1997).

The role of the interviewer is a challenge because one must attain support for the project and build rapport yet remain completely neutral and objective (Bernard, 2000). Due to the nature of the current studies and the political underpinnings associated with the provision of humanitarian aid, efforts had to be made to explain my background and the nature of the study to reduce fear and suspicion, to ensure confidentiality and to make the respondent feel comfortable sharing information. It was also determined that having organizational support was instrumental in gaining the trust and support of participants. For example, in the case of the military, until rapport and trust had been established it was impossible to even schedule interviews. To aid with this, I received support from all organizations involved prior to data collection. This support greatly improved individual’s willingness to participate.

To improve the validity of interviews the study also utilized triangulation of methods. Cohen and Manion (1986, p. 254) state that triangulation is an “attempt to map out, or explain more fully, the richness and complexity of human behavior by studying it from more than one standpoint.” For the purpose of qualitative research, triangulation is helpful in enhancing the credibility and reliability of results. For example, to ensure a complete analysis, I utilized not only in-depth semi-structured interviewing but also reviews of records and reports and non-participant observations as well as field notes. Observational methods allowed me to witness the events that have been described. In many cases, this was important in understanding participant’s responses and helped to reduce the possibility of controlled responses, while serving as a tool to explain, confirm,
or discredit responses to interview questions. Challenges and bias are important when either of the techniques, interview, observation or review, are employed alone. However, triangulation of methods helped to gain a clearer interpretation of inter-organizational collaboration and the delivery of aid, while reducing the overall bias of the study.

Another important challenge was associated with interpreting the results of the interviews. This study utilized a nonprobability cluster sampling procedure for the organizational interviews. Cluster sampling was used to help ensure representativeness. However, although broken into strata convergent results were expected and occurred. Confidence in generalization from samples to populations is dependent on representativeness (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998). For the purpose of this study, particularly in an effort to address the issue of generalizability, it was important that organizations being studied were stratified according to rank or status. Triangulation should result in convergent validity, and thereby support the reliability of the instrument (Bernard, 2000). Therefore, it was assumed that interviewing employees of different status throughout the organization would result in similar beliefs and patterns espoused by their organization of employment. However, in this field it was believed that important differences between individuals from different levels of the organization may emerge. While overall results were convergent, differences in perceptions and beliefs varied. The stratified clusters helped to account for this. Significant differences in thought and action between those that work in the field and those that are higher in status were indicative of important and yet unexplored findings in this area. Thus, sampling techniques allowed me to gain a better understanding of subgroups and varying perceptions that exist, resulting in increased reliability.
Even with careful attention to stratification of personnel, limitations remained with sampling. For instance, in the Red Cross sample, it was determined that volunteers were all long-term volunteers. Therefore, this sample may not be representative of those with only a short-term commitment to the Red Cross. With reported long-term involvement, the study may also have missed important differences between participants who remain committed to the organization as to those that do not continue working with the organization.

Improvement of health status, access to health care, provision of safe water and adequate food supply are easily quantifiable measures. However, to relate those measures to the organizational structure in which they manifest is seemingly more complex and methods of achieving this may appear uncertain, particularly when utilizing qualitative measures. Therefore, a final challenge included ensuring reliable and valid results when employing abstract constructs as measures. Measurement is a deductive process that includes taking a concept and developing a measure to observe that construct empirically (Neuman, 1997). Selection of instrumentation is vital to the validity of the research study. In the assessment of organizational collaboration during aid efforts, few empirical methods of measurement exist.

A tool used to measure organizational culture, an attribute of collaboration, was the Hofstede Cultural Orientation Model (1980). This model, later modified by Erez (1994), provided a framework for the evaluation of organizational culture. While this scale has been widely used in the corporate world, there has been little application of the model to humanitarian endeavors. Therefore, the model could not be utilized in its entirety with confidence until additional work is done. Thus, the models provided by
Hofstede and Erez were used as a theoretical framework to determine levels of differences and similarities between the organizational cultures of those organizations participating in collaborative humanitarian aid efforts.

To reduce any questions associated with the interview tool and to improve measurement reliability, rich detail was collected during the interview process. This narrative description, combined with a methodology informed by the work of Rubenstien (2003) who utilized similar design to discuss organizational culture and humanitarian assistance, was helpful with sorting data associated with organizational culture along a continuum allowing organizations to be compared.

**Recommendations**

Based on the findings of this study, a number of recommendations can be made for further research and changes to policy and practice. Recommendations call for the following: a) changes to the current standards of education and training, b) the need for additional research, c) the need to refocus on the basics of aid delivery and organizational collaboration and d) better understanding of the proliferation of NGOs.

*Standards of Education and Training*

A number of training and education programs geared toward humanitarian action and organizational interaction were observed through this study. However, issues with these trainings emerged. Most notably was the lack of aid workers from differing organizations. Military conferences and trainings tended to include mostly government organizations that supply aid, the militaries of allied countries, and larger international
organizations. The same held true for trainings and programs implemented by NGOs, in which no military were present. To truly enhance interaction, improve understanding and make a difference in aid delivery, these partners must come to the same table and train in unison.

The military hosts a number of practical exercises, simulating disasters and complex humanitarian emergencies. These exercises were favorably reported by participants. While it would be impossible, due to funding, staff and resource constraints, to get all participants to attend such conferences, efforts must be made to expand participation. A possible solution would be to scale trainings, possibly to the region or country level, inviting regional organizations of all levels (military, IOs, NGOs, etc). Important considerations will also include inviting these organizations in the planning and hosting of such exercises. This study highlighted distrust across organizations, which may serve as a barrier to participation. Gaining the support of organizations through inclusion in planning phases may aid with this challenge.

Another important finding of this study was the need for increased organizational awareness of the culture of humanitarian organizations and the mechanisms to help bridge the gap between their organizational differences. These findings suggest that it is not necessarily the culture. If this is the case, the issue is one of cultural awareness and an overall lack of cultural competence. In the sociological literature, Green (1982) first defined cultural competence as having the ability to work effectively within the context of difference cultures in a manner that is appropriate to the members of the culture themselves (Green, 1982). Striving for cultural competence is an on-going process that includes awareness and sensitivity for other cultures.
In keeping with the empirical literature, it is a recommendation of this study that enhancing organizational culture competence should include educational interventions (Brathwaite, 2005) to improve organizational understanding, in efforts to achieve cultural competence. This theory is likened to working with a population. Organizations should be at a minimum culturally aware. While proficiency is the ideal, one can function with awareness. Those that have a greater cultural awareness are better able to interact. Thus, reaching cultural awareness can help to bridge organizational differences and help to lessen challenges that exist.

The first step toward reaching this awareness includes revisions to the trainings that currently exist. At military trainings and meetings such as INTERHANDS or FAHUM, there is continual talk of how the mission of the conference is to bring organizations together, to help instill a desire to collaborate and to foster an understanding of all organizations that provide humanitarian assistance. This shows organization’s acknowledgement of the importance of fostering relationships. To support this, members of the non-governmental sector, including the Red Cross and other international organizations such as the World Food Program, and the UN agencies attend. Their organizations tend to send one or two representatives. I observed the same representatives at all conferences and trainings. It is the belief of these participants that they are there to help improve military understanding of NGOs. However, there was little acknowledgement of reciprocal training or need. There is also under-representation of the host of other organizations that provide assistance, in particular local NGOs. It is impossible to talk about bringing people together and collaborating when many of the key players are not in attendance. Efforts must be made to build support for inter-
organizational trainings, ensuring all necessary actors are at the table while improving the overall buy in for such trainings. Efforts must also be made to take the focus off one organization type, promoting multi-organization collaboration and relationship building.

Call for Additional Research

The events that transpired during the course of this dissertation, in particular the December 2004 Tsunami and Hurricane Katrina have brought disaster management, humanitarian assistance and the need for collaboration among those working in these situations to the forefront. Published reports and interviews from the field highlighted many of the same issues that emerged in this study. Many of these reports mentioned the “hiccups” (Couldrey and Morris, 2005, pg 6) or the gaps in services that occurred because of problems with coordination efforts. Reports cite the inability of organizations involved in relief efforts to quickly fill and maintain positions, the high levels of turn over among UN and government aid workers, issues with communications, and difficulties finding “agreed upon standards” (Couldrey & Morris, 2005) Additionally, those involved in humanitarian action continue to state the need to invest in humanitarian response to ensure more effective aid delivery and prevent the atrocities witnessed in recent disasters.

Therefore, it is essential to conduct more research on the viability of collaborative efforts. There are high levels of support for this model. However, with differences between policy and practice and reported low levels of organizational “collaboration” make it is difficult to determine the actual success of the model. While its viability in
increasing efficiency and effectiveness of humanitarian endeavors is intuitive, work must be done to study the reality of this practice.

A gap in the present study and an imperative for future research on humanitarian assistance includes incorporating the voice of the aid recipients themselves. Learning from the shared experiences of those who received aid may help foster additional understanding of complexities in aid delivery, particularly methods for improving efficiency and effectiveness of efforts.

Future research efforts should also be geared toward viable efforts for bridging organizational differences, focusing on the effectiveness of inter-organizational training programs and the coalition model. Attention should also be paid to the dramatic increase in NGOs operating in disaster prone regions of the world, the impact of these organizations in aid delivery, long-term sustainability, and acceptance within local communities.

Proliferation of NGOs

As previously mentioned, the findings of this study were consistent with that of researchers who attempted to analyze the cultures of the military, either U.S. or British, as well as more those more recent studies, published during the writing of this dissertation which looked to compare the British military to NGOs (Cross, 2003; Rubenstein, 2003; Tomlinson, 2000). A unique feature of this study is that it attempted to differentiate humanitarian aid organizations, noting the differences among organization types and not falling into the pitfall of lumping all NGOs together. The study focused on the International Federation of the Red Cross, a prominent international NGO and a
group of smaller local NGOS, something that has not been previously reported in the literature.

Dividing humanitarian aid organizations into different types is consistent with the proliferation of NGOs in the past decade (Matthews, 1997; McGann & Johnstone, 2005), while acknowledging their varying size, orientation and reputation. With such a vast array of NGOs, the study sampled from four local organization types, of varied funding sources and both indigenous and exogenous in nature. However, as proliferation continues, it is imperative to learn more about these organizations and what makes one organization more successful than its counterparts.

The local and indigenous organizations that participated in this study were extremely active in Haiti but varied in terms of international recognition. While most were very well known in the region of focus, they would go arguably unrecognized in the humanitarian community in general. The lack of international reputation is possibly a barrier to organizational interaction as trust and rapport were cited as such important to those working in aid delivery. Still more work must be done to determine if this is the case. More in-depth studies of local NGOs are imperative as it is this organization type that is the rapidly increasing and has long-term stakes within the community. Work must also be done to assess the impact of evangelism on aid, being mindful of the perceptions of aid recipients. With complex issues (funding, resource availability, competition, scope of services) and a call for more training and increased collaborative efforts, in-depth studies must also be done, further segmenting this organization type, to determine methods of overcoming barriers and assessing the viability of the collaborative model of aid delivery.
The literature cites the growth of NGOs as a pattern motivated by the perceived inability of bilateral and multilateral organization to respond to the complex needs facing communities in which local NGOs reside and work (Matthews, 1997; McGann & Johnstone, 2005). With their own perceived importance in the community, as well as the potential for saturation resulting from dramatic increases in the numbers of small NGOs that emerge following a disaster such as the Boxing Day Tsunami (Matthews, 1997; McGann & Johnstone, 2005), understanding of this organization type and their role in aid delivery is imperative.

*Returning to the Basics*

Additional efforts must be made to return to the basics of humanitarian action and organizational interactions. Findings of this study focused on communication and rapport, issues central to the establishment of trust, as challenges to aid delivery. During analysis, I kept returning to a sign posted in a major’s office that listed the 4 C’s. The sign caught my eye because it was a deviation from the command and control typically noted. His 4 C’s were *cooperation, communication, coordination, and collaboration*. While there is much work to be done, this is the ultimate goal. Humanitarian organizations must learn to communicate effectively and build rapport to allow for cooperation, coordination, and collaboration. It is through the achievement of these practices that changes to aid delivery can be made. However, without the basic foundation, a foundation built on trust, this will not be achieved. This again, highlights the aforementioned importance of interaction during training. I firmly believe that inter-
organizational trainings will also help to improve channels of communication and rapport building, essentially leading to improved interactions.

Another basic step that is essential to the success of collaborative efforts is the development and operationalizing of core concepts in humanitarian assistance. The lack of clearly defined measures, modes of operation, and core concepts leads to additional confusion when organizations attempt to collaborate. Providing the theoretical base and concept development that is needed will enable organizations to have a better understanding of each other, allowing them to communicate and cooperate more effectively, ultimately leading to higher levels of trust.

Implications for Public Health

For public health, recognizing complex emergencies and the impact of disasters on the health of populations is an imperative. With this imperative comes the need to understand how organizations with expertise in humanitarian action operate. Thus, in light of recent events and the formidable need for humanitarian relief efforts a goal of this study was to contribute to the literature on humanitarian relief, as provided by both the U.S. military and humanitarian aid organizations. The study also contributes to the discussion of the role of organizational culture in interactions between military and nongovernmental humanitarian assistance organizations, an area in which gaps in the literature exist.

This study was an exploratory study. Although strictly qualitative in design, it descriptively defined the organizational culture of the U.S. military, International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) and local and indigenous
NGOs working in similar settings, drawing upon commonalities and differences between the cultures of these organizations. The Hofstede Cultural Orientation model (1980) provided the theoretical framework to systematically compare the organizational cultures of the U.S. military, the IFRC and other humanitarian aid organizations, highlighting similarities and differences between organizations, further elucidating possible barriers to collaboration. As an exploratory study, this was the first step in understanding the organizational culture of organizations that provide humanitarian assistance, as well as the impact of organizational collaboration on assistance. The findings of this study will inform and drive additional research on organizational culture and humanitarian aid.

Proposed studies include additional studies that focus on: a) viable efforts for bridging organizational differences, b) assessing the viability of true collaborative models, taking into account the overall impact of these models on efficiency and effectiveness in regards to human health and wellbeing, c) looking at the perceptions of aid recipients regarding organizational culture and aid delivery, and d) focusing on local NGOs and their viability in long-term aid delivery processes. The implications of the proposed study may be far reaching in guiding more efficient planning, implementation, and interaction of those providing relief, allowing for the more effective delivery of aid.

The Collaborative Effort model is the current model of choice utilized by the global community for the provision of humanitarian assistance during times of crisis and complex humanitarian emergencies. Experiences such as those in Somalia, Rwanda, Iraq, and Haiti prove that coordination among the military and humanitarian aid organizations can improve the effectiveness of delivery of humanitarian aid during complex crises. All organizations that provide humanitarian assistance have a stake in
the outcome of humanitarian relief efforts, as well as essential tools to assist in achieving those outcomes. Therefore, collaboration between humanitarian agencies and the military can be beneficial, and even crucial. When organizations are able to come together to highlight each other’s strengths, while making up for each other’s weaknesses, collaborative efforts can be highly effective. This study helped to confirm many of the currently cited barriers to organizational interactions, lending to the overall understanding of organizational cultural factors that may impede success. Expounding on the results of this study, efforts must be made to foster understanding of organizational differences to help enhance exchange between humanitarian relief organizations, military and non-military alike.

There is growing literature on the importance of collaboration. Public health research supports coalition models, partnerships and the need for collaboration among groups in research, community development, and program implementation (Butterfoss, et al.). Community health projects, comparable to humanitarian ones discussed in this study, that rely on coalitions and partnerships have increased dramatically, bringing together considerable resources (Berkowitz, 2001; Butterfoss et al., 1993; Foster-Fishman, Berkowitz, Lounsby, Jacobson, & Allen, 2001; Kadushin, Lindholm, Ryan, Brodsky, & Saxe, 2005; Zakocs & Edwards, 2006). Yet there has been little empirical evidence assessing the effectiveness of these initiatives (Butterfoss et al., 1993; Kreuter, Lezin, & Young, 2000). Furthermore, the factors that enhance the effectiveness of coalitions remain unclear (Zakocs & Edwards, 2006). A review of the empirical research by Zakos and Edwards (2006) found that coalitions with formal governance structures, strong leadership, active participation, diverse membership, and group cohesion might be
more effective. This supports the desire of participants in the present study to enact formal governance and continues to validate the need for bridging organizational differences and bringing diverse groups to coalitions or collaborative agreements between humanitarian organizations. However, others are quick to challenge coalition models, stressing the problems associated with confused decision making processes and barriers associated with organizational differences (Kadushin et al., 2005). The authors of these studies suggest that coalitions need to have focused goals, as coalitions with broader scope prove to be virtually unsuccessful (Kadushin et al., 2005).

Cohesion is an imperative for successful coalitions, particularly as the success of initiatives rely on the fostering of partnerships. However, cohesion is linked to trust, an issue that emerged as a challenge facing collaborative endeavors. Based on the findings of this study, it is possible that trust issues stem from misconceptions and the differing methods through which organizations participate in humanitarian actions. An important part of the problem is that there are few operational definitions, causing confusion when organizations have differing understandings of the core concepts. Two common examples include the differences in what organizations deem as humanitarian assistance and differing definitions over who is refugees. While this may appear trivial, these differences greatly affect how organizations act and the aid they provide. Thus, when organizations come together and there are no core concepts or operationalized definitions each has a differing approach and, in some cases, these differences can lead to skepticism and mistrust. As a future step, basic development of core concepts and operational definitions may help to improve future collaborative initiatives. Development of a standard and agreed upon operational definition will allow organizations to begin to
collaborate on a level playing field, possibly fostering cohesion when groups come together.

The debate that exists over the importance of collaboration and coalition models, the varying degrees of success reported in the empirical literature, and the findings of this study, suggest there is a need to provide a strong evidence base to support the continuation of such models. Zwarensein and Reeves (2000) called for “more evidence and less rhetoric” (p. 1022). Still gaps in the literature remain. This study helps to provide evidence of the widespread challenges and problems common to collaboration efforts, not merely those undertaken by solely humanitarian organizations. Thus, the challenges and recommendation of this study can provide a base to the empirical evidence regarding organizational collaboration.

The findings of this study were, perhaps, predictable. The list of the lessons identified is a shock to no one. Essentially, the findings of this study are reduced to the fundamentals of communication, rapport, and trust, which are essential elements to aid delivery. While organizational culture influences aid delivery and affects organizational collaboration, particularly when cultures are in conflict, factors can be overcome by returning to the basics of communication and fostering trust – fundamentals that cross cut all public health disasters. Herein lays the most important implications for this study, the ability to move the findings from the current study into action and to map those findings onto other activities.

All disasters share a number of common characteristics, namely they expose public health deficiencies, serve as a catalyst to complex emergencies, those who are vulnerable are typically the hardest hit, and there tends to be a lack of proper resources to
deal with the aftermath of disaster (Burkle, 1999). Using the findings of this study, which draws back to the fundamentals – the need for better communication among public health organizations – we can learn to better act and react in disaster situations of any kind. With the impending threat of an Influenza disaster, predictions of increased rates and intensities of natural disasters and the threat of wars and civil unrest worldwide, translating these findings is a necessity.
REFERENCES


Smit, I. (2001). Assessment of cultures: A way to problem solving or a way to problematic solutions? In C. Cooper, S. Cartwright & P. C. Earley (Eds.), *The International Handbook of Organizational Culture and Climate*. Chichester: John Wiley & Sons, LTD.


APPENDIX A: INTERVIEW GUIDE

INTERVIEW GUIDE

Introduction:
1. Please tell me a little about yourself and what you do.
   a. Probe: What do you enjoy about your work?
2. I am here to learn a little more about humanitarian assistance and the organizations that provide aid. How would you define humanitarian aid?
3. Can you tell a story that would illustrate this?
4. Please tell me a little about your organization and its role in providing humanitarian assistance.
5. Please share some of your experiences providing humanitarian assistance.
   a. What were some areas of success?
      i. What factors helped aid in that success. Probe: collaborative based?
   b. What were some barriers that you faced?
   c. Have you worked for other aid organizations besides [Present organization]?
      How did your experiences differ from [Present organization].
6. What made you decide to get into work relating to humanitarian aid?
7. People differ in what is important to them in a job. Please tell me a little about what is important to you.
8. We are trying to learn a little more about organizations that are providing humanitarian aid. Tell me a little about your organization?
   a. What is the mission of [Present Organization]?
   b. How do you feel the organization lives up to its mission?
   c. What values do employees attach to their work?
      i. What about workers in other HAOs? Do they share these values?
   d. What are some expectations of your organization?
      i. Work
      ii. Employee behavior
      iii. Company sponsored events
      iv. Employee interaction
   e. In general, is there a particular type of personality or kind of person that works with your organization?
Appendix A (Continued)

f. Do you think that different aid organizations have different cultures or group personalities?
   i. What is it like working with an organization with a different background then your own?
9. How long do people tend to work in your organization? Why do people leave?
10. How closely do you interact with the recipients of aid?
   a. Please give some examples.
   b. Tell me how you feel about interaction.
      i. Probe: Is it important?
11. What makes a successful aid mission? What are indicators of success?
12. In your opinion, what makes one organization more successful in the delivery of aid over another?
13. We are looking to learn more about organizational collaboration and the delivery of humanitarian aid. Have you ever provided assistance in collaboration with other organizations?
   i. Did you feel this/these missions were successful? Why or why not?
   b. Tell me about the organizations you worked with.
      i. Were they from similar or different backgrounds?
      ii. What were their missions?
      iii. How do you think your similarities or differences affected the success of the mission?
   c. Tell me about how your organization interacts with other organizations?
      1. Is this interaction easy or difficult?
         ii. Were there structures put in place to aid in this process?
14. Have you ever worked directly with the [ICRC/US military/local]?
   a. Please talk about some of your experiences.
   b. What was the best part about working with this organization?
   c. What was the hardest part about working with this organization?
   d. How has your interaction with this organization changed over the years?
      i. Has interaction become easier or harder?
15. When you work with other organizations, describe the communication process between organizations
16. When you work with other organizations, do you feel that your organization and its decisions are respected?
17. What are your feelings about working with other HAOS?
a. Who do you prefer to work with? Why?
b. Who do you prefer not to work with? Why?
18. In recent aid endeavors, there has been a push toward a model of collaborative effort. Do you support this model? Why or why not.
19. Describe an effective aid delivery system.
20. If you could change anything about the provision of aid (by either Organization X or organizations that you work with) what would it be?

Closing:
• Please think about all of the things we have talked about today and all of the experiences that you have shared. What do you think is the most important piece of knowledge when studying humanitarian assistance and inter-organizational collaboration?

Recap:
• Provide a brief summary of the key issues. Ask participant “How well does that description capture what we have talked about. Am I missing anything?
### APPENDIX B: CODE BOOK

The Role of Organizational Culture and Inter-organizational Collaboration in the Delivery of Humanitarian Assistance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>General</th>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General</td>
<td></td>
<td>This category is for “General Comments” that are related to humanitarian assistance. These comments were generated through general discussion and are primarily from the “Introduction” questions of the interview guide.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comments</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Role</td>
<td></td>
<td>General comments and descriptions about ones role/position in their organization. Comments may include their role in the delivery of humanitarian assistance, length of time in the position, etc. However, discussion of one’s role in humanitarian assistance, time working for an organization, educational background, etc. will be coded separately to pull out additional organizational culture information.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Define</td>
<td></td>
<td>Definition of humanitarian assistance as provided by the participant.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Story</td>
<td></td>
<td>A story or description that illustrates what humanitarian assistance means to the participant.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Choose_Wor</td>
<td></td>
<td>Comments about how one chose to get into their area of work. This may include circumstances, decisions, and intentions. This does not include factors that are important to them in a job unless they are discussing what made them take THIS job. Otherwise, comments about what is important to them in a job should be coded up organizational culture.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Misconcept</td>
<td></td>
<td>Comments that illustrate misconceptions. This may be in term of other organizations, missions, work, etc.</td>
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# The Role of Organizational Culture and Inter-organizational Collaboration in the Delivery of Humanitarian Assistance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>General</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Transit</td>
<td>Transitioning. Mentions of transitioning jobs. This should be coded for both transitioning between positions in one's current job, as well as transitioning from one organization to another.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Haiti</td>
<td>Comments specific to the situation in Haiti</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hait_wo</td>
<td>Comments regarding the delivery of humanitarian assistance by the participant in Haiti. This code should be in regards to the specific actions of an individual, not the generalized situation in Haiti.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diff</td>
<td>Discussion about wanting to make a difference.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Culture</td>
<td>Comments about the culture of a population or of the recipients of humanitarian assistance. This may be coded in regards to mention of one's understanding of a culture in which they worked, lack of understanding, efforts to take culture into consideration when developing programs, or the lack of efforts to do so.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experiences</td>
<td>Comments or discussion of the individual’s experiences providing humanitarian assistance. This includes stories regarding missions, personal feelings, beliefs, etc.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Success</td>
<td>Comments of descriptions that highlight factors that aid in successful delivery of assistance.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barriers</td>
<td>Comments of descriptions that highlight factors that serve as barriers to the successful delivery of assistance.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organization</td>
<td>These are comments or discussion related to the organization in which the participant is currently employed. Codes in this section will be useful in painting a picture of one’s of organizational culture. However, codes in this section are more general than those used as OC descriptors.</td>
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</tbody>
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## The Role of Organizational Culture and Inter-organizational Collaboration in the Delivery of Humanitarian Assistance

<table>
<thead>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Org_role</td>
<td>General</td>
<td>General comments and descriptions of one's organization and its role in the delivery of humanitarian assistance. Background information.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mission</td>
<td></td>
<td>The mission of the organization in which the participant currently works.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Live_up</td>
<td></td>
<td>Comments about how an organization “lives up” to its mission.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Values</td>
<td></td>
<td>General Comments regarding the values that that employees attach to their work.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Val_share</td>
<td></td>
<td>Comments regarding the values of other organizations. This is in direct response to the questions, are these values common among all HAOs. However, comments may be found throughout discussion of other organizations that provide humanitarian assistance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expect</td>
<td></td>
<td>General comments about expectations of an organization. This includes comments about what is expected in terms of work ethic, employee behavior, employee interaction.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Live_in</td>
<td></td>
<td>Comments about staff living and working in country.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turnover</td>
<td></td>
<td>The concept of turnover in the workplace. How it affects mission, when it happens, How it is handled.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resource</td>
<td></td>
<td>Comments about resources (or lack there of) and availability to organizations. This may be coded, in particular, to comments regarding terms of limited resources. This code will be directly related to competition and will also be an important indicator of organizational cultures.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# The Role of Organizational Culture and Inter-organizational Collaboration in the Delivery of Humanitarian Assistance

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>General</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Org_Culture</td>
<td>These are codes directly related to organizational culture. Code may be associated with actual questions on the interview guide or may be more implied in nature and based on the Hofstede and Erez models.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethno</td>
<td>Comments that are ethnocentric in nature.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imp_Job</td>
<td>Comments regarding what is important in a job. This should be coded in direct response to the question, “People differ in what is important in a job…” However, it may also come about in general discussion about one’s job.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Person</td>
<td>Comments regarding the type of person that works for the individual organization.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Person_all</td>
<td>Comments regarding the personality of different organizations. These comments relate to the participants beliefs of individual cultures/personalities of organizations. For this code, terms may also relate to individuals working for another organization if the term is used in the context of explaining an organization.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time</td>
<td>Refers to how long a person has worked with this organization. For many interviews, this information was collected prior to the interview or at the end if it did not come up during the interview. For cases where time was not part of the actual interview, field notes will be coded to elucidate that information.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# APPENDIX B: CODE BOOK

## The Role of Organizational Culture and Inter-organizational Collaboration in the Delivery of Humanitarian Assistance

<table>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Intrct_Aid</td>
<td>These are comments that discuss how closely the participants organization interacts with the recipients of aid. This may be brought out as a direct answer to the questions asked or may be found in stories discussing the experiences that one has had in the field and delivering aid. This may include comments about understanding the recipients of aid, their actions, their culture, etc. Suggests a relationship with recipients of aid.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Msr_Succes</td>
<td>Comments that discuss how the organization measures success, indicators of success or what makes a missions successful.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>+_Succ</td>
<td>Comments or discussions of the participant’s beliefs regarding what makes one organization more successful than another. <em>This may include organizational collaboration as a measure of success but does NOT include comments about successful collaborative missions in general. It is possible that these codes overlap but they should not replace each other.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Language</td>
<td>Comments referring to language and terminology. This may also include language noted by the researcher as specific to the organization.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Process</td>
<td>Terms relating to procedures that are followed in the delivery of aid.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PD</td>
<td>Any comments illustrating to Power Distance, The degree of inequality among people working in an organization. Comment will include those that discuss organizational structure (hierarchy vs. horizontal management) hierarchy, management styles (paternalistic, materialistic), differences in status among employees, salary gaps, etc. <em>These codes will be further analyzed for High vs. low PD. Theoretical codes may be much more abstract then others in this codebook.</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Revised 7/19/2006
## APPENDIX B: CODE BOOK

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mgmt</td>
<td></td>
<td>Discussion of the management structure of organizations that delivery humanitarian assistance. This will likely be in the discussion of ones organization but may also include discussion of other organizations that provide aid. This will be an indicator of PD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Probs</td>
<td></td>
<td>Problems. Any comments that discuss problems or differences with other organizations management structure, procedures, operations, plans of action, etc. This will be an indicator of both PD and UA.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UA</td>
<td></td>
<td>Any comments illustrating Uncertainty Avoidance, the degree to which people in an organization prefer structured over unstructured situations. Structured situations are those in which there are clear rules as to how one should behave. This will include the existence of formal rules, rights, and duties, large number of specialists, avoidance of risk, as well as informal rules and procedures, more generalists, individual decision making, and risk taking. <em>These codes will be further analyzed for High vs. low UA. Theoretical codes may be much more abstract then others in this codebook.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curve</td>
<td></td>
<td>Comments or discussion about the learning curve associated with ones job. Discussion may be part of a discussion about transitioning positions. However, it more directly relates to that active process of learning. This is an indicators of UA.</td>
</tr>
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## APPENDIX B: CODE BOOK

### The Role of Organizational Culture and Inter-organizational Collaboration in the Delivery of Humanitarian Assistance

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<tr>
<td>MF</td>
<td>Any comments illustrating Masculinity-Femininity, the degree to which values like assertiveness, performance, success, and competition, which in nearly all societies are associated with the role of men, prevail over values like the quality of life, maintaining warm personal relationships, service, care for the weak, and solidarity, which in nearly all societies are more associated with the role of women. This will include discussion of management styles that stress independence, decisiveness, and assertiveness; Adversarial negations, as well as management styles that stress group cohesion and decisions; Problem solving negotiations. <strong>These codes will be further analyzed for High vs. low MF. Theoretical codes may be much more abstract then others in this codebook.</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Security</td>
<td>Mention of the need for security or the use of force during aid delivery. This may be exhibited as perception or actual need and positively acknowledging need or scoffing at the idea.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compete</td>
<td>Competition. Comments regarding competition with other organizations that delivery humanitarian assistance. This is both an indicator of MF as well as a factor in organizational collaboration.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Love</td>
<td>Labor of love. This is any discussion about humanitarian assistance or relief work being a “labor of love.” Many organizations use this term directly. These comments may be co-coded as values and are an indicator of MF. However, prelim analysis showed this to be a key emergent theme so it will be coded individually.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psy_sup</td>
<td>Comments that make mention of psychological support to aid workers. This will also be coded under MF, but being a strong feminine quality it is important to pull out as its own code.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prayer</td>
<td>Comments that discuss the role of prayer or religious aspects. This code is for the actual act of praying or discussion of praying for or with the recipients of aid.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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# APPENDIX B: CODE BOOK

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<tr>
<td>IC</td>
<td>Any comments which illustrate a sense of Individualism-Collectivism, whether one’s identity is defined by personal choices and achievements or by the character of the collective groups to which one is more or less permanently attached. This will include discussion of how workers act in disaster situations, particularly in terms to working individually or as a team. <em>These codes will be further analyzed for High vs. low MF. Theoretical codes may be much more abstract then others in this codebook.</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religion</td>
<td>Denotes comments about religion in humanitarian assistance. This is not the direct act of praying but mention to the role of religion in delivery of aid, assistance that is being provided, and driving forces behind organizational involvement.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exposure</td>
<td>Comments regarding the importance of getting your name out there or being exposed. This may relate directly to media coverage, news briefs, press material or other instances in which being “known” makes a difference. <em>This code is both telling of ones organizational culture and a factor that affects inter-organizational collaboration.</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comm</td>
<td>Comments regarding the communication process both within the organization and with other organizations, recipients, etc.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miss-job</td>
<td>Comments related to differences in a sense of mission vs. sense of job, in terms of delivery of humanitarian assistance and “who does it better.”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sustain</td>
<td>Comments related to sustainability programs, the need for sustainable programs or even lack of sustainable programs as provided by the organization. This is both organization specific and in discussion of other organizations.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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### The Role of Organizational Culture and Inter-organizational Collaboration in the Delivery of Humanitarian Assistance

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Org_Collab</td>
<td></td>
<td>These are codes that are directly related to organizational collaboration. Codes may be associated with actual questions from the interview guide or they may also come about through stories, discussion of experiences, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work</td>
<td></td>
<td>Comments and descriptions of what it is like to work with an organization other than your own. This will include general experiences that one had working with other organizations, discussions of their backgrounds, missions, how they were similar/different. It may also include feelings of success/barriers to success as the context will be very important. However, there will be another code to code specifically for this.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diff_back</td>
<td></td>
<td>Comments and descriptions about working with organizations that have a different background then your own. In this code, there will be a variety of different responses as background will change based on military, NGO, faith based, etc. All interviews will be categorized to allow this to be pulled out.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coll_Succ</td>
<td></td>
<td>These are comments about successful collaborative missions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coll_NoSuc</td>
<td></td>
<td>Comments about factors that may have led to unsuccessful collaborative missions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coll_No exp</td>
<td></td>
<td>Comments discussing the lack of experiences that one providing aid in collaboration with another. This may very well be one phrase or even the word no.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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The Role of Organizational Culture and Inter-organizational Collaboration in the Delivery of Humanitarian Assistance

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intrct_org</td>
<td></td>
<td>These are comments that discuss how participants work with other organizations that provide humanitarian assistance. This may be brought out as a direct answer to the questions asked or may be found in stories discussing the experiences that one has had in the field, delivering aid and working with others. Comments will include those that discuss the ease or difficulty with interaction, structures that were put in place to aid the process. <strong>Coding will not be for opinions of what should be done or what needs to be done, rather their experiences. This code will be very important for organizational culture as well.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work_ICRC</td>
<td></td>
<td>Comments about ones experiences working directly with the ICRC.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ICRC_Chng</td>
<td></td>
<td>Comments about how ones interaction with the ICRC has changed over the years. Comments may be either positive, negative or neutral in nature.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work_Mil</td>
<td></td>
<td>Comments about ones experiences working directly with the US military. <strong>In certain instances, there may be general discussion of working with the military (may include foreign militaries). This will be coded here but will be considered in the final analysis that major differences exist between militaries of the world.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mil_Chng</td>
<td></td>
<td>Comments about how ones interaction with the Military has changed over the years. Comments may be either positive, negative or neutral in nature.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work_Local</td>
<td></td>
<td>Comments about ones experiences working directly with local NGOs. <strong>This may include comments regarding faith based organizations, larger NGOs that are working on a local capacity, etc.</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Local_Chng</td>
<td>Comments about how one’s interaction with the local NGOs has changed over the years. Comments may be either positive, negative or neutral in nature.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Respect</td>
<td>Comments about whether one feels their organization is respected when working with others. This may include overall respect, decision making, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Coll_feel</td>
<td>General comments regarding one’s feeling about working with other HAOs. Personal beliefs, feelings other than that of the organization or the organizations mandate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Who</td>
<td>Comments about organizations or types of organizations that they prefer to work, as well as those that they prefer not to work with.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rapport</td>
<td>Comments directly related to the role of rapport in organizational collaboration.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Trust</td>
<td>Comments relating to sense of trust or issues associated with trust.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve</td>
<td></td>
<td>These codes are directly related to the insight of participants and to discussion on how to improve the delivery of humanitarian assistance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Effective</td>
<td>Comments regarding the participants’ personal beliefs as to what makes an effective aid delivery system. These are not experiences, rather what they think makes or would make and effective aid delivery system.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Model</td>
<td>Comments discussing the collaborative effort model and either support or opposition to the model.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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The Role of Organizational Culture and Inter-organizational Collaboration in the Delivery of Humanitarian Assistance

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<tr>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Change</td>
<td></td>
<td>Comments about what one would change in terms of the provision of aid. This may overlap with the effective aid delivery but refers to more specific comments about changes to structures that are in place, rather than changes in ideology.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central</td>
<td></td>
<td>Comments that discuss a need for a central source to help coordinate aid delivery. <em>This may be part of “change” or “effective” but it is so common among some groups that I would like to pull it out separately as well.</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Jaime Antoinette Wilke Corvin received a Bachelors Degree in Biology from Eckerd College in St. Petersburg, Florida in 1999. In 2001, Mrs. Wilke Corvin received a Master of Science from the Department of Community and Family Health at the University of South Florida College of Public Health. Her concentration area was Maternal and Child Health. During her Masters, Mrs. Wilke Corvin worked with the American Cancer Society Florida Division.

Mrs. Wilke Corvin joined the doctoral program at the University of South Florida College of Public Health in 2001. While in the doctoral program, Mrs. Wilke Corvin worked as a research associate for the Lawton and Rhea Chiles Center for Healthy Mothers and Babies and for the Global Center for Disaster Management and Humanitarian Action. Her research interests include global health, maternal and child health, reducing health disparities, humanitarian assistance, disaster management, organizational culture, and collaboration.