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Climate Change and the International Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement

ABSTRACT

Only since the turn of the 21st century have humanitarian organisations developed specific strategies that address climate change impacts as a humanitarian challenge. Taking the International Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement, being the largest humanitarian network, as an empirical case study, the article discusses the Movement's changes in the areas 1) agenda setting, 2) organisational restructuring, 3) networking, 4) programming, and 5) advocacy. Based on the case study and a theoretical framework of organisational sociology, the article provides conclusions on internal and external factors that can explain why the Movement has been successful in being one of the first actors within the organisational field of humanitarian organisations to focus systematically on the humanitarian implications of climatic changes.

Keywords: *Climate Change, Humanitarianism, International Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement, Organisational Change*

Introduction¹

While to a certain extent climate change will be managed by newly created organizations, much will also depend on older, existing organisations that will have to adjust their policies and priorities in order to provide the policies and programmes necessary to address climate change.²

- 1 The research has been supported by the Ruhr Universität Bochum (Starting Grant Program for Young Researchers), Mercator Foundation (MERCUR Starting Grant), and the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD). I thank all research partners and interview participants for their support as well as the anonymous reviewers for their comments.
- 2 John Mathiason: *Managing Climate Change: Challenges for International Organizations and for Scholars Who Study Them*, in: *Journal of International Organizations Studies* 4:1 (2013), pp. 7–12, 11.

Currently, one can observe a rapidly changing humanitarian organisational field in which the majority of humanitarian actors are developing new approaches to incorporate the challenges of a changing climate into their organisational expertise and mandate. This adaptation process and the related restructuring at the internal level of humanitarian organisations is at the centre of this analysis.

The attention towards climate change as a humanitarian issue has only increased significantly during the last fifteen years.³ Previously global warming was mainly considered as a threat to the environment, and thus a topic for environmental non-governmental organisations:

When the International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent first discussed climate change in 1999, few were convinced that humanitarian organisations really needed to worry about it. In those days, people considered it an environmental issue; at most a potential risk for the distant future, a scientific debate.⁴

The quote and its implied scepticism towards the relevance of climatic changes for humanitarians emphasises the major turnaround that has taken place within the humanitarian community since the turn of the 21st century. The aim of this article is to trace the factors that facilitated this shift within this relatively short time span. Utilising an organisational sociology perspective that stresses both external and internal incentives for organisational change, the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement is analysed because it was among the first humanitarian organisations that strategically moved the issue of climate change onto its organisational agenda and integrated it into its existing programmes on disaster risk reduction.

What has enabled the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement to address this topic of climate change strategically and why were they among the early responders within the humanitarian community? To answer this question, this article traces the developments during the last fifteen years within the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement along the five dimensions 1) agenda setting, 2) organisational restructuring, 3) networking, 4) programming, 5) advocacy.

Today, humanitarians agree that climate change has important implications for both disaster management (from emergency relief to the recovery phase) as well as for community risk reduction.⁵ In the context of disaster risk reduction and the increasing attention on local resilience, humanitarian actors have pledged to follow the Hyogo

3 Madeleen Helmer/Dorothea Hilhorst: Natural Disasters and Climate Change, in: *Disasters* 30:1 (2006), pp. 1–4.

4 Red Cross/Red Crescent Climate Centre: *Climate Guide*, The Hague 2007, p. 2.

5 Red Cross/Red Crescent Climate Centre: *Climate Guide*, pp. 77–105.

Framework for Action (2005–2015)⁶ and the subsequent Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (2015–2030)⁷, which addresses climate change as one of the drivers of disaster risks:

Disasters, many of which are exacerbated by climate change and increasing in frequency and intensity, significantly impede progress towards sustainable development. Evidence indicates that exposure of persons and assets in all countries has increased faster than vulnerability has decreased, thus generating new risk and a steady rise in disasters losses with a significant economic, social, health, cultural and environmental impact in the short, medium and long term, especially at the local and community level.⁸

Because of climatic changes, humanitarian organisations expect an increase in disaster relief and recovery activities. This is due to greater numbers and different forms of disasters – from slow onset disasters such as droughts or sea level rise, to rapid onset disasters such as tropical storms or floods.⁹ Sea-level rise, as an example, affects both food and water security through salt-water intrusion especially in low-lying islands. However, rising sea levels also threatens many highly populated urban areas across the globe that might become inhabitable, thus also causing migration movements due to climatic changes. This will create legal challenges for protecting these displaced populations in the future.¹⁰

- 6 The Hyogo Framework was established by the 2005 World Disaster Reduction Conference and endorsed by the United Nations General Assembly Resolution A/RES/60/195. United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR): Hyogo Framework for Action 2005–2015: Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters, Extract from the Final Report of the World Conference on Disaster Reduction, A/CONF.206/6, Geneva 2007, available online at: http://www.unisdr.org/files/1037_hyogoframeworkforactionenglish.pdf (accessed 26 August 2015).
- 7 United Nations World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction: Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030, Sendai 2015, p. 6, available online at: <http://www.wcdrr.org/preparatory/post2015> (accessed 26 August 2015).
- 8 *Ibid.*, p. 4.
- 9 The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) predicts that the intensity and frequency of extreme weather related events will increase, which also heightens the disaster risk. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change: Climate Change 2013: The Physical Science Basis, Stockholm 2013, p. 5. See also The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change: Managing the Risks of Extreme Events and Disasters to Advance Climate Change Adaptation, Special Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change 2012, New York 2012.
- 10 Jane McAdam: Climate Change, Forced Migration, and International Law, Oxford 2013.

In this context, the German Red Cross, for instance, acknowledges that “relief and reconstruction [are] no longer sufficient answers”, instead disaster risk reduction becomes more important to address these rising risks, while the target group of the most vulnerable people will not change.¹¹ Academic debates also recommend increasing efforts to address the core issue of vulnerability reduction in the context of disaster management and climate change adaptation.¹²

Climate change is an increasing disaster risk, particularly for the most vulnerable people. Instead of starting new programmes to address these new risks by themselves, the challenge is to integrate them into our humanitarian work. The international community needs to understand and accept that traditional ways of thinking about disaster response no longer apply. Preparing for, reducing the risk of and responding to natural hazards is what many humanitarian actors already do, in collaboration with those most at risk. In the face of climate change, we just need to do more, and do it smarter, shifting from response to risk reduction, and making use of relevant climate information.¹³

Humanitarian organisations acknowledge that different types of natural disasters have different humanitarian implications. However, climate change has an impact on all humanitarian sectors, prompting organisations to address it as a crosscutting issue. The health and care sector will be directly affected by changes in disease patterns, and indirectly through malnutrition linked to droughts and crop failure. In the food security and livelihoods sectors, the water resources and soil quality will decrease, crop failures can increase, and living conditions for livestock worsen. Finally, regarding the water and sanitation sector, there will be increases in droughts and water shortages in arid environments, degradation of water quality, and increased flooding interfering with water purity and sanitation security.¹⁴

- 11 Thorsten Klose: Climate Change: Basic Facts and Figures, presentation given at session III of the workshop: Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) and Climate Change Adaptation (CCA), Kampala, Uganda 2013, p. 65.
- 12 Madeleen Helmer/Dorothea Hilhorst: Natural Disasters and Climate Change, p. 3; Geoff O’Brien et al.: Climate Change and Disaster Management, in: *Disasters* 30:1 (2006), pp. 64–80.
- 13 Marten van Aalst: Communicating Changing Risks, in: *Forced Migration Review* 31 (2008), pp. 57–58, 57.
- 14 Red Cross/Red Crescent Climate Centre: Climate Training Kit (no date), available online at: <http://www.climatecentre.org/training> (accessed 26 August 2015).

With regards to the regional impacts of climate change that are discussed in the latest 2014 Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) comments that it has responded to many of the mentioned climate change related humanitarian emergencies over the past decade that include:

‘Stress on water resources’ and reduced agricultural productivity in Africa; heatwaves, ‘economic losses and people affected by flooding’ in Europe; floods and ‘drought-related water and food shortage causing malnutrition’ in Asia; damage to coral reefs and marine ecosystems, as well as floods in Australasia; wildfires and killer heat waves in North America; decreased food production and quality in Central and South America; ‘loss of livelihoods, coastal settlements, infrastructure, ecosystem services and economic stability’ in small islands.¹⁵

The acknowledgment of climate change as a humanitarian issue, rather than only an environmental one, has led to the emergence of concrete measures and tools to address its effects. In order to deal with the uncertainties linked to climatic events in the future, humanitarian organisations involve local communities through climate related vulnerability and capacity analyses, more detailed disaster preparedness tools and capacity-building measures to enhance local resilience. These tools have been designed in response to requests by local populations, practitioners on the ground, decision makers in organisational headquarters, and by donor agencies. This research traces the evolution of this newly established organisational consensus over the last fifteen years.

Research Framework

This section introduces the theoretical organisational sociology concepts utilised in this research framework, presents the research methods and data basis, and provides information on the selected case study of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement.

15 IFRC: ‘Deeply Concerned’ by Humanitarian Consequences of Climate Risks Highlighted in New IPCC Report, Red Cross/Red Crescent Climate Centre, 31 March 2014, available online at: <http://www.ifrc.org/en/news-and-media/press-releases/asia-pacific/japan/red-cross-red-crescent-deeply-concerned-by-humanitarian-consequences-of-climate-risks-highlighted-in-new-ipcc-report/> (accessed 26 August 2015).

Theoretical Concepts

Theoretical perspectives of organisational sociology address a variety of explanatory factors for organisational behaviour and organisational change. The following analysis focuses on both internal and external reasons that contribute to the explanation of the development of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement's recent focus on the topic of climate change. External factors refer to the organisational environment that is comprised of other actors in the organisational field,¹⁶ such as non-governmental organisations, governments, the general population, and beneficiaries, while the internal factors include the members and staff of an organisation and its structures at various levels from local chapters, to national and international headquarters.

While humanitarian actors are mainly situated in the humanitarian organisational field with its set of actors, such as vulnerable populations, government and United Nations bodies, for instance, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), their linkages to the organisational field of climate change are increasing. Humanitarian organisations, for instance, now also engage in the climate change conferences at the international level or network with climate change scientists and environmental actors and ministries. The research therefore considers both organisational fields as overlapping, leading to new challenges for humanitarian organisations in the realm of networking, advocacy and programming.

With regard to the external organisational environment and its impact upon organisations, neo-institutional theories argue that organisational actors, interests, and rationalities are products of their institutional environment. Neo-institutionalism assumes that regulative and normative pressures as well as cognitive constraints influence organisational behaviour.¹⁷ They therefore expect an adaptation of organisational activities and formal structures to shifting institutional expectations and pressures. Strategies of compliance are expected to originate at the level of formal structures and externally employed frames of reference, later on promoting change at the activity level of an organisation. However, although 'institutions control actors by providing definitions of situations and identities', organisations are not seen as passive rule followers but as active participants who interpret and construct their own worlds.¹⁸

16 According to Paul DiMaggio and Walter Powell an organisational field consists of "the totality of relevant actors" that "in the aggregate, constitute a recognized area of institutional life". Paul DiMaggio/Walter Powell: *The Iron Cage Revisited: Institutional Isomorphism and Collective Rationality in Organizational Fields*, in: *American Sociological Review* 48:2 (1983), pp. 147–60, 148.

17 *Ibid.*

18 William Richard Scott: *Institutions and Organizations: Foundations of Organizational Science*, Thousand Oaks 1995, pp. 22ff; 132.

With regard to the internal organisational environment, various theoretical approaches exist. Contingency theories, for example, highlight contextual factors such as organisational size, history and organisational aims,¹⁹ while resource dependency approaches stress the need for organisational resource acquisition.²⁰ Moreover, actors pushing for internal organisational change can become important facilitators of change processes. In this analysis, they will be called “change agents”, who are defined by David Buchanan and Richard Badham as “any individual seeking to reconfigure an organisation’s roles, responsibilities, structures, outputs, processes, systems, technology, or other resources”.²¹ Another internal factor that can influence adaptability is the degree of institutionalisation within an organisation. Organisational restructuring and the establishment or existence of organisational units that are more compatible with external environments can be beneficial in terms of legitimacy and resource mobilisation, but they can also create internal tension as outlined by Jeffrey Pfeffer below:

Organizational environments and the contingencies to be confronted change constantly. [...] With each change in the environment, the organizational units that are more compatible with the new requirements are likely to assert claims for more power and control in the organization. [...] As Pfeffer and Salancik (1978) argued, organizations confront a dilemma between adaptation and implementation. The stable power structure in institutionalized organizations permits the organization and mobilization of energy to get things accomplished. [...] It is at the point of moderate institutionalization that the organization will be able to adapt and also to mobilize resources for action.²²

- 19 Derek Pugh/David Hickson (eds.): *Organizational Structure in Its Context: The Aston Programme 1*, Lexington 1976.
- 20 Jeffrey Pfeffer/Gerald R. Salancik: *The External Control of Organizations: A Resource Dependence Perspective*, New York 1978.
- 21 David Buchanan/Richard Badham: *Politics and Organizational Change: The Lived Experience*, in: *Human Relations* 52:5 (1999), pp. 609–629, 610. The social movement literature speaks of norm entrepreneurs (Martha Finnemore/Kathryn Sikkink: *International Norm Dynamics and Political Change*, in: *International Organization* 52:4 (1998), pp. 887–917) while political sciences use the term policy entrepreneurs (Michael Mintrom/Sandra Vergari: *Advocacy Coalitions, Policy Entrepreneurs and Policy Change*, in: *Policy Studies Journal* 24:3 (1996), pp. 420–434)
- 22 Jeffrey Pfeffer: *Power in Organizations*, New York 1981.

Research Methods

I generated my research findings inductively based on interviews with various humanitarian non-governmental organisations. Interviews were conducted between 2012 and 2014 with researchers, policy makers, and humanitarian practitioners, especially with the climate (policy) experts from nine organisations including the Asian Disaster Preparedness Center, Brot für die Welt, CARE International, Oxfam, and Welthungerhilfe, as well as with representatives of national Red Cross/Red Crescent societies and the Red Cross/Red Crescent Climate Centre. The focus of this analysis is on the eleven interviews with employees of various branches of the Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement.

In addition, I carried out a document analysis of organisational Red Cross/Red Crescent documents and participated in informal talks and participatory observations, for example, during the German Red Cross workshop on disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation in Kampala, Uganda, in September 2013. The workshop included 35 participants from ten national Red Cross/Red Crescent Societies from sub-Saharan Africa, the German Red Cross, the Red Cross/Red Crescent Climate Centre and from two Ugandan government ministries.

The entire data set was analysed using the computer assisted qualitative data analysis tool MaxQDA to outline the interviewees' perspective on climate change and humanitarian action while identifying the internal and external factors that impact upon the Movement's role and positioning towards the topic within the increasingly overlapping organisational fields of climate change and humanitarian action.

Case Study

The analysis focuses on the developments of the International Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement, which consists of 189 national Red Cross/Red Crescent Societies, the The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), established in 1919, and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), founded in 1863. According to the Seville Agreement from 1997, the International Committee of the Red Cross acts as lead agency "in situations of international and non-international armed conflicts, internal strife and their direct results", while the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies is taking the lead in "natural or technological disasters and other emergency and disaster situations in peace time which require resources exceeding those of the operating National Society".²³ The

23 International Committee of the Red Cross: The Seville Agreement: Council of Delegates, Seville, 25–27 November 1997, in: *International Review of the Red Cross* 322 (1997).

International Conference is the supreme deliberative body of the International Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement. Every four years, the International Conference brings together the parties of the Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement with representatives of the 194 States Party to the Geneva Conventions.²⁴

The 189 national Red Cross/Red Crescent Societies have a special status as auxiliaries to the public authorities in the humanitarian field, which “is characterised by a specific legal status, based on international humanitarian law, the rules established by the Movement and the national legislation of each State. The auxiliary role has primarily national, but also in some cases international, implications”.²⁵ National Red Cross/Red Crescent Societies “provide a range of services including disaster relief, and health and social programmes. In wartime they may assist the civilian population and support the medical services of the armed forces”.²⁶ Today, the International Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement

is the largest humanitarian network in the world. Its mission is to alleviate human suffering, protect life and health, and uphold human dignity especially during armed conflicts and other emergencies. It is present in every country and supported by millions of volunteers.²⁷

Integrating Climate Change into the Humanitarian Agenda of the International Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement

The following analysis of the question, what has enabled the International Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement to integrate the topic of climate change into its humanitarian agenda, will be conducted from a historical point of view that is structured along

24 International Committee of the Red Cross: International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent, Overview from 9 September 2011, available online at: <http://www.icrc.org/eng/who-we-are/movement/international-conference/overview-international-conference-of-the-red-cross-and-red-crescent.htm> (accessed 26 August 2015); International Committee of the Red Cross: The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, 2014, available online at: <http://www.ifrc.org/en/who-we-are/the-movement/> (accessed 26 August 2015).

25 International Committee of the Red Cross/The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies: Handbook of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, Geneva 2008, p. 830.

26 International Committee of the Red Cross: The Movement: An Overview, 24 August 2013, available online at: <https://www.icrc.org/eng/who-we-are/movement/overview-the-movement.htm> (accessed 26 August 2015).

27 Ibid.

the following five dimensions: 1) agenda setting, 2) organisational restructuring, 3) networking, 4) programming, 5) advocacy. Each dimensions outlines the observed changes within the last fifteen years along with their explanatory factors. These factors include changes in the external organisational environment such as climatic impacts on vulnerable populations, changing discourses, new networks with new expertise, and new financial incentives and requirements, which created incentives for humanitarian organisations to address the topic of climatic changes. Internal incentives within the International Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement include personal interests of staff and decision makers, and observed local needs and expectations.

Agenda Setting

At the 27th International Conference of the Red Cross/Red Crescent in 1999, the participants agreed for the first time to “undertake a study to assess the future impact of climatic changes upon the frequency and severity of disasters and the implications for humanitarian response and preparedness”.²⁸ This initiative marked the beginning of a reorientation towards an active engagement with the topic of climate change as a humanitarian issue.

The decision was preceded by the first and second Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change assessment reports on climate change in 1990 and 1995,²⁹ and the entering into force of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) on 21 March 1994. Today 195 countries are Parties to the Convention,³⁰ although considerably fewer states committed to the Kyoto Protocol (adopted 11

28 International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement: The Plan of Action for 2000–2003: Adopted by the 27th International Conference, published 1999, final goal 2.1(3), available online at: <http://www.redcross.int/en/conference/speeches/plan.asp> (accessed 26 August 2015).

29 John Houghton/Geoff Jenkins/James Ephraums (eds): Report Prepared for Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change by Working Group I, Cambridge 1990, available online at: http://www.ipcc.ch/ipccreports/far/wg_1/ipcc_far_wg_1_full_report.pdf (accessed 26 August 2015); Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change: IPCC Second Assessment: Climate Change 1995: A Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, 1995, available online at: <https://www.ipcc.ch/pdf/climate-changes-1995/ipcc-2nd-assessment/2nd-assessment-en.pdf> (accessed 26 August 2015).

30 United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change: Climate Finance, no date, available online at: https://unfccc.int/cooperation_and_support/financial_mechanism/items/2807.php (accessed 26 August 2015).

December 1997, entered into force on 16 February 2005).³¹ Since the 1990s, various developments in the organisational field of climate change both at the academic and policy level have led to an increased “issue salience” of climate change as a topic.³²

The expansion of this organisational field enabled a window of opportunity for humanitarian organisations to contribute their capacities to the emerging networks of actors at the global, national, and local level. The aim to establish themselves among this new network to gain both organisational legitimacy and new resource opportunities represents one explanatory factor for a stronger orientation towards climate change in humanitarian organisations including the Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement.

For the Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement this meant that it stressed the linkages between climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction as it has been building its expertise in the latter area. Especially, the advantage of a broadly anchored local Red Cross/Red Crescent volunteer networks that can be activated for the issue of disaster preparedness has been stressed in this context both as a resource for actions and funding and as a mandate for advocacy work at the political level:

National Red Cross/Red Crescent societies are in a unique position to work with groups and individuals at the community level that government agencies may sometimes find difficult to reach. Climate change often provides an additional incentive for proactive disaster risk reduction and may offer new opportunities to fund such programmes. The Red Cross should take the voice of the most vulnerable to national and international policy makers.³³

In line with the growing public, academic and political awareness of climate change issues, new advocacy coalitions and funding opportunities emerged that were no longer limited to environmental non-governmental organisations and climate scientists but increasingly became attractive to the humanitarian community.³⁴ A leading Red Cross/Red Crescent Climate Centre representative remembers this shift in awareness:

31 United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change: Kyoto Protocol, published in 2014, available online at: http://unfccc.int/kyoto_protocol/items/2830.php (accessed 26 August 2015)

32 Nina Hall: *Moving Beyond Their Mandates?: How International Organisations are Responding to Climate Change*, Unpublished Manuscript, Berlin 2013.

33 Vietnam Red Cross Society: *Preparing for Climate Change in Vietnam*, Geneva 2007, available online at: http://www.climatecentre.org/downloads/File/asia_and_pacific/Vietnam%20February%202007.pdf (accessed 26 August 2015).

34 Red Cross/Red Crescent Climate Centre: *Climate Guide*, p. 2.

Over ten years ago when the founding director of the Climate Centre Madeleen Helmer was in the Pacific Islands and she said ‘there it looks like the climate is changing and people may suffer what is the Red Cross doing about it?’ People in the humanitarian sector in general did not even know what climate change was [...] in the early 2000s. It was an obscure scientific complicated long-term future almost science fiction topic. However, we knew from the science that the problem was real, was already having some manifestations, and was likely to grow, And since then in the beginning our work was mostly awareness and advocacy. For example, I have been going to every UN forum or convention on climate change, climate conference, or COP since 2004 and in the beginning I was saying ‘yeah I am collaborating or I am working with the Red Cross family’, people [replied] ‘and why are you here?’ Climate change was perceived to be as mostly an atmospheric chemistry problem, a geopolitical issue, or an environmental issue. I think that by now, in part of course because of our work, but also because of the work of many others, there is an absolute recognition that climate change is a humanitarian topic and there are many things that we can do (interview with a leading Red Cross/Red Crescent Climate Centre representative, September 2013).

The scepticism described in the quote above with regard to the humanitarian community and the participants at UN conventions in the mid-2000s existed also within the National Red Cross/Red Crescent Societies as described by a leading representative of the German Red Cross:

I believe the RC/RC Movement has reacted differently to the topic then ten years ago. I think that also internally it took a lot of hard work because one rather associated the environmental movements with the topic of climate change and wondered why this is a topic for humanitarian or developmental actors [...]? Why are we interested in CO₂ reduction? However, I believe that it has become clear now that climate change does not only have consequences for the ecosystem but also humanitarian consequences. This aggravation has an influence on the access to water, the access to health possibilities, disaster events, humanitarian crises, etc. Therefore, it became a primary topic of the Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement. Nevertheless, I believe everyone has understood this by now (interview with a leading German Red Cross representative, November 2012, translated by the author).

Decision makers within the Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement consequently identified organisational advantages linked to the changes within the increasingly overlapping organisational fields of climate change and humanitarian action. Among these perceived advantages are goals to establish more long-term perspectives for humanitarian projects through an emphasis on disaster preparedness and risk reduction programmes instead of the previous focus on disaster response activities. This enables

the development of new expertise, acquiring new funding and taking on a lead in advocacy. A leading German Red Cross representative, for example, stated in an interview: “We had to claim a niche regarding development and this niche is disaster risk reduction. If we talk about disaster risk reduction it is logically that, we cannot pass climate” (interview with a leading German Red Cross representative, January 2013, translated by the author).

The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies also has had an incentive to stress that humanitarians have to help in non-conflict situations as it has the lead role in this field.³⁵ As the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies’ resources are limited in comparison to the International Committee of the Red Cross,³⁶ it is important for the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies’ organisational legitimacy to position itself strongly in issue areas that have a potential of expansion both in attention and in funding. Among these issues are not only climate change, but also new technologies, forced migration, or early warning – early action which were among the topics discussed in recent International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies World Disaster Reports.³⁷

To integrate the topic of climate change into the agenda of the Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement, different parts of the Movement have published several key documents at the national and international level. At the national level, the 2003 Netherlands Red Cross report *Preparedness for Climate Change*, is noteworthy as one of the early thematic documents. In addition to underlining the humanitarian implications of climate change, it also stresses that responsive actions fall within the humanitarian mandate to aid the most vulnerable – an argument that has been used prominently since:

35 International Committee of the Red Cross: The Seville Agreement: Council of Delegates.

36 The International Committee of the Red Cross has more than 12,000 staff in 80 countries. The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies/International Committee of the Red Cross: The International RC/RC Movement at a Glance, published in November 2007, available online at: http://www.ifrc.org/Global/Publications/general/at_a_glance-en.pdf (accessed 26 August 2015). The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies does not provide exact figures on its employees. The Federation’s LinkedIn page cites a number between 1,001 and 5,000: http://www.linkedin.com/company/ifrc?trk=top_nav_home (accessed 26 August 2015).

37 For example, The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies: World Disasters Reports, 2012, available online at: <http://www.ifrc.org/publications-and-reports/world-disasters-report/> (accessed 26 August 2015).

As the global climate is changing, the Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement needs to change as well. Climate change directly affects the Red Cross and Red Crescent's core mandate: assistance to the most vulnerable. Inaction is not an option: either we address the rising risks, or we fail to address our own mandate.³⁸

The observed humanitarian implications of climatic changes, which mostly affect populations already vulnerable to climate variability,³⁹ therefore, present the background for humanitarians to address this topic within their organisational mandates to help the most vulnerable. The humanitarian reasoning that "it is morally preferable to prevent human suffering than to save lives in the aftermath of a disaster",⁴⁰ also supports humanitarian engagement in the context of climate change, linking it to the organisational mandate of the Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement.

At the international level, the seminal Climate Guide – a handbook published by the Red Cross/Red Crescent Climate Centre to prepare the Movement for the humanitarian implications of climate change, is the most relevant document for the development of national strategies.⁴¹ At the time of its publication, the 30th International Conference of the Red Cross/Red Crescent defined four great humanitarian challenges facing the world today with "environmental degradation and climate change" being situated prominently at the top of the "Together for Humanity" agenda, stressing the need "to intensify operational interaction and partnerships among ourselves and with other institutions".⁴²

Organisational Restructuring

In 2002, an important structural change took place, the Netherlands Red Cross together with the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies established the Red Cross/Red Crescent Climate Centre in The Hague, The Nether-

38 Red Cross/Red Crescent Climate Centre: Climate Guide, p. 17.

39 Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change: Climate Change 2014: Impacts, Adaptation, and Vulnerability, Top-Level Findings From the Working Group II, Summary of the Fifth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change for Policymakers, 2014, p. 7.

40 Thorsten Klose: Introduction. Presentation given at session I of Workshop DRR and CCA, Kampala 24 September 2013, p. 9.

41 Red Cross/Red Crescent Climate Centre: Climate Guide.

42 International Committee of the Red Cross/International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies: Resolutions: 30th International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent, Geneva (26 to 30 November 2007) and Council of Delegates of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, (23 to 24 November 2007), Annex: Resolution 1, Declaration: Together for Humanity, Geneva 2007, p. 75.

lands. The Netherlands Red Cross hosts the Climate Centre, which however remains independent from it but with a hybrid structure, as explained by the Associate Director of the Climate Centre below. The highest decision making body of the Red Cross/Red Crescent Climate Centre is a three member board with one member being designated by the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies secretariat, one by the Netherlands Red Cross and one independent chair selected jointly by the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies and the Netherlands Red Cross.⁴³

These four people have the authority to tell me as Associate Director what I should do and they establish strategic plans and approve reports and so on. From that perspective, we are not directly under the [IFRC] secretariat and we are not directly under the Netherlands [Red Cross], we have this hybrid [structure]. We support everyone, the National RC/RC Societies, the IFRC headquarters in Geneva, the IFRC zonal offices in Kuala Lumpur or for Southern Africa in Gaborone. We try to establish working relationships with everybody. Of course, we are small so there is only so much we can do. It depends a lot, on what others are doing and most of our work happens in partnership with or lending a hand to others, who are actually doing the job (interview with a leading Red Cross/Red Crescent Climate Centre representative, September 2013).

The official aims of the Red Cross/Red Crescent Climate Centre are to support the national Red Cross/Red Crescent Societies in the areas of: *awareness* (information and education activities about climate change and extreme weather events), *action* (supporting climate adaptation activities, within the existing context of disaster risk reduction programmes), *advocacy* (impacts of climate change on vulnerable people and experience with climate adaptation and disaster risk reduction programmes), and *analyses* (climate change risk reduction issues at stake in the context of the Red Cross and Red Crescent).⁴⁴

In its current strategy report (2012–2015) the Red Cross/Red Crescent Climate Centre states that:

43 Red Cross/Red Crescent Climate Centre: Annual Report 2013: Innovation, Participation and Learning in Climate Risk Management, The Hague 2014, p. 45.

44 Red Cross/Red Crescent Climate Centre: About Us, 2014, available online at: <http://www.climatecentre.org/about-us> (accessed 20 August 2014, no longer available).

Programs of the Climate Centre are well received. By the end of 2011, almost 70 National Societies in developing countries had participated in the Preparedness for Climate Change programme. More than 15 Partner National Societies address climate change either domestically or in the international programs. The Climate Centre has contributed to the development and implementation of a range of major programs (such as the EUR 40 million Netherlands Red Cross Partners for Resilience programme).⁴⁵

In this process of organisational restructuring, meaning the establishment of new institutionalised structures, one can observe the important influence of ‘change agents’ that push the topic internally.⁴⁶ They are relevant in moving topics to the top of an organisational agenda and in bringing different actor groups together, such as scientists, practitioners and government officials, or different parts of the Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement. Consequently, these leaders can acquire a central position within an organisation to educate, advocate and monitor the progress of a new organisational agenda.

With regard to the key event of establishing the Red Cross/Red Crescent Climate Centre in 2002, Madeleen Helmer, a Red Cross representative with practical experience in the Pacific Islands and first director of the Red Cross/Red Crescent Climate Centre, was influential in advocating for this organisational change. Her initiative has now found the established support of a growing group of organisational change agents (meaning a group of scientists and practitioners that are working on the links between humanitarian action and climate change) who work for, or closely cooperate with, the Red Cross/Red Crescent Climate Centre. The reasons that motivate this group of actors range from strategic interests in improving the position of their organisation, to personal interests such as having expert or local knowledge, personal ties to other important actors working on the topic, career related, or altruistic motives (interviews with representatives of the International Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement, 2012–2014).

In 2008, Madeleen Helmer also delivered an influential keynote speech at the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC), which is a unique inter-agency forum for coordination, policy development and decision-making involving the key United

45 Red Cross/Red Crescent Climate Centre/International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent/The Netherlands Red Cross (eds.): Red Cross/Red Crescent Climate Centre: Strategic Plan 2012–2015, 2012, available online at: <http://www.climatecentre.org/downloads/files/RCCC%20strategy%202012–2015%20final.pdf>, p. 8 (accessed 26 August 2015).

46 David Buchanan/Richard Badham: Politics and Organizational Change: The Lived Experience, in: *Human Relations* 52:5 (1999), pp. 609–629.

Nations and non-United Nations humanitarian partners. Her speech has inspired changes at the international level of humanitarian organisations as analysed by Nina Hall:

The majority of IASC members were receptive to her [Madeleen Helmer's] message and decided to establish a Climate Change Task Force to coordinate the humanitarian community's engagement with the UNFCCC process. This moment was a critical juncture in the humanitarian community's involvement in climate change.⁴⁷

The presence of change agents such as Madeleen Helmer and others within the Red Cross/Red Crescent network also facilitated the development of new organisational structures across the National Red Cross/Red Crescent Societies regarding climate change sensitive personnel and regarding the development of organisational agendas to mainstream climate change as a humanitarian topic. Today, for example, a climate change focal point within each National Red Cross/Red Crescent Societies shall coordinate the various stakeholders at the national level but also serve as a contact person within the Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement itself.⁴⁸ The German Red Cross for example established the position of head of division on disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation at its headquarters in Berlin for the first time in 2009 (interview with the head of this division November 2012).

Among the programmes that helped such a global organisational restructuring are the *Preparedness for Climate Change* programme, which took place between 2006 and 2009, with a second round in 2010. During the first round, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies region/zone offices and the Red Cross/Red Crescent Climate Centre supported 39 National Red Cross/Red Crescent Societies "to assess the implications of rising climate risks in the participating countries and its consequences for their work" through trainings and workshops.⁴⁹ The Red

47 Nina Hall: A Catalyst for Cooperation?: The Inter-Agency Standing Committee and the Humanitarian Response to Climate Change, forthcoming, in: Global Governance, Hertie School of Global Governance.

48 Red Cross/Red Crescent Climate Centre: Entry Points for Considering Climate Change in National Society Programmes, 2011, available online at: <http://www.climatecentre.org/downloads/File/VCA%20guidance/Six%20Entry%20Points.pdf> (accessed 26 August 2015).

49 Red Cross/Red Crescent Climate Centre: Preparedness for Climate Change Programme, 2010, available online at: <http://www.climatecentre.org/downloads/files/programs/PFCC/Guide%20to%20PFCC%202%20Final-%20English.pdf> (accessed 26 August 2015).

Cross/Red Crescent Climate Centre also conducted consultations across the globe that led to the document *How can climate change be considered in Vulnerability and Capacity Assessments?*⁵⁰

Programming

Within the Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement various tools to support the National Red Cross/Red Crescent Societies in climate change adaptation projects have been developed, including the vulnerability and capacity toolkit, the preparedness for climate change training cycle, as well as the “climate smart” *Entry points for considering climate change in National Society programmes*.⁵¹ According to these programming tools, National Red Cross/Red Crescent Societies shall undergo a climate risk assessment including the identification and prioritisation of actions and the preparation of a disaster response plan. The latter includes forecast-based contingency plans on different timescales (days, months, years) for pre-emptive action. To reach the goal of preparedness for future climate risks, a regularly updated assessment process is envisioned which makes use of new technologies of data forecasting. Moreover, National Red Cross/Red Crescent Societies should address climate change in their documents or develop plans for addressing it. This is particularly the case for new projects and for the health and disaster management sections. Finally, climate change related indicators for the monitoring and evaluation processes have to be established. This long list points at a strong focus on prevention, liaison, and data-based action plans. It also shows a structured organisational development approach to establish a new climate change strategy within National Red Cross/Red Crescent Societies.

50 An updated version from 2012 incorporates local experiences and best practices: Red Cross/Red Crescent Climate Centre/International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent (eds.): *How Can Climate Change be Considered in Vulnerability and Capacity Assessments?: A Summary for Practitioners*, published in June 2012, available online at: <http://www.climatecentre.org/downloads/File/VCA%20guidance/VCA-CC-for%20practitioners-JUN2012.pdf> (accessed 26 August 2015).

51 Red Cross/Red Crescent Climate Centre/International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent (eds.): *How Can Climate Change be Considered in Vulnerability and Capacity Assessments?: A Summary for Practitioners*; Red Cross/Red Crescent Climate Centre: *Preparedness for Climate Change Programme*; Red Cross/Red Crescent Climate Centre: *Entry Points for Considering Climate Change in National Society Programmes*; International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent: *Bridging the Gap: Integrating Climate Change and Disaster Risk Reduction: A Case Study*, Kuala Lumpur 2008, available online at: <http://www.climatecentre.org/downloads/File/articles/Bridging%20the%20Gap%20Integrating%20climate%20change%20and%20disaster%20risk%20reduction-%202008.pdf> (accessed 26 August 2015).

Local population in their interactions with the project staff and the volunteers of the Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement have articulated expectations for an integration of climatic changes into Red Cross/Red Crescent programmes, although their perception of local changes differ from the complex language employed in organisational programming.⁵²

When one talks to the people [in Vietnam], they knew things were changing. In the beginning, the word climate change was not there, but when one talked with the farmers they said this is no longer as we know it from our childhood and our fathers, this is changing.⁵³

During the participatory vulnerability and capacity assessments employed by National Red Cross/Red Crescent Societies local community members voiced similar observations across the globe. During staff meetings and organisational exchange meetings such as workshops on disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation conducted at various levels of the Red Cross/Red Crescent movement the issue of climatic changes and local impacts was addressed, too, and perceived as an important challenge.⁵⁴

Networking

National Red Cross/Red Crescent Societies are supposed to keep in touch with climate related stakeholders, to be regularly updated on the nature of changing climate risks which shall be implemented in the planning of activities. These stakeholders can be non-governmental organisations, public authorities, for instance government officials, or academics. In particular, the relationship to the government's climate change focal point is emphasised, if it exists, along with the ministry of health and the national disaster management office.

52 Madeleen Helmer: 14th Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, Poznan 2008, available online at: <http://climatechange-tv.rtcc.org/2008/12/26/madeleen-helmer-december-2008/> (accessed 26 August 2015).

53 Interview with a leading German Red Cross staff stationed in Uganda, September 2013, translated by the author

54 Participatory observations and personal interviews, workshop in Kampala, Uganda, September 2013

It is crucial that the adaptation planning efforts of Governments address the humanitarian consequences of climate change and in particular that they take into account existing local humanitarian capacity to contribute to adaptation.⁵⁵

Moreover, National Red Cross/Red Crescent Societies should link their discussions of climate change projections, their humanitarian implications and possible actions to the data provided by national meteorological services. In this context, the question of knowing how to interpret these data becomes important. At the third World Climate Conference, organised by the United Nations' World Meteorological Organisation (WMO), in Geneva, Switzerland, September 2009, Madeleen Helmer the Red Cross/Red Crescent Climate Centre president at the time said:

Seasonal forecasts, though, are what they [project staff] need desperately. Plus a way of getting information to people who may live in a place that sees one bus a day. We want a permanent dialogue between the knowledge centres and those that can use that knowledge.⁵⁶

At the same World Meteorological Organisation conference, the Global Framework for Climate Services was agreed upon, to “strengthen production, availability, delivery and application of science-based climate prediction and services”.⁵⁷ The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies has collaborated with the World Meteorological Organisation “to implement the Climate Services Adaptation Programme in Africa, which aims to build resilience in disaster risk management, food security, nutrition and health”.⁵⁸ It also cooperates with the International Research Institute for Climate and Society (IRI) at Columbia University, New York, USA in “developing tailored forecasting and monitoring products to help the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies improve its capabilities to both

55 International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent: 31st International Conference of the RCRC, Approved Workshops: Workshop 6 Humanitarian Consequences of Climate Change, Geneva 28 November-1 December 2011, p. 8.

56 Owen Gaffney: Climate Services for All?, in: *Global Change* 74:4 (2009), pp. 36–39, 39.

57 World Meteorological Organization (WMO): Global Framework for Climate Services. Brief Note, World Climate Conference-3, Geneva 2009, available online at: http://gfcs-climate.org/sites/default/files/brief_note_en.pdf (accessed 26 August 2015); World Meteorological Organization: WCC-3 High-Level Declaration, World Climate Conference-3, Geneva 2009, available online at: http://gfcs-climate.org/sites/default/files/WCC3_declaration_en.pdf, OP2 (accessed 26 August 2015).

58 IFRC: ‘Deeply Concerned’ by Humanitarian Consequences of Climate Risks Highlighted in New IPCC Report.

respond to and prepare for disasters”.⁵⁹ At the practical level, the Red Cross/Red Crescent Climate Centre supports National Red Cross/Red Crescent Societies in receiving, providing and interpreting such data, for example, through a map room on past and future precipitation levels.⁶⁰

Networking also takes place between National Red Cross/Red Crescent Societies and local communities, who are involved at various stages through participatory tools. The aim is, for example, to investigate current and traditional community methods of dealing with climate risks and climatic changes through instruments such as the local seasonal calendar, which is part of the vulnerability and capacity assessment method.⁶¹ Moreover, communities should have access to, and sufficient understanding of, early warning information. The involvement of local communities through participatory tools and consultations is a high priority for any National Red Cross/Red Crescent Society and advocated in various guidelines. In general, the Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement presents the institutionalised local contact through its expansive volunteer network as a major strength with regard to its response capacities.

Advocacy

According to the *Entry points for considering climate change in National Societies programmes*,⁶² advocacy refers to the sharing of experiences between the Red Cross/Red Crescent national focal points on climate change, the National Red Cross/Red Crescent Society, other National Red Cross/Red Crescent Societies and in the wider disaster

- 59 International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies: Red Cross Red Crescent and IRI forge partnership to save lives in face of climate change and its humanitarian impacts , 2007, available online at: <http://www.ifrc.org/en/news-and-media/press-releases/asia-pacific/indonesia/red-cross-red-crescent-and-iri-forge-partnership-to-save-lives-in-face-of-climate-change-and-its-humanitarian-impacts/> (accessed 26 August 2015); see also: International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies: Forecasts in Context, available online at: <http://iridl.ldeo.columbia.edu/maproom/IFRC/> (accessed 26 August 2015).
- 60 See for example, <http://iridl.ldeo.columbia.edu/maproom/IFRC/FIC/> (accessed 26 August 2015).
- 61 International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies: How to Do a VCA: A Practical Step-By-Step Guide for Red Cross Red Crescent Staff and Volunteers, Geneva 2007; International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies: VCA Training Guide: Classroom Training and Learning-By-Doing, Geneva 2008; Red Cross/Red Crescent Climate Centre/International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent (eds.): How Can Climate Change be Considered in Vulnerability and Capacity Assessments?: A Summary for Practitioners.
- 62 Red Cross/Red Crescent Climate Centre: Entry Points for Considering Climate Change in National Society Programmes.

risk reduction, climate change, and health community. In particular, the leadership of the National Red Cross/Red Crescent Society should engage in the issue of climate change risks and possible adaptation. Advocacy also involves national climate change stakeholders and the participation at national events, days for action, forums, conferences and the like, including a two-way relationship with the meteorological office to communicate community information needs. Overall, the National Red Cross/Red Crescent Society should be able to “assess whether or not current government climate policies, in place at national and local levels, are reflecting the needs of communities”.⁶³

Lobbying for climate change funding for the most vulnerable people, is another advocacy task, despite the acknowledgment of the national governments’ responsibility to protect their citizens and enforce legislation on disaster risk reduction. In this context, the staff of National Red Cross/Red Crescent Societies should be able “to explain in basic terms, the causes of climate change as well as the main trends, projections and likely impacts of current and future climate change in their country”.⁶⁴ In addition, awareness raising campaigns, for example in schools or through the network of Red Cross/Red Crescent youth volunteers shall be implemented to transfer information on changing climate risks.

The challenges associated with these advocacy tasks, local education and awareness raising on climate change deserve future research attention, especially in the context of how to communicate knowledge.⁶⁵ One recent innovation is the use of participatory games that the Red Cross/Red Crescent Climate Centre facilitates for donors and practitioners from the local to the national level. Their aim is to foster awareness of the complexity of climate change impacts for local livelihoods and disaster preparedness.⁶⁶

With regard to the development of advocacy instruments that address the complex linkage between climatic changes and humanitarian implications, the global discourse on climate change has also opened up opportunity structures in Western donor countries, where most humanitarian organisations receive their funding. Societal knowledge about the topic of climate change has increased with many Western countries having

63 Ibid., p. 2.

64 Ibid.

65 Kerstin Rosenow-Williams: Communicating Climate Risks. A Case Study of the International Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement, In: *Journal of International Law of Peace and Armed Conflict* 28:2 (2015), pp. 130–138.

66 Janot Mendler de Suarez/Pablo Suarez/Carina Bachofen (eds): Games for a New Climate: Experiencing the Complexity of Future Risks, Boston 2012, available online at: <http://www.climatecentre.org/downloads/File/Games/Games-related%20publications/Pardee%20report.pdf> (accessed 26 August 2015); Red Cross/Red Crescent Climate Centre: Using Games to Experience Climate Risk: Empowering Africa’s Decision-Makers, Final report: CDKN Action Lab Innovation Grant, undated; Red Cross/Red Crescent Climate Centre: Games: Participatory Games for the ‘New Normal’, 2013, available online at: <http://www.climatecentre.org/resources-games/games> (accessed 26 August 2015).

a rate of “knowing ‘something’ or a ‘great deal’ about climate change” at above 90 per cent of the population according to a 2009 Gallup poll.⁶⁷ With regard to the Gallup question whether “the global warming presents a threat to you and your family”, the answers differed widely, with a marked decrease of minus ten per cent in Western countries (66 per cent in 2007/2008 versus 56 per cent in 2010) and the United States (from 63 to 53 per cent).⁶⁸ This decrease follows the failed attempt for a global climate agreement in 2009 in Copenhagen. Nevertheless, despite this sinking threat perception, even in the United States the support for environmental protection policies has been higher than for economic growth since the 1990s, with an exception of the period of economic downturn from 2009 to 2013.⁶⁹

The observed change in organisational advocacy work can also be linked to new financial incentives as a key factor encouraging organisations to adapt their strategies to a new agenda. The most recent decision on the establishment of a Green Climate Fund is only one example of how the topic has attracted donor interest worldwide.⁷⁰ Another example is the conference of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change of the Parties decision in 2001 that least developed countries shall draft national adaptation programs of action to identify “their urgent and immediate needs to adapt to climate change”.⁷¹ To support this process the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change established the Least Developed Countries Fund managed by the Global Environment Facility.⁷² National and supranational donors,

67 Brett W. Pelham: Awareness: Opinions About Global Warming Vary Worldwide: Many Unaware, Do Not Necessarily Blame Human Activities, in: GALLUP (2009), available online at: <http://www.gallup.com/poll/117772/Awareness-Opinions-Global-Warming-Vary-Worldwide.aspx#1> (accessed 26 August 2015).

68 Anita Pugliese/Julie Ray: Fewer Americans, Europeans View Global Warming as a Threat, in: GALLUP (2011), available online at: <http://www.gallup.com/poll/147203/Fewer-Americans-Europeans-View-Global-Warming-Threat.aspx> (accessed 26 August 2015).

69 Art Swift: Americans Again Pick Environment over Economic Growth: Partisan Gap over Priority Largest Recorded’, in: GALLUP (2014), available online at: <http://www.gallup.com/poll/168017/americans-again-pick-environment-economic-growth.aspx> (accessed 26 August 2015).

70 United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change: Climate Finance.

71 United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change: Report of the Conference of the Parties on its Seventh Session, held in Marrakesh from 29 October to 10 November 2001, Addendum, Part Two: Action Taken by the Conference of the Parties, 8th plenary meeting (10 November 2001), FCCC/CP/2011/13/Add.1 2002; United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change: National Adaptation Programmes of Action (NAPAs), undated, available online at: https://unfccc.int/national_reports/napa/items/2719.php (accessed 26 August 2015).

72 United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change: Least Developed Countries (LDC) Fund, undated, available online at: https://unfccc.int/cooperation_and_support/

such as the European Union Commission's European Community Humanitarian Office also changed their funding lines to incorporate more climate change related projects.

Throughout this process of establishing national training capacities to identify climate change related needs in least developed countries, new partners such as ministries, insurance companies, local implementation partners, scientists and meteorologists have come together. In this context, humanitarian organisations also want to establish themselves as reliable local and international partners. The creation of new funding lines and donor interests can provide increasing financial support also for humanitarian projects in the areas of disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation. The shift, however, also presents new constraints as donors increasingly expect project applications to address climatic changes.

Conclusion

This analysis has traced the development of the climate change discourse from an environmental to a humanitarian topic. Among the external reasons that facilitated this development within the Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement one can list the climatic impacts on vulnerable populations, changing discourses and an increased public, academic and political interest in the topic, which have resulted in new networking and advocacy coalitions and funding opportunities.

At the internal level, local populations affected by climatic changes; local staff and national headquarter delegates, at various locations of the Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement, voiced the need to address the humanitarian consequences of climate change. Moreover, key individuals have pushed a humanitarian climate change agenda within their respective parts of this global Movement. Their organisational and individual motives include strategic interests to improve the position of their organisation, as well as personal interests such as having expert or local knowledge, personal ties to other important actors working on the topic, as well as career related or altruistic motives – a list, which will benefit from further empirical elaboration.

With regard to the question, why the Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement was among the first humanitarian actors to address the challenge of climate change prominently the following factors could have had an impact. Firstly, change agents, who have been connected through a newly institutionalised organisational structure (the Red Cross/Red Crescent Climate Centre), have played an important role. They were influential in not only developing the organisational rhetoric and framing of the

issue but also accompanied the structural changes that are necessary to implement this adaptation process across the 189 National Red Cross/Red Crescent Societies. A process, which is still going on and will require more time and resources due to the great complexity of the topic of humanitarian implications of local climatic changes.

Secondly, the different degrees of institutionalisation within the Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement can be of importance. Stable structures at the National Red Cross/Red Crescent Societies, which are auxiliaries to their national governments, help to organise this complex process of organisational change. At the same time, relatively moderate and flexible institutionalisation at the international level of the Movement enabled the establishment of the Red Cross/Red Crescent Climate Centre in 2002. The extent of power claims raised by such new organisational units that are more compatible with shifting external expectations, as discussed by Jeffrey Pfeffer,⁷³ would be of interest for further empirical research.

Thirdly, the fact that enough resources were available at the level of the Netherlands Red Cross to push the topic of climate change onto the agenda of the International Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement represents another explanation. Its exposure to raising sea levels, the strong national recognition of climatic changes in the Netherlands and related response and preparedness expertise, facilitated this early engagement of a Western donor country and its Red Cross Society with the consequences of climate change.

While all humanitarian organisations were exposed to the shift in the international policy discourse within the organisational field of climate change, it was within the Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement that the normative and cognitive pressures were perceived more strongly. The early perception of related expectations and opportunities by certain individuals and National Red Cross/Red Crescent Societies eventually led to a concerted response that later on influenced other actors within the humanitarian organisational field. Today other organisations address the issue of climate change in a similar manner as outlined from the point of view of the Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement throughout this article. More comparative case studies on the developments in other humanitarian and development organisations should be conducted in the future.

In summary, today the majority of humanitarian organisations position themselves within the increasingly overlapping organisational fields of climate change and humanitarian action and (re)define their strategies. In the future, increased slow and sudden onset disasters will lead to more vulnerable people being affected. These people are being hit by climate related hazards on many different levels including different time

73 Jeffrey Pfeffer: *Power in Organizations*.

and spatial scales rendering the issue of climate change a complex one to address.⁷⁴ The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies concludes with regard to this future scenario that: “More than ever, we need to embark on plausible – and adequately funded – early-warning and resilience-building measures, starting with the poorest and most vulnerable parts of the world.”⁷⁵

In order to incorporate climate change action into their daily work, humanitarian organisations including the Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement decided to foster partnerships between local communities and other stakeholders to build resilient communities that are well prepared in both disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation.⁷⁶ To achieve this goal, projects shall strengthen local capacities of the population through community-based programmes, while simultaneously enhancing regional and national capacities.

The practical outcomes of this reorientation and the challenges concerning the local implementation of the envisioned agenda deserve further research attention and comparative case studies. The cross-cutting nature of climate change for humanitarian action links it to practically every humanitarian sector and beyond, as well as to a large part of the world that is affected by climatic changes in the present or in the future. This understanding requires new approaches in communication, long-term planning and implementation of projects that have the potential to enlarge the concepts and understanding of humanitarian assistance fundamentally in future. Especially with regard to more long-term oriented projects, this will also require new funding mechanisms that focus on the anticipation of humanitarian implications of climatic changes instead of simply addressing the humanitarian consequences after the occurrence of natural disasters.

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74 Thorsten Klose: DRR and CCA in the Context of Resilience, Presentation given at session VII of Workshop DRR and CCA, Kampala 24 September 2013, p. 17f.

75 IFRC: ‘Deeply Concerned’ by Humanitarian Consequences of Climate Risks Highlighted in New IPCC Report.

76 International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent: 31st International Conference of the RCRC, Approved Workshops: Workshop 6 Humanitarian Consequences of Climate Change, pp. 4, 16, 21.