



Master Thesis

*Humanitarian Operations during COVID-19: Remote
Management, Digitalisation, and Localisation in the
Rohingya Refugee Response*

Philipp Hilzendegen

1007605

Wageningen University

M. Sc. International Development Studies

SDC 80736

Supervisor: Dr. Bram J. Jansen

Submitted: October 20, 2021

Abstract

This thesis investigates the emergence of practices of remote management in humanitarian operations amidst the COVID-19 pandemic in the Rohingya Refugee Response. The Rohingya face a double threat from the virus: First, humanitarian organisations that provide aid to the refugees face severe constraints through restrictions to limit the spread of the virus. Second the affected population themselves are at a high risk of a severe outbreak of the virus, as they are living in one of the most densely populated camps in the world with a low standard of hygiene and are often in poor health. Therefore, it is essential for humanitarian organisations to continue their work through switching to remote management. Early predictions argued that it could lead to two major transformations of the sector: a more central role for local actors and an emergence of technological solutions. This research applied findings from past pandemics to differentiate different practices of remote management as coordination, diagnostics, risk communication and remote activities. The data was collected by conducting eight semi-structured interviews with humanitarian practitioners utilising remote management and collecting reports by the humanitarian organisations. The findings suggest the emergence of those four different practices. However, the early predictions turned out to be misguided. The initial techno optimistic discourse by the humanitarian organisations resulted in a non-technology driven response, due to politically restricted connectivity and the presence of a digital divide, which excludes the Rohingya from the digital world. Moreover, local actors increasingly took on major responsibilities, but this did not result in a shift of power. Instead, the status quo between the international organisations and their local partners was maintained remotely. At last, interactive voice response technology for participatory communication with refugees was utilised for the first time in this response and appears to be a more common trend of this pandemic.

Table of Content

Abstract	ii
Table of Content.....	iii
List of abbreviations.....	vi
1 Introduction	1
1.1 Background.....	1
1.2 Statement of the problem.....	4
1.3 Research Questions.....	6
1.4 Justification, research objectives and research approach	6
1.5 Structure of this study.....	7
2 Review of the literature	8
2.1 Defining remote management	8
2.2 Thematic origins of remote management	10
2.2.1 Remote management and changing security situations.....	10
2.2.2 Remote management and technology.....	12
2.2.3 Remote management and localisation.....	15
2.3 Technology usage in pandemics.....	17
2.4 Framework of practices	18
2.5 Research gap and contribution	19
3 Methodology	21
3.1 Research Design	21
3.2 Research Site	21
3.3 Data collection.....	22
3.3.1 Methods.....	22
3.3.2 Sampling.....	24

3.3.3	Collection of data	24
3.4	Data analysis.....	26
3.5	Limitations.....	27
3.6	Reflection.....	28
4	Practices of remote management.....	29
4.1	Causes of remote management practices.....	29
4.2	The different practices of remote management	32
4.2.1	Coordination.....	32
4.2.2	Diagnostics	34
4.2.3	Risk communication.....	35
4.2.4	Remote activities	38
4.3	Limitations to further practices of remote management.....	41
4.3.1	Politically restricted connectivity	41
4.3.2	Approval process by the government.....	43
4.3.3	(Digital) Literacy of the Rohingya	43
4.4	Outcome of remote management practices	44
5	Technology, new actors and power relations	46
5.1	Technological tools and new actors.....	46
5.1.1	Importance of data protection	47
5.1.2	Due diligence.....	48
5.2	Power relations and the localisation agenda.....	49
5.2.1	Shift to the local	50
5.2.2	Localisation of aid.....	51
6	Discussion: From a techno optimistic discourse to a non-technology driven response... 53	
6.1	The techno optimistic discourse	53

6.1.1	The importance of participatory approaches for risk communication	54
6.1.2	IVR for risk communication and beyond	54
6.2	A non-technology driven response	56
6.2.1	The digital divide in the response	56
6.2.2	Restriction of connectivity	57
6.3	A patchwork of digital and physical solutions	58
6.3.1	Connectivity as aid	59
6.3.2	Data protection	60
7	Conclusion.....	61
8	References	65
9	Appendix	77
9.1	List of interviews	77

List of abbreviations

CWC	Communication with Communities
DRC	Democratic Republique of the Congo
GDPR	General Data Protection Regulation
HLP	Housing, Land and Property
INGO	International Non-governmental Organisations
IOM	International Organisation for Migration
ISCG	Inter-Sector Coordination Group
IVR	Interactive Voice Response
NRC	Norwegian Refugee Council
OCHA	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
RRRC	Repatriation Commissioner
UN	United Nations
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

1 Introduction

1.1 Background

The last two decades have seen the emergence of a number of pandemics such as SARS, the Avian flu, Ebola and the Zika virus (Wilson & Jumbert, 2018). Most recently, at the end of 2019, a new virus emerged - COVID-19 - which quickly spread around the world and is currently in 2021 affecting almost every country on the planet. As a response to halt the spread of the virus in 2020, many countries have gone into lockdown (i.e., social restrictions, school closures, etc.) and closed their borders. Additionally, free travel was severely limited, affecting the basic workings of the globalised world. Consequently, these measures caused immense economic and social consequences globally (Barbelet et al., 2020). However, COVID-19 is not the only disaster affecting people. Next to the pandemic, civil wars are continuing, refugees still live in overly congested camps and other natural disasters can still occur at any time. In other words, humanitarian disasters are not paused, and the aid organisations still need to continue their work during this pandemic.

Experiences from past pandemics amidst humanitarian settings – especially in the case of Ebola in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) – show how difficult it is to control their spread and continue other programming activities (Gostin et al., 2019). Refugees and displaced populations are among the most vulnerable to the virus itself, but also to containment measures, because their living conditions are often characterised by overcrowded camps with a low standard of living. This means, access to water and sanitation is located at central points and shared with many other households, while nutrition and health status of many is poor. Additionally, they have less access to health services and less possibilities to cope with possible containment measures. All these factors compound to a higher risk of the spread of infectious diseases, such as COVID-19 (Lau et al., 2020).

In addition to the refugees being at an increased risk, pandemics disrupt humanitarian operations. This means countries might decide to limit humanitarian operations to slow the spread of the virus, restricting humanitarian workers from entering the country and limit interventions in camps, as to not introduce the virus from the outside (Dahab et al., 2020). For instance, the Ebola outbreak in the DRC saw a retreat of international humanitarian workers (Gostin et al., 2019). Reducing the presence of international agencies in a politically instable context, characterised by weak local governance and limited infrastructure for health puts the displaced populations at a high risk from the disease (Lau et al., 2020).

To summarize, the COVID-19 pandemic put refugee populations at a high risk while simultaneously disrupting humanitarian operations. In particular, early predictions of the spread of the pandemic among refugee populations looked at the Rohingya refugee camps in Bangladesh. The simulations by Truelove et al. (2020) show that a largescale outbreak of the pandemic in this setting was very likely and would potentially overburden the local health care services. Only the arrival of one infected individual would result in huge numbers of affected people due to the high population density in refugee camps. Moreover, the footprint of humanitarian operations was reduced by withdrawing international staff, and limiting movements of the workers (ACAPS, 2020a). However, that same survey also showed that operations do continue amidst the pandemic and the sector had to adapt to these new measures.

For these reasons, the pandemic and the subsequent restrictions, humanitarian organisations were forced to adapt and innovate their way of working (Solomon, 2020). However, the way the organisations would adapt and what aid would look like during the pandemic remained unclear. Two subjects have received increased attention since the outbreak, namely the use of digital communication technology and the collaboration with local actors.

First, the potential of digital communication technology - such as apps, mobile phones and conferencing tools - to overcome the challenges around access has been proposed as a solution (Bryant et al., 2020). Even before the pandemic, their potential for enabling humanitarian access has been discussed (Belliveau, 2016). This means, international staff can stay in their home country and utilise those technologies, while local actors on the ground take over the implementation. To clarify, instead of international staff being in the field, they can oversee operations and offer their technical expertise through digital ways from their head offices of their respective organisations (Bryant et al., 2020; Chen & Cook, 2020). In other words, there was a clear techno optimism towards technology and the private sector behind those during COVID-19. Likewise, other digital tools such as the use of social media to disseminate critical information have received increased attention (Bryant et al., 2020). Overall, it is unclear what this influx of technology means for the sector, however it is important to note that even before the pandemic, a digitalisation of the sector was taking place (Willitts-King et al., 2019).

Second, the role of local actors in humanitarian responses has received increased attention. The crisis has resulted in a withdrawal of international staff from the field, which forced local

organisations to step in and take over additional responsibilities. Consequently, this dynamic created an increasing interest into the work of local aid organisations and their role in the humanitarian field (Barbelet et al., 2020; Vielajus & Bonis-Charancle, 2020). As pointed out by Barbelet et al. (2020), it could lead to transformative long lasting changes for the sector and put local actors at the forefront. In a sense, out of the necessity to adapt, the ownership of humanitarian operations could be transferred to local organisations. It is worth noting, that the increased attention towards local actors comes at a time where the humanitarian sector is committed to a localisation agenda, meaning increasingly putting the local actors at the forefront of the response (Fabre, 2017). However, organisations interpret and implement this agenda differently across the sector (Barbelet, 2018). Early examples from the Rohingya Refugee Response show that local organisations are already stepping up. For instance, local organisations are relying on their community volunteers, which they already trained before the pandemic. According to early findings by Barbelet et al. (2020) it enables them to continue their work better in comparison to bigger international organisations relying on international staff.

However, at this point it is too early to assess what will be the long-term consequences to humanitarianism from this pandemic. What is happening right now, is exactly the two dynamics mentioned: local actors are in the field and taking over implementation of activities and humanitarian organisations are resorting to digital communication technologies to overcome access constraints and continue their work. Together, these two components represent the remote management of humanitarian operations, which describes a way of delivering aid remotely when international staff is withdrawn from the field and increased responsibilities are shifted to local staff and local organisations. It is enabled by the utilisation of digital communication technology (Donini & Maxwell, 2013).

To sum up, remote management has received increased attention since the start of the pandemic. More recently, additional documents on it were published, and it was utilised to overcome challenges of access in humanitarian operations during Cyclone Harold in 2020 (Bamfort et al., 2020; Barbelet et al., 2020; Birch, 2020). Additionally, the interest appears to be widespread even beyond the humanitarian sector. For instance, the German development

bank has held a conference titled: *Fragile contexts, digitalisation, and remote management, monitoring and verification* at the beginning of 2021.¹

It is important to mention that the focus of this research is on the already mentioned Rohingya Refugee Response as an example of a humanitarian setting in which an outbreak of COVID-19 is very difficult to contain. It is so difficult to contain the spread of a virus as these camps are some of the most densely populated places in the world (WV Bangladesh, 2020). Since the Rohingya fled from Rakhine State in Myanmar in 2017 after an outbreak of violence to Cox's Bazar in Bangladesh, around 869.000 are living in these refugee camps in 2020 (IOM, 2020g; UNICEF, 2021b). Interruptions to humanitarian services have dire consequences for them as they are completely reliant on outside help (IOM, 2020g). I want to stress the importance of the double burden that COVID-19 puts on this population: the risk of the virus and the disruption of humanitarian operations. This situation provides an interesting research setting for this thesis². Importantly, while the humanitarian situation and consequences for the affected population are severe, I focus this thesis on the humanitarian organisations themselves.

1.2 Statement of the problem

As has been noted, the global COVID-19 pandemic is putting the lives of many at risks and hinders the work of humanitarian organisations. Consequently, the sector is adapting to remote management practices to be able to serve the vulnerable populations, rather than withdrawing completely and stopping activities. However, how exactly remote management programming amidst a global pandemic looks like is unclear, what challenges it faces, and how it may affect the humanitarian field raises questions. The review of literature, which I discuss in detail in chapter 2, reveals the following literature gap. On the one hand, literature on the prior use of remote management is restricted to conflict areas in a few, highly volatile settings such as Afghanistan, Somalia, and Syria. In those settings, international actors often had to resort to remote management (cf. Donini & Maxwell, 2013). On the other hand, most of the literature, apart from Duffield (2013, 2016) and Sandvik et al. (2014), is practitioners based; meaning it is written by or for humanitarian organisations to inform their

¹ https://www.kfw-entwicklungsbank.de/International-financing/KfW-Development-Bank/About-us/News/News-Details_608192.html [Last accessed: 03.10.2021]

² I provide more details on the Rohingya Refugee Response in 3.2.

programming. However, much of it lacks a wider sociological perspective on remote management, especially regarding transformative changes impacting the humanitarian sector. In short, this means that there is a knowledge gap on the use of remote management amidst pandemics and literature that discusses it amidst a wider sociological perspective remains scarce.

To put it differently, when commencing this thesis, it was still very unclear what aid delivery would look like during the pandemic, and what would be the long-term effects on the humanitarian sector. Some authors argued that it will put the local actors in the driver seat (Barbelet et al., 2020). Others, such as Vielajus & Bonis-Charancle (2020), stressed that these emerging practices and procedures need to be studied, to identify what they are and how they impact the field of humanitarianism. Additionally, Belliveau (2016) already established the importance of studying the technology behind those emerging practices and the effects they have on the sector. This is why my research is so important, to identify the emerging practices and the effects they have on the humanitarian sector.

My research draws on past findings on remote management in conflict settings and combines it with research on humanitarian operations amidst past pandemics. The situations are comparable as pointed out by Barbelet et al. (2020). The authors argue that the current global situation can be compared on the one hand to the experience of humanitarian actors in the recent Ebola crises in West Africa and the DRC. On the other hand, it is also comparable from an operational perspective to Syria and other contexts where remote management was necessary to overcome access restrictions. The authors stressed that in both contexts, local actors have received increased attention and responsibilities. However, there are two additional factors of remote management, that need further attention.

First, the increased responsibility of local actors does not always mean that increased power was transferred to them. What this means is that in many cases the remote international staff remained in charge of making the decisions. This means decisions were made remotely from the local context. In fact, using local staff that is remotely managed reinforces the existing power relations in the humanitarian sector between the international and the local actors (Duffield, 2016). Second, remote management is enabled by communication technology. Behind those, in most cases are so called new actors in the form of private technological companies. However, while technology has received attention amidst past pandemics, the role

of the technology companies behind those remains understudied and their role in the provision of aid remains unclear (Willitts-King et al., 2019).

1.3 Research Questions

Therefore, this thesis studies this research problem more closely, by answering the following research questions.

- (1) How did remote management affect the practices of aid delivery in Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh amidst the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020?
- (2) How did remote management practices and the subsequential influx of new technological actors affect the humanitarian organisations?
- (3) How did remote management practices affect the power relations between international organisations, their local staff, and local organisations?

1.4 Justification, research objectives and research approach

The COVID-19 pandemic, which is forcing a widespread use of remote management, is the ideal context to study remote management and address the research gap and issues described in this chapter. I aim to identify the emerging practices of remote management, therefore adding to the research gap and the emerging literature on the COVID-19 pandemic.

Moreover, this thesis is the first attempt at studying remote management outside of volatile settings. At last, this research could also be used by practitioners to learn from and to inform future programming and decisions. Parallel to those goals, this research is also designed to provide a sociological perspective on remote management, which is also lacking in the literature. How this research aims to fulfil those objectives is described in the following two paragraphs.

For this study, I combine past research on remote management in volatile settings and the use of technology amidst pandemics. More clearly, I utilise the body of knowledge on remote management and related concepts to identify practices of remote management. I further distinguish those based on their purpose via a framework for humanitarian technology established by Wilson & Jumbert (2018), based on their research on the Ebola pandemic. In addition, I provide the wider sociological angle by looking at the role of new tech actors and effects of new technology, that enable these practices. For the same purpose, I investigate the effects the use of remote management had on the power between international and local actors. This enables me to put the practices into a wider perspective on the current

transformative changes impacting humanitarianism: the digitalisation of aid and the localisation of aid.

It is important to realize that the context in which remote management occurs is also essential. Humanitarian operations are very context dependent, such as the prior research on remote management shows (cf. Chaudhri et al., 2019). Therefore, this research limits itself to look into a specific context, the Rohingya Refugee Response in Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh.³ As the situation is constantly evolving, the research was limited to the situation in 2020. Equally important, for the purpose of this research I focus on humanitarian technology enabling remote management limited to communication technology, such as mobile phones and their applications. Therefore excluding other approaches and technologies such as drones, biometrics or remote sensing (Willitts-King et al., 2019). Likewise, the focus on technology explains why for the remainder of this thesis the processes and technology of remote management are at the centre of analysis, while putting the difficult humanitarian situation the Rohingya are experiencing to the side-line.

1.5 Structure of this study

This thesis proceeds as follows: In chapter 2 I review the existing academic and grey literature on remote management and define the main concepts. This chapter provides the theoretical framework and identifies a research gap in the literature. The third chapter is concerned with the methodology I used for this study. I explain my choice of sampling, methods, and analysis. Chapter 4 and 5 present the empirical findings of this study, focusing on the three key areas of research as identified in my research questions: remote management practices, technology and new actors, and power relations. In chapter 6 I discuss the findings from the empirical chapters in more detail. This chapter I use to discuss core findings of this study and compare them with existing literature. Moreover, I also discuss what my results mean in relation to wider transformational changes such as the influx of new technologies. At last, in chapter 7 I provide a concise summary of this research, answers to my research questions, limitations of this study and a suggestion for future research.

³ The reasoning for this choice is explained in 3.2.

2 Review of the literature

In the previous chapter I introduced the context and the research problem of this research. In this chapter I present the academic and grey literature that exists on remote management in humanitarian operations, which provides the theoretical framework of my thesis. First, I show that different definitions on remote management exist and further unpack the concept. Second, I discuss three distinct thematic areas in which this concept has been researched: (1) security situation (2) technology and (3) localisation. Third, after establishing the link between remote management and technology, I present literature on technology usage amidst pandemics. From this literature, I derive and present a framework to distinguish different practices of remote management. At last, I summarize this chapter where I clearly establishing the research gap of this thesis.

2.1 Defining remote management

The term remote management refers to different strategies or approaches that enable humanitarian organisations to manage their operations remotely. In those scenarios, organisation withdraw their international staff from the location of the crisis and increasingly rely on local staff and local partners (Stoddard et al., 2010). However, in the literature on remote management, the terms used for it vary and different definitions of the term are applied (e.g., Althea, 2015; Donini & Maxwell, 2013; Egeland et al., 2011). Nonetheless, there are a few common features of the definitions: (1) a removal or withdrawal of international staff (Althea, 2015; Danish Refugee Council, 2015; Howe et al., 2015) and it is commonly seen as (2) an adaptation and deviation from normal programming to overcome issues of access or security to continue operations, while limiting risks to the international staff (Donini & Maxwell, 2013). Moreover, it needs to be separated from other strategies, meaning remote management is not a nationalisation of staff and is not a form of partnership arrangement such as subcontracting (Jackson & Zyck, 2017).

Importantly, the term remote management has been unpacked further by some authors, such as Hansen (2008). He identified different remote modalities, which differ from each other based on the amount of responsibility and power that has been delegated to the local staff and whether they are reactively or proactively established (Birch, 2020). They are located on a spectrum, spanning from a reactive stance where international staff have taken the complete decision-making power with them to modalities where decision-making and management decisions have shifted to the local actors to varying degrees (Collinson & Duffield, 2013).The

four different remote modalities are (1) remote control, (2) remote delegation, (3) remote support and (4) remote partnership. However, it is difficult to strictly differentiate between those modalities. Subsequent reports have often built on those, used them for distinction, and added other modalities (cf. Fradejas-García, 2019; Jackson & Zyck, 2017; Zyck, 2012; Donini & Maxwell, 2013). Below, the adapted details on those four main modalities are described. They are taken and adapted from (Chaudhri et al., 2019; HAG & CARE, 2020; Hansen, 2008; Zyck, 2012):

Remote control refers to a reactive stance, where the power over decision making remains with international staff, who is remotely located from the context.

Remote delegation is also a reactive stance. However more power is given temporally to local staff or partners

Remote support is on the other side of the spectrum and is therefore a proactive stance. Local actors have the power to decide on daily decision-making, whereas more general decisions and oversight remains with the international staff

Remote partnering is also a proactive stance. In this case, operational decision making is in the hand of the local partner, who receive support from international non-governmental organisations (INGO) or United Nations (UN) agencies and adequate capacity development

My thesis draws on research by Donini & Maxwell (2013) who describe remote management as different remote modalities which are utilised by humanitarian organisations in situations where they have limited or no access to the population in need. Access is constrained, either by the security situation or by political barriers due to COVID-19 such as travel limitations. This entails the withdrawal of international staff and a shift of responsibilities to local staff or local organisations, which is partly enabled by technological solutions. Additionally, remote management encompasses all different modalities of aid delivery that are remote, such as mentioned above. Moreover, this term is – according to Jackson & Zyck (2017) – the most widely recognised among practitioners. On top of that, they argue remote management must be understood as an adaptation; and is not considered within the sector as a possible modus operandi from the beginning.

2.2 Thematic origins of remote management

2.2.1 *Remote management and changing security situations*

The last two decades have seen a growing interest in remote management in both academic papers and reports by humanitarian organisations. The focus is on the security situation in a few conflict areas where humanitarian organisations are present (cf. Duffield, 2012; Kalkman, 2018). The reports often focus on Afghanistan, Iraq and Somalia, where there is a high presence of security incidences for aid workers (Stoddard et al., 2010; Zyck, 2012). With the access situation in Afghanistan and Somalia becoming very restricted for international staff, and an increasing shift towards remote management the discussion on the topic became more detailed after 2010 (Donini & Maxwell, 2013). In those operations, it is argued that due to the deteriorating security situation - meaning international humanitarian organisations and their staff being targeted - solutions that allow to remotely continue activities were developed. Therefore, the organisations withdrew their international staff from risky areas and moved them to safe places from which they could remotely manage the operations. Accordingly, responsibilities and implementation were shifted to local organisations and their staff (Stoddard et al., 2009, 2010; Zyck, 2012). A lot of the studies in this thematic areas are either case studies (cf. Donini & Maxwell, 2013; Hansen, 2008), or focus on the identification of lessons learned from the existing cases (Egeland et al., 2011; cf. Stoddard et al., 2009, 2010).

Another important point to consider is that while remote management is discussed in the context of highly volatile settings at the same time there is a debate in the literature about if humanitarian operations are facing a changing security situation and more risks. Indeed, Egeland et al. (2011) and Howe et al. (2015) caution that there is a development in the humanitarian sector, where there is a trend to intervene in volatile countries, potentially explaining the increase of security incidences. According to those authors, organisations shifted from avoiding risks to managing those through remote approaches and partnerships with local actors. This in line with Duffield (2001), who argues that aid interventions are increasingly utilised to govern the areas out the reach of western States remotely. Similarly, Donini & Maxwell (2013) argue that with the end of the cold war, the war on terrorism after 9/11 and the subsequent emergence of integrated missions (i.e. UN wide approaches to intervene in conflict areas), humanitarian organisations find themselves increasingly involved in highly politicised conflict situations such as Afghanistan, Iraq, Somalia and Syria. In fact, Syria was described as a specific case, as rather from shifting to remote management due to changing security situations, organisations have used this form of aid delivery from the

beginning and are actively implementing through local partners (Howe et al., 2015). Consequently, this form of engagement has received special attention and some authors even called this form of aid delivery “remote encouragement” (Hofman & Pérache, 2014). The difference in the case of Syria was that there was never a clear possibility of access for international humanitarian organisations, but rather they had to set up operations through local organisations.

Despite this academic discussion, there appears to be a consensus among the humanitarian organisations that their work has become more dangerous (Cunningham, 2017). Importantly, while critical voices, such as Duffield (2012), question this perception of humanitarian organisations that aid has become more dangerous, he also points out that if this perception remains, it is irrelevant whether aid has become more dangerous or not, as long as the humanitarian organisations act on their perception. Therefore, organisations increasingly use remote management solutions and they have become more normalised (Chaudhri et al., 2019). Besides, this form of aid delivery is often criticised for the transfer of risks.

Risk transfer

Remote management approaches in volatile situations are often based on the assumption that local actors face less security risks than international staff. However, this is a misconception (Stoddard et al., 2009). Rather than limiting risks, remote management transfer the risks from international staff to the local partner organizations and/or local staff (Collinson & Duffield, 2013). For instance, Howe et al. (2015) show that local staff faces extreme risks in cases where remote management is utilised. On top of that, they do not have the same support system as international staff, such as access to insurance. In fact, as a result of the widespread use of remote management, attacks on humanitarian workers shifted from international staff to local aid workers (Zyck, 2012). This transfer of risk has been criticised by a few authors, such as Collinson & Duffield (2013).

A critical perspective on this transfer of risk is provided by Fassin (2007), who describes humanitarianism as a politics of life. According to him, humanitarian operations are characterised by a presence of politics over lives; meaning it is the ones who hold the power who decide which lives to save, which lives to risk and who is to bear witness. In the context of risk transfer to local actors this means that the international organisations - which traditionally hold all the power - decide that their international staff cannot bear the risk and

therefore transfer it. The local on the other hand does not hold the power and consequently must bear the risk.

2.2.2 Remote management and technology

Importantly, remote management is not only the result of a changing security situation, but also this of technological advancements. For instance, Duffield (2016)) argues that the withdrawal of international staff from the field is enabled by digital information and communication technology. This view is also shared by Donini & Maxwell (2013) who identify a correlation between the increasing use of remote management and the availability of digital technologies such as phones and other remote solutions. Additionally, Kalkman (2018) argues that there is a clearly established link between the use of remote management and the widespread availability of technology.

Another important point is that by now mobile communication technologies are widespread and there is a trend towards global connectivity (Duffield, 2016; Sandvik et al., 2014). In fact, humanitarian organisations that were operating remotely reported using communication technologies in the form of phone-, internet- or satellite- based solutions to coordinate with staff and partner organisations in the field (Stoddard et al., 2010). Therefore, the increasing connectivity enables humanitarian organisations to innovate on those technologies and to resort to remote management approaches (Althea, 2015; Donini & Maxwell, 2013). For the most part, technology is framed or understood as an instrument to overcome issues of access by enabling remote management (Sandvik et al., 2014).

At the same time, it is also important that while there is this link to technology, remote management is not necessarily always technology based as it has been utilised in the past in settings without the necessary connectivity infrastructure. For instance, in the 1980s to 1990s during operations in Somalia and Afghanistan it was already rather common practice to reduce international staff in some areas deemed too dangerous or impossible to access those countries due to the cold war (Donini & Maxwell, 2013). Therefore, organisations worked through proxies, such as local actors while international staff could remain withdrawn from the field, and only occasionally visit the field (if at all). They received input from local actors through reports, analogue phone lines or through intermediaries. Nonetheless, this practice has received less attention during that time and therefore was less documented (Stoddard et al., 2010).

Beyond using digital communication technology to converse and coordinate with field staff, new technologies also allow for remote monitoring of activities. Without international staff on the ground, the organisations needed to find new ways to triangulate information and oversee activities (Chaudhri et al., 2019). In fact, Howe et al. (2015) reported that remote management comes with compromises especially in the areas of reporting and monitoring & evaluation (M&E) requirements. As possible solutions remote sensing and geo tagging of pictures has also been utilised. Beyond monitoring there have also been limited uses of telemedicine and eLearning, trying to provide remote services instead of physical activities (Howe et al., 2015; Jackson & Zyck, 2017). As a consequence of those compromises to monitoring of operations, both upwards accountability to the donor and downwards accountability to the beneficiaries are hindered. This is where technology can provide possible solutions. For instance, to enable accountability to refugees, complaint hotlines and automatic calling of beneficiaries, which allow for two-way communication between the humanitarian organisations and the recipients of aid, have been used (Belliveau, 2016). To clarify, two-way communication refers to the possibility of the receivers of aid to talk directly to the humanitarian organisations, whereas one-way communication would be the humanitarian organisations only ‘speaking at’ the beneficiaries. To explain, radio is a clear example of one-way communication, whereas a phone call allows communication both ways. Additionally, ‘speaking at’ stresses that the speaker focuses on communicating a message, not about if and how it is received.

Due to the potential and growing availability of technologies, those have been readily adopted by the humanitarian sector. However, some criticism on this move has emerged. Donini & Maxwell (2013) and Duffield (2013, 2016) speak about cyber or digital humanitarianism, which results in a growing distance or remoteness between the giver and receiver of aid. According to Aarvik (2020), digital humanitarianism refers to the fact that in emergencies the affected populations and the humanitarian organisations increasingly rely on digital communication and information technology. It is difficult to draw a line between the use of humanitarian technology and where digital humanitarianism starts, but a critical reflection is needed (Aarvik, 2020). This is supported by Duffield (2016), who argues that the optimism of technology advocates citing the humanitarian imperative overrides critical voices on the use of technology in the sector. Accordingly, Sandvik et al. (2014) argue that the widespread use of technology in humanitarian settings is in need for a critical reflection asking about the consequences for the humanitarian field from adopting this technology. They call for critical research in to this dynamic to investigate the use of technology between the positions of

digital humanitarianism critics and tech advocates, which would allow for a meaningful engagement. For Sandvik (2017) this means that, while there is a growing body of critical literature on the use of technology, the entire dynamic of innovating the field increasingly needs additional research.

Another important point is, that the information and communication technology used for remote management is mostly owned by the private tech sector. This means so-called new actors are brought in to provide their technical fixes. However, public-private partnerships between humanitarian organisations and new actors are not a new occurrence as they have become more prominent in the sector since the 1990s already (Duffield, 2013; Sandvik et al., 2014). The inclusion of private actors in the field has started in the past as funders of aid, but has increasingly shifted to the provision of services such as telecommunications, technological innovation and physical goods (Maietta et al., 2017). Despite this, the influx of new actors and their impact on the work of humanitarians remains an area where more research is necessary. For instance, it is unclear how organisations can and should ethically engage with those ('Q&A', 2020; Sandvik et al., 2014). Moreover, how these new actors and their technologies impact the field needs more attention. Notably, it even changes what is seen as a resource in humanitarian settings, such as understanding connectivity as a form of aid delivery (Sandvik et al., 2014). For the purpose of tracking this influx of new actors and in turn be able to analyse the consequences of their technologies, Jacobsen & Fast (2019) suggest in addition to looking at who shows up at a humanitarian crisis, to also look at what technologies show up.

Remoteness

One point that is highly criticised in the literature around the use of technology for remote management is the growing distance or remoteness it creates. For instance, Duffield (2012) criticises the retreat of international decision makers into cyber bunkers and aid compounds, while overseeing operations in areas deemed too insecure for physical visits. Donini & Maxwell (2013) argue that the face-to-face approach that used to be the core of humanitarianism is increasingly replaced by a face-to-screen relationship. Accordingly, Sandvik et al. (2014) reason that the use of technology increasingly influences and changes the relationship between the giver and receiver of aid. Likewise, Duffield (2016) describes this as the withdrawal of international staff, which leads to a growing distance; meaning digital technologies are in fact distancing technologies. The consequence of this is that use of

remote management leads to remoteness from the field, which in turn leads to humanitarian programming based on generalized template approaches that lack any contextual knowledge (Fradejas-García, 2019). Consequently, the dynamic between the different levels of aid actors and beneficiaries has changed and the distance of the international staff hinders a deeper understanding of the people they aim to support (Collinson & Duffield, 2013; Dijkzeul & Sandvik, 2019). Adding another aspect to that, Stoddard et al. (2010) reported that coordination between the international and the local staff becomes hindered by language barriers that are more prominent when operating remotely.

2.2.3 Remote management and localisation

Lately, a strand of literature emerged which focuses on remote management and its relation to the localisation agenda. However, this is not completely new in the literature. For instance, Stoddard et al. (2010) have already established the importance of partnership frameworks for successful remote management. Their research also stressed that remote management differs in its nature depending on the extent decision-making shifted from international staff to local field staff. Indeed, the four modalities of remote management mentioned prior in 2.1 represent this shift. The modalities on the rather reactive spectrum (remote control, remote delegation) are the arrangements where organisations directly implement when the situation allows for it, whereas the modalities on the proactive spectrum (remote support, remote partnership) represent the INGOs more in the position of an intermediary. This intermediary role is the consequence of a wider transformation in the humanitarian sector. The humanitarian response is increasingly localised, meaning increased ownership by the local actors. Consequently, the role of international organisations is shifting away from direct implementation and rather becoming an intermediary between the donor and the local actors (Howe et al., 2015). Therefore, some authors have started to analyse the effect of remote management on the localisation agenda. For example, Elkahlout & Elgibali (2020) establish the term “remotely managed localised humanitarian action”. In their research, they use the case of Syria to establish that remote management can also be beneficial towards greater localisation. Additionally, trust was identified as a key component in the partnerships between INGOs and local actors that are beneficial to the localisation agenda by allowing the shift of responsibility and power to the local (Chaudhri et al., 2019; Howe et al., 2015)

In contrast, Duclos et al. (2019) are critical of presenting remote management as beneficial to the localisation agenda. They argue that localisation is supposed to challenge the power that INGOs currently have in the humanitarian system, but remote management bears the risk of reinforcing it. This is in line, with critical voices such as Duffield (2016) who argues that using local staff and partners that are remotely managed reinforces the existing power relations. As pointed out by Emmens & Clayton (2017), there is an overlap where remote management and the localisation agenda can learn from each other. Even so, this is a new and recent strand of research and requires further analysis.

2.3 Technology usage in pandemics

A growing body of literature is emerging that discusses the potential and risks of digital communication technology, and the technologies used by humanitarian organisations amidst pandemics. Regardless, as pointed out by Wilson & Jumbert (2018), the role technology plays amidst pandemics has received limited attention. These two authors used a report by Fast & Waugaman (2016) as a starting point for building a conceptual framework on those technologies. They recategorized the findings from that report on the use of technology amidst the Ebola pandemic in West Africa in 2013 into three distinct categories. This way they develop their own framework on communication technologies used amidst pandemics and further refined it through triangulation with other sources. The resulting framework is the one I resort to in this research to further distinguish the practices of remote management. Here, technology is an instrument that allows for digital communication across distance. However, I argue that the purpose of the communication distinguishes the practice. To illustrate, an international aid worker passes on a message via email to the local partner that a shipment of goods is arriving tomorrow and that someone will have to pick those up. This message serves therefore the purpose to coordinate that someone will pick up the goods. Thus, in this case the practice of remote management is coordination. The details of this framework I describe, after explaining the rationale behind it.

The rationale behind this is that the prior review of the literature clearly showcases a link between technology in the form of digital communication and remote management. Therefore, a framework developed out of those technologies amidst pandemics provides a starting point for this research. However, as pointed out earlier there have been instances of remote management before the widespread availability of digital communication technology. Then again, those still relied on the passing on of information in different forms. Therefore, I frame communication as the instrumental core enabling remote management in this thesis. Additionally, I extended the framework to include low and no tech solutions, as they still rely on communication practices that serve a purpose.

2.4 Framework of practices

Wilson & Jumbert (2018) established three different categories of technology grounded in the purpose they are used for. Those are (1) coordination, (2) diagnostics and (3) risk communication. They have been slightly adapted for this research. Those changes are also described. Additionally, out of the empirical findings of this research a fourth category (i.e. (4) remote activities) was added to this framework.

- (1) **Coordination:** Communication technologies that are utilised for the purpose of coordination among the different actors that are present in the pandemic response. Through this, roles and responsibilities are coordinated to enable an efficient response without overlap of activities. While Wilson & Jumbert (2018) mainly relate this category to the coordination between different organisations, this research also includes coordination efforts within organisation.
- (2) **Diagnostics:** Communication technologies that enable diagnostics, meaning they can collect information systematically and process it in some instances even automatically about the pandemic disease such as the spread. For this category, this research also includes diagnostics that go beyond tracking the virus and include diagnostic efforts for monitoring of other humanitarian needs, including monitoring and evaluating of humanitarian programming. Through those efforts, the organisations are then able to adjust their focus and respond to new dynamics.
- (3) **Risk communication:** Communication technologies that allow for communicating risks and recommendations to the affected populations. For this research, risk communication is expanded to also include the sharing of other relevant information by humanitarian actors with the population at risk, such as changes to programming or other measures to hinder the spread of the disease. This might include participatory approaches – in other words two-way communication practices – such as social media and calling campaigns. The advantage of those solutions is that next to communication risks they also allow for diagnostics due to the responses by the affected populations; therefore creating a small overlap with the diagnostics category (Wilson & Jumbert, 2018).
- (4) **Remote activities:** This category does not stem from the cited article. It emerged out of the empirical findings of this study. It refers to communication technology that was utilised in the response to replace traditionally physical activities. It encompasses not only communication technologies, but also low and no-tech solutions. Like risk communication, it focuses on communication with the affected population, however it goes beyond the communication of risks. It rather aims to provide a service remotely. For instance, physical education is replaced by communication technologies, protection case workers communicate via phones and only when necessary, intervene with physical presence, and lawyers assisting in housing, land and property (HLP) rights via a hotline.

2.5 Research gap and contribution

In this chapter I showed that the literature is based on a few case studies (cf. Althea, 2015). From those cases - emerging from the field level - literature that focuses on good practices and lessons learned has been produced (cf. Zyck, 2012). A few authors, such as Stoddard et al. (2010) also argued that there is a lack of operational guidance and policy documents on the topic. Additionally, authors such as Duffield (2013, 2016) and Sandvik et al. (2014), bring in an analytical sociological perspective, showcasing the social consequences of remote management, such as remoteness. Parallel, there is a growing body of academic literature that meaningfully engages with the widespread use of information and communication technology, including the various concern and consequences of this such as the unclear role of private tech actors to provide these technological solutions to access populations in need (Jacobsen & Fast, 2019). Moreover, a clear link between technology and remote management was established (Kalkman, 2018). On technology usage in the humanitarian sector, Sandvik et al. (2014) showed that it is necessary to study how new technologies are introduced and how they impact the work of humanitarian organisations.

I have identified a research gap, consisting of two parts. First, utilisation of remote management appears to be widespread while the literature on the topic remains scarce. There are case studies and publications by or for humanitarian organisations; so called grey literature, though peer reviewed articles remain scant (Chaudhri et al., 2019). Therefore, the literature remains descriptive, further focusing on establishing definitions, creating guidance, documentation and describing good practices. Second, the focus of the literature is clearly on the security and risk management component of the concept. Accordingly, a systematic review by Chaudhri et al. (2019), suggests that the term remote management is not utilised in non-volatile settings. Also, this research could not identify any examples of such a study prior to the current pandemic.

Returning to the context of this research, during the recent COVID-19 pandemic technological solutions to remote management have received increased attention as humanitarian organisations were forced to adapt their way of working due to travel and access constraints. Moreover, the focus shifted on the role local actors can play in the delivery of aid. Therefore, to approach this research gap, I apply the concept and past research on remote management from conflict settings to a pandemic context. Additionally, this study provides a sociological analysis of the wider implications of those emerging remote management

practices to the digitalisation and the localisation of the sector. Importantly, the framework of practices I derived and adapted from Wilson & Jumbert (2018) enables me to distinguish different practices. In turn, this allows me to contribute to the literature on remote management by showcasing the use of this framework and moves my contribution away from a purely further conceptualisation of the concept in a new context towards an addition that allows a deeper understanding of it. The methodological approach utilised to derive the necessary data for this research is described in the next chapter.

3 Methodology

3.1 Research Design

This study is a qualitative, exploratory study into remote management practices and the effects it has on the field. This design enabled me to gather a holistic understanding of the context, the Rohingya Refugee Response in Cox's Bazar Bangladesh. The study itself was not designed very rigid in its approach and allowed for the flexibility to adjust to the field. In that sense it allowed me to follow-up new leads I came across during my research, such as the availability and emergence of a lot of reports by the humanitarian organisations. Additionally, the focus of the research only evolved over time. This means at the beginning of this research, I was conducting the first interviews to identify a sector of the response that would be the most interesting. However, it became clear that limiting myself to a specific sector would neither allow for a holistic picture, nor would it be a feasible approach. This is because, many organisations are present across multiple sector and adaptation to COVID-19 have been designed across sectors.

Additionally, the choice of this study design is also related to the nature of the research questions. The how questions ask for underlying explanations. To be able to answer it, qualitative research allows the study of the process that led to the emergence of remote management practices with all its details, rather than just the outcomes. Therefore, providing the possibility to understand the social processes that occurred. The choice of research question allowed me to look at remote management from a broad perspective.

3.2 Research Site

I have purposely selected the Rohingya Refugee Response in the Kutupalong refugee camps. The purpose was to conduct the study in a setting where humanitarian organisations employ remote management practices as a response to the pandemic. As the study done by Truelove et al. (2020) has claimed that there was and still is a very high probability of the spread of the virus among the Rohingya population. When designing this research in September 2020, only limited information about the COVID-19 was known, thus at that point it was still unclear how the pandemic would progress. Still, early inquiries into this response revealed that the humanitarian organisations reacted to this high risk by reducing their footprint and switching to a remote management modality. Moreover, the pandemic arrived in the camps. With these two processes taking place, the research setting allowed for the inquiry of remote management practices. In essence, by selecting this site for the research, it was possible to

gather data in the appropriate setting, connected to the events around the pandemic and where processes of remote management were utilised.

Another aspect of my choice was the high level of vulnerability of the Rohingya. Humanitarian organisations themselves consider the vulnerability of the population when deciding whether to stop their help to the population or to continue activities remotely with a possible reduction of quality and monitoring (Stoddard et al., 2010). In this response it was necessary to continue and maintain operations; especially considering that the Rohingya completely rely on humanitarian aid.

Site description

Around 869.000 Rohingya are living in highly congested refugee camps in Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh in 2020 (IOM, 2020g). They are distributed across 34 camps, with nearly 600.000 of them located in the Kutupalong Refugee camp plus expansion site (ISCG, n.d.). The Rohingya fled from Rakhine State, Myanmar to Bangladesh in 2017 after violence broke out (UNICEF, 2021b). Since then, they are living in these camps, which are among the most densely populated places on this planet and some of the most congested camps (WV Bangladesh, 2020). They are completely reliant on the help of humanitarian organisations, who are working there together as the Rohingya Refugee Response (ISCG, 2020a).

On May 14 the first case of COVID-19 was confirmed among the refugee population (UNHCR, 2020a). Since then 360 cases among refugees were reported for the year 2020 (UNHCR, 2021). However, the actual number of infections is expected to be much higher, as testing is severely limited (ISCG, ACAPS, et al., 2020). For the year 2020, there were severe lockdowns from April until November, heavily limiting activities by humanitarian organisations in the camp (UNHCR, n.d.).

3.3 Data collection

3.3.1 Methods

I used semi-structured interviews as a method of data collection. Those type of interviews allow respondents to express their insights more freely, especially when paired with open questions. Importantly, they allow the researcher to follow up on answers or new leads. Additionally, by following an interview guide, the researchers ensures that all important topics are covered and the interviews are comparable to each other (Bernard, 2017). The big advantage of this method for interviews is that it made sure I would not miss out on any

important topics during the interview, while at the same time allowing the respondents to bring up topics, they felt are important, and allowing them to expand on important topics. In turn, this resulted in a richness of data, including important contextual knowledge and additional information. Moreover, this way respondents were able to share the information on the topics they were knowledgeable about, and no interview time was wasted on topics that were not relevant to those individuals. Another important advantage of semi-structured interviews is that they allow for adaptations when the research reveals new topics and findings. To confirm findings from former interviews, I brought those up with new respondents to confirm, expand or discuss those in more details. Moreover, interview and the topics discussed could be adjusted over time, making the questions more relevant for the context.

I decided to collect the data for this research via interviews for four distinct reasons. First, the data collection took place parallel to the COVID-19 pandemic. This means, there are no historical records of the events yet and the adaptations by the humanitarian community were happening at the same time as my research. Therefore, the people within the organisations who were involved in these adaptations and in cases even decided on those were the only ones knowledgeable about the underlying reasons and important details. Second, this research goes beyond identifying practices. Indeed, it asks wider questions that want to understand the complex social processes that occur when organisations had to adapt to a global crisis. Thus, the humanitarian workers who were forced to adapt their work and shift to remote management can provide the necessary insights and reflections of this change. This form of information, I would not be able to find anywhere else. Third, fieldwork was not possible at this time; meaning physically visiting the refugee camps would be impossible, further limiting the possibilities of data collection. Fourth, the individuals I wanted to interview were working in a humanitarian situation, that was constantly evolving. This meant their time was precious and my interviews were taking time away from these practitioners. Therefore, this form of interviews allowed for a systematic collection of data; and interview guides could be adjusted to solely focus on the type of information I could not find from any other source. I paid particularly strong attention to make my interviews as focused as possible on the specific respondent's expertise as to maximise the use of the valuable interview time.

The semi-structured interviews were conducted with the help of an interview guide. This guide contained all the important topics to be covered during the interviews. Additionally, it contained formulated probing questions to steer the interview in the desired direction.

Importantly, I did not ask my research questions to the respondents directly. Therefore, questions were designed to reveal the desired information that would allow after analysis to answer the research question (Maxwell, 2012). This was especially important in this research, as organisations and respondents have different understandings and definitions on remote management⁴. Next to interviews, reports published by the humanitarian organisations themselves were utilised as a source of information. They provided complementary information, such as additional facts and figures, background information, and in some cases additional insights beyond the interviews.

3.3.2 Sampling

For this study eight participants were sampled purposely. A list of the interviews and additional details can be found in the Appendix. The informants were chosen to obtain information on a very specific topic and therefore the right experts were needed (Bernard, 2017). These selected participants acted as key informants to this study. A small sample size was sufficient for this research, as remote management practices were very widespread.

Additionally, the participants had to fit specific criteria. Therefore, the individuals had to work for a humanitarian organisation working in the Rohingya Refugee Camps. On top of that, they had to utilise remote management practices in their response. Therefore, I sampled individuals in senior positions that were either remotely managing a team from outside the country, outside the camp or were managing the on-site response, while receiving inputs remotely from their international partner organisation or headquarters. The type of organisation my respondents came from was less important. This meant, I included the UN agencies, INGOs, national offices of INGOs and local organisations that were implementing on behalf of an INGO.

3.3.3 Collection of data

Interviews

The data collection process took place from November 2020 until the last interview on the 22.06.2021. Prior to data collection, an interview guide was developed. This guide was tested and revised with a peer to make certain that questions did probe for the desired responses and

⁴ Chapter 2 showcased that there are different definitions present in the literature and subsequently the respondents have also a different understanding of the concept.

were clearly phrased. Next, the process of data collection commenced. In a first step, an inventory was made on which organisations were present in the Rohingya camps. This information stems from a list maintained by the response where all humanitarian organisations report in what camps they conduct which activities (cf. ISCG, 2020b). Using the list, I identified the actors in charge of the response within the organisations and tried to contact those directly. If this was not possible, I reached out with a more general inquiry to the organisation to connect me to the right department. In total, around 300 individual E-Mail addresses were contacted. It is important to mention that most of these inquiries did not result in a response or citing capacity limitations an interview was not possible.

Interviews with respondents were conducted using digital communication tools such as Skype, MS Teams and Zoom. At the start of the interview, the participants were shortly informed about the context and the goals of this research., They were also informed that they and their organisation would remain anonymous. Next, they were asked if they consent to this interview and consent to an audio recording. Once this was established, audio was recorded. After, the interviews were transcribed in a non-verbatim manner. Meaning, other forms of information, such as pauses, sighs etc were not included in the transcripts (‘Transcription’, 2018).

Reports

Simultaneously, reports from the response describing practices of remote management were collected and analysed. For this purpose, two databases were searched: the official website of the Rohingya Refugee Response⁵ and Reliefweb operated by United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA)⁶. This allowed for a systematic collection of reports, that were published by the organisations present in the field. Importantly, this search did not limit itself to remote management as a search string, as the literature review revealed that organisations differ in their terminology. To circumvent this and identify the right reports, the term ‘remote’ was used, as results such as remote control, remote programming etc. would then also be identified. Importantly, the search was limited to the timeframe 01.2020 until 14.4.2021. In total, 130 reports were collected this way.

⁵ <https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/en/operations/bangladesh> [Last accessed: 16.10.2021]

⁶ <https://reliefweb.int/> [Last accessed;16.10.2021]

3.4 Data analysis

After transcription of the interviews, I analysed those in a strategic and rigorous coding process. Coding refers to the assigning of nominal variables to text and followed the idea from codes to common themes to the final emergence of a category (Bernard, 2017; Miles et al., 2014). I utilised the qualitative data analysis tool Atlas.ti for this process. It is important to mention that this process was not strictly linear and procedural. Rather it was a very interactive and iterative process, meaning based on new findings I made constant adjustments to my coding. Especially, reflecting and the writing of analytical methods added depth to this rigorous process and allowed me to gain an in-depth understanding of the data (Fereday & Muir-Cochrane, 2006).

To ensure my data analysis is embedded and connected to the available literature, I coded the data deductively through a codebook (Bernard, 2017). This codebook I created based on my review of the literature and conceptual framework. A starting point for further distinguishing practices of remote management was the framework I discussed in the previous chapter, which allows to categorize practices based on the objective of the communication (i.e. for the objective of coordination, diagnostics, risk communication and remote activities). Therefore, provisional codes were applied to data segments. However, to not confine my findings with this codebook, I created new codes when they emerged inductively – such as the fourth category of practices of remote management which I named remote activities. This approach is called a hybrid-approach, which ensures that my findings relate to the pre-existing literature but are not limited by it. This allows for a rigorous way of analysing the data (Fereday & Muir-Cochrane, 2006).

Once I applied my codes to the data segments, I analysed the codes for patterns and similarities that connected those together through an iterative process, furthering my understanding of the data until I arrived at different categories of codes, which include themes, causes, relationships and theoretical constructs (Miles et al., 2014; Saldaña, 2016). Afterwards, I looked for connections and relationships between my categories. This was achieved by writing analytical memos of my thought process. It was necessary to establish relationships between categories, as this research aims for explanations that rely on establishing connections between them to be able to answer my research questions (Miles & Huberman, 1994 as cited in Bernard, 2017).

To address questions of validity of findings, the data was analysed rigorously as described above. Additionally, to ensure the quality of the data the findings from interviews were triangulated (Miles et al., 2014). The research was systematically designed to allow for triangulation by using the collected reports from the humanitarian organisations to check against the information obtained from the interviews. On top of that, I used feedback by interviewees to refine findings. This means that through constant analysis of my interviews, I identified preliminary findings, which I would validate in subsequent interviews.

3.5 Limitations

The findings are based on only eight interviews, which is a limitation itself considering the size of the response and the number of organisations involved. This means that I had a rather low basis of information to triangulate data during my analysis. A higher participation rate would therefore clearly increase the validity of my findings. Likewise, this low amount of interviews results in a high selection bias. There is a risk that the answers from the participants portray a very skewed picture on remote management, on new actors and the role of local actors, (Bernard, 2017). Therefore, the research is designed to also incorporate reports to limit this threat to validity. As the reports are not limited to the interviewed organisations other important findings from the overall humanitarian response were captured this way.

Another limitation of this research is the absence of local actors. The interviewees, except for one, are all international humanitarian organisations. Additionally, the reports collected are also limited to international organisations. The reason for this could be that the local organisations don't publish, publish in different databases, or publish in a different language than English. For the interviews, I have talked to one local actor, however the participants organisation is part of a global movement and therefore used to working with INGOs. I have not been able to conduct an interview with one of the many local organisations, that are the implementing partners of INGOs or implement themselves. Their answers could show how and to what extent local actors resort to remote management, and especially their views on how it influences the relationship between them and the international organisations.

A third limitation is concerning my inquiry into technology and new actors. Except for one, interviews were conducted with different levels of managers who worked remotely. However, none of those was very knowledgeable on new actors, data protection, and technology. Clearly, the one interview I conducted with an expert of this field, revealed way more concise answer. Therefore, the findings in relation to this remain limited.

3.6 Reflection

While this chapter seems like a linear, step-by step description of the research without mentioning hurdles, it is important to mention that there were also issues in the process around data collection. These issues influenced the overall research in the form of data, impacted design choices and further influenced the data analysis. For this reason, it is important to offer a critical reflection on the research process for complete transparency.

The research site is not static, meaning the Rohingya Refugee Response is constantly evolving and changing. There is a dynamic present of constant updates and changes, due to the pandemic, but also due to other threats to the Rohingya. This influences the programming of the humanitarian organisations. The dynamic evolvments made it very challenging to zoom in and to get a holistic picture.

Moreover, finding participants for interviews was a challenge. Interviews requests were regularly denied citing capacity restrictions and a lack of time. Interviewees also mentioned that the capacity of the organisations was strained, and they had to work longer since the start of the pandemic. The humanitarian organisations in this response seem to have to constantly adjust to the dynamic changes that are happening, and their capacities are limited. Conducting research in an on-going humanitarian crisis in that sense takes additional time away from the participants. It might also reflect that it is difficult for organisations to keep up with those evolvments.

At last, during the early stages of data collection, it became apparent that there is limited mentioning of remote management practices in the reports and overall, the practices utilised in this case are limited. The research later revealed that this was due to a set of limitations, often imposed by the government of Bangladesh. However, while there are limitations in place, which I present in detail in 4.3, this did not stop humanitarian organisations to resort to remote management. On the contrary, this finding shows how the contextual environment of a humanitarian response impacts the ways organisations operate. This means, in any refugee crisis the organisations need to conduct programming within the rules and regulations of the local government. Thus, these limitations add another aspect to my findings and explain why in this context, a complete technological remote management response is neither feasible nor possible. The findings of my study in relation to this I will showcase in the next chapter.

4 Practices of remote management

The previous chapter described how the data was obtained through interviews, reports and subsequently analysed. This chapter describes the empirical findings of my research. It presents the practices of remote management in relation to my first research question: *How did remote management affect the practices of aid delivery in Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh amidst the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020?* The chapter is divided in four parts. First, the causes that forced humanitarian organisations to resort to remote management are described. Second, the different practices are explained in detail. Third, I showcase the limitations to remote management that the humanitarian organisations faced. Fourth, findings are presented that relate to the quality of programming using remote management.

4.1 Causes of remote management practices

On March 24, 2020, the Repatriation Commissioner (RRRC) on behalf of the government of Bangladesh issued a directive that would limit services to refugees in the camp. The goal of these measures was to limit the social contacts and consequently the spread of the Corona virus. To achieve this, the humanitarian footprint in the camp was reduced by limiting access for humanitarian staff. In addition, services were terminated, activities in the camp reduced and public facilities were closed (RRRC, n.d.). To achieve this, the government declared that there will be a distinction between services it declares essential and that can continue and non-essential services that must come to a complete stop. Importantly, which services are considered essential, and which not was decided by the government of Bangladesh and defined in a government circular (Office of the Refugee Relief and Repatriation Commissioner, 2020)

It is also important to mention that the categorisation changed over time, due to advocacy by the humanitarian community. It appears that the view of the government and the humanitarians differed as what is essential and not in this situation. For instance, the government rules and regulations regarding a ban on initial 3/4G in the camp have hampered the possibilities of providing services remotely and have been lifted since then according to my respondents. Similar, protection services was also considered non critical for some time (RRRC, 2020), which severely hampered measures in that regard (ACAPS, 2020b) At last, education is the one sector that was declared non-essential since the beginning (Pillai & Zivera, n.d.). Overall, what is declared an essential and non-essential service appears to be the

product of negotiations between the humanitarian community and the government who have different opinions and consequently, it has changed over time apart from the education sector.

Turning back to the regulations in 2020. The first initial lockdown of 2020 was extended repeatedly and was followed at times where more or less activities have been permitted, depending on the pandemic situation in Bangladesh (UNHCR, n.d.). Still, for the entire year learning spaces have remained shut and education has been halted (Pillai & Zivera, n.d.). During these different periods of lockdowns, other events have also impacted the camps, such as flooding and fires. Additionally, disaster preparedness measures have also been negatively impacted by the restrictions; therefore increasing the risk of natural hazards impacting the camps (ACAPS, 2020b).

For these reasons, the restrictions imposed affected the humanitarian response in the camp. However, the interviews revealed that organisations were affected by this differently. For activities that were deemed as essential it meant a reduction of staff presence and changes to the implementation according to governmental regulations, while still providing this service to the Rohingya. For non-essential activities this meant that activities had to be stopped completely. Consequently, alternative modalities were explored and implemented when possible. In fact, two respondents who worked in a non-essential sector referred to education as the one activity that has been restricted since the beginning of the pandemic and has been for the entire year of 2020.

Because of the pandemic and the above-described governmental restrictions, humanitarian organisations faced challenges regarding access to the camp and had to make adaptations to their programming. Those I will show in more detail next.

Access

There are two dimensions of access: access to the country and access to the camp. Access to the country refers to travel limitations, obtaining visas and planning of COVID-19 tests to be allowed to enter the country. However, this form of access was only relevant for international organisation who wanted to use expatriate staff that was out of the country prior to the lockdown. Even so, organisations facing access issues reported that it became a more complicated and lengthier process, but not an impossibility. Despite that, one organisation mentioned that their expatriate country coordinator had to remotely manage the operations for half a year from outside the country due to not being able to receive a visa earlier (Interview

4). Be that as it may, the expatriate staff who stayed throughout the pandemic was not forced to leave the country if their visas permitted. Still, two other organisations mentioned that a lot of their international staff decided to leave Bangladesh during the pandemic to remotely manage the operations from their home country. One respondent stressed that “*people got on planes and they left and some of us stayed, and then they said, oh, don't worry, we're going to Skype you*” (Interview 6). Accordingly, due to staff not being present in the country, remote management practices were implemented or newly developed.

Another significant aspect of access is access to the camp, which became more restricted with the new measures. Consequently, staff moving to camp needed special permits, registrations, and their vehicles needed specific stickers. Besides, this was only possible for staff implementing essential activities. Therefore, these measures led to a drastic reduction of the humanitarian footprint to around 20% of pre pandemic levels (ISCG, n.d.). Another effect of this policy was that access to the camp was mainly for national staff and only very few foreigners were granted access. Nonetheless, participants mentioned that there were some loopholes for staff involved with non-essential services to access the camp. Two of my respondents indicated that they were able to move strategically into the camp at times using vehicles from essential staff. In fact, the strictness of the measures fluctuated with the situation of the pandemic, meaning that at times access restrictions were less strict. Finally, these two dimensions of access restrictions meant, that humanitarian organisations had to adapt their programming.

Adaptations

Adaptations to programming were necessary for all participating organisations. These adaptations happened on the one hand due to constraints such as service restrictions and limited access, but on the other hand also due to the pandemic itself. In fact, COVID-19 changed the overall response as priorities and goals shifted towards programming around the pandemic (ISCG, 2020a). This reprioritisation led among others to changes in the overall response. Likewise, one respondent mentioned that “*the focus very much shifted away from anything else. And it was all on COVID and everything you did was COVID oriented*” (Interview 6). For example, it became a priority to raise awareness with the Rohingya about COVID-19 and to communicate changes to service provisions. To illustrate, a respondent mentioned that for them working in the health sector, they would communicate information about COVID-19 during household visits, but also mention that the Rohingya can and should

still access their essential health services - if necessary – despite the order to stay at home as much possible.

Finally, besides programming adaptations and a reprioritisation of programming, there was a move to using digital communication tools to replace physical meetings and to adhere to physical meeting restrictions. Therefore, these adaptations led to the emergence of remote management practices across the response and are discussed in detail in the next section.

4.2 The different practices of remote management

There are four different practices the humanitarian organisations adapted to continue their work during the pandemic. First, to reduce face to face meetings, and cope with the access restrictions different digital communication tools were utilised. Those tools enabled practices to coordinate the response remotely and are described under **coordination**. Second, digital communication technology enabled practices for remote diagnostics and monitoring of activities within the response, which are discussed under **diagnostics**. Third, outreach and awareness raising - described under **risk communication** - became an important activity for organisations. Fourth, for some activities it was possible to provide them remotely. The remote provision of activities is described under **remote activities**.

4.2.1 Coordination

The practice of coordination refers to all processes that are used to allocate roles and responsibilities within the response (Wilson & Jumbert, 2018). For coordination, all organisations interviewed have resorted to remote management on four different levels

The first level where practices of coordination take place was mentioned only by the international organisations. Those coordinated their response between their head offices, outside of Bangladesh, and their Cox's Bazar offices. Namely, the head office often in form of a regional manager oversaw programming design. Likewise, the head of Cox's Bazar office received this way the necessary instructions for the response. Specifically, the more general changes to programming were communicated on this level such as necessary changes of priority due to the pandemic.

The second level was mentioned by the participants who were the heads of Cox's bazar offices or in charge of the Rohingya Refugee Response. Importantly, this group consists of mainly expatriates except for one Bangladeshi national who was the head of a local

organisation. These respondents used remote management practices to coordinate with their field or implementing staff going to the camps, which were mostly made up of national staff. This form of communication used to take place in the office, but because of COVID-19 restrictions moved to digital communication technology. Coordinating on this level served the purpose of communicating changes to programming, new guidelines on implementation and debriefing field staff to inform future actions. In some cases, the head of Cox's Bazar office was not always present in the country and managed their team in Bangladesh remotely from outside the country.

The third level was reported by four organisations working with Rohingya volunteers. Prior to the pandemic, communication with volunteers would happen regularly when national and international staff would visit the camps. With access constraints, those meetings became restricted and were replaced with digital tools. The goal of those exchanges was to coordinate activities of the volunteers, disperse important information and to debrief them. Moreover, in some instances additional training was conducted digitally.

The fourth level mentioned during the interviews is the interagency or sectoral level of communication, where all meetings moved to digital conferencing tools. Sector and interagency events would take place online. Those meetings have the purpose to spread information about the sector and new developments. Moreover, to facilitate the interagency level there is a central website⁷ where implementing organisations share their updates, reports, and activities with each other. Accordingly, this can help organisations in adapting their programming and to access shared data. For the coordination of activities across the response it was important to know who does what where at all times and the amount of data shared via there increased during the pandemic (NetHope, 2020). An interesting finding is that respondents mentioned that conducting sectoral meetings virtually allowed more organisations and people to join those meetings than before, especially local actors.

In short, digital communication tools enabled humanitarian organisations to coordinate their response on four different levels. Respondents mentioned that their organisations were well prepared for this change by having prior invested in the necessary technology. Additionally, organisations working through a local partner or head office staff were already working this

⁷ <https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/en/operations/bangladesh> [Last accessed: 15.10.2021]

way before the pandemic. Some respondents mentioned that communication at times was hindered by not being in the same context as the local staff or partner. The tools utilised are both programs for internet conferencing and remote teamwork, applications for smartphones phones or phone calls using cellular technology. In chapter 5.1, I describe in detail the tools and the actors behind those solutions.

4.2.2 Diagnostics

The practice of diagnostics refers to all forms of remote management that are used for diagnostics and M&E (Wilson & Jumbert, 2018). The area of diagnostics has not been mentioned frequently during interviews. Further inquiry revealed that the focus of the respondents was on the implementation of activities. Some interviewees mentioned their longstanding partnership with their implementing organisations and are confident in their work during this pandemic, therefore allowing them to opt for less oversight and monitoring. This finding I showcase in more detail in 5.2.

While mentioned rarely these practices are still present in the response and some organisations have mentioned the use of available information resources to inform their programming. With the emergence of the pandemic and the subsequent restrictions, there was no longer a possibility for large face to face data collection. Nonetheless, the overall response needed data to make evidence-based decisions on programming (Holt et al., 2020). For this reason, needs assessments were necessary. To conduct those digital communication technologies - among others – were utilised. I identified three different types of remote management practices for the purpose of diagnostics and monitoring.

First, data was collected by mobile phone interviews for needs assessment and monitoring of activities. Refugees were contacted by mobile phone for interviews. Importantly, there is no centralised and extensive data base of phone numbers. Therefore, organisations had to limit this to known numbers from past programming. However, these data bases have been described as unrepresentable and the privacy of respondents could also not be guaranteed (Holt et al., 2020). For instance, this form of data collection was used to assess the needs of the Rohingya and to monitor the distribution of goods. (UNHCR, 2020c; WV Bangladesh, 2020)

Second, small scale data was collected through essential programming staff. Next to their normal activities, essential staff conducted qualitative interviews with key informants.

Moreover, this form of data collection was also used to track rumours and trends in the camp (Holt et al., 2020).

Third, refugees were used as researchers. On the one hand, these were Rohingya volunteers that have been trained on data collection within the camp. For example, the Communication with Communities (CWC) Unit has utilised Rohingya volunteers to conduct interviews during household visits. These interviews allowed them to monitor the experiences of the refugees during the service restrictions and allowed the reporting of apparent problems they encountered.

On the other hand, digital solutions have also been used. For instance, a remote SMS monitoring system has been deployed as a feedback and complaints mechanism. This meant Rohingya could report problems they had with accessing services or their housing by SMS. Based on those messages, the Field & Site Management Unit was able to monitor and also to respond to reports (UNHCR, 2020b, 2020e).

Taken together, these three different forms of data collection were still limited with their findings as the data collected was not representable and small scale. Moreover, the digital solutions employed were quite limited and mainly based around phones in the form of calls and SMS. However, given the restrictions, they were the only source of information possible.

4.2.3 Risk communication

This practice refers to forms of remote management that target people at risk (Wilson & Jumbert, 2018). During the pandemic, the humanitarian organisations had to inform the Rohingya about the COVID-19 pandemic, measures to restrict its spread and changes to programming, such as the service restrictions. Generally, all interviewed organisations adopted their programming to disseminate information along their activities. This meant interactions with people were used to share information. However, most respondents indicated that they mainly conducted risk communication alongside their physical activities. For instance, Rohingya visiting a clinic would receive this information during their visit. Another example were household visits. Besides that, options for digital solutions to risk communication were very limited due to a few constraining factors, described in detail in 4.3. Despite these limitations, a few actors also resorted to digital technology to spread information.

In addition, risk communication can be split further into two categories. One- way communication, which means talking at people and two-way communication of risks giving the targeted population the possibility to respond and ask questions. Those two categories are discussed in detail below. Importantly, the messages shared along these different pathways have been developed beforehand, based on World Health Organisation's guidelines, and approved by the local authorities. For instance, pre-approved messages have been collected in databases⁸ for the purpose of communicating with the communities using organisations such as BBC Media Action (CwC, 2020a).

One way communication or speaking at people

There are different methods utilised in this response. Respondents and reports mentioned a lot of no-tech and low-tech solutions. For instance, no-tech solutions such as signs and leaflets or low-tech solutions such as megaphones and radios were used to target the Rohingya. Those megaphones were either placed on cars and bicycles to move through the camp and share critical information about COVID-19 and restrictions, or they were static (IOM, 2020e). This meant community representatives such as Imams received audio messages from organisations and broadcasted those through their loudspeakers (UNHCR, 2020d). Additionally, to specifically target children, cartoons on COVID-19 were broadcasted at service stations (UNICEF, 2020a).

At the same time, there were also digital solutions employed as mentioned by one respondent. For instance, sharing of audio/video files via WhatsApp and/or Bluetooth. Moreover, there was messaging taking place via WhatsApp and SMS. Though all those digital solutions were limited in their reach due to limitations around phones as explained in 4.3.

Two-way communication or speaking with people

In contrast to speaking at people, there were also practices that focused on the interaction with those. Again, a lot of those were low or no tech solutions. For instance, household visits were utilised by a lot of organisations. This is because surveys revealed that Rohingya prefer information they receive directly from people (ISCG, ACAPS, et al., 2020). Additionally,

⁸ For instance: <http://www.shongjog.org.bd/response/rohingya/> [Last accessed: 04.10.2021]

public audio forums were held where audio messages were broadcast to the community and follow up questions could be asked (IOM, 2020a).

Parallel, there were also digital ways of communicating two-way. For example, WhatsApp groups have been established to distribute information and ask follow-up questions (CwC, 2020b). Similarly, Social Media channels were also used by some organisations (Wells, n.d.).

Taken together, these practices of risk communication utilising different channels all essentially provided the same information. Specifically, the interactive character of two-way communication allowed the Rohingya to communicate back, which allows for a form of diagnostics. In other words, humanitarian organisations received feedback on their messaging and could analyse questions asked to allow for adjustment to the risk communication programming. Next, I describe one example of a digital mass two-way communication which has been utilised in this response, the COVID-Info Line.

4.2.3.1 COVID-Info Line

The Covid-Info Line was established in the response at the end of April, 2020 (IOM, 2020c). One respondent mentioned that this form of technology has been utilised in the past in other responses. To adjust to COVID-19, the decision was made to establish it in the response as another way to communicate with the community, but also to allow for diagnostics and two-way communication. This tool can spread information and collect feedback. The next paragraph shortly explains what this line is and the technology behind it.

The Covid Info Line is a mass communication tool based on Interactive Voice Response (IVR) technology. It can play pre-recorded audio messages to the Rohingya at scale in their own language. With it, the organisation can periodically start calling campaigns with updated information on COVID-19 and changes to service provisions. This means that upon activation, the system automatically calls a database of numbers and then provides them with the pre-recorded messages. The database of phone numbers stems from numbers the organisation collected in past programming, or users can choose to include their number in the database by calling a specific number to sign up. Importantly, the part that makes IVR technology interactive is the possibility for respondents to leave messages including questions, suggestions or problems (IOM, 2020c). The collected data is then followed up by the organisation and can inform future risk communication messages (Ceriola, 2020).

It is also important to mention that this is the first time IVR technology has been utilised in this response (IOM, n.d.). Similar systems have been established by UNHCR and the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) since then (CwC, 2020d). The big advantage of IVR technology is that it allows for two-way flow of information and can additionally be used beyond COVID-19 risk communication. For instance, it has also been used for cyclone warnings (IOM, 2020d). Another use is the phone number database, which has been used for diagnostics purposes in needs assessment conducted during the pandemic. To illustrate, this means that if someone called the IVR hotline in the past and mentioned problems in relation to water, they would be contacted again during the WASH survey to provide inputs. (IOM, 2020f). Furthermore, it can also replace face to face meetings with the Rohingya for other purposes, such as acting as a legal assistance hotline in the case of NRC which I discuss in detail in the section on remote activities.

Nonetheless, its reach was also limited as pointed out during an interview. The issue with this technology is that it can only reach people who have a mobile phone, and their number is known to the organisation. However, device ownership is limited among the Rohingya.

In summary, for the purpose of risk communication different technologies and tools have been used. However, only a limited part of them uses digital communication technology for the practice of remote risk communication. Those digital tools are mainly centred around phones and in some cases specific apps. Digital communication happened via WhatsApp and social media. Moreover, the IVR technology utilises traditional phone calls via the network.

4.2.4 Remote activities

During this research a fourth practice emerged, which was not described by Wilson & Jumbert (2018). This practice did not fit any other of the other categories. This practice of remote activities used digital communication technology to continue programming activities in an adapted and remote format, which prior to the restrictions were done physically.

Therefore, the term 'remote activities' was used to indicate that those practices of remote management represent a program or an activity, that is provided remotely. There are three areas where activities were conducted remotely described below: remote protection, remote education, and the emergence of IVR hotlines.

4.2.4.1 Remote protection

Due to the restrictions limited protection workers were present in the camps. Consequently, to respond to issues of (child-) protection and gender-based violence there was a shift to a remote delivery modality. As a result, there was reduced access to feedback and reporting mechanisms for the Rohingya, as communication became phone-based (ISCG, n.d.). One respondent explained that as part of the remote case management, the response relied on Rohingya volunteers. Those received coaching, mentoring and daily debriefings via phones. Additionally, communication with the protection cases happened via phone or text and through regular follow-up visits by community volunteers (Child Protection Sub Sector Bangladesh, 2020). Moreover, case management was done increasingly across agencies, which allowed for the maximisation of protection staff being present while only limited workers in the camp were allowed (UNICEF, 2021a). Similarly, psychosocial support was provided by phone and remote counselling was available via a hotline (Ingram, 2020; IOM, 2020b). This hotline was established to give Rohingya the possibility to reach out to agencies, was free of charge and also allows for the monitoring of protection concerns (UNHCR, n.d.). At last, to assist organisations with their protection efforts, the sector published a guidance document for the modality of remote case management (Child Protection Sub Sector Bangladesh, 2020)

Nonetheless, whether remote case management in protection was an adequate replacement, opinions from the interviews conducted differed. Whereas one respondent mentioned that the work of the protection sector worked out well this way, another remarked critically to *“how are you supposed to provide SGBV [sexual and gender-based violence] support to a survivor on a phone without any awareness where they are right now or whether they can talk or if anyone is overhearing them”?* (Interview 6).

4.2.4.2 Remote education

The education sector was declared non-essential from the beginning. Therefore, since the start of the pandemic activities using educational spaces for education, or in-person learning were prohibited. However, there were still attempts to provide education. For instance, the education sector established a technology task team, that came up with potential solutions that can enable remote learning when education in presence was not possible (Cox’s Bazar Education Sector, 2020). Nonetheless, the possibilities to reach learners remotely were limited (see 4.3 for details). The education activities focused on three different areas, which were

caregiver-led home-based learning, audio programming and educating Rohingya volunteer teachers. Overall, education was mainly focused to be done at home by the children themselves under caregiver supervision where they could receive additional inputs by audio programming and supported by Rohingya volunteers when necessary (UNICEF, 2020b).

Due to the connectivity limitations in the camp, remote learning options were very limited for the children (Ingram, 2020). Therefore, caregiver- led home-based learning was utilised. This form of learning means that children received print materials to work from home and their caregivers would make sure they do work on those materials. The materials were distributed by essential staff during other service provisions, as staff from the education sector had no access (UNICEF, 2020b). This form of learning was supported by audio programming and Rohingya volunteer teachers.

For audio programming, radios were utilised. There were radio programs on a weekly basis, which targeted children and teachers (ISCG, IOM, et al., 2020). Moreover, to increase the reach radios were distributed to households (UNICEF, 2021a). Audio programming also had the advantage that through those channels additional risk communication could take place.

Volunteer teachers were utilised to support the children in their home-based learning with questions and tutoring sessions. They conducted household visits and facilitated tutoring sessions in camp in person. Importantly, internet and SMS were not utilised with children, and only around 27% of children communicated with their volunteer teachers via phone calls (REACH, 2021). One respondent explained the process of how those teachers were trained. While for children, phone-based solutions were very limited; many of the teachers were in possession of such devices (Technology Task Team, n.d.). Therefore, this allowed organisations to share audio files with them. The respondent explained that when the education staff could move strategically to the camp, they shared those files via Bluetooth or gave them preloaded MP3 players. However, once the internet restrictions have been lifted, they could share these files via WhatsApp with the volunteers to share among themselves.

4.2.4.3 IVR hotlines

A remote activity present in the camps was to completely shift former in- person communication to a hotline. While the protection sector has utilised this in the form of remote protection, there was also another practice of hotline usage. Namely, the NRC has established a legal assistance service program through a hotline. This hotline uses IVR, where

respondents can call, ask for call-backs and receive information based on their inputs (CwC, 2020c). Services provided by the hotline are COVID-19 related, service restrictions and services and information on HLP rights. This hotline is the Rohingya Refugee Response's version of the digital community hub, which the NRC has been introducing globally since the emergence of the pandemic (Ireland, 2020).

4.3 Limitations to further practices of remote management

A few organisations established technological solutions directly targeting the affected population. It is important to realize that the practices adopted are the result of severe limitations to such practices. There are three different areas of limitations that made it difficult for humanitarian actors to digitally communicate with the Rohingya. These three areas are (1) politically restricted connectivity in the camps, (2) the approval process by the government and (3) the literacy of the Rohingya population. They influence the form of practices and the technology used in this response.

4.3.1 Politically restricted connectivity

In the camps, connectivity is extremely restricted due to three restrictions. First, there are governmental restrictions on phone ownership by the Rohingya. As one respondent mentioned about their Rohingya volunteers: “[...] *only a few have access to phones, particularly women*” (Interview 8). A recent assessment, indicated that only 9% of the Rohingya own extended assets, which include mobile phones (Holt et al., 2020). Therefore, the ownership of phones already limits the possibilities to connect with the population. Specifically, one of the reasons for the absence of phones is that “*refugees have technology confiscated from them*” as “*mobile phone usage is illegal, technically*” (Interview 6). Second, it is illegal for the Rohingya to own a SIM card (NetHope, 2020). Consequently, access to financing for mobile data is thus another difficult issue to overcome. However, some respondents mentioned that even though these tools are technically illegal, there are still Rohingya who overcome those as these restrictions and policies have been differently enforced over time. Three, for the few Rohingya with phones and mobile data, this still did not mean access to the internet. From September 2019 until August, 2020 3G and 4G mobile networks have been suspended (Holt et al., 2020; ISCG, IOM, et al., 2020). And even with it being reinstated, connectivity remains a huge issue.

As one respondent put it *“connectivity is abysmal and it’s abysmal only for political reasons, not for budgetary or anything else. We could have put 4G in the camps. [...] No approval for that has ever been given.”* (Interview 6). For instance, an assessment of connectivity revealed that the internet is patchy and unreliable across the camps and unfit to allow for remote programming using digital communication technology (ETC, 2020; NetHope, 2020).

My respondents mentioned that in general government rules and regulations are limiting technology usage. One respondent mentioned that *“there’s a political problem, which is that the government is not generally endorsing a lot of technological solutions, or willing to support them”* (Interview 6). There is no clear consensus among my respondents why this is the case. The restrictions on 3/4G were imposed citing risk of misinformation that could lead to fear in the camps (Karim, 2020).

Considering that the government actively limits the connectivity in the camps by the various rules described above, it is interesting that humanitarian organisations still resorted to solutions relying on those. I interpreted it as a struggle over control between the humanitarian organisations and the government. The camp settings currently in place are physical spaces over which the government has control. Once refugees are widely connected, the government will have less control over the virtual spaces. Importantly, no matter the restrictions on technology, there are refugees that have access to it. This shows that already by now, the camps are not a controlled space. The current pandemic, and the sudden resort to technological solutions to communicate with refugees might even lead to a further spread of mobile phones among the Rohingya. It appears to me, that while there are efforts by the government to limit technology access for the refugees, the process of spreading connectivity and technology is still happening and the pandemic might accelerate it.

In conclusion, the state of connectivity in this response is the result of political decisions, rather than technical issues. Consequently, remote management solutions that target people in camps were limited. The organisations still pushed for and managed to employ some, however their reach is limited due to the low levels of device ownership and SIM cards. In fact, organisations have described the limited connectivity as a barrier for their work (NetHope, 2020). Therefore, the remote management practices in this response are a direct result of having to adapt to limited connectivity.

4.3.2 Approval process by the government

Next to the connectivity restrictions, some respondents mentioned the approval process by the government as a limitation to their programming and remote practices. In the camps every new project and changes to projects must be approved by the government through the RRRC. This is the case for INGOs, local/ national organisations or UN agencies. However, for the last an approval of the overall strategy is enough, and projects only need to be approved by the local authorities of the camps. This approval process was described as lengthy, even before the pandemic. During the pandemic, a lot of government offices were closed and approval processes became lengthier. Moreover, at times it has become very difficult as the government offices have not adapted to working remotely, meaning that the offices still had to be visited physically in person to request approvals. This was not possible during some periods of the lockdown due to the offices being closed.

Consequently, those lengthy and at times impossible approval processes have limited the practices of remote management in the camp. Due to these, the way technology has been brought into this response to communicate with the Rohingya has been very limited. One respondent who was part of a technology task team during the pandemic explained that while they have identified quite some possibilities to bring in technology due to “*restrictions, because of the bureaucracy, because of the tedious permission process*” (Interview 8) they have in many cases not become part of programming. Like the political restricted connectivity mentioned before, approval processes appear to be another layer by the government to limit technology usage. Therefore, the very limited emergence of remote management practices is also due to political decisions.

4.3.3 (Digital) Literacy of the Rohingya

Another factor that limited the use of digital communication technology is the literacy and the understanding of technology by the Rohingya. The organisations that were looking at technology for practices of risk communication and remote activities mentioned that it was very challenging to bring in technology in this context. There are two reasons for this. One is the understanding of technology, so called digital literacy by the Rohingya population. Digital literacy is low among the Rohingya, and the adaptation of these programmes came as a result of the pandemic. Therefore, there was limited time to tweak those and further assess the capability of the population to use those. Second is the general low literacy levels among the population. Specifically, the language is “*an oral dialect of a non-written language*”

(Interview 6). Consequently, using written messages as forms of digital communication is limited. Thus, organisations had to resort to audio messages and files they could share via WhatsApp or Bluetooth.

In conclusion, these three areas of limitations shape the response. They shape the practices of remote management that the humanitarian actors were able to adopt. They explain why the digital technology brought in for the purpose of risk communication and remote activities are very limited. They are limited because there are issues around ownership of digital devices and very limited connectivity in the camps. There is a political unwillingness to endorse technology and there is only limited options to communicate with the Rohingya themselves due to high illiteracy levels and low digital literacy. Due to this, technology has been used sparingly and in addition in this context it could not replace traditional physical activities.

4.4 Outcome of remote management practices

While the previous sections clearly described what practices of remote management were utilised in the response to COVID-19, it is also important to look at how did it work out. This research did not attempt to formally evaluate the practices. However, a few respondents reported their own assessments and experiences on working remotely.

For coordination, most respondents mentioned that they were well equipped to do so and would argue that using digital communication tools was an adequate replacement. Especially the ones working through a local partner reported, that they were used to working this way from the past. However, a few also mentioned that communication became more challenging when being remote from the context and therefore this way of working had its limitations. For diagnostics remote management seems to have been limited in its effectiveness. As mentioned, the reach of diagnostics was extremely limited. Additionally, organisations that implement through a local partner often have strict monitoring and reporting requirements in place. However, to fulfil those amidst the pandemic was not possible. Therefore, my respondents mentioned they relied on the trust that was established in the past rather than strict monitoring. For risk communication, the technological tools have never been formally evaluated, as one respondent mentioned. Due to the limitations described in 4.3, their reach was extremely limited. Similar is the case of remote activities. For instance, a formal evaluation of education showed a clear drop of access and quality of education since the emergence of COVID-19 and reports issues, such as lack of connectivity, for providing education remotely (REACH, 2021). That same report also stresses the risk and occurrence of

drop out of school aged children. There hasn't been a formal assessment on the learning outcomes for children, but one respondent mentioned that they did this small scale and the findings showed students did miss those learning targets. However, they also found that students still appreciated receiving at least some kind of educational activities.

In sum, while remote management practices appear to be working between humanitarians, I found that all remote approaches that directly communicate with refugees are extremely limited in their reach and cannot replace physical activities.

5 Technology, new actors and power relations

This chapter showcases the findings in relation to my second and third research questions: (2) *How did remote management practices and the subsequential influx of new technological actors affect the humanitarian organisations?* (3) *How did remote management practices affect the power relations between international organisations, their local staff, and local organisations?* It incorporates the empirical findings from my interviews, and where mentioned the analysed reports. Moreover, the finding of due diligence, I discuss in relation to the remote management literature. Additionally, I examine the power relations between international organisations and their local partner or local staff in more detail, showing what this could mean for the localisation of aid. The chapter is structured that I first showcase my findings in relation to my second research question and due diligence, before I turn to the findings for my third research question and localisation.

5.1 Technological tools and new actors

For the humanitarian organisations to be able to resort to remote management, they utilised different digital communication tools. Nonetheless, the tools identified are not new, as one respondent stated: *“I wouldn't say there's, there is like a kind of innovative new technology that was put up in this response”* (Interview 6). This statement supports what other respondents mentioned. Most organisations mentioned that the tools used for the practice of coordination have been established before the pandemic. As a result, they did not have to bring in new tools, but they used the tools rather more extensively and in more situations. For instance, former in-person communication has shifted to phones or conference tools. This means for coordination practices standard digital conferencing tools were utilised. This includes Skype, Microsoft Teams and Zoom. Though for communication with people in the camp the options were limited. Therefore, more phone centric solutions have been used such as phone calls, SMS, and WhatsApp for the practices of risk communication and remote activities. At last, IVR technology was employed for automatic risk communication via calling campaigns.

Above's mentioned tools are technological solutions that are provided by private actors. These private actors fall under the category of new actors. For the usage of standard communication tools, the new actors were tech actors such as Microsoft and Zoom. There are also the providers of IVR technology. In this response the platform for the COVID-Info Line

was provided by EngageSpark. The provider for the NRC hotline was Twilio. Both of those are private tech companies, which provided their service to the humanitarian organisations.

The influx of new actors poses a few challenges and risks for humanitarian organisations. The usage of those tools increasingly leads to collecting and sharing of data digitally by the humanitarian organisations, utilising tools provided by private technological actors.

Consequently, these new actors become part of the humanitarian field as providers of those technological solutions. However, it is important to mention that this data might be misused by third parties, who might access it through data breaches. I discuss the importance of data protection in detail in chapter 6, whereas I only provide a short overview of my findings in this chapter next.

5.1.1 Importance of data protection

A few of my respondents stressed the importance of data protection for their organisation with recent shift towards remote management and the general increased usage of digital tools.

According to them, their organisations have updated their data protection measures and guidelines amidst this pandemic when necessary. Additionally, I identified a few guidance documents published to assist humanitarian organisations when shifting to remote management. For instance, guidance of the sharing of information when utilising online conferencing tools (OCHA et al., 2020). Another example is guidance for organisations that utilise remote case management in children protection or work in gender-based violence (Child Protection Sub Sector Bangladesh, 2020; Women's Refugee Commission & Warchild Canada, 2020). More general documents were also released for instance on data responsibility (Humanitarian Data Exchange, n.d.).

However, despite these examples my findings are limited. Not all respondents were able to provide information on this topic. They argued that concerns of data risks and data protection are discussed and decided on a different level. Consequently, when humanitarian organisations engage in partnerships with new actors, the decisions are made on a different level. Importantly, they mentioned that they have staff in their organisation that is knowledgeable about the complexities of this topic and assists the organisation in engaging with the private sector. Additionally, organisations have pre-established service agreements, which new actors are required to sign to ensure the security of the data.

5.1.2 Due diligence

A few respondents mentioned, that before utilising a specific technology and when deciding how to use it, they are due diligent about the process. For them this means, they consider the use based on what they know about the technology, the risks with it, the nature of the data that is shared via it, the importance, and the feasibility of the technological solutions. Based on this they make the decision whether to use it. Due diligence by humanitarian organisations was already described by Donini & Maxwell (2013, p. 407) as a “*context-based reasonableness standard*”. This description is in line with my findings, arguing that humanitarian actors make their informed decisions based on their contextual understanding and available information

One example of this is that one respondent also mentioned that when using cloud- based solutions, they make sure those servers are in Europe, so they fall under General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) legislation by the European Union, which is considered by them an adequate level of data protection. Consequently, GDPR legislation in turn ensures that the data is protected adequately. Moreover, this respondent mentioned that while it is important to acknowledge that regarding data protection humanitarian and private actors differ, humanitarian organisations are due diligent on how exactly they utilise new technology. For instance, they might decide to add another layer of protection. For example, if an organisation is in areas under control of different groups (like in Syria), the organisation makes sure that data is not shared between the two sides by providing different cloud solutions to the two sides.

Another part of due diligence is considering for what the tools are used, and the context they are used in. For example, respondents indicated that they use WhatsApp as it is widely used in Bangladesh and using a different solution would not be feasible in this context. Additionally, in many cases the information shared via WhatsApp is not sensible and rather consists of communication for everyday activities. Still, they mentioned that it has also been utilised by staff when in the camp to share sensitive information quickly and efficiently. Another example that was discussed during an interview was that organisations consider the type of data that is shared via a tool. For instance, a calling campaign to provide information on COVID-19 in the camp provides very little options for misuse, whereas using digital communication technology for the remote case management of protection cases includes sensitive data. Importantly, linking due diligence to considering whether the data is sensitive

or not is problematic according to Sandvik et al. (2014). The authors argue that this might lead organisations to make compromises to data protection when they consider data not sensitive. However, these authors argue that it is difficult to designate data as sensitive, as this is subject to change over time and difficult for organisations to predict the potential misuse of data.

The last aspect of due diligence is resorting to solutions that are user driven. It has been mentioned in the context of IVR technology. The Covid-Info line utilises the solution provided by Engage Spark, and not a product from another private actor because the user is fully in control. In practice, this means once the organisations received the software solution, setting up the calls and programming the responses and messages was done by the organisation themselves. Therefore, allowing them full control over all actions. However, the respondent mentioned that the decision was also driven by the fact that other solutions needed remote support or hardware. As hardware shipping was a risk amidst this pandemic, and remote support could cease to exist depending on how the pandemic would affect the country where the remote support unit was located, the respondent decided against those solutions. While due diligence is important when dealing with data, the respondents also stressed the importance of establishing appropriate data protection measures.

5.2 Power relations and the localisation agenda

With limited access to the camp and the usage of practices of remote management, it meant in many cases that the people who make the decisions were not in country, could not visit the camps and could not meet with the implementing people in person. This affected the overall decision-making of organisations. However, the changes to power and decision-making differ across my respondents. There is a clear split between different modalities of remote management. For organisations that are on the spectrum of remote control or remote delegation, the hierarchy and power to make decisions remained with the international staff, while still shifting responsibilities on local actors. Importantly, some of them mentioned that while they did not delegate power to local staff or partner, they increasingly consulted their local counterparts for the purpose of making informed decisions. For organisations on the remote support or remote partnership spectrum, they mentioned established trust in their local partners capabilities. Here, they did not only shift responsibilities but also the possibility to make decisions, while themselves focusing on overall strategic areas.

A few respondents mentioned that for them the remoteness from the context was an issue with decision-making. They mentioned that this made it difficult to gain a holistic picture of the situation in the camp. As one respondent put it: *“You can’t go to the camps on Teams or on Skype or whatever”* (Interview 6). Consequently, the difficulty was for the people who remotely managed their operations to gain a holistic and contextual understanding. Through daily digital conversations and debriefings with the mainly national staff that still accessed the camps, they could get insights. Nonetheless, one respondent even mentioned that communicating remotely did not allow for the same level of understanding as in the past. Prior to working remotely, the exchange with the national staff would happen often in the camp, as communication was embedded in the context. However, how much the remoteness affected decision-making negatively the views among respondents differed. Apparently, it became difficult and working through remote management had its limitations and should be replaced by field visits, but some respondents still argued that they were able to continue their work through it. One respondent had a more negative view on practices of remote management, as he mentioned that *“[now] people are making incredibly complicated decisions about a context that they’re very remote from, and the whole industry has pushed against this for years”* (Interview 6). Still, the respondents agreed that remote management must be temporary and cannot replace field visits and being in the context in the future.

5.2.1 *Shift to the local*

As mentioned above, responsibilities increased for the local staff and partners, which became essential to the response. There are three instances where remote management increasingly shifted responsibilities on locals. First, organisations that implemented directly had to increasingly rely on their local staff. As they were in many cases the only ones able to enter the camp, they had to take up increasing responsibilities. For some organisations their inputs impacted decision-making as their assessments were vital for this process. A few respondents mentioned that most of their staff is national and highly trained, and they had full confidence in their work with increased responsibilities.

Second, already prior to COVID-19 Rohingya volunteers have played a role in the response. With the emergence of COVID-19 and the access restrictions, they became increasingly important to continue activities (WV Bangladesh, 2020). As mentioned earlier, volunteers were used for instance as part of the remote case management in the protection sectors and as teachers. In interviews, the volunteers have been discussed as part of the outreach and risk

communication programs, but also their importance for activities beyond this. They were seen as essential to continue work through remote management modalities.

Third, a few respondents had long standing partnerships before the pandemic with the organisations that implement on their behalf. These organisations have been indirectly implementing already prior to the pandemic. Therefore, they already remotely managed operations to a certain extent. Specifically, what they mentioned was that the pandemic put their local partners even more in the driver's seat and for decision-making they relied on the information given to them by their partners. The respondents admitted that the way they remotely managed the operations did not always allow for complete monitoring of the activities. However, due to working together for years trust has been established in this partnership and not being able to monitor all activities was acceptable. This aspect of trust is presented below.

The increased reliance on and shift to local staff, local partners and volunteers, trust became an important topic and was essential for decision making for a few respondents. Participants that were out of the country, or not always present; mentioned that without trusting the people implementing, they could not have shifted to remote management practices. While it was already more common for organisations that do not directly implement to remotely manage their local partners, the dynamic still changed with the pandemic. Accordingly, field visits and in-person meetings were no longer possible. Similarly, also directly implementing organisations had to trust their local staff when the higher management levels had no possibility to visit the field. As a result, trust was essential to remotely manage the operations. At last, organisations with high level of trust in their implementing partners or staff opted to reduce monitoring of activities so they could rather focus on the continuity of activities.

5.2.2 Localisation of aid

At the start of the pandemic the local actors were at the centre of attention, and questions were raised what this means for the humanitarian sector. It emerged by now that major responsibilities were transferred to local actors as they were the ones who had access. Consequently, their importance amidst this pandemic became visible, though it is not yet clear what the long-term effect of this will be. One interesting finding is that local partners have been participating in the international response more strongly, as they were suddenly able to attend virtual sectoral meetings across the response. Similar occurrences have been reported by Barbelet et al. (2021), stating that local actors were able to attend fora that were prior

mainly reserved for international actors, such as Inter Agency Standing Committee (IASC) meetings. This increased exposure could potentially be very beneficial for local actors.

What is clear about this response is that the humanitarian organisations approached this differently. As I have shown, for some organisations this meant shifting responsibilities but also power to their local partner as a good relationship with those was established prior to the pandemic and the shift to working remotely only required a few adjustments. For other organisations, they shifted implementation to their local partners, but the international staff kept the power. Consequently, the former can be attributed as rather helpful to the localisation agenda, whereas the later reinforces the existing power relationships. With this observation it becomes clear that the difference in modalities of remote management clearly represents different ways of working with local partners. The proactive, partnership- based model allows for a shift of power, whereas the reactive one does not. This has also been showcased in the response to Cyclone Harold, where localisation was enforced by the pandemic and enabled by established partnerships with local actors (Barbelet et al., 2021).

My research is based only on 8 interviews. Therefore, it is difficult to conclude from this and to estimate how this looks across the response. However, global research done by Barbelet et al. (2021) also shows that while for some organisations the power shifted to their local partners, others rather resorted to remote control of their local counterparts. Like my findings, the authors noted that modalities that allow to control the activities remotely assisted by technology were utilised, rather than working towards greater localisation in many cases. Therefore, it is important to be cautious of the link between localisation and remote management. There are clear aspects where they can be beneficial to each other. However, caution is warranted as a review by the Australian Red Cross & Humanitarian Advisory Group (2020) showed that the beneficial relationship between the two varies greatly across responses. Accordingly, if the localisation objectives were achieved and consequently power shifted towards the local actors, it is irrelevant if they are supported by the international humanitarian organisations remotely or in person.

6 Discussion: From a techno optimistic discourse to a non-technology driven response

Compared to early predictions, which stressed and discussed the key role technology could play in the humanitarian response to the COVID-19 pandemic (cf. Bryant et al., 2020), my findings from the Rohingya Refugee Response show there was no widespread manifestation of technological solutions. In fact, this response has not become technology driven. In this section I discuss how the techno optimistic discourse from the beginning of the pandemic did not lead to a technologically driven response, but rather resulted in a patchwork of low to no tech solutions of remote management practices. Nonetheless, a few digital solutions were still utilised in this response, however they were restricted to either communication amidst humanitarians or had a very limited reach.

6.1 The techno optimistic discourse

The pandemic forced organisation to look at digital communication technologies to enable the continuity of their activities through remote management. Since the start of the pandemic, more literature has emerged that showcases the widespread use of remote management, such as the case of the Australian Red Cross's approach in their deployments (Australian Red Cross & Humanitarian Advisory Group, 2020), and subsequent utilisation of digital communication technology in the humanitarian sector (Hamilton, 2021). This run at technological solutions to overcome the challenges of COVID-19 is what I describe as a techno optimistic discourse. My findings on the Rohingya Refugee Response also showed that in fact the organisations looked for digital communication technology they could incorporate in their response. For instance, the education sector explored the possibilities of remote learning solutions for children. Another example is the emergence of IVR technologies.

The big selling point that fuels this techno optimistic approach are the promises of the technology. Again, the education sector appears to be a good use case to utilise technology for remote learning, while schools remain closed, as it - in theory - allows children to learn from their home enabling social distancing. Other promises of technology are the possibility to establish direct communication links between the humanitarian organisations and the affected population, however in my case this was only utilised by a few actors. One technological solution which establishes this link is the IVR technology, which has been brought into this response for the first time during the pandemic. This technology is a clear example of the potential of such solutions. Therefore, in the next section I discuss IVR as a technological

solution that has a high potential for participatory risk communication and is a clear example of this techno optimistic discourse.

6.1.1 The importance of participatory approaches for risk communication

Participatory risk communication became a priority amidst the pandemic. The literature on humanitarian operations in pandemics amply mentions risk communication and has stressed the importance of participatory approaches for this purpose (Wilson & Jumbert, 2018). However, the remote management literature did not mention this area. It appears that it becomes a higher priority for humanitarian organisations amidst pandemics. Participatory approaches utilise two-way communication to allow affected populations to share feedback, complaints and request. The relevance of two-way communication with refugees itself is not specific to pandemics as there is increasing focus on downwards accountability (i.e. to the receivers of aid) in the sector according to Madianou et al. (2015). Indeed, these authors show that humanitarian organisations utilise SMS services and hotlines to give a voice to affected populations. Correspondingly, humanitarian organisations are increasingly aware of the advantages of two-way communication, but Bryant et al. (2020) caution that in past epidemics establishing these channels received limited priority. My findings suggest that for this response two-way communication was established early by a few organisations, however only with very limited reach. Accordingly, it seems that organisations have increasingly prioritised establishing such communication channels, for instance the COVID-Info Line. The emergence of such hotlines is a major finding of this research as it appears to be widespread and is discussed further in the next section.

The underlying idea of these participatory approaches is to give a voice to refugees assisted by technology. However, it is important to note that past research on the idea of giving voice through technology to affected populations showed limited effects. For instance, Madianou et al. (2015) identified a divide among the affected population, making only some voices heard. The underlying principle of this divide is access to the necessary technology, connectivity, and digital literacy. The authors clearly showed that two-way communication mostly gives voice to the better off part of the affected population, therefore potentially providing a skewed picture of the needs and priorities.

6.1.2 IVR for risk communication and beyond

The pandemic saw the emergence of IVR technology-based hotlines such as the COVID-Info Line and two others in this response for the first time. They are mainly utilised for the purpose

of risk communication, however one of them also provides up to date information and advisory services on HLP rights. Importantly, the information derived from refugees directly can also be utilised for the purpose of diagnostics, however according to Bolton (2018) past experiences with IVR technology show that the sharing of information with it is a good use case, but the diagnostic component has shown limited success.

My findings suggest that the emergence of hotlines and IVR technology are a trend of this pandemic and are not limited to this response. Indeed, the emergence of hotlines seems to be widespread like in the case of Somalia and DRC (Shaqodoo & Oxfam Somalia, n.d.; World Food Programme, n.d.). Additionally, the NRC is increasingly setting up their so-called Digital Community Hubs across their responses globally, which utilise IVR technology (Ireland, 2020). This technology shows the digital solutions the pandemic is pushing forward, and a clear influx of new specialised technology actors who provide the new technology. The promise behind this technology appears to be providing updated and reliable information in a participatory manner to the affected population.

There are a few reports on the use of IVR technology in humanitarian contexts available. For instance, Bolton (2018) identified a number of examples of IVR usage amidst different contexts. Her research also mentioned a lack of formal evaluations on those programs. Additionally, the report mentioned that IVR technology is suitable for data collection with respondents who prefer oral exchanges of information. However, one of my respondents shared his view that this response is not a good use case citing the limited exposure to technology by the Rohingya and the low reach of the program. Another report by Mock et al. (2016), focusing on the World Food Program's experience with their mobile vulnerability assessment and monitoring program, shows the importance of establishing trust with community in those digital programs in a face to face setting prior to utilising it. It appears, that with the sudden introduction of the IVR technology in this response, there was no time to prepare the affected population for it. Therefore, this might partly explain the limited effects of this activity, however there are two bigger factors that limited the widespread of digital solutions, which I discuss next.

6.2 A non-technology driven response

While the prior section discussed the use of IVR, it is important to stress that this is an exception on the use of technology in this response to connect with the affected population directly. In fact, this response has not become technology driven. In this response, most remote management practices are only utilised for purposes of internal communication. This is because humanitarian organisations have their connectivity established, whereas connecting the Rohingya remains a challenge. An example of this internal communication are remote management practices for the purpose of coordination. Here, the humanitarian organisations resorted to online conferencing tools. Importantly, these tools were already used prior to the pandemic, however recent reports stress the importance of those tools for successful remote management (IFRC, 2020). The two factors that made digital solutions targeting the affected population directly difficult are discussed next.

6.2.1 *The digital divide in the response*

When humanitarian organisations increasingly utilise digital communication technologies in their aid provision, they risk excluding populations and people that cannot connect to those (Sandvik et al., 2014). The split of those who have access to digital devices and technology, and those who do not is called the digital divide. It can often be observed in divides due to gender, economic conditions, and other characteristics (Willitts-King et al., 2019). To illustrate, remote management practices to diagnose the needs of the affected population emerged as face-to-face data collection became restricted. Consequently, phones were utilised to conduct interviews. However, my findings clearly show how limited the reach and potentially unrepresentable the data is. The risk of this form of data collection is that humanitarian organisations make programming decisions on data that is potentially skewed and unrepresentable of the general needs of the population. In that case, the digital divide presents a clear barrier to access humanitarian services and risks excluding the unconnected, especially if their needs are not met due to a lack of data. Outside a pandemic, humanitarian organisations would give priority to contact those (Bryant et al., 2020).

With the emergence of the pandemic and the increased use of technological solutions, there is the risk that this accelerates a further exclusion of the marginalized groups, who do not have equal access to the right tools (Hamilton, 2021; Willitts-King et al., 2019). My findings clearly show that only a minority of Rohingya have access to such devices, and women are even less likely to. Prior research by Madianou et al. (2015) already established that digital

participatory approaches by humanitarian organisations are utilised for the purpose of giving a voice to the affected population, however due to unequal access to devices, specific groups are excluded. Similar research amidst the COVID-19 pandemic, shows the same trend (Madianou, 2020). This exclusion of specific groups is also an important factor when considering the usage of IVR technology in this response.

In sum, the digital divide present in the Rohingya Refugee Response limits the possibilities for the humanitarian organisations to establish a direct digital link with the affected population. Therefore, it is one factor that explains why technological solutions were only utilised in such a limited manner, and the ones that were implemented – such as IVR – have a very limited reach.

6.2.2 Restriction of connectivity

On top of limited device ownership, connectivity is another factor which excludes the Rohingya from accessing digital aid. As pointed out by Jacobsen & Fast (2019) when humanitarian organisations increasingly rely on digital solutions, it is important to analyse who is actively prevented from accessing humanitarian aid. The Rohingya are actively prevented from accessing aid via digital ways, as there is an active political will to restrict connectivity. There are political decisions by the government in place that limit connectivity, such as the - now - lifted ban on 3/4G and the illegality of owning phones or SIM cards.

While connectivity has been reported as an issue also in other responses (Hamilton, 2021), there is clearly a very interesting dynamic present in this case. There is a clear difference in the way humanitarian organisations aim to deliver aid versus how the government of Bangladesh wants to. Establishing why the government is actively preventing technology is beyond the scope and the findings of this research, however some argue that it is due to the dynamic that a host government needs to provide to the refugees, while at the same time establishing control and governmentality over the population (Martin & Taylor, 2021). Accordingly, limiting access to the digital world keeps the refugees in a physical camp setting.

Importantly, the reasons that lead to a lack of connectivity can be regulatory or technical. In the Rohingya response there are a lot of regulatory barriers. As mentioned prior, the government is trying to control the affected population. Martin & Taylor (2021) clearly identify the measures in place to control the Rohingya, which are consistent with my findings.

The authors argue one such thing is the requirement of proper identification for the lawful ownership of SIM cards, which effectively bans Rohingya from legally owning such a card as they currently cannot obtain any such identification. While a lot of workarounds have been described by these authors, they also described how more recently the government increased the strictness of these rules and started confiscating mobile devices. However, struggling to exercise this control, the last step was to outright stop the network connection, therefore making SIM cards and mobile technology useless when trying to access the internet. This dynamic is not per se specific to this context, but also has been mentioned by other sources (cf. Kuner & Marelli, 2020).

6.3 A patchwork of digital and physical solutions

In this discussion I have so far shown that the initial techno optimistic discourse did not result in a widespread manifestation of technological solutions. Some technology was used, especially the IVR technology for the purpose of risk communication, but due to the digital divide present in this context, and the political restrictions to connectivity, their use remains limited. The emergence of remote management practices in this response are clearly tailored and adapted to the specific operational environment and specificities of the Rohingya Refugee Response. The ones that emerged are trialled and tested from past experiences, similar to findings by Bryant et al. (2020). This is in contrast with the expectation I had after reviewing the literature that predicted a radical shift towards technological solutions. My expectation was to come across a variety of innovative technological solutions and observe an influx of new technological actors. In my research findings, this was certainly not the case.

What emerged from the pandemic is a patchwork of no to low tech solutions. There is the presence of a few digital solutions, however in most cases they are not a suitable replacement for physical activities, but rather they are a complementary solution. In this response, remote management is not utilised to the extent where it would be warranted to call this digital humanitarianism and the following example clearly shows the parallel presence of both physical and digital activities. For instance, the education sector's response is a great example of the patchwork of no to low tech solutions. The educational model used is caregiver-led, meaning children learn in their own house through physical workbooks and other educational materials, receiving support or supervision from their caregivers. For questions and help, they can get in contact with community volunteer teachers, who conduct house visits to help children the children or advise the parents. The teachers themselves receive training by the

humanitarian organisations in a digital manner utilising phones and digital recordings. Additionally, radio broadcasting is used as a low-tech solution to provide additional educational activities to children on a regular basis.

Importantly, the techno optimistic discourse also showed that humanitarian organisations are increasingly turning towards these digital solutions and therefore require connectivity. In fact, the trend to global connectivity has been described as a factor allowing for the widespread use of remote management by a few researchers, however the same authors also cautioned humanitarian organisations that there are still unconnected populations that might be forgotten by digital humanitarians (Duffield, 2013, 2016; Sandvik et al., 2014). Consequently, efforts to connect the former unconnected results in the growing attention towards the provision of connectivity.

6.3.1 Connectivity as aid

My findings clearly show humanitarian organisations increasingly see the potential of connectivity for this response and have therefore strongly advocated to lift the ban of 3/4G. This is in line with the increasing digitalisation of the humanitarian sector, where connectivity is increasingly seen as aid. It is the result of an increasing demand by some affected populations so they can express their needs directly to the organisations (Bharania & Silverman, 2021), and a result of the increasing digitalisation of the sector, which changes what is considered aid – in this case connectivity (Martin & Taylor, 2021). Connectivity as aid refers to connecting the affected population to mobile technologies such as phones and the internet. It is different from connectivity for aid which means providing connectivity for humanitarians workers so they can continue their work (Kuner & Marelli, 2020). This concept has received ample attention recently. For instance, the Red Cross has an entire chapter on connectivity as aid in their handbook on data protection and has devoted quite some attention to it amidst this pandemic in a webinar (ICRC, 2021; Kuner & Marelli, 2020) Importantly, from a technical standpoint humanitarian organisations need to involve various private and eventually governmental actors to provide connectivity. This means they are not in control of the provision of these services and therefore need to increasingly face data protection concerns (Kuner & Marelli, 2020).

6.3.2 *Data protection*

While there was no radical uptake of new technological tools by the humanitarian organisations, the use of tried and tested tools increased and expanded. As a direct consequence of this, data is increasingly available and shared digitally utilising the tools provided by private actors. However, there are inherent risks of this data to be misused by third parties (Bryant et al., 2020). Indeed, the risk of data breaches has increased over the last years and is receiving increased attention amidst the COVID-19 pandemic (Gazi & Gazis, 2020; ‘Q&A’, 2020). Based on past examples of data breaches, it is argued that humanitarian organisations and their data are being increasingly targeted (Raymond, 2017).

Importantly, the potential of data collection and the inherent risks to it that emerge when resorting to remote management have received ample attention in the literature (Donini & Maxwell, 2013), and Gazi & Gazis (2020) stress that this pandemic warrants to embrace digital technology, while limiting the risks. Even so, according to Bharania & Silverman (2021), measures to prevent those breaches and ensure the protection of data are of low priority and receive limited resources. Accordingly, the difficulties organisations face to scale up their data protection, often due to limited guidance, have been described by Hamilton (2021). Additionally, the involvement of the private sector needs increased attention as they have less experience in working in humanitarian contexts. Therefore, they are less conflict sensitive and potentially unaware to humanitarian principles; possibly enabling data breaches (Bharania & Silverman, 2021). This is in line with findings by Bryant et al. (2020) and my research, as I found limited examples of mitigation measures and attention towards data protection. In fact, the respondents mainly referred to existing data protection policies in place by their organisation and some updates have been issued due to the increased use of digital solutions.

7 Conclusion

In this thesis I researched how humanitarian organisations continued their work amidst the global COVID-19 pandemic in the Rohingya Refugee Response in Cox's Bazar Bangladesh, as they had to adapt to working without international staff in the camp and with a reduced footprint to halt the spread of the virus. To enable the continuity of their activities, they resorted to remote management, a form of aid delivery that enables humanitarians to deliver aid remotely, through local actors on the ground and enabled by communication technology. Accordingly, the concept has received a lot of attention amidst the pandemic. Despite that, former literature on this solution is limited to conflict settings and most of the literature is practitioners based. Consequently, exactly how humanitarian organisations would utilise it during COVID-19 was unclear. However, early predictions argued that it could lead to two major transformations of the sector. First, local actors would be at the centre of the response, leading to a shift of power in line with the localisation agenda. Second, humanitarian operations would become increasingly digitalised, as the organisations resort to technological solutions and private tech actors to continue their work.

This led me to raise the following three research questions, which I attempted to answer with my research: (1) *How did remote management affect the practices of aid delivery in Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh amidst the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020?* (2) *How did remote management practices and the subsequential influx of new technological actors affect the humanitarian organisations?* (3) *How did remote management practices affect the power relations between international organisations, their local staff and local organisations?* I provide an answer to those questions based on my theoretical framework combining research on technology usage during pandemics with research on remote management amidst volatile settings. Based on this understanding, I conducted eight interviews with practitioners of humanitarian aid in the Rohingya Refugee Response who utilised remote management during this pandemic. Additionally, I collected emerging reports from the organisations themselves.

In relation to my first research question my findings show that remote management became increasingly important for the delivery of aid in this response and four different practices of it emerged: (1) coordination, (2) diagnostics (3) risk communication and (4) remote activities. Most humanitarian actors limited their remote management to coordinate activities on multiple levels: between organisations, within organisations and with community volunteers by using digital communication technologies such as conferencing tools, mobile applications,

and phones. Next, diagnostics and monitoring of the response and activities became extremely hindered due to the restrictions imposed by the government on the camps such as limited access and no social gatherings. Therefore, the organisations attempted to overcome this by phone interviews and small scale in-person interviews through Rohingya volunteers. However, the reach and findings remained extremely limited and potentially skewed. Next to those practices the focus of the response shifted to COVID-19 related programming and risk communication to the Rohingya became a major priority. For this purpose, the humanitarian organisations resorted to a patchwork of low to no-tech solutions and limited digital solutions. There, the newest digital addition to this response was the utilisation of IVR technology for participatory risk communication which I discussed in the last chapter. At last, a category of practices emerged beyond the framework by Wilson & Jumbert (2018) assigned as remote activities which describes technologies used to provide services remotely to the Rohingya, such as remote protection, remote education and goes beyond the purpose of risk communication.

In relation to my second research question, I have discussed extensively in chapter 6 that from an initial techno optimistic discourse a non-technology driven response emerged. The remote management practices are clear adaptations to the specific operational environment of this response, they are adjusted to the digital divide present and the politically restricted connectivity of the affected population. Consequently, and in contrast to expectations that rather suggested the emergence of new technological solutions and the influx of new tech actors, humanitarian organisations stuck to trialled and tested solutions.

In relation to my third research question, I showed that there is a clear split amidst the organisations interviewed. This split can be seen in the different modalities of remote management (i.e., remote control, remote delegation, remote support, remote partnership) that vary on the amount of power that has been delegated to local partners or local staff. The organisations who already had a strong partnership established with their local counterparts (i.e. either remote support or remote partnership) were well prepared to shift to remote management and increasingly transferred power. Other organisations were more on the remote control and remote delegation spectrum, meaning they transferred responsibilities, but the remote international staff maintained the power. In sum, there is no indication that the initial expectation on COVID-19 to transform aid and force organisations to localize became true. Rather, remote management enables organisations to continue their work, while maintaining the same status with their partners. Therefore, whether remote management can

be beneficial to the localisation agenda appears to depend on the relationship of organisations with their local partners and local staff themselves, irrespective if they are working remotely or not.

In sum, this research shows that practices of remote management are not limited to conflict areas but are increasingly utilised in a pandemic setting such as COVID-19. The early expectations of a transformation of the sector, that would advance the localisation agenda and increasingly digitalise the response turned out to be misguided. The sector managed to continue using tried and tested digital technologies while maintaining the relationships with local partners in the same place as before the pandemic. Despite providing interesting insights, my research is also subject to a few limitations.

Limitations

While I would argue that my conceptual and methodological approach to this research enabled me to identify the emerging practices, the findings related to the usage of technology, new actors, and the effects this has on humanitarian aid remain limited. This can be attributed to my sampling strategy, as my respondents had limited knowledge on this matter. Indeed, their focus was on programming and continuing activities and not setting up new partnerships with technological actors. Future research on technology usage should incorporate insights from experts in this area and feature interviews with organisations that focus on the digitalisation of aid, such as NetHope. Another limitation is that this research lacks the local perspective, meaning local staff and local organisations and their experiences being remotely managed. Another important point to mention is that this research relied on digital ways to collect data. Fieldwork in the form of either visiting the research site or alternatively observing the work of a humanitarian organisations in presence might have resulted in different findings and impressions for this research. At last, there are a lot of indications that the way humanitarian organisations continued their work through remote management lowered the quality of the response. It was beyond the scope of this research to evaluate the emerging practices such as IVR technology. However, respondents indicated that a lot of secondary effects of the pandemic affected the Rohingya severely and it appears to be the case that the programming was not able to achieve everything. Therefore, I would recommend evaluating remote management in this response, to establish what it can, and cannot achieve, which is also related to my final point:

A final note

As a final note I want to mention, that when the COVID-19 pandemic broke out, it was predicted that large scale outbreaks in refugee camps would be very likely, would overburden the local health care facilities and lead to a lot of infections and potential deaths (Truelove et al., 2020). These predictions also influenced the decision to conduct this research, focusing on one of the biggest and densest refugee camps in the world and investigating how remote management practices will affect aid delivery amidst COVID-19. My interest for this research and the focus of the humanitarian community was clearly on preventing a humanitarian disaster as a direct result from the spread of the virus. However, more than a year later from designing this research and since the beginning of the outbreak it became clear that the primary effects of the virus are not the biggest threat to the refugees. This is what Jan Egeland, the secretary general of the NRC, meant when he argued that humanitarian organisations got something wrong about COVID-19. He stressed that the health impacts of the virus were not the biggest threat to refugees around the world, but it is the secondary effects that impact their lives the most (Egeland, 2021). It is the loss of education, loss of livelihood, reduction of humanitarian services that impact people the most (Gorevan, 2020). In the case of the Rohingya, it is the lost years of education and the risk that children might never return to the classroom (Reidy, 2020). This is where future programming needs to focus on, as humanitarian organisations become increasingly aware of the impacts of COVID-19.

8 References

- Aarvik, P. (2020). Digital Humanitarianism. In *Humanitarianism* (pp. 43–44). Brill.
https://doi.org/10.1163/9789004431140_021
- ACAPS. (2020a). *COVID-19 Impact on humanitarian operations* [Quick survey].
https://www.acaps.org/sites/acaps/files/products/files/20200407_acaps_quick_survey_humanitarian_impact_of_covid-19.pdf
- ACAPS. (2020b). *COVID-19 & Secondary Impacts*.
https://www.acaps.org/sites/acaps/files/products/files/20200707_acaps_covid-19_secondary_impacts_in_rohingya_refugee_camps.pdf
- Althea, R. (2015). *No longer a last resort: A review of the remote programming Landscape* [Working paper].
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/405265/review-remote-prog-landscaping.pdf
- Australian Red Cross & Humanitarian Advisory Group. (2020). *Distance Deployments: Australian Red Cross's Experience with Remote Rapid Response*.
https://humanitarianadvisorygroup.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/HAG_ARC_DistanceDeploymentsv9-1-2.pdf
- Bamfort, T., Kenni, L., & Nakabea, R. (2020). *Local response in a global pandemic: A case study of the Red Cross response to Tropical Cyclone Harold during COVID-19 in Vanuatu and Fiji*. Australian Red Cross.
<https://www.redcross.org.au/getmedia/979a2299-2a98-4cc3-b15b-2abd2c061109/ARC-TC-Harold-Full-report-Electronic-171220.pdf>
- Barbelet, V. (2018). *As local as possible, as international as necessary* [HPG Working Paper]. Humanitarian Policy Group.
https://cdn.odi.org/media/documents/As_local_as_possible_as_international_as_necessary_understanding_capacity_and_comp.pdf
- Barbelet, V., Bryant, J., & Spencer, A. (2021). *Local humanitarian action during Covid-19: Findings from a diary study* [HPG Working Paper]. ODI.
https://cdn.odi.org/media/documents/C19__localisation_diary_methods_WEB.pdf
- Barbelet, V., Bryant, J., & Willitts-King, B. (2020). *'All eyes are on local actors': Covid-19 and local humanitarian action* [Briefing Note]. Humanitarian Policy Group.
https://cdn.odi.org/media/documents/All_eyes_are_on_local_actors_Covid-19_and_local_humanitarian_action.pdf
- Belliveau, J. (2016). Humanitarian Access and Technology: Opportunities and Applications. *Procedia Engineering*, 159, 300–306. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.proeng.2016.08.182>

- Bernard, Russell. H. (2017). *Research Methods in Anthropology: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches* (Sixth Edition). Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.
- Bharania, R., & Silverman, M. (2021, July 8). Protective by design: Safely delivering connectivity as aid. *Humanitarian Law & Policy Blog*. <https://blogs.icrc.org/law-and-policy/2021/07/08/protective-by-design-connectivity-as-aid/>
- Birch, I. (2020). *Remote management programming and donor policy* (p. 27) [K4D Helpdesk Report 926]. Institute of Development Studies. <https://opendocs.ids.ac.uk/opendocs/handle/20.500.12413/15814>
- Bolton, L. (2018). *Interactive Voice Response in Humanitarian Contexts* (p. 8) [K4D Helpdesk Report 487]. Institute of Development Studies. <https://opendocs.ids.ac.uk/opendocs/handle/20.500.12413/14264>
- Bryant, J., Holloway, K., Lough, O., & Willitts-King, B. (2020). *Bridging humanitarian digital divides during Covid-19* [Briefing Note]. Humanitarian Policy Group. https://cdn.odi.org/media/documents/Bridging_humanitarian_digital_divides_during_Covid-19.pdf
- Ceriola, P. (2020, April 8). How organizations are using engageSPARK to fight COVID-19 (Coronavirus). *SMS, Voice, WhatsApp, and Airtime Campaigns in 200+ Countries*. <https://www.engagespark.com/blog/how-organizations-are-using-engagespark-sms-ivr-to-fight-covid-19-coronavirus/>
- Chaudhri, S., Cordes, K., & Miller, N. (2019). Humanitarian health programming and monitoring in inaccessible conflict settings: A literature review. *Journal of International Humanitarian Action*, 4(9). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s41018-019-0055-x>
- Chen, C., & Cook, A. D. B. (2020). *Humanitarian Assistance in the Asia-Pacific during COVID-19* (NTS Insight No. IN20-06). S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/resrep26879>
- Child Protection Sub Sector Bangladesh. (2020). *Guidance note on remote CP Case Management Cox's Bazar*. <https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/en/operations/bangladesh/document/guidance-note-remote-cp-case-management-coxs-bazar>
- Collinson, S., & Duffield, M. (2013). *Paradoxes of presence: Risk management and aid culture in challenging environments*. Humanitarian Policy Group. <https://www.alnap.org/help-library/paradoxes-of-presence-risk-management-and-aid-culture-in-challenging-environments>
- Cox's Bazar Education Sector. (2020). *Back to Learning Adapted Local Guidance for COVID-19 Education Facility Reopening*. <https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/en/operations/bangladesh/document/back-learning-adapted-local-guidance-covid-19-education-facility>

- Cunningham, A. J. (2017). Kidnapping and the limits of acceptance. *Journal of International Humanitarian Action*, 2(4). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s41018-017-0020-5>
- CwC. (2020a). *Meeting Minutes of the CwC Working Group (2 April 2020)*. https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/sites/www.humanitarianresponse.info/files/documents/files/cwc_wg_minutes_20200402.pdf
- CwC. (2020b). *COVID 19: A fight against the Pandemic as well as Infodemic*. <https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/en/operations/bangladesh/document/covid-19-fight-against-pandemic-well-infodemic>
- CwC. (2020c). *Meeting Minutes of the CwC Working Group (15 July 2020)*. https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/sites/www.humanitarianresponse.info/files/documents/files/cwc_wg_minutes_20200715.pdf
- CwC. (2020d). *Meeting Minutes of the CwC Working Group (12 August 2020)*. https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/sites/www.humanitarianresponse.info/files/documents/files/cwc_wg_minutes_20200812.pdf
- Dahab, M., van Zandvoort, K., Flasche, S., Warsame, A., Ratnayake, R., Favas, C., Spiegel, P. B., Waldman, R. J., & Checchi, F. (2020). COVID-19 control in low-income settings and displaced populations: What can realistically be done? *Conflict and Health*, 14(54). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s13031-020-00296-8>
- Danish Refugee Council. (2015). *Remote management in humanitarian operations—Lessons learned from Libya and beyond* [Evaluation/Learning Brief #8]. <https://www.alnap.org/help-library/evaluationlearning-brief-8-remote-management-in-humanitarian-operations-lessons-learned>
- Dijkzeul, D., & Sandvik, K. B. (2019). A world in turmoil: Governing risk, establishing order in humanitarian crises. *Disasters*, 43(Suppl 2), 85–108. <https://doi.org/10.1111/disa.12330>
- Donini, A., & Maxwell, D. (2013). From face-to-face to face-to-screen: Remote management, effectiveness and accountability of humanitarian action in insecure environments. *International Review of Red Cross*, 95(890), 383–413.
- Duclos, D., Ekzayez, A., Ghaddar, F., Checchi, F., & Blanchet, K. (2019). Localisation and cross-border assistance to deliver humanitarian health services in North-West Syria: A qualitative inquiry for The Lancet-AUB Commission on Syria. *Conflict and Health*, 13(20). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s13031-019-0207-z>
- Duffield, M. (2001). Governing the Borderlands: Decoding the Power of Aid. *Disasters*, 25(4), 308–320. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-7717.00180>
- Duffield, M. (2012). Challenging environments: Danger, resilience and the aid industry. *Security Dialogue*, 43(5), 475–492. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0967010612457975>

- Duffield, M. (2013). *Disaster-resilience in the network age access-denial and the rise of cyber-humanitarianism* (DIIS Working Paper 2013:23). Danish Institute for International Studies. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/resrep13344>
- Duffield, M. (2016). The resilience of the ruins: Towards a critique of digital humanitarianism. *Resilience*, 4(3), 147–165. <https://doi.org/10.1080/21693293.2016.1153772>
- Egeland, J. (2021, January 7). *What we got wrong about Covid and refugees*. Norwegian Refugee Council. <https://www.nrc.no/opinions-all/what-we-got-wrong-about-covid-and-refugees/>
- Egeland, J., Harmer, A., & Stoddard, A. (2011). *To Stay and Deliver: Good practice for humanitarians in complex security environments* (Policy and Studies Series). Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. https://www.unocha.org/sites/unocha/files/Stay_and_Deliver.pdf
- Elkahlout, G., & Elgibali, K. (2020). From Theory to Practice: A Study of Remotely Managed Localised Humanitarian Action in Syria. *Journal of Peacebuilding & Development*, 15(2), 235–249. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1542316620922503>
- Emmens, B., & Clayton, M. (2017). *Localisation of Aid—Are INGOs Walking the Talk? Shifting The Power*. https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/WTT_FINAL.pdf
- ETC. (2020). *Minutes-Global ETC Joint Teleconference*. Emergency Telecommunication Cluster. <https://www.etcluster.org/document/global-etc-joint-teleconference-minutes-bangladesh-car-libya-nigeria-syria-yemen-september>
- Fabre, C. (2017). *Localising the response* (The Commitments into Action Series). OECD. <https://www.oecd.org/development/humanitarian-donors/docs/Localisingtheresponse.pdf>
- Fassin, D. (2007). Humanitarianism as a Politics of Life. *Public Culture*, 19(3), 499–520. <https://doi.org/10.1215/08992363-2007-007>
- Fast, L., & Waugaman, A. (2016). *Fighting Ebola with Information: Learning from Data and Information in the West Africa Ebola Response*. USAID. [https://www.research.manchester.ac.uk/portal/en/publications/fighting-ebola-with-information\(e5a5b3cd-9e4f-422a-868f-4f8db9308af3\).html](https://www.research.manchester.ac.uk/portal/en/publications/fighting-ebola-with-information(e5a5b3cd-9e4f-422a-868f-4f8db9308af3).html)
- Fereday, J., & Muir-Cochrane, E. (2006). Demonstrating Rigor Using Thematic Analysis: A Hybrid Approach of Inductive and Deductive Coding and Theme Development. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 5(1), 80–92. <https://doi.org/10.1177/160940690600500107>

- Fradejas-García, I. (2019). Humanitarian remoteness: Aid work practices from ‘little Aleppo’. *Social Anthropology*, 27(2), 286–303. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1469-8676.12651>
- Gazi, T., & Gazis, A. (2020). *Humanitarian aid in the age of COVID-19: A review of big data crisis analytics and the General Data Protection Regulation*. 102(913), 75–94. <https://doi.org/doi:10.1017/S1816383121000084>
- Gorevan, D. (2020). *Downward Spiral: The economic impact of Covid-19 on refugees and displaced people*. Norwegian Refugee Council. https://www.nrc.no/globalassets/pdf/reports/nrc_downward-spiral_covid-19_report.pdf
- Gostin, L. O., Sircar, N. R., & Friedman, E. A. (2019). Fighting Novel Diseases amidst Humanitarian Crises. *Hastings Center Report*, 49, 6–9. <https://doi.org/10.1002/hast.970>
- HAG & CARE. (2020). *Remote humanitarian management and programming: Guidance note* (Work in the Age of COVID-19 Guidance Note Series). Humanitarian Advisory Group & CARE International. <https://www.alnap.org/help-library/remote-humanitarian-management-and-programming-guidance-note>
- Hamilton, Z. (2021). *COVID-19 and digital humanitarian action: Trends, risks and the path forward*. GSMA. https://www.gsma.com/mobilefordevelopment/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/M4H_COVID-19-Report.pdf
- Hansen, G. (2008). *Operational Modalities in Iraq* (Briefing Paper No. 2). NGO Coordination Committee in Iraq. <https://www.alnap.org/help-library/operational-modalities-in-iraq>
- Hofman, M., & Pérache, A. H. (2014). From remote control to remote management, and onwards to remote encouragement? The evolution of MSF’s operational models in Somalia and Afghanistan. *International Review of the Red Cross*, 96(895–896), 1177–1191. Cambridge Core. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S1816383115000065>
- Holt, C., Hurni-Cranston, X., Ahmed, L. M., & Mastroianni, F. (2020). Data collection: Lessons learned from the Covid-19 pandemic in Rohingya refugee camps, Cox’s Bazar, Bangladesh. *Humanitarian Alternatives*, 15, 79–93.
- Howe, K., Stites, E., & Chudacoff, D. (2015). *Breaking the Hourglass: Partnerships in Remote Management Settings—The Cases of Syria and Iraqi Kurdistan*. Feinstein International Center. <https://fic.tufts.edu/publication-item/organization-partnerships-remote-settings/>
- Humanitarian Data Exchange. (n.d.). *Data Responsibility for COVID-19—Humanitarian Data Exchange*. Retrieved 14 May 2021, from <https://data.humdata.org/faqs/covid>

- ICRC. (2021, May 27). *Digital Dilemmas Debate #5: From Food to Wifi - Connectivity as Aid* [Webinar]. International Committee of the Red Cross. <https://www.icrc.org/en/digitharium/digital-dilemmas-debate-5>
- IFRC. (2020). *Remote Missions during COVID-19 Operation Lessons to be learned*. <https://hlc2021.delegateconnect.co/talks/distance-deployments-australian-red-cross-and-ifrc-s-experience-in-remote-rapid-response>
- Ingram, S. (2020). *Lives Upended: How COVID-19 threatens the futures of 600 million South Asian children*. UNICEF. <https://www.unicef.org/rosa/reports/lives-upended>
- IOM. (n.d.). *COVID INFO LINE : 10146 Rohingya pick up COVID-19 information*. Retrieved 27 April 2021, from https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/sites/www.humanitarianresponse.info/files/documents/files/covid_info_line_pilot_results.4_0.pdf
- IOM. (2020a, April 14). *Coordinated Preparation in Full Swing to Combat COVID-19 in Cox's Bazar Refugee Camps*. <https://www.iom.int/news/coordinated-preparation-full-swing-combat-covid-19-coxs-bazar-refugee-camps>
- IOM. (2020b). *Regional Strategic Preparedness and Response Plan COVID-19*. https://www.iom.int/sites/default/files/country_appeal/file/iom_roap_regional_donor_appeal_final.pdf
- IOM. (2020c). *COVID INFO LINE: Weekly IM OUTPUT*. https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/sites/www.humanitarianresponse.info/files/documents/files/covid_info_line_1.6.2020.pdf
- IOM. (2020d, June 5). *COVID Info Line: Enhancing Information Flows through Interactive Voice Response Technology in Bangladesh*. <https://www.iom.int/news/covid-info-line-enhancing-information-flows-through-interactive-voice-response-technology>
- IOM. (2020e, June 12). *Rohingya Cyclists Share Key COVID19 Information Door to Door in Cox's Bazar Refugee Camps*. <https://www.iom.int/news/rohingya-cyclists-share-key-covid19-information-door-door-coxs-bazar-refugee-camps>
- IOM. (2020f). *IOM Needs and Population Monitoring: COVID-19 NPM-IVR Needs Assessment* [Survey Analysis: July 2020]. <https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/en/operations/bangladesh/document/needs-and-population-monitoring-npm-covid-19-ivr-needs-assessment>
- IOM. (2020g). *IOM Needs and Population Monitoring: COVID-19 NPM-IVR Needs Assessment Round 2* [Survey Analysis: September 2020]. https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/sites/www.humanitarianresponse.info/files/documents/files/npm-ivr_needs_assessment_report_r2.pdf

- Ireland, P. (2020, December 1). *The technology partners helping to give displaced people a voice*. NRC. <https://www.nrc.no/perspectives/2020/the-technology-partners-helping-to-give-displaced-people-a-voice/>
- ISCG. (n.d.). *Joint Response Plan for Rohingya Humanitarian Crisis—Mid Term Review—January to July 2020*. Retrieved 10 December 2020, from <https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/en/document/2020-joint-response-plan-rohingya-humanitarian-crisis-mid-term-review-january-july-2020>
- ISCG. (2020a). *Joint Response Plan Rohingya Humanitarian Crisis—January to December*. <https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/en/operations/bangladesh/document/2020-joint-response-plan-rohingya-humanitarian-crisis-january-0>
- ISCG. (2020b). *Bangladesh: Cox's Bazar refugee response 4W*. https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/sites/www.humanitarianresponse.info/files/documents/files/200831_4w_final_english.pdf
- ISCG, ACAPS, CARE, UN Women, & Oxfam. (2020). *In the Shadows of the Pandemic: The Gendered Impact of COVID-19 On Rohingya and Host Communities / HumanitarianResponse*. <https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/en/operations/bangladesh/document/shadows-pandemic-gendered-impact-covid-19-rohingya-and-host>
- ISCG, IOM, UNRC Bangladesh, & UNHCR. (2020). *COVID-19 RESPONSE PLAN Addendum to the Joint Response Plan 2020 Rohingya Humanitarian Crisis / April-December 2020*. <https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/en/operations/bangladesh/document/covid-19-response-plan-addendum-joint-response-plan-2020200705>
- Jackson, A., & Zyck, S. A. (2017). *PRESENCE & PROXIMITY - to stay and deliver, five years on*. NRC, OCHA, JSIA. https://www.humanitarianoutcomes.org/sites/default/files/publications/presence_and_proximity.pdf
- Jacobsen, K. L., & Fast, L. (2019). Rethinking access: How humanitarian technology governance blurs control and care. *Disasters*, 43, S151–S168. <https://doi.org/10.1111/disa.12333>
- Kalkman, J. P. (2018). Practices and consequences of using humanitarian technologies in volatile aid settings. *Journal of International Humanitarian Action*, 3(1). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s41018-018-0029-4>
- Karim, N. (2020, August 24). Bangladesh to lift Rohingya internet ban as anniversary nears. *Reuters*. <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-bangladesh-refugees-internet-idUSKBN25K1Z6>

- Kuner, C., & Marelli, M. (Eds.). (2020). Connectivity as aid. In *Handbook on data protection in humanitarian action* (2nd ed.). International Committee of the Red Cross.
- Lau, L. S., Samari, G., Moresky, R. T., Casey, S. E., Kachur, S. P., Roberts, L. F., & Zard, M. (2020). COVID-19 in humanitarian settings and lessons learned from past epidemics. *Nature Medicine*, 26, 647–648. <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41591-020-0851-2>
- Madianou, M. (2020). A Second-Order Disaster? Digital Technologies During the COVID-19 Pandemic. *Social Media + Society*, 6(3), 1–5. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2056305120948168>
- Madianou, M., Longboan, L., & Ong, J. C. (2015). Finding a Voice Through Humanitarian Technologies? Communication Technologies and Participation in Disaster Recovery. *International Journal of Communication*, 9, 3020–3028.
- Maietta, M., Kennedy, E., & Bourse, F. (2017). *The future of aid: INGOs in 2030*. IARAN. https://static1.squarespace.com/static/593eb9e7b8a79bc4102fd8aa/t/5eedad7207f4ce0909946e4d/1592634837158/the_future_of_aid_ingos_in_2030.pdf
- Martin, A., & Taylor, L. (2021). Exclusion and inclusion in identification: Regulation, displacement and data justice. *Information Technology for Development*, 27(1), 50–66. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02681102.2020.1811943>
- Maxwell, J. A. (2012). Chapter 5. Methods: What Will You Actually Do? In *Qualitative Research Design: An interactive Approach* (3rd ed., Vol. 41). SAGE Publications, Inc. <https://us.sagepub.com/en-us/nam/qualitative-research-design/book234502>
- Miles, M. B., Huberman, A. M., & Saldaña, J. (2014). *Qualitative Data Analysis A Methods Sourcebook* (3rd ed.). SAGE Publications, Inc. <https://us.sagepub.com/en-us/nam/qualitative-data-analysis/book246128>
- Mock, N., Singhal, G., Olander, W., Pasquier, J.-B., & Morrow, N. (2016). mVAM: A New Contribution to the Information Ecology of Humanitarian Work. *Procedia Engineering*, 159, 217–221. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.proeng.2016.08.164>
- NetHope. (2020). *Data & Connectivity in the Rohingya Refugee Camps*. <https://solutionscenter.nethope.org/program-areas/connectivity-infrastructure/bangladesh-connectivity-assessment>
- OCHA, IFRC, & ICRC. (2020). *TIP SHEET ON THE RESPONSIBLE USE OF ONLINE CONFERENCING TOOLS*. https://data.humdata.org/dataset/2048a947-5714-4220-905b-e662cbcd14c8/resource/3b7dccf5-cfda-4d64-9af6-b63f861ac593/download/4459_002_tip-sheet-responsible-use-of-online-conferencing-tools_web_1.pdf
- Office of the Refugee Relief and Repatriation Commissioner. (2020). *Rohingya refugee camp operations: Essential Programmes in light of COVID-19*.

https://rrrc.portal.gov.bd/sites/default/files/files/rrrc.portal.gov.bd/notices/c3aece34_0550_4b4d_b33c_e8864272ada9/2020-03-25-16-34-21d19f130456961e35a25dbd1e5ef780.pdf

Pillai, S., & Zivera, R. (n.d.). *COVID 19 Response Strategy, 2020 Reaching Every Learner*. Cox's Bazar Education Sector. Retrieved 14 April 2021, from <https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/en/operations/bangladesh/document/education-sector-covid-19-strategy-2020>

Q&A: Humanitarian operations, the spread of harmful information and data protection: In conversation with Delphine van Solinge, the ICRC's Protection Advisor on Digital Risks for Populations in Armed Conflict, and Massimo Marelli, Head of the ICRC's Data Protection Office. (2020). *International Review of the Red Cross*, 102(913), 27–41. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S1816383120000429>

Raymond, N. A. (2017, December 8). Humanitarian data breaches: The real scandal is our collective inaction. *The New Humanitarian*. <https://www.thenewhumanitarian.org/opinion/2017/12/08/humanitarian-data-breaches-real-scandal-our-collective-inaction>

REACH. (2021). *Bangladesh—Assessment of the Education Sector Response to the Rohingya Crisis*. https://www.impact-repository.org/document/reach/1a8e426c/REACH_Education-Sector-Assessment_Thematic-Briefs_March_2021.pdf

Reidy, K. (2020, June 2). *In search for education for Rohingya children*. UNICEF Bangladesh. <https://www.unicef.org/bangladesh/en/stories/search-education-rohingya-children>

RRRC. (n.d.). *Community facing key messages on essential services and assistance*. Retrieved 26 July 2021, from https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/sites/www.humanitarianresponse.info/files/documents/files/community_facing_key_messages_on_essential_services_and_assistance_for_rohingya_population_english_v5.pdf

RRRC. (2020). *Rohingya refugee camp operations: Restricted Programmes in light of COVID-19*. http://rrrc.gov.bd/sites/default/files/files/rrrc.portal.gov.bd/notices/48cc8a3a_58ab_42cf_93dc_b87a70a3d87d/2020-05-10-11-10-97a8138de4e490d8fe88a6dc393379f7.pdf

Saldaña, J. (2016). *The Coding Manual for Qualitative Researchers* (3rd ed.). SAGE Publications, Inc.

Sandvik, K. B. (2017). Now is the time to deliver: Looking for humanitarian innovation's theory of change. *Journal of International Humanitarian Action*, 2(8). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s41018-017-0023-2>

- Sandvik, K. B., Gabrielsen Jumbert, M., Karlsrud, J., & Kaufmann, M. (2014). Humanitarian technology: A critical research agenda. *International Review of the Red Cross*, 96(893), 219–242. Cambridge Core. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S1816383114000344>
- Shaqodoon & Oxfam Somalia. (n.d.). *COVID-19 Hotline: Informing people about COVID-19 in Somalia*. Retrieved 5 October 2021, from <http://resources.hygienehub.info/en/articles/4512095-covid-19-hotline-informing-people-about-covid-19-in-somalia>
- Solomon, S. (2020, May 29). Humanitarian access in the time of coronavirus: We adapt, we innovate and we adapt some more. *Medium*. <https://medium.com/humanitarian-dispatches/humanitarian-access-in-the-time-of-coronavirus-we-adapt-we-innovate-and-we-adapt-some-more-ffae3efdec14>
- Stoddard, A., Harmer, A., & DiDomenico, V. (2009). *Providing aid in insecure environments: 2009 Update* (HPG Policy Brief No. 34). Humanitarian Policy Group. <https://www.humanitarianoutcomes.org/publications/providing-aid-insecure-environments-2009-update>
- Stoddard, A., Harmer, A., & Renouf, J. S. (2010). *Once Removed: Lessons and challenges in remote management of humanitarian operations for insecure areas*. Humanitarian Outcomes. <https://www.alnap.org/help-library/once-removed-lessons-and-challenges-in-remote-management-of-humanitarian-operations-for>
- Technology Task Team. (n.d.). *Guidelines for planning and implementing technology solutions during COVID19 response and beyond*. Cox's Bazar Education Sector. Retrieved 19 August 2021, from https://docs.google.com/document/d/1K8UPgS6NGTlp-XLFxduS9BNIJst1L-crtvc23HHdIfI/edit?usp=embed_facebook
- Transcription. (2018). In B. B. Frey (Ed.), *The SAGE Encyclopedia of Educational Research, Measurement, and Evaluation* (Vols 1–4). SAGE Publications, Inc. <https://doi.org/10.4135/9781506326139.n706>
- Truelove, S., Abraham, O., Altare, C., Lauer, S. A., Grantz, K. H., Azman, A. S., & Spiegel, P. (2020). The potential impact of COVID-19 in refugee camps in Bangladesh and beyond: A modeling study. *PLOS Medicine*, 17(6), e1003144. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pmed.1003144>
- UNHCR. (n.d.). *Factsheet-Protection as of December 2020*. Rohingya Refugee Response. Retrieved 17 April 2021, from <https://data2.unhcr.org/en/documents/details/84918>
- UNHCR. (2020a). *UNHCR Bangladesh-COVID 19 Preparation/Response- 15 May 2020 (#3)*. <https://data2.unhcr.org/en/documents/details/76630>
- UNHCR. (2020b). *Factsheet- Field & Site Management (30 June 2020)*. <https://data2.unhcr.org/en/documents/details/78342>

- UNHCR. (2020c). *Post-Distribution Monitoring Shelter and Non-Food items*.
<https://data2.unhcr.org/en/documents/details/83254>
- UNHCR. (2020d). *Emerging Practices: WASH and COVID-19 Field Practices*.
<https://reporting.unhcr.org/node/27653>
- UNHCR. (2020e). *Factsheet- Field & Site Management (31 August 2020)*.
<https://data2.unhcr.org/en/documents/details/82815>
- UNHCR. (2021). *UNHCR Bangladesh-COVID 19 Preparation/Response- 31 December 2020*. <https://data2.unhcr.org/en/documents/details/84361>
- UNICEF. (2020a, May 15). *Geneva Palais briefing note on UNICEF response to COVID-19 in Rohingya refugee camps as first coronavirus case confirmed*.
<https://www.unicef.org/press-releases/geneva-palais-briefing-note-unicef-response-covid-19-rohingya-refugee-camps-first>
- UNICEF. (2020b). *Bangladesh: Humanitarian Situation Report No. 54: Mid Year 2020*.
<https://reliefweb.int/report/bangladesh/bangladesh-humanitarian-situation-report-no-54-mid-year-2020>
- UNICEF. (2021a). *Bangladesh: Humanitarian Situation Report No. 55: 1 January to 31 December 2020*. <https://reliefweb.int/report/bangladesh/bangladesh-humanitarian-situation-report-no-55-1-january-31-december-2020>
- UNICEF. (2021b). *Bangladesh Appeal—Revision 1*.
<https://www.unicef.org/media/105026/file/2021-HAC-Bangladesh-July-Revision.pdf>
- Vielajus, M., & Bonis-Charancle, J.-M. (2020). Aid localisation: Current state of the debate and potential impacts of the Covid-19 crisis. *Humanitarian Alternatives*, 14, 150–161.
- Wells, A. (n.d.). *Keeping Displaced Communities Safe and Healthy As COVID-19 Pandemic Takes Hold*. Retrieved 14 April 2021, from <https://storyteller.iom.int/stories/keeping-displaced-communities-safe-and-healthy-covid-19-pandemic-takes-hold>
- Willitts-King, B., Bryant, J., & Holloway, K. (2019). *The humanitarian 'digital divide'* [HPG Working Paper]. Humanitarian Policy Group.
https://cdn.odi.org/media/documents/The_humanitarian_digital_divide.pdf
- Wilson, C., & Jumbert, M. G. (2018). The new informatics of pandemic response: Humanitarian technology, efficiency, and the subtle retreat of national agency. *Journal of International Humanitarian Action*, 3(8). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s41018-018-0036-5>
- Women's Refugee Commission & Warchild Canada. (2020). *Guidance on Establishing Remote Monitoring and Management of GBV Programming in the Context of the COVID-19 Pandemic*. <http://www.womensrefugeecommission.org/research->

resources/guidance-establishing-remote-monitoring-management-gender-based-violence-programming-covid-19-pandemic/

World Food Programme. (n.d.). Finally, IVR calls coming through loud and clear. *Elrha*. Retrieved 5 October 2021, from <https://www.elrha.org/project-blog/finally-ivr-calls-coming-loud-clear/>

WV Bangladesh. (2020). *Rohingya Refugee Response COVID-19 Report*. World Vision. <https://www.wvi.org/sites/default/files/2020-10/Rohingya%20Refugee%20Response%20COVID-19%20Report.pdf>

Zyck, S. A. (2012). *Remote Control Project Management in Insecure Environments*. Civil-military Fusion Centre. <https://www.alnap.org/help-library/remote-control-project-management-in-insecure-environments>

9 Appendix

9.1 List of interviews

Table 1

Interview	Type of organisation (local/international)	Position interviewee	Bangladeshi national?	Implementation (self/indirect through local partner)	Sector	Activities considered essential/non-essential?
Interview 1 05.01.2021	local	Director of humanitarian programming	Yes	self	Child protection, CwC, GBV, NFI/ Shelter	Essential
Interview 2 19.11.2020	International	Head of Cox's Bazar Office	No	Indirect through local partner	WASH, NFI/Shelter	Essential
Interview 3 08.12.2020	International	Head of Cox's Bazar Office	No	Indirect through local partner	CWC	Essential
Interview 4 21.01.2021	International	Regional manager	No	Indirect through local partner	Health	Essential
Interview 5 20.01.2021	International	Innovation manager	No	self	Education	Non-essential
Interview 6 14.06.2021	International	Programming manager CWC	No	self	CWC	Essential
Interview 7 11.01.2021	International	Regional manager	No	self	Health	Essential
Interview 8 22.06.2021	International	Education programming manager	No	self	Education, HLP, GBV, NFI/ Shelter	Non-essential