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AN ANALYSIS OF THE POTENTIAL BENEFITS OF CREATING SPECIALIZED UNITED NATIONS EMERGENCY OPERATION CENTERS IN THE DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

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AN ANALYSIS OF THE POTENTIAL BENEFITS OF CREATING SPECIALIZED UNITED NATIONS’ EMERGENCY OPERATION CENTERS IN THE DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

A Master’s Thesis

Submitted to the Faculty

of

American Public University

by

Esther Waigumo Ngotho

In Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements of the Degree

of

Master of Emergency & Disaster Management

August 2015

American Public University

Charles Town, WV
DEDICATION

To mother Africa, the continent that gave birth to me….

Source: http://iharare.co.zw
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This project is largely due to the work of the late Jomo Kenyatta, the founding father of Kenya in his book “Facing Mt Kenya,” which first gave me the urge to understand different people through cultural anthropology: the need to see a people’s existence from their own point of view; to see their way of life from their own eyes…

I am also indebted to Dr. Cuthbert, the instructor who tirelessly inspired me throughout my Master’s program at APUS. I owe him a train load of thanks for having faith in me even when I did not have faith in myself…. To him, I shall always be grateful!
ABSTRACT

OF THE THESIS

AN ANALYSIS OF THE POTENTIAL BENEFITS OF CREATING SPECIALIZED UNITED NATIONS’ EMERGENCY OPERATION CENTERS IN THE DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

by

Esther Waigumo Ngotho

American Public University System, August 1, 2015

Charles Town, West Virginia

Dr. Randall Cuthbert, Thesis Professor

Three case studies from the developing parts of the world were investigated in an attempt to understand how each country’s capacity to respond to disaster is linked to its social, economic and political factors. Further, the examination of terrorism, spread of pandemics and global warming revealed that globalization has resulted into an interconnectedness that leads to spillover effects of disasters from one country to another, pointing to a need for the world to cooperate in international emergency management. Currently, the UN is the most suitable international body that can advance crises’ management in the world as a human right for all nations. It has the capacity to design and codify invaluable principles for responding to international disasters by offering voluntary membership to countries that meet predetermined conditions of participation for disaster relief programs. Obviously, the developing countries would benefit meaningfully from such operations if a way to even out wealth disparities between the rich and the poor nations was found, and a system for incorporating automatic request for international assistance once their national response plans became overloaded was devised.
However, the structure and funding of these systems were issues that this study recommended for further research.
Table of Contents

ABSTRACT .................................................................................................................. 5
INTRODUCTION .......................................................................................................... 8
LITERATURE REVIEW .............................................................................................. 13
METHODOLOGY ....................................................................................................... 48
DISCUSSION ............................................................................................................. 53
CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS ............................................................. 61
REFERENCES .......................................................................................................... 64

LIST OF FIGURES AND TABLES

Figure 1: The Disaster Cycle .................................................................................. 18
Figure 2: The modified OODA loop ........................................................................ 21
Figure 3: OSOCC management structure ............................................................... 25
Figure 4: Total number of disasters by year 1994 - 2003 ......................................... 27
Figure 5: World map indicating the categories of Human Development Index ........ 29
Figure 6: 2014 Human Development Index ........................................................... 30
Figure 7: Areas impacted by Ebola ......................................................................... 38
Figure 8: Effects of Climate Change ...................................................................... 44
Table 1: Countries with Widespread Transmission .................................................. 37
Table 2: Countries with Former Widespread Transmission and Current, Established Control Measures ................................................................. 38
Table 3: Cases in Urban Settings with Effective Control Measures ....................... 38
Table 4: Previously Affected Countries .................................................................... 39
An Analysis of the Potential Benefits of Creating Specialized United Nations Emergency Operation Centers in the Developing Countries

The object of this study is contemporary in nature, form and foci, and it will be based on the future of international emergency management with regard to terrorism, spread of pandemics and global warming; the three most recurrent identifiable causes of emergencies in the world today. It will be proposed that UN emergency centers be fully equipped and maintained to coordinate international emergency responses through employment of current information and status of emergencies in the developing countries.

Statement of the Problem

This study visualizes a case of specializing and decentralizing the UN emergency management operations which should be made both urgent and highly prioritized by reason of the lethality of the above mentioned epidemiological sources of disasters. There is a growing need for emergency management to be standardized and coordinated efficiently by a specially mandated UN agency that can codify the principles and techniques of international emergency response operations. This project therefore, proposes that the existence of permanent United Nations’ Emergency Operation Centers (UNEOCs) be established at identified geographical locations around the world to ease and decentralize the coordination of emergency operations especially should these occur in the developing nations. The reason for the creation of such EOCs would be to assign rights and place responsibilities on individual countries involved in order for them to set up trained and equipped disaster management units and also to help their people build capacities to resist and/or cope with disaster impacts. Thus, it will be argued that specialization and decentralization of UN emergency operations will cause member states to respond more rapidly and efficiently in the event of disasters.
The researcher’s goal in this project is to advocate for an ideal UNEOC (an information coordination center) that would be replicated at strategic geographic locations if not in all UN member states. The hope in this exercise is that:

1. All member states will comply with requirements for establishing successful EOCs in their respective countries.

2. That various thresholds will be determined and established, upon which when reached, the member states will receive automatic help and involvement from the UN during an emergency response.

3. Speedy efficient emergency management response will be recognized as a human right and will be directed and guided as such.

4. That the research will provide ideas on how to bridge the gap between the rich and poor nations more seamlessly for the purpose of creating universal emergency management responses.

Each of the important issues listed below will be treated as well as examined in great length and detail, and the application of the final product will depend on the conditions of each individual country. The aim is to make it adaptable to that country, as each country will be mandated to research and familiarize itself with its own conditions. As has previously been observed in emergency management, it should be recognized that emergencies and disasters occur in social contexts and have social consequences (Britton, 1992; Drabek, 1989). It is, therefore, pivotal that the UN gets a strong understanding of the social structures and communication processes within the culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) countries of the world in order to develop sound engagement opportunities with leaders of those countries. It is however, important for an agency of emergency management to be cognizant of the fact that
many CALD countries demonstrate great resilience, as they often possess a range of experiences and skills in dealing with their own emergencies. It is also significant that such an agency draw on the countries’ competencies during the phases of emergency management in the event of an emergency. The issues that are central to this project include:

i. Definition of terms: disaster, vulnerability, resiliency and emergency management

ii. The U. S. Emergency Management System

iii. The meaning and Importance of Emergency Operations Center

iv. Phases of Emergency Management

v. The involvement of the UN in international Emergency Management

vi. The Human Development Index

vii. The Global impact of Terrorism, Pandemics, and Climate Change

viii. Disparities in Disaster Impacts between the Developed and Developing countries

**Purpose**

The purpose of this study is to determine whether specializing and decentralizing the UN emergency operations and bringing international emergency coordination centers close to the points of incidences would contribute greatly to making emergency responses in the developing countries more effective and efficient in mitigating loss of life and property.

**Significance**

The significance of this study is to develop and recommend a plan in support for the specialization and decentralization of the UN emergency operations that can be used in planning and developing the organizational functions, roles, and responsibilities for an emergency response within the all-hazards context of a potential UN Incident Management System (UNIM) and an International Response Framework (IRF). The benefit to the UN would be to inform them
of the roles and responsibilities of other responder agencies for various levels of incidents and to ensure easy and rapid coordination of emergencies as they arise at any point around the globe. This would facilitate faster and localized responses to incidences as they occur. The study would be important to member states as it would establish interrelated linkages with partner states for training, cooperation and preparedness for any arising emergencies.

**Research design and Scope**

This study will focus on the operations of UN and select member states as case studies and involve the implication of the process of emergency management both for the UN and in the member states. The research would be designed to use case studies in order to get specific and targeted input from key and relevant “informants.” The project will focus its analysis on the shortcomings of the United Nations Disaster Assessment and Coordination (UNDAC). This specialized agency is under the UN Secretary General and is charged with the duty of assessment, coordination and information management in emergency response missions (UNOCHA, 2014).

**Limitations**

The major limitations of this study is that only three emergency case studies from the poor developing countries will be used in the hope of being able to generalize the findings. Besides, the project will be guided by reference to only three significant hazards: pandemics, climate change and terrorism which have provided new challenges as well as complicated old ones in the developing countries. Also, in this report, secondary data will be used to show that disasters have been affecting developing countries in worse ways than the developed nations due to high level of socio-economic vulnerabilities, even though there may be other significantly important vulnerabilities.
Literature Review

The number of all natural and manmade disasters has steadily gone upwards in many parts of the world making adverse events more intense and more frequent, a situation that is only likely to get worse. This frequency, magnitude and intensity is even made more debilitating by global warming, terrorism and pandemics (Komino, 2014).

Definition of Key Terms

There is no single accepted or undisputed definition of the term “disaster” but although different writers and organizations defined it in different ways, they nevertheless agreed that it denoted occurrence of loss of human life and property as well as deterioration of infrastructure, both of which resulted in human suffering to an extent that the victims required extraordinary response and assistance from outside their community or country in dealing with the ensuing crisis (WHO, 1999; American Red Cross, as quoted in Langan & James, 2005, pp. 4; Smith & Maurer, 2005). Likewise, the UN also defined a disaster as “a serious disruption of functioning of society involving widespread human, material, economic, or environmental losses and impacts, which exceeds the ability of the affected community or society to cope using its own resources” (UNISDR, 2007, pp. 17). The caveat placed in these definitions was that for a crisis to be recognized as a disaster, its impact had to have the capability to overwhelm the response capacity of a community.

According to (UNISDR, 2007) complex global disasters occurred when different hazards, conditions of vulnerability and insufficient capacity or measures to reduce potential negative consequences of risk, dynamically interacted in an interdependent world. On one hand is vulnerability which is the inability to cope with a disaster or more precisely the decreased capacity of a system, community or society potentially exposed to hazards, to adapt by resisting
or changing in order to reach and maintain an acceptable level of functioning and structure. On the other hand, is resilience which is the actual capacity of people to cope with disasters (Cutter, 2003; Komino, 2014).

The meaning of resilience has continued to evolve over the years as has different disciplines that make reference to it, but there is no consensus on a single definition. Social researchers viewed it as an in born personal trait that is only useful after a short-lived trauma, while later definitions presented it as a dynamic process that kicked in during a natural disaster situation. Subsequent definitions however, have been broadened to include systems such as families and communities, countries and now the globe. Accordingly, the definitions of resiliency further expanded to include the ability to absorb the shock from human ecology through adaptation to hazards. This human ecology consisted of potential psychological, social, medical and economic harm and losses which although were constructed socially were triggered by the impact of hazards. When and if this happens, the complex phenomenon of “vulnerability”, an antonym of capability and resilience is created. It is therefore not possible to deal with the word “resiliency” without making reference to the word “vulnerability” and vice versa. Although the two words are inextricably interwoven, it is desirable to have resilience and undesirable to have vulnerability from an emergency management’s point of view (Herrman et al., 2001; Kirmayer, Dandeneau, Marshall, Phillips & Williamson, 2011; Pooley & Cohen, 2010).

Harrald (2005) and Quarantelli (2005) insisted that there was a progressive development of an emergency to a disaster and then to a catastrophe, when they attempted to offer a distinction between the three events based on their size, breadth of damages and the extent of preparedness that would be required to deal with each one. Their attempt to differentiate between a disaster, an emergency and a catastrophe however, proved futile because it was not clear at what point a
routine emergency changed into a disaster or a disaster into a catastrophe or what attributes and characteristics could be identified and recognizable in each of the three states. Guterman (2005) factored into these categories the fact that all adverse events are subjective to the perceptions of the people they impact. In the real sense, one community’s emergency or disaster may be seen as catastrophic in another community, meaning that what qualifies a traumatic event as an emergency or a disaster or a catastrophe is personal to the victim. In view of the above notions, disaster experts seemed to agree that these events are social in nature and can only be defined from the eyes of the society in which they occur (Dynes, 1988; Cutter, Boruff & Shirley, 2003). 

Before plunging deeper into the project, it was also found important to acknowledge the controversy that the word “emergency” is capable of sparking. The Merriam-Webster Online dictionary suggested that it is a reactive word whose meaning is most suited to what first responders would react to (Merriam-Webster's online dictionary, n.d.), but in this study, it will be used interchangeably with the word “disaster.” It should however be noted that this study does not claim that total control of that which it refers to “disaster” is possible. This researcher agreed that the term “emergency management” is both an oxymoron and a misnomer, but is a term that is widely accepted and used to encompass the total sum of all those activities necessary to build, sustain, and improve the capacity to mitigate against, prepare for, respond to, and recover from potential and actual natural and manmade disasters (McEntire, 2004). 

The U. S. Emergency System 

The US has a well-developed emergency management that employs the use of National Response Framework (NRF) and National Incident Management System (NIMS), the two guiding systems that were used for reference in this project. These systems are used at the local, state and federal levels (FEMA, 2008 & DHS, 2008). In the U. S. emergency management, these
levels are hierarchically arranged and it was upon them that the discussion of a fourth
international level of emergency management was based.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (2008) and DHS (2008) established that both
NRF and NIMS are indispensable to disaster management because they provided both the
doctrinal framework for incident management at all jurisdictional levels regardless of the size,
cause or complexity of an incident; as well as the mechanisms and structure for national incident
management policy to ensure uniformity, inoperability and compatibility of the many agencies
that got involve in an emergency response. The NRF acts as a framework or a guide on how the
U.S. should conduct an all-hazards response. Its doctrine is based on engaged partnership, tiered
response, scalable flexible and adaptable capabilities, unit of effort through unified command
and readiness to act and is therefore always in effect. It establishes planning as a critical element
of effective prevention, mitigation, response and recovery in emergency management. The
national Incident management System on the other hand, is a comprehensive national-wide
systemic approach to incident management and involves: public information, multiagency
coordination and incident command system. It is a set of preparedness principles and concepts
for all hazards at all levels and can therefore be successfully copied to assist in an international
response.

**Phases of Emergency Management**

To even begin to understand what international emergency management entails, there is a
need to have an in-depth knowledge of emergency management itself as the function that is
charged with creating the framework within which communities reduce vulnerability to hazards
and cope with disasters. Emergency management protects communities by allowing the
coordination and integration of all activities necessary to build, sustain and improve the capacity
to mitigate against, prepare for, respond to and recover from terrorism and other manmade and natural disasters. It thus should take into account all hazards, all phases, all stakeholders and all impacts relevant to a disaster. Further, from one incident, the emergency manager must anticipate future disasters and take preventive and preparatory measures to build disaster-resistant and disaster-resilient communities (Komino, 2014).

Though the study of comprehensive emergency management is relatively new, its practice is old. Komino (2014) suggested that resilience building should be a guiding principle in emergency management in the world today due to the fact many new and complex disasters are plaguing and transforming global interrelatedness. However Alexander (2002) and FEMA, (2006) recommended comprehensive disaster management based upon the four phase approach of: mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery.

**Mitigation:** This is the phase where all the actions undertaken either reduce the likelihood of the occurrence of an emergency or prevent the emergency all together, or reduce the impacts of an unavoidable emergency. In Genesis (6 - 9 New International Version) the Bible outlined the first two important phases of emergency management as Noah prepared for and mitigated against the flood; he did not wait for it to rain before he built the Ark. Likewise in mitigation, all the activities that reduce danger and the damaging effects of an adverse event must be initiated before it occurs. In mitigation, otherwise known as Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR), both structural and non-structural measures to reduce adverse impacts of natural, technological and environmental hazards should be determined and put in place long before the disaster strikes (UNISDR, 2007).
Preparedness: In emergency preparedness, deliberate actions are taken which would improve the chances of successfully dealing with an emergency based on risk analysis. Preparedness includes the development of strategy, policy structures, warning and forecasting systems and plans geared towards saving lives and property in the event of an imminent threat. In some cases, preparedness might entail causing a change in attitude and behaviors that promote a culture of prevention, such as actions that help to avoid adverse impacts of disasters (UNISDR, 2007).
**Response:** Disaster response involves the actions taken during or immediately following a crisis in an attempt to preserve life or meet basic subsistence needs of those impacted. An efficient effective response to a disaster will depend on how well prepared a country is and whether it is able to respond responsibly and safely (UNISDR, 2007).

**Recovery:** Immediately following a disaster and after the initial danger is over, those activities and amenities that were disrupted and damaged by an adverse event should be reordered and rearranged. Many actions and decisions go into this process in an attempt to return as close as possible to the pre-disaster conditions. Both rehabilitation and reconstruction constitute recovery and it is at this time that the communities impacted by disaster should develop and apply mitigation measures to lessen future disasters, bringing the phases of emergency management to a full circle (UNISDR, 2007).

For a long time, the UN concentrated on the last two phases of emergency management: the response and recovery phases, and even the way these were operated was fragmented, not decentralized. The failure of the UN to address the root cause of the problems that the developing nations faced in undertaking all aspects of emergency management was found to have led to the gap between the manner in which the developed and developing nations survived during disasters. According to data analysis, this was believed to be what caused the UN to expend resources repeatedly on the same issues and in the same locations for years on end (Shimeles, 2013).

In making a case for international emergency management, it was suggested that the UN had been a reactive organization in its approach to emergency management because it initiated emergency responses following disasters in many developing countries. Consequently, a strong and ongoing global movement to promote reduction of risk before or after disaster struck has
become a main focus in the 21st century. Analyzed disaster trends suggested that the UN needed to change course and incorporate each phase of emergency management theory. As such it is no longer in doubt that the UN must incorporate a more proactive status towards disasters for and within their member states (UNISDR, 2004; UNISDR, 2010).

Importance of Emergency Operation Centers (EOCs)

Emergency Operation Centers were originally created in the U. S., but are now a major feature in many nations, as well as in public and private organizations all over the world. Since these are the focal points during a disaster operation, the formation of such centers within the UN fraternity seem long overdue. Currently, it appears that the closest UN office to an EOC is UNDAC, for it assesses, coordinates and manages information for international Urban Search and Rescue in an emergency response mission (UNOCHA, 2014). However, an all-hazard EOC is a prerequisite in a world where disasters have evolved in form, magnitude and intensity (Shouldis, 2010; Perry, 2003).

Both Shouldis (2010) and Brehmer (2005) corroborated that the EOC as a central command and control facility is responsible for carrying out the principles of emergency or disaster management to ensure the continuity of a business, political jurisdiction or a government. Further, they reiterated that it needed to be equipped with the ability to disseminate clear unambiguous information that pertains to the overall “big picture” of the mission being undertaken in support of response efforts during a disaster. Its responsibility therefore, is strictly to provide strategic support of on-scene response efforts by developing situational awareness. It must endeavor to alleviate conflicting actions by properly collecting, gathering and analyzing data in order to arrive at decisions that protect life and property and ensures business continuation within the applicable legal framework. John Boyd’s OODA loop (Fig. 2) is a good
reference model that clearly established the priority of activities of an EOC as to: observe, orientate, decide and act.

Fig. 2: The modified OODA-loop.

Brehmer, (2005) further explained that the emergency manager had to observe and take note of the emergency situation, and just as the Americans did during the Korean War, he needed to orient his “missile” towards the enemy and then decide what actions have to be taken. Once he determined how to proceed, a trigger action had to be initiated by mobilizing people and
equipment beyond what a single agency was capable of doing to improve operations and prevent failure in a complex adverse event. He reiterated that the manager had to make executive decisions and be in charge of the inter-agency coordination in support of an incident response and concluded that he therefore needed to be capable of thinking out of the box as well as staying ahead of the emergency by creating “what if” scenarios.

Shouldis (2010) noted that although EOCs existed in many forms, the major criterion for choosing a form for its existence was ease of access to information. As such, an EOC had to be established with an intent to facilitate the smooth collection and dissemination of data under a possibly unpredictable dynamically changing emergency environment. From his description of various types of EOCs, it was clear that the virtual EOC would be the one to be considered for a global application. Davis (2002) described the Virtual EOC as a cloud based emergency management software application that made a dream of business continuity planning (BCP) and disaster recover (DR) a reality by allowing instantaneous communication and timely decision making, the two most important ingredients of effective emergency management.

**UN Involvement in International Emergency Management**

The United Nations is an international organization that was established in 1945 in San Francisco, California, where representatives of 50 countries met to draw up the United Nations Charter. During that inception, the UN stated its purpose, aims and justification as: to save succeeding generations from the impacts of war; reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights, in human dignity and worth, and in equality of all human beings; to uphold and maintain international laws, rights and obligations; and to promote social progress, better standards of life and enlarge peoples’ choices. Further, the UN recognized that in order for the organization to
achieve its laid down objectives, all member states needed to live in harmony, peace and unity (UN Charter, n.d.).

According to the UNDP (2014, overview), Pope Francis I is quoted as having said that “Human rights are violated not only by terrorism, repression or assassination, but also by unfair economic structures that create huge inequalities.” Thus, the UN’s basic premise for human development in developing nations is to equally promote peoples’ chances and capabilities and to empower them to live lives that are valuable to them. For this reason, the UN Charter was based on the concepts of moral principles and obligations towards all people as being equal and recognized that; “Equal consideration for all could thus demand unequal treatment in favour of the disadvantaged” (UNDP, 2014. pp 27). Since the UN charter is based on equal consideration of all people, its universal applicability may require unequal attention, entitlements, and additional support for those that are more vulnerable and, the more vulnerable in the scope of this report are the developing nations (UN Charter, n.d; UNDP, 2014; ). This notwithstanding, the governments of most countries that lack financial resources to save the lives and property of their citizens view emergency management as a luxury that they cannot afford. Thus, failure of the UN to step in to assist in these conditions would raise concerns about its commitment to the issue of human rights as engraved in its charter.

At the core of international emergency response system is the office of UNDAC which is managed by United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA) and which has broad mandate to support and strengthen a country’s national capacity for emergency response. Its responsibilities which include coordination, advocacy, information management, financing and policy development in an attempt to provide a coherent response in emergencies are not handled by that office per se, but are rather delegated to other specialized
agencies of the UN, a process that can be lengthy and bureaucratic (Fig. 3) given the fact that the other agencies have their own organizational structures too. Moreover, their teams are only deployed at the request of the United Nations’ resident or humanitarian coordinator in conjunction with the government of the affected country (Komino, 2014).

Most countries lack frameworks in place to facilitate, oversee and coordinate international emergency response resulting to bottlenecks and red tapes in the course of requesting and disbursing UN disaster relief assistance (Holdeman, 2010). This gap could be closed by establishing an International Incident Management System (IIMS), much like the U. S. NIMS to automatically coordinate interagency response operations to a disaster incident as well as to respond to other challenges such as lack of legislative mandate at an international level for hazard mitigation, preparedness and recovery. Like the Australian Inter-Service Incident Management System (AIIMS), such an in-built mechanism would not only allow emergency response to be spontaneous but is bound to be a highly decentralized bottom-up arrangement that would rely heavily on trust and relationships between the UN and member states (Holdeman, 2010; AEM, 2005).

In consideration of these drawbacks, it is unlikely that the UN would be able to achieve legal equality in its treatment of all its member since some have more muscle when it comes to size, wealth and power. It is also unlikely that it would be able to hold countries responsible for inefficient emergency management in their own countries due to the sovereignty and autonomy of the nations, but it is possible to peg assistance and membership to predetermined voluntary rights and responsibilities as has been done by the U. S. health system. In explaining how the U. S. health system ensured compliance, Levinson and General (2011) described the federal requirements for Hospital Emergency Preparedness known as Medicare Conditions for
Participation (42 CFR §§ 482.13) which outlined a set of minimum quality and safety standards that health facilities wanting to be considered for Medicare and Medicaid programs must meet before they can participate, that included the development and implementation of a comprehensive emergency plan. Although participation is voluntary, those healthy facilitate that did not follow these regulations forfeited reimbursement for services.

Fig. 3: OSOCC management structure

Source: http://www.unocha.org/what-we-do/coordination-tools/osocc-rdc/overview

**Disparities in Disaster Impacts between Developed and Developing Countries**

Even though it is true that disasters do not discriminate between the developed and the developing nations, research has indicated that the developing nations are clearly disadvantaged
when it comes to disaster impacts. According to UNISDR (2004) approximately 90% of all deaths related to natural disasters occurred in the developing countries. The report further gave the reason for this high impact of disasters as developmental in nature as 11% of the people exposed to natural disasters lived in countries that were classified as “low or medium human development” on a scale of the Human Development index (HDI) as graphically represented by Fig. 4 below. There are two major factors that account for this state of affairs: first, the developing countries are unfortunately exposed to more hazards than the developed countries as is evident from the fact that both Latin America and Asia lie along a volcanic belt, and that El Nino is responsible for most droughts in South Asia and Southern Africa where malaria is rampant as mosquitos breed in the swamps and prey on people who are not only poorly fed but have poor immunity as well (Ruxin, 2008). Secondly, the disaster impacts follow a poverty trail. Poverty was identified as the single most important factor that intensify the impacts of disasters. Most studies indicated that the poorer the nation, the more vulnerable it was to disaster impacts, while the richer the nation, the more likely it was to survive disasters unaffected or was able to recover quickly because it had the capacity to mitigate, prepare and respond in an appropriate manner (Pielke, Rubiera, Landsea, Mario, Fernandez, & Klein, 2003).
Since poor countries are both more exposed to hazards and more vulnerable than their richer counterparts, it followed that poor people lived in poor housing, had poor health, education and were thus more fragile and vulnerable. This explanation made the relationship between poverty and vulnerability clearer, for although disasters are triggered by external hazards, they are perpetuated by vulnerability. Poverty made the developing countries to lack in early warning systems and hindered them from following building and other regulations that would enable them withstand disaster impacts. Therefore, when disasters struck they caused mass casualties as well as destruction of property. Ultimately, this resulted in a vicious circle because the available development funds were diverted to emergency relief and recovery which caused setbacks to social and long term economic development in those countries (Pielke et al., 2003; Cutter, Boruff

Fig. 4: Total number of disasters by year 1994-2003 (according to human development aggregates).

Source of data: EM-DAT: The OFDA/CRED International Disaster Database.
& Shirley, 2003). However, even though all countries are vulnerable to risks, the question of why some countries suffered far less harm and recovered much more quickly than others when disaster struck remains of interest to the UN. The UN attempts to address the issue of disparities in disaster impacts between developed and developing countries by looking at all countries through a human development lens that considers vulnerability and resilience by comparing data for its members for whom such data is available and documenting it in a Human Development Report (Zambrano, 2014; UNDP, 2014).

The Human Development index: is a concept that is now generally used as an indicator of the developmental growth of a country as opposed to the traditional per capita income way of measuring a country’s economic development. The per capita income basis proved insufficient as a method because it did not fully reflect the development level of a country since it ignored the welfare of the society and that of the human being. To overcome this discrepancy in evaluation and for purposes of comparison, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in 1990, proposed that the HDI be used. This new HDI system considered three dimensions – health, education, and the standard of living which enabled further consideration of other measurements such as: life expectancy at birth, adult literacy rate and the combined primary, secondary, and tertiary gross enrollment ratio, as well as per capita gross national income. The 2014 HDI report which was based on “reducing vulnerabilities and building resilience” grouped countries of the world into four categories: very high human development, high human development, medium human development, and low human development. Previously, those countries grouped under the broad category of very high human development were known as the developed countries, while those in the other three categories were the developing countries (Zambrano, 2014; Wu, Fan & Pan, 2014; UNDP, 2014). Both figures 4 and
5 are a visual representation of both the developed and developing countries, and the relevant literature examined in this study showed that those countries that were seriously impacted by various types of disasters belong to the low human development category.

**Disaster Case Studies from Developing Countries**

It should be noted that even though man has been plagued by disasters throughout history, a steady rise in their intensity, frequency and magnitude is documented as a recent phenomenon across the globe (UNISDR, 2004). Various researchers noted that with this continued trend, it would be important to identify the ways in which different nations were affected and the various means that could be applied to contain and/or

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**Fig. 5: World map indicating the categories of Human Development Index**

Source: 2014 Human Development Report

**2014 Human Development Index (HDI)**
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Very high human development</th>
<th>High human development</th>
<th>Medium human development</th>
<th>Low human development</th>
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<tr>
<td>90 United States</td>
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</table>
mitigate disaster occurrences. Towards this end, the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR) operates under the mandate to help societies universally achieve resilience to natural, technological and environmental hazards to reduce human, economic, and social losses (UNISDR, 2005). Unfortunately, even though the impacts of disasters are not uniform across the
board, there is a further complication in the fact not only are people from developing countries dying and losing their properties unnecessarily, but the effects of these disasters are spilling over into the rest of the world, creating direct or indirect global impacts. This state of affairs will be demonstrated by an examination of the terrorist attacks in Kenya, Ebola in West Africa, as well as the effects of global warming in different parts of the world.

Terrorism

The potential future threat of terrorism in the world is currently a complex global phenomenon. It has been observed that until September 2011, one country’s anarchy posed a direct security threat mainly to its neighboring states only (Cilliers, 2003; Menkhaus, 2013). In Kenya for instance, al-Shabab, an Islamic youth group bred in Somalia due to power vacuum, continuously interfered with the lives of her peace-loving people. The group is related and works in cohort with al-Qaeda and has in the past flourished in Ethiopia with funding from Eritrea and like al-Qaeda, its job has now expanded to propagation of global jihad (Boyd, 2013; McBain, 2013).

Kenya: has had the misfortune of continuously experiencing terror attacks on its citizens since that fateful first attack which took place on August 7, 1998. On that day, dual bombings took place in two East African countries when simultaneous blasts exploded, one at the U.S. embassy in Nairobi, Kenya killing more than 200 people and wounding about 5,000 others. The other explosion of a booby-trapped tanker truck exploded outside the US embassy in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania killing about ten people and wounding many other passers-by. The claiming of responsibility of the twin American Embassy bombings by the Al Qaeda group placed two of its leaders, Osama bin Laden and Ayman al-Zawahiri in the lime light and on the Federal Bureau of

Another terrorist attack occurred in Kenya in November of 2002, where an all-terrain vehicle crashed through a barrier outside the Paradise Hotel, in Kikambala in the coastal town of Mombasa, the only Israel-owned hotel in Mombasa area and blew up killing 13 and injuring 80 people. Minutes before the blast, two missiles were fired at an Israeli airliner just after take-off from Moi International Airport in Mombasa, but missed their target. Once again the terrorist group Al-Qaeda later claimed responsibility for both attacks (“Kenya terror strikes”, 2002; Bush, G. W., 2002).

On September 21, 2013 another terrorist group, Al-Shabaab besieged the Westgate shopping mall in Westlands, Nairobi and left about 70 people dead and more than 170 injured (Boyd, 2013). In June of the year that followed, an attacked by the same group at a place called Mpeketoni near the coastal town of Mombasa in Kenyan resulted in the death of 60 people (Langat, 2015). The worst attack yet on Kenyan people was carried out on April 2, 2015, by both al-Qaeda and al-Shabaab when gun men stormed Garrisa University College in Garissa town, Kenya, shoot at the security at the gate and then marched into the campus’ hostels in the early morning. They sprayed bullets on the unsuspecting students killing almost 150 people and injuring close to 80 more. They took hundred of students hostage, separated them on religious grounds and ultimately killed Christians while they let the Muslims flee to safety (Kapchanga, M. 2015). According to Kapchanga (2015), the high number of deaths in the Garrisa University attack in Kenya for instance, was caused by the “D-grade” of preparedness of the security forces.

Following these attacks, collective international response came inform of verbal condemnation by the UN Security Council and other countries that individually expressed
solidarity included Israel, United Kingdom, and the U. S. In all these terrorist attacks, a link to radical, anti-American Islamic terrorist networks was established even though the attacks took place outside of the U. S. The U. S. in particular urged other UN members to join hands in order to dismantle the terrorists’ infrastructure that caused these Complex Humanitarian Emergencies (CHEs), implying that the fight against terrorist was beyond any one country (Bush, 2002; Lyman & Morrison, 2004). Eventually, even though the U. S. took out the al-Qaeda’s leadership through the use of sophisticated drones, Kenya continued to receive many more devastating attacks as the chronology of attacks described above indicated. That Kenyans are a resilient people was not in doubt but clearly, the country lacked the resources needed to mitigate against further attacks which kept coming intermittently, a scenario that, it is believed, could not have occurred if the UN had deliberately and purposefully involved itself in the wiping out of the terrorists in Kenya. These attacks have disabled the Kenyan foreign currency earner of tourism in particular and crippled the country’s general economy making it even harder for the country’s infrastructure to remain resilient for future attacks.

Terrorism neither respects boundaries, nor does death that result from it discriminate against different nationalities as was seen in the case of Nairobi bombing of U.S. embassy where some of those who died were U.S. citizens, or in the Westgate mall attack in which Kofi Awoonor, an esteemed Ghanaian author and diplomat was killed (Boyd, 2013). As such, the UN must help demand of its members that all conditions that encourage the growth of the likes of al-Qaeda and al-Shabaab be mitigated against (Ochieno, 2013).

Pandemics

According to medical dictionary definitions (2013), a pandemic is not local. It is a sudden, severe outbreak that spreads quickly affecting a whole region, continent or the entire world. The
The word pandemic has a connotation of involving “all people.” One such pandemic is Ebola which has the potential to spread rapidly and result in mass casualties (Ruxin, 2008). The spillover and spread of pandemics produce a range of negative social, economic and political consequences that can potentially weaken these systems simultaneously. The overwhelming physical consequences and sometimes fatal impacts of pandemics are driven by many factors including international travel and trade, urbanization, climatic change and more often than not, lack of mitigating measures, all of which have failed to receive appropriate international attention (Bogich et al., 2012).

A pandemic is a “terrorist” threat in its own right and like other terrorist threats, it does not respect international borders. For this reason, the World Health Organization (WHO) has previously agreed to revise the International Health Regulations (IHR) which is the international legal framework that governs how WHO and its member States should respond to infectious disease outbreaks in an attempt to fully understand the threat posed by new and re-emerging diseases to the international community. The scope of this revision laid down preparedness, mitigation and response strategies to international spread of diseases that the signatory states would be expected to implement into the fabric of their policies, individually as well as collectively to meet the capacity to respond and cope with the prevention and containment of public health emergencies of an international concern. The IHR identified eight critical areas that needed to be addressed by each country as: surveillance and testing, communication and coordination, legislation, financing and policy, preparedness, response, risk assessment and human resource (Davies, 2013; Ruxin, 2008). Davies (2013) asserted that it was obvious that all member states would not achieve the goals of IHR but one thing was clear – that the threat posed
by pandemics required a global approach because failure to contain these diseases in one country meant placing the whole world in peril.

As implied by Knobler, Mack, Mahmoud and Lemon, (2005) developed countries usually responded to pandemics with abundant resources and expertise but the developing countries remained defenseless. The World Health Organization offers support to these countries in the development of national pandemic preparedness plans and capacity building as well as prepares guidance documents to inform and harmonize national and international planning, preparedness and response to pandemics besides helping to mitigate the impact of the diseases.

**Ebola in West Africa:** The Ebola virus outbreak which was described by WHO as the largest, most severe and most complex outbreak in the history of epidemics, started in Guinea in West Africa in 2013 and spread to neighboring countries of Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone and Liberia. At the onset of the outbreak, the disease appeared to have been managed particularly at the first location of occurrence. Not very long from the first incident of the Ebola virus in Sierra Leone did other locations begin to exhibit occurrences of the disease to the extent that the government sent out an international appeal for international assistance to help contain its outbreak and spread (“UN and regional leaders,” 2015). Sierra Leone, Liberia and Guinea which were at the center of the current Ebola outbreak were ranked towards the bottom of the 2013 Human Development Index. Out of 187 countries and territories, Liberia ranked 174 and had life expectancy of 57 years, Guinea 178 with a life expectancy of 54.5 years and Sierra Leone was 177 with the lowest life expectancy in the world of 48 years (UNDP, 2014).

It was clear that pandemics do not discriminate either (see Table 1, 2, 3 & 4) and in the view of the virulence of Ebola virus, global health experts, declared the epidemic that ravaged West Africa an international health emergency that requires a coordinated global approach. The
test of containing the Ebola virus outbreak revealed that incidences of outbreak of pandemics and contagious disease spread can only be effectively stemmed through national and international combined efforts. In his opening remarks a press conference in Addis Ababa, the UN Secretary General Ban Ki Moon underscored the need for international solidarity in fighting pandemics when he asserted that continued peace and development go hand-in-hand (“UN and regional leaders,” 2015).
Countries with Widespread Transmission

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Total Cases (Suspected, Probable, and Confirmed)</th>
<th>Laboratory-Confirmed Cases</th>
<th>Total Deaths</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Guinea</td>
<td>3745</td>
<td>3277</td>
<td>2490</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sierra Leone</td>
<td>13129</td>
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<td>3933</td>
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Table 1

Countries with Former Widespread Transmission and Current, Established Control Measures

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<th>Country</th>
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<th>Laboratory-Confirmed Cases</th>
<th>Total Deaths</th>
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<tr>
<td>Liberia</td>
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<td>4806</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
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<td>3151</td>
<td>4806</td>
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Table 2

Cases in Urban Settings with Effective Control Measures

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<tr>
<th>Country</th>
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<th>Total Deaths</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>Total</td>
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Table 3

Previously Affected Countries

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Total Cases (Suspected, Probable, and Confirmed)</th>
<th>Laboratory-Confirmed Cases</th>
<th>Total Deaths</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nigeria</td>
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<td>8</td>
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<td>Senegal</td>
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<td>Spain</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mali</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
United Kingdom &emsp; 1 &emsp; 1 &emsp; 0

United States &emsp; 4 &emsp; 4 &emsp; 1

Total &emsp; 35 &emsp; 33 &emsp; 15

Table 4

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Although it was evident that the steps that were needed to fight Ebola were clear in the mind of the international community at the third International Conference on Financing for Development in Addis Ababa, it was also clear that UN was too slow in translating such efforts into action. The ensuing frustration due to lack of international coalition in the matter was expressed by the director of operations for Doctors without Borders, Dr. Bart Janssens when he called out the UN on its slow response after he exhausted his staff in the response according to (Karimi & Gigova, 2014). Two problems became obvious: a) that developing nations faced an immense challenge when it came to building core capacities in their health systems and b) that the UN member states failed in taking their commitment to help each other seriously. This also underlined the logic and importance for the UN to demand a certain amount of involvement from each member country in protecting its own citizens in order to sustain political will in those countries.

The UN mission for the Ebola emergency response would probably depict and more or less help explain the context in which the proposed decentralized UN emergency response centers would be based: a global alert and response system for epidemics and an effective international capacity for coordinated response. Apart from being focused on the health aspect of populations,
the visualized UN emergency response centers would also act as alert operations centers that would be prepared and ready to handle all types of emergency situations and occurrences. The functions of these proposed UN Emergency Operations centers would be similar to those outlined by the UN mission (IHR, 2005) for Ebola response as follows:

1. The UN EOCs would support Member States for the implementation of national capacities for epidemic and disaster preparedness and response including laboratory capacities and early warning alert and response systems;
2. They would support national and international training programs for epidemic and disaster preparedness and response;
3. They would coordinate and support Member States for pandemic and seasonal effects of global warming preparedness and response;
4. They would develop standardized approaches for readiness and response to major epidemic-prone diseases (e.g. meningitis, yellow fever, plague);
5. They would strengthen biosafety, biosecurity and readiness for outbreaks of dangerous and emerging pathogens outbreaks (e.g. SARS, viral hemorrhagic fevers);
6. They would maintain and further develop a global operational platform to support outbreaks.

The examination on spread of pandemic and their global impacts indicated that there was a need for a specialized body to be present in every country to deal with the prevention of emergence of pandemics, their localization when they happen as well as surveillance to prevent spillovers. Such facilities appeared to be needed more in the developing countries where the emergence and transmission of diseases could spread like bushfire due to lack of proper infrastructure for dealing with them.
Global warming

Many geomorphologists have documented the significantly harmful effects that the speeding up of global warming is likely to cause in the world. As the globe heats up one degree at a time in a decade, the ensuing climate changes will plunge humanity into the biggest environmental and humanitarian crisis of all times. Among these natural disasters, the exceptionally heavy rains associated with the El Niño (a warming water pattern in the equatorial Pacific) and La Niña (a cooling water pattern in the equatorial Pacific) phenomena are regarded as the most dangerous natural hazards and principal trigger of disasters (Smith, Edmonds, Hartin, Mandra & Calvin, 2015).

Global warming poses dangers to different countries but still, the impacts of natural disasters will depend not only on the disaster itself but also other social and physical vulnerabilities in a particular country. Natural disasters are a global issue as they occur all over the world but sadly, even though they may have considerable impact in the developed countries such as France, Switzerland, Japan and the U.S. among others, the negative impacts due to these natural disasters is concentrated in developing countries (Alexander, 1993). As if this was not enough, most of the developing countries are coincidentally located in areas especially prone to natural hazards. For instance, Asia and Latin America share the highest concentration of flooding and associated risks due to hurricanes, cyclones, tropical storms, typhoons, and monsoons as well as earthquakes (Pielke et al., 2003). Although poverty and natural disasters should not be considered as synonyms, it was certainly clear that some characteristics emanating from poor economic, social, political and cultural conditions resulted in very high vulnerability to natural disasters. Recently, attention has been paid to the prevention, reduction and mitigation of natural disasters by creating a scientific and technical committee of the International Decade
for Natural Disaster Reduction (IDNDR) (UNISDR, 2005). Understandably, reducing vulnerability should undoubtedly be the work of many nations.

Even though the total number of storms has remained constant, the proportion of high-intensity events has gone steadily upward in most parts of the world. Scientific research indicated that global warming would cause hurricanes and tropical storms to become more intense and cause more damage to coastal ecosystems and communities. Scientists point a finger to higher ocean temperatures as the main culprit, since hurricanes and tropical storms get their energy from warm water. Global warming will cause super hurricanes with increased wind speed and rainfall which will spell super storms across many shorelines in the world (Elsner, 2008; Emanuel; Sundararajan & Williams, 2008). These authors were concerned that many other problems were likely to result if climate change heated up the oceans. Apart from an increase in hurricanes, they were also likely to be stronger causing the water to warm at the poles and the
and the seas to melt causing drought in many parts of the earth. The general consensus among researchers was that global warming would lead to appreciable increases in rain from all categories of hurricanes. Since warm air holds more water than cold air, moisture-laden air potentially can produce significant rain during a hurricane, even in low-intensity storms. Heavy rainfall raises the probability of dangerous flooding, as seen with Hurricane Irene in 2011. In 1998, flooding from Hurricane Mitch killed more than 11,000 people in Central America (Emanuel; Sundararajan & Williams, 2008).

**Hurricane Mitch in Central America:** can very well be considered the deadliest Atlantic hurricane to hit the Central America in the last two centuries. It left more than 10000 people
dead and millions were displaced, while the damage costed billions of dollars. According to the World Bank (1999a) statistics, all the countries of Central America that were affected by the impact of this hurricane lived below the poverty line of making less than $1 a day as follows: Panama in 1989, 27%; Costa Rica in 1989, 19%; Guatemala in 1989, 53%; Honduras in 1992, 47%; Nicaragua in 1995, 50%; and El Salvador in 1994, 48%. The tragic tale of the impact of Mitch in Central America strongly suggest that decades of mal-development and the physical impacts of this class 5 Hurricane have fallen most heavily on the poor. In these poor countries, those with shoddier housing, usually located on highly vulnerable areas were more exposed to damage. The southern regions where Mitch hit represents well documented classic case of both failed and contested development (Boyer, 1999; Pielke et al., 2003).

The analysis of data on the impacts on these developing countries suggested that the impacts of Hurricane Mitch was a window through which the world would have a foretaste of the impacts of future disasters unless societal vulnerabilities were put in check through sustainable development that dwelt with poverty, land and environmental issues (Pielke et al., 2003). The situation was further blurred by the fact that analysis into Hurricane Mitch linked its impacts to global warming (IFRCRCS, 1999).
Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework of this project stems from the researcher’s own experiential knowledge associated with staying abreast with current events and news of “terrorist and weather-related” emergencies and disasters and how they were handled in a developing country where she was born and raised. The researcher believes that instead of these experiences creating a bias in this project, they formed the basis of the research because they not only gave her the insight into the problem under investigation, but also helped her choose the topic as well as shaped the study. Therefore, this researcher refuses to term her “involvement” as bias but chooses to exploit the golden opportunity presented by the experiential knowledge. This knowledge comes from the emergency responses by Kenyan authorities to the following terrorist-related and weather-related emergencies/disasters.

Basically, there are two lines of thought in the world regarding global warming: those who believe that it is a hoax and those that think it is driving us towards peril. Whatever the case, this research will argue that the UN is well place to utilize whatever beliefs a member state holds to be true for emergency management purposes. Those countries or people who see the phenomenon a hoax, can use it to create scenarios for the purposes of preparing for emergency response and those who believe global warming to be true will engage to find ways to mitigate against it provided the UN will adopt all the phases of emergency response itself.

The researcher will use prior research and theories on the definition of disaster and the scope of emergency management as a spotlight to illuminate the path that the UN should follow in helping member states with the management of disasters and emergencies. Currently, it appears that much of the UN’s efforts in the response phase of an emergency are geared towards providing short-term humanitarian relief supplies, an undertaking that can be extremely costly,
rather than in the preceding phases of preparation and mitigation which are part and parcel of an emergency management process. To this end, a definition and a concept map of the relationships within an emergency operations center will be employed but as a starting point, emergency management in the United States (US) will be used as a base for discussion mainly due to several reasons:

- There is considerable volume of cumulative research on disasters in the US and it was best suited to be used to generate and test hypothesis in other areas.
- The continued improvement and involvement of the US has created a degree of stability for both emergency management researchers and professionals so that it can become a focal point for theoretical framework in this project.
Methodology

This chapter describes the research design and methods employed in the project, putting into perspective the design characteristics of case studies, data collection methods, the research procedures and the data analysis methods used. According to Trochim (2006) a research design provides the glue that holds the research project together. A design is used to structure the research, to show how all of the major parts of the research project - the samples or groups, measures, treatments or programs, and methods of assignment - work together to try to address the central research questions.

Research Design: Since the issues of emergency management in the world are complex and social in nature, a need was felt to explore many contextual factors that the researcher believed to be relevant to the problem under investigation in order to answer the questions of “how” and “why.” For this to be achieved, the qualitative research methodology was chosen. As Yin (2009) advised, qualitative case study methodology in particular, provided tools for this researcher to study the complex phenomena of disaster management within the contexts of terrorism and the effects of global warming. This approach allowed concepts, data collection tools, and data collection methods to be adjusted as the research progressed. Six steps of case study methodology made it possible for the researcher to: determine and define the research questions; select the cases and determine data gathering and analysis techniques; prepare to collect the data; collect data from the review of literature; evaluate and analyze that data; and prepare the report (Yin, 2009).

An outline and format was developed in the initial stages of this research to guide the researcher. Thus, the job of the researcher was to fill information into this outline as it became available. Further, the aims and objectives of the study; rules and protocol were also determined
in the initial stage to keep the researcher focused on the task at hand. Very early in the planning stage, the researcher formulated a theory as a starting point to give direction and structure to the research. This theory formed a focal point for the researcher’s reaction to data and made it possible to filter and organize data. The formulation of the theory was based on the premises that there was no need to reinvent the wheel and instead, it was deemed fit to build upon the existing body of knowledge of emergency management. In so doing, the research was sure to contribute and/or add to the existing knowledge on the subject of study. Also, in the planning stages, an overview of the research was developed which dwelt with 12 topics that were considered fundamental in appreciating the subject matter: the need to decentralize UN emergency operations for the sake of the developing countries. Together with the formulation of the aims and objectives of the study to keep the investigator focused on the main tasks and goals, a decision was made on the use of both descriptive and explanatory research methods. A descriptive study is one in which the problem is clearly defined and reveals what is going on while the explanatory method explained why it was going on.

As recommended by Yin (2009), the development of a project overview before a research study served the role of an external communicator who was unavailability to review the finished product. Moreover, it also increased the reliability and validity of instruments besides enabling the investigator to follow and maintain a chain of evidence from the initial research questions to the case studies’ logical conclusion.

**Data Sources:** There was a careful choice of articles and materials from multiple data sources, a strategy advocated by Yin (2009) and aimed to ensure corroboration and correctness of information to assist in making accurate inferences and to enhance credibility. According to Mileti (1987), disaster researchers generally enjoy very high cooperation between themselves
and researchers from other disciplines as well as the public which means potential errors are reduced and the validity of findings is increased. Therefore, from multiple sources of data, converging findings (triangulation) were identified which increased both construct validity and reliability and eventually helped in generalizing the results. Prior research in the subject of emergency management will therefore be used to develop a justification for decentralization of UN emergency operations, to inform decisions about the methods of research, to provide the much needed sources of data for the literature review, and through the use of case studies of the way UN has handled emergency operations in some developing countries, the project hopes to generate and justify the theory.

**Research Questions:** Based upon literature review, documents, and records of the 12 critical aspects of this study (named in the introduction above), the investigator brought the following questions to bear upon the source material:

RQ1. What is the essence of international emergency management response?

RQ2. What factors affect the emergency response capacity of individual nations?

RQ3. How does emergency management in the developed countries compare with developing countries?

RQ4. How can the UN advance efforts to improve the practice of emergency management in the developing member states?

The case study method was used to develop a theoretical basis for the topic of research as well as an approach to examine the theory itself. A case study is typically a detailed analysis of a single or individual case (Lee & Lings, 2008), where a case is defined as a single social setting. (Lee & Lings, 2008). It supposes that one can properly acquire knowledge of the phenomenon from an extensive exploration. Yin (2009) supported the notion that a case study allowed a
holistic inquiry for investigating a contemporary phenomenon such as emergency management within its natural context (developing countries in this case. Although according to Yin (2009) and Creswell (2003) it was necessary to draw the boundaries of a case study by time and place, time and activity (Stake, 1995), and by definition and context (Miles & Huberman, 1994) in order for the study to retain its scope, sociological methodological lessons derived from disaster research were applied in this project. The external validity was limited by time, place and culture in each case study as it became clear that the research design had to answer questions relative to people’s culture since “what people say about behavior and how they actually behave are not the same thing,” (Mileti 1987, p. 69). Hence, each country’s behavior in emergency situations was considered more important than public attitudes and myths. Nevertheless, the researcher decided to wait until a realistic sense of where the research is heading was realized, and remained open to the fact that the boundaries could shift in the course of the research. Nevertheless, in trying to bind the case, the researcher decided to use poor developing countries and disaster emergency operations as caveat. To establish the boundaries, a working definition of “poor developing countries” and “disaster” were offered. It was also determined that in order to come as close as possible to achieving the desired results, there was need to use multiple instrumental case studies that either came from the same poor developing country or from multiple developing countries, which Yin (2009) said would lead to analytical generalizations. Finally, an interpretive analysis allowed the researcher to identify lessons learned, conclusions and recommendations. To that end, the researcher provided a detailed description of each case and identified necessary themes in each one of them. As advised by Yin (2009) and Stake (1995), database was created to effectively organize the available data. The database contained
clear case study notes, case study documents, collected and created tabular materials, and narratives that were capable of being retrieved for later use or reference.
Discussion

What is the essence of international emergency management response? What factors affect the emergency response capacity of individual nations? How does emergency management in the developed countries compare with developing countries? How can the UN advance efforts to improve the practice of emergency management in the developing member states?

The answers to these questions form the pieces in the mosaic that together will create the desirable future international emergency response. The U. S. emergency management fundamentally provides a path through which international emergency management could be based. On one hand, it advocates the use of NRF framework for guidance, and on the other it requires the establishment of NIMS which includes the ICS with an EOC to support an incident management (FEMA, 2008 & DHS, 2008).

The establishment of an EOC as a generic office for coordinating emergency operations is important for minimizing duplication of efforts, dubiety and clashes of actions between various agencies that get involved during response and recovery phases of a disaster. Response and recovery are made successful by the ability of a country to acquire and allocate necessary resources during an adverse event, an activity that hinges on availability of information. Gathering reliable information and putting it at a central location where it is accessible to those involved in the response, which is what an EOC does, is almost as vital as the delivery of emergency assistance itself (Perry, 2003; Shouldis, 2010).

In this project, it was argued that international emergency management would improve greatly with the establishment of a permanent EOC in every UN member state as this would both specialize and decentralize UN emergency management operations. The UN headquarters is located in New York and although UNDAC has an office for Europe/ Africa/ Middle East, the
Americas, and Asia-Pacific, its handling of emergency management operations were found to be lacking, in some cases, in integrated, real time information analysis, objectives, cultural understanding, tactics and sources of power and influence (UNOCHA, 2014). Given the global interconnectedness of disasters, it was evident that the UN would need to expand its presence in to every country through the establishment of UNEOCs.

Although this project reiterated the usefulness of an EOC as outlined in the NRF and as adopted by the U. S. Department of Homeland Security, it found it beyond its capability to prescribe what kind of an EOC the UN should adopt, how it should be structured or funded and recommends that further research be undertaken on these issues. It did however single out the virtual EOC as the most appropriate EOC of the 21st century because it combined innovation with future technology. Besides, the UN already has 63 Information Centers (ICs) all over the world mostly in developing countries that work in close coordination with the UN headquarters on one hand and on the other, it partners with governments, the private sector, civil societies, media, education institutions and libraries in host member states (UNIC, 2008). For international emergency response to succeed, the UN would require authority to create an EOC in every country and to secure the commitment of that country to adhere to the plan by making comprehensive emergency management part of the country’s corporate culture. The emergency manager would be expected to reside within the country where the disaster is occurring because it is clear from literature review that it would be relatively impossible for an emergency manager outside the country to be able to determine in precise terms what is needed on the ground. This suggested that the UN and the member states must sit at the table and discuss how to proceed, for response and recovery alone are not effective means of managing disasters if they are performed
in the absence of a comprehensive regimen of preparedness or mitigation activities (Alexander, 2002; Britton, 2006; FEMA, 2006).

Likewise, an international “all-hazard” preparedness program would involve international relations and detailed planning process that includes mutual-aid assistance agreements between countries in much the same way as is stipulated in the NRF and NIMs in the U. S. Emphasis would have to be on gathering of technical information based on accurate assessment of risk, vulnerability, and capabilities of each country. Since resources are always scarce during large-scale incidents, the UNEOC would be charged with the task of identifying and obtaining additional assets that are not always available to a country’s on-scene incident commander in the developing countries.

The need to bring UN humanitarian interventions into the picture of each country’s emergency management springs from the fact that at the present time, the effects of disasters go beyond the national lines. For instance in some parts of Africa, it appeared that the works of terrorism has been motivated by the alignment of countries with the super powers like the US besides the need for terrorist groups to find grounds for practice to enable them pose threat to the world (Lyman & Morrison, 2004). It is therefore in the interest of the UN to bring the member states together for preparedness, mitigation, response and recover from such acts. The United Nations has advocated collaboration among the member states and stressed mitigation aspect of emergency management by prescribing peacekeeping and preventive-diplomacy. As a result, the member states pledged to join forces to fight the daunting challenges that emanate from terrorism (U. S., 2010). This joining of forces can literally be compared to interstate compact arrangements in NRF of the U.S. and what remains at this point is to formalize that relationship between the member states. The assistance that these member states give to each other would be
fast and flexible between the compacts (FEMA, 2008). In U. S. (2010) and Lyman & Morrison (2004) it was argued that the fight against terror required the establishment of a Multinational Joint Task Force that is strong and well-coordinated besides being consistent with UN human rights due diligence policies. Therefore, in order for international efforts to be geared towards fighting terrorism and focus on protecting communities across borders, collaboration on peace and security is essential to the UN’s partnership.

Globalization has not only brought countries together and provided new opportunities for countries, but it has also increased the risk that adverse events will be transmitted more rapidly across borders. It has given rise to concerns such as the fact that there are local reactions to spillover effects of events far away. New and emerging threats call for national as well as global and cross-border responses, resources and leadership in various areas including emergency management and in particular, global commitment to universalism is needed. After all, these cross-border challenges are likely to continue in the coming decades.

Whereas terrorism, outbreak and spread of diseases such as Ebola can be categorized as immediate hazards that are often apparent and require rapid response (Ruxin, 2008; Lyman & Morrison, 2004), the onset of climate change as a hazard is slow and may not be immediately recognizable thereby creating creeping vulnerabilities that require strategic planning to avoid disastrous long-term impacts (Lynas, 2007). An important shift among the world’s international disaster management organs, agencies and interest groups is inevitable of wide spread recognition and acceptance of this fact. Moreover, recent disasters such as those caused by terrorism, global warming and pandemics have brought to the attention of the international community the intricacies of international relationship in emergency management (Britton, 1992).
Preparing countries for less vulnerable future means strengthening the intrinsic resilience among the communities in these countries. The UN has advocated a way to pay attention to disparities within and between countries through the use of a people-centered human development approach that uses the HDI because the spatial distribution of natural disasters showed a clear tendency to occur in developing countries. The developing countries are more susceptible to the impacts of disasters than the developed countries and the underlying fact is the correlation between poverty and vulnerability. At the root of this disparity is poverty. Simply put, wealthy nations have the resources to engage in all the phases of emergency management but the developing nations continued to depend on humanitarian aid to enable them deal with disasters (Cutter, Boruff & Shirley, 2003; komino, 2014). According to the secondary data obtained, the summary of information on the case study countries which were unable to put up effective emergency management during disasters indicated that they were all in the lower category of HDI (UNDP, 2014). In the case of Hurricane Mitchel in Central America for instance, it was revealed that even though the susceptibility of these countries to natural disasters was high due to the environment, it was also related to social economic, political, and cultural aspects (Pielke et al., 2003). Moreover, when the disasters occur, they plugged these countries further into the abyss of poverty and more vulnerability, resulting in a mathematical equation that poverty leads to vulnerability, although poverty is not synonymous with vulnerability which called for creation of resilient communities.

Resilience is about ensuring that each country and global institution work to empower and protect people. Chambers (1989, pp 1) (as cited by UNISDR, 2007) made it even clearer that “vulnerability is not the same as poverty. It means not lack or want but defenselessness, insecurity and exposure to risks, shocks, and stress” because unlike poverty, there was an
extrinsic side to vulnerability that a country may not have control over which further justified mitigation efforts to shield developing countries from disasters.

The UN categorically stated that poverty places constraints on peoples’ ability to cope with setbacks and that even though all countries needed to address their own vulnerabilities and build resistance for future shocks, it recognized the inability of poor countries to do so for their citizens and further asserted that equal consideration for all could demand unequal treatment in favor of the disadvantaged (UNISDR, 2007). At the global level, risks which are trans-border in nature required collective actions and called for global commitments and better international governance. The UN’s vision is that countries achieve simultaneous eradication of poverty and significant reduction of inequalities and exclusion and promote human and sustainable development. It was noted that human vulnerability was increasing due to financial instability and environmental hazards such as climate change, pandemics and terrorism while at the same time, the world is changing rapidly and global connectivity are increasing the threat of contagion exposure to natural disasters and violent conflicts. As a result of international trade, travel and telecommunications, the vulnerabilities once considered local have now become global. According to UN secretary general Ki-Moon, poverty and vulnerability reduction among all peoples is the main objective of the UN and eliminating extreme poverty is not just about getting it to zero; but staying there” (UNISDR, 2007, p 2).

Although it appeared that the international community was adequately prepared to address global disasters, recent events such as terrorist activities in Kenya and the Ebola pandemic in West Africa exposed huge gaps in how international emergency response was managed. It particularly that there were issues of preparedness when Ebola outbreak started to spread due to lack of early warning signs and neither was it possible to quickly contained it nor delay its
spread at source. It took what appeared to be a long time and a lot of resources to reduce its mortality and social disruption. The situation in West Africa proved that no country is immune from the spillover of disasters and it is therefore more likely than ever before, that a joint emergency management operation will be increasingly necessary as disaster impacts do not respect sovereignty of nations (Karimi & Gigova, 2014; Bogich et al., 2012).

The establishment of a UN emergency management in its entirety is an attempt to create an opportunity where the international community will come together to perform disaster management and it is not devoid of implications. Thus, the most critical emerging issue regards governance to the international management approach. To deal with this situation, a concerted and collaborative effort must be identified. It is paramount that a method of creating shared responsibility and cohesiveness be found given the UN’s legal limitations, the sovereignty of nations and coordination challenges (Britton, 1992; Bogich et al., 2012; Cook, 2006).

Based on an analysis of the available evidence, 2014 Human Development Report makes a number of important recommendations for achieving a world which addresses vulnerabilities and builds resilience to future shocks. It calls for universal access to basic social services, especially health and education; stronger social protection: unemployment insurance and pensions; and a commitment to full employment and recognizing that the value of employment extends far beyond the income it generates, in other words, it calls for sustainable development (UNDP, 2014).

Finally, the greatest limitation for the recommendations of this project must be acknowledged which is the fact that protracted state collapse poses an inherent challenge to the best humanitarian, development and peace keeping efforts of the international community. This
can be reflected in the experiences of external engagement by the US in crises such as those in Iraq, Somalia, Haiti and Rwanda, which tend to be driven more by humanitarian and political concerns rather than by national and international security imperatives. The collapse of states have routinely been characterized as an inherent threat to international peace and security and these states are commonly known to be breeding grounds for disease, refugees, environmental destruction and regional instability among other problems. Overtime arguments have been fronted promoting the ‘securitization’ of complex emergencies as advanced by humanitarian lobbyists and by genuine security analysts, whose campaigns have generated partial success. It is time for the international community to come up with a plan of an international emergency management nature.
Conclusions and Recommendations

This project posed several questions that were initially not anticipated. Among them; what type of EOC would be most appropriate for international emergency management? What thresholds would be set for activation of the international EOCs? What organizational structure would these international EOCs taken on to ensure smooth coordination between international agencies and member states’ governments? Where would the funding come from?

The literature review did not yield universal conclusions as political, administrative and fiscal processes were complex and differed in each country, and although the available evidence requested for further research into the whole idea of establishing an international EOC in every UN member country, it however led to some preliminary conclusions. It was clear that many of the problems that would be experienced seemed to emanate from inherent issues in the developing countries, but in spite of these issues, it was also clear that every country needed a focal point from which to coordinate an emergency response because coordination ensured that efforts were neither duplicated nor areas needing coverage were left devoid of that assistance. In fact, the EOC is a critical part of an emergency management and the key to both international and local disaster preparedness, response and recovery because it was found to be crucial in saving lives and reducing property damage.

Currently UNOCHA plays the closest role to that of an EOC during a disaster response in countries with UN presence by supporting the UN Resident or Humanitarian Coordinator by carrying out several functions, all at the same time. However, this report confidently concluded that the UN needed to establish an EOC in every member country to ease and decentralize the operations of its emergency response while at the same time to specialized and centralize the mechanisms to ensure that incidents were handled in an efficient manner. It was recommended
that the UN set up virtual EOCs in all its information offices in the world to start with, as most of these were located in the developing countries. The virtual EOC was singled out in this study as the most appropriate in the 21st century because it combined innovation with future technology, allowing instantaneous communication and timely decision making, the two most important ingredients of effective emergency management.

Since all disasters are local and cultural in nature, the involvement of the government of each member state was determined to be critically essential. In an ideal situation, every country should be able to responsibly mount an incident response. To ensure that effective coordination takes place during all phases of emergency management, an international emergency manager would need to work closely with the country EOC personnel, elected officials and private agencies. In the absence of such coordination, the solutions and the relief offered by UN would irrelevant, inapplicable and therefore a waste of time and capital. Since effective governance at the national and international level would be vital for a comprehensive and meaningful international emergency management, each country would have to be able to do a thorough risk assessment during disasters in their countries and communicate those to the international EOC. The accuracy of this risk assessment is what would be critical in mounting a serious and effective emergency management.

In the face of the ever-increasing disaster challenges emanating from the more emerging complex epidemiological sources of disasters such as terrorism, global warming and new killer pandemics, each country must find it reasonably important to join the UN family to reduce vulnerability and risks for its own people. To this end, one major concern is how the UN will retain the mandate as the overseer of the international emergency management. It was apparent from this project that the UN will need to develop and mandate an adoption of an international
incident management system for international disaster aid programs to ensure that every member state commits and complies with instituting comprehensive emergency management for its citizens.

Evidence from each of the case-study countries showed that even though decentralization of services such as EOC presented opportunities for participation, in the case of international emergency management, there would be challenges ranging from sovereignty of countries, the need by some countries to save face and the need to protect “secrets” from being accessed by foreigners. The study concluded that the establishment of international emergency management in the developing countries would therefore be marred by many problems among them corruption and lack of proper governments. Kenya, Iraq, Somalia, Nigeria and Haiti provided examples of the political conditions in the developing countries that would interfere with the setting and functioning of international EOCs. In spite of these challenges and the fact that the UN is not perfect, it appears to be the only existing institution where countries can share problems and find solutions together and therefore the only international body that can lead international emergency/disaster management.
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