

THESIS RESEARCH REPORT

The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on humanitarian logistics in South Sudan

An opportunity for localisation of humanitarian logistics?



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Disclaimer

The views and opinions expressed in the interviews are those of the interviewees and do not necessarily reflect the official policy or position of the represented organisations. Any content provided by the interviewees is of their own opinion.

Front cover image source: Logistics Cluster South Sudan

Abstract

Humanitarian aid organisations in South Sudan have faced challenges regarding the restrictions imposed by the South Sudan government regarding the spread of the Covid-19 virus. Research shows that the restrictions did not only require organisations to adapt their logistics management but did also provide new challenges and opportunities for localisation of humanitarian aid and logistics in South Sudan.

This study investigates the relationship between the Covid-19 pandemic and humanitarian logistics in South Sudan and aims to show options for an increase of localised humanitarian aid.

Based on a review of existing literature on the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on humanitarian logistics and localisation, a set of interviews was conducted with several international and national humanitarian organisations operating in South Sudan. Respondents were asked about their experiences with the restrictions due to the pandemic and their opinion on challenges and opportunities for localisation of aid.

The results show that all humanitarian organisations have faced multiple challenges, most significantly of which are delays in aid supply transportation and growing financial concerns, and that they needed adaptation to continue their work. Partnerships between national and international organisations and conduct trainings to increase knowledge and capacity are seen as the biggest opportunities for advanced localisation.

On the basis of the results, it is recommended that national and international organisations in South Sudan increase discussions about the purpose and methods for the progress of localisation of humanitarian aid, intensify partnerships among each other and, in cooperation with the South Sudan government, set up plans to avoid logistical problems in future crises, similar to Covid-19.

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List of Acronyms

CBO	Community-based Organisation
DRA	Dutch Relief Alliance
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FBO	Faith-based Organisation
FSL	Food Security and Livelihood
HQ	Head Quarters
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
(i)NGO	(International) Non-Government Organisation
KUNO	Kennisuitwisseling over Noodhulp/Humanitarian Knowledge Exchange
LC	Logistics Cluster
LNGO	Local Non-Government Organisation
NFI	Non-Food Items
NL	the Netherlands
NNGO	National Non-Government Organisation
Q14	14 Day quarantine
SOP	Standard Operating Procedure
SSD	South Sudan
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
UNMISS	United Nations Mission in South Sudan
UNOCHA	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
USD	United States Dollar
VHL	Van Hall Larenstein
WASH	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
WFP	World Food Programme
WHO	World Health Organisation

Chapter 1. Introduction to the research

1.1 Background information

After the identification of the first case of Covid-19, the South Sudan Government imposed certain restrictions to anyone in the country, in an attempt to minimise the spread of the often deadly disease. The restrictions contained, among others, closed borders to neighbouring countries, interstate travel-ban, mandatory quarantine for travellers coming into the country or crossing state borders. Figure 1 shows a timeline with an overview of some of the activities related to the Covid-19 pandemic in South Sudan.

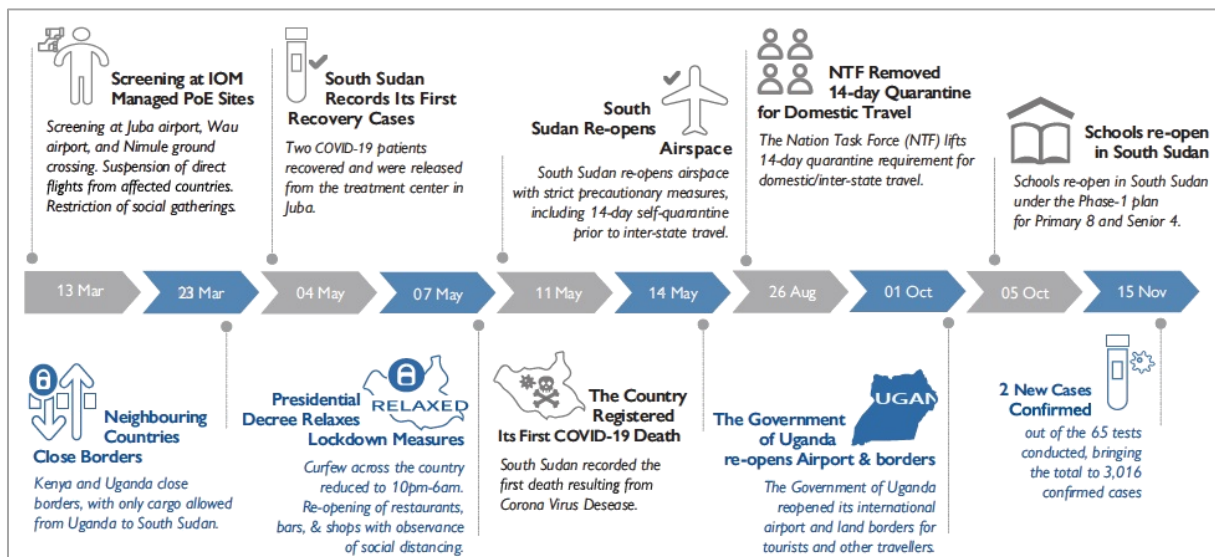


Figure 1 - Timeline activities and restrictions Covid-19 South Sudan, adapted (IOM South Sudan, 2020)

Since South Sudan is heavily reliant on food import from neighbouring countries (IPS, 2016), the restrictions negatively affected the countries' food supplies.

Humanitarian organisations were not excluded from the restrictions put up by the government, affecting many of their activities. On top of these restrictions came the aftermath of the heaviest floods in over 60 years in South Sudan history, affecting thousands of livelihoods and adding to an already Level 3 emergency in the country (UN News, 2020). Flooded roads made it hard for organisations to reach beneficiaries (see figure 5 in Annex 3) and conflicts between communities made transport of goods a dangerous activity (IFRC, 2020).

With to the high-level emergency in South Sudan, over the recent years many local aid organisations have formed and worked on various aid activities in the country. However, until this moment the leadership in humanitarian aid and majority of direct funding runs through international organisations operational in the country. The Grand Bargain commitments aim to change that in the form of 'Localisation of aid' (IASC, 2020). While there has been progress on the concept over the past years it is expected that the Covid-19 pandemic has its effect on the progress of localisation.

While there has been some research done on the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic in South Sudan (Barbelet, et al., 2020; Logistics Cluster (a), 2020; The New Humanitarian, 2020), none of them focused specifically on the connection between logistics, localisation and the impact of Covid-19.

The KUNO platform (platform for Humanitarian Knowledge Exchange) requested research on the impact of Covid-19 on humanitarian logistics and aid in South Sudan, and the adaptations that were made by aid organisations as a consequence of government restrictions. Additionally, there was a request for an overview of opportunities and challenges to increase localisation of aid and a specific question on how the role and decision-making power of local organisations was affected by the Covid-19 crisis. Collectively, the information helps anticipate how this possibly affects the future of

humanitarianism. Multiple pieces of other researches will be combined by KUNO and distributed to humanitarian organisations giving the possibility to learn from past practices and efficiently plan for the future.

Through a literature study and interviews with several national and international actors in the humanitarian field in South Sudan, this research aims to give a clear overview of the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic and the restrictions implemented by the South Sudan government on humanitarian aid and humanitarian logistics in the country, and the adaptations made by aid organisations to be able to keep implementing their planned activities. Additionally, it aims to give an understanding of the effect of the Covid-19 pandemic on the current status of localisation of humanitarian aid in the country and the challenges and opportunities of future increase of localisation in aid and logistics, leading to recommendations given in the final chapter.

The research started in September 2020 and was finished in January 2021. Due to continuous data updates regarding Covid-19 cases and related content, the choice was made to, for this research, set the date for final information search on December 1, 2020. Any further updates on the number of Covid-19 cases or changes in government restrictions in South Sudan are not taken into account in this document.

1.2 Problem definition

It is clear that the work of aid organisations in South Sudan has been affected by the government's measurements against the spread of the Covid-19 virus. However, to KUNO it is unclear in what exact way different organisations have adapted to these restrictions. It is clear that, due to closed borders and limited access of roads due to recent floods, the import of food aid supplies has been disrupted. Unknown is how long this will continue. Additionally, it is unclear how the role of local actors has changed due to the Covid-19 restrictions and how this change could contribute to a shift to localisation of humanitarian logistics.

Problem statement:

The KUNO platform lacks knowledge on the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on humanitarian logistics in flood-affected areas in South Sudan. It is clear that a change has taken place in the role of local organisations regarding humanitarian aid. However, unknown are the details of this change and what opportunities or challenges this can bring to the progress of localisation of humanitarian aid and logistics in South Sudan.

1.3 Research objective

The objectives of this research are formulated as follows:

- To contribute to filling the gap of lacking knowledge on the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic on food assistance by aid organisations in South Sudan after the floods of 2019 and to investigate the opportunities and constraints for shifting to localisation of humanitarian logistics to manage humanitarian logistics by national or local organisations, for the longer term.
- To make recommendations to the commissioner and to humanitarian organisations that can be used to make progress on localisation of humanitarian aid in South Sudan after the Covid-19 pandemic and related to future crises.
- To make recommendations that aim to contribute to the development of policies supporting the humanitarian localisation agenda in South Sudan.

1.4 Research questions

Main Question

How do aid actors respond and adapt to the effects of the Covid-19 crisis on the logistics flow of food aid supplies to and within South Sudan regarding emergency response? And what are opportunities and challenges of shifting towards localisation of humanitarian logistics?

Sub Questions

1. How did aid organisations manage humanitarian logistics in South Sudan before the Covid-19 crisis?
2. What adaptations have aid organisations made in order to cope with the Covid-19 measures and restrictions imposed by the South Sudan government?
3. What impact did the Covid-19 crisis have on the role and the decision-making power of local actors in emergency response?
4. What are opportunities and challenges for increasing localisation of humanitarian logistics in South Sudan?

1.5 Definition of terms

This report contains many terms often used in humanitarian aid. For the purpose of this research the following definitions of terms are given:

<i>Local NGO:</i>	Organisation operating in one community or location within a country.
<i>National NGO:</i>	Organisation operating throughout the whole country, but not internationally.
<i>L/NNGO:</i>	This term is used in this report to describe either a local NGO or national NGO, only when there is no distinction needed between the two.
<i>Localisation:</i>	Empowering of local and national organisations to take a greater role in leadership, decision-making, coordination and operating of humanitarian aid in a country.
<i>Funding:</i>	Financial capital provided by a government, an organisation or an individual for humanitarian purposes.
<i>Partnerships:</i>	Two or more organisations working collectively, to combine strengths and learn from one another. This relationship is usually between iNGOs and L/NNGOs.
<i>Capacity:</i>	The strengths and resources available within a community, society or organisation that can reduce the level of risk, or the impact of a disaster.
<i>Logistics:</i>	The planning, implementation and control of flows and storage of goods, and information between the point of origin and consumption to meet customer requirements.
<i>Transport:</i>	The activity or system for carrying people or goods from one place to another, using vehicles, roads, water, air.
<i>Covid-19:</i>	Disease called SARS-CoV-2, also known as Covid-19 or corona virus. First cases reported on 31 December 2019 in Wuhan, China. Most people infected with the virus can experience mild to moderate respiratory problems and will recover fully without treatment. However, mainly older people and people with underlying medical problems or a weaker immune system could develop more serious symptoms and in a fair amount of cases the virus is deadly (WHO(a), 2020). As of 29 November 2020, there have been over 60 million cases and over 1.4 million deaths reported globally since the start of the pandemic (WHO(b), 2020).

Food security and livelihoods (FSL):

A term used for a humanitarian programme often used by aid organisations. The general aim of the programme is to help affected people to engage in activities towards better living conditions and to meet their food consumptions needs.

1.6 Research report overview

Chapter 2 – Literature review

This chapter describes the already existing literature on the subject and the related research question

Chapter 3 – Methodology

In this chapter, the methodology of the research is described and includes a conceptual framework

Chapter 4 – Results

All results derived from the analysis of all the conducted interviews are presented in this chapter, organised per research question, categorised per type of organisation

Chapter 5 – Discussion

The findings from the literature review and the results are compared to find similarities and conflicts in previous and current researches. Furthermore, this chapter includes the research limitations, a reflection on the researcher and options for further research on the topic

Chapter 6 – Conclusions

The conclusions from all collected data are described in this chapter, leading to the recommendations

Chapter 7 – Recommendations

This final chapter gives recommendations to the commissioner and other actors, using the conclusions of the research to increase efficiency in the work field

Chapter 2. Literature review

This chapter gives an overview of the information about the research subject that is already known from the literature up to the start of the research. It shows the lack of research, as well as discourses and contrasting outcomes from different sources. The literature review is listed on the hand of the four sub research questions.

2.1 Sub Question 1

'How did aid organisations manage humanitarian logistics in South Sudan before the Covid-19 crisis?'

The aid programmes in the response of the floods in South Sudan are coordinated by the Office of the Ministry for Humanitarian Affairs and Disaster Management and UNOCHA (IFRC, 2020).

In early 2020 the logistics coordination, warehousing, transporting support and technical advisory services were executed by the Logistics Cluster (LC), leading humanitarian organisations. The choice for providing the coordination by one main actor was made to ensure the delivery of relief items are done multisectoral and prevents the possibility of multiple actors doing the same work (WFP, 2017). The Logistics Cluster, led by the World Food Programme (WFP), stated that it wanted to decrease reliance on air transport and rather focus on road and river transport. During the dry season, this has been a quite effective way to deliver relief items, in a time where many locations that previously were only accessible via air finally became reachable by road, including some regions highly dependent on humanitarian aid. Road and river transport were encouraged since it was a faster way of delivering relief items and aid organisations could easily pre-position their relief items, without being dependant on air transport conducted by a third party. Organisations were encouraged to pre-position items since the roads were presumed only to be accessible for a short time before the rainy season appeared (Logistics Cluster, 2019). In June 2020, WFP had prepositioned over 150,000 metric tons of food commodities, which would be enough for six months for almost 3 million people living in areas that are likely to become unreachable in the coming rainy season of 2020-2021 (WFP (a), 2020).

Most food items consumed in South Sudan are imported from neighbouring countries, and food supplies used by international aid agencies is usually transported from regional ports in Tanzania, Kenya, Djibouti and Sudan, and from there transported to South Sudan (WFP, 2017).

Sources provide a general overview of the logistics of food supplies in South Sudan. However, there is a lack of information on the method of performing logistics by international, national and local organisations. It is mentioned that there are organisations that use the help of the Logistics Cluster, yet it is not clear which organisations this contains and what services of the cluster they benefit from (WFP, 2017).

2.2 Sub Question 2

'What adaptations have aid organisations made in order to cope with the Covid-19 measures and restrictions imposed by the South Sudan government?'

Restrictions

With the first cases of Covid-19 in Africa, president Kiir issued nationwide restrictions in March 2020 in an attempt to stop the spread of the Covid-19 virus. These restrictions included the closure of airports and borders and a ban on interstate travel. Excluded from this ban were trucks carrying food and fuel tankers, and cargo and relief flights regarding humanitarian aid, meaning that in a rather restricted way food aid could continue (The New Humanitarian, 2020). Upon entering South Sudan after international travel, passengers were required to undergo a Covid-19 test and a 14-day quarantine before and after arrival. The borders with neighbouring countries were closed for passengers and only passible to humanitarian cargo. However, the drivers were obligated to undergo strict screening for the virus which caused delays in border crossing (Logistics Cluster (a), 2020).

Additionally, due to floods in 2019, some roads were already barely passable, and many areas were therefore hard to reach. Additionally, the majority of the food items in South Sudan is imported from neighbouring countries and with these borders now closed, less food was available on the markets. Since floods partly destroyed crops and animal pastures, and most non-essential shops and office buildings have closed their doors due to government restrictions, many South Sudanese have lost their sources of income. Consequently, with the increasing scarcity food prices getting higher and people losing their income, and fewer people can afford to feed their families, leading to an increase in need for humanitarian assistance (IFRC, 2020) (Cordaid, 2020).

Personnel

Sources say that about 75% of the international humanitarian aid workers left South Sudan, mostly because for them it was safer to work from abroad rather than to stay in the country (Barbelet, et al., 2020). Some sources claim that international aid workers faced xenophobia due to fact that the first two cases of Covid-19 in the country were international United Nations (UN) staff (Anyadike, 2020). This is conflicting with other sources that tell that organisations were still able to do their work and would only leave the country if the nationwide restrictions cause more challenges for humanitarian activities (Simons, n.d.).

The United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS), the agency responsible for peacekeeping in the country, was not able to rotate their field staff as often as they usually do, due to the travel restrictions, quarantine measures and border closures. This means that their field soldiers stayed on duty for three months longer than the usual three months (UN Peacekeeping, n.d.). This may have impacted their efficiency in the work field, since they worked for longer periods than usual, without time off to see their families and destress from the daily work (Korane, 2020).

Supply chain

In April and May 2020, WFP provided almost 4 million people with two- or three-months' worth of food aid rations, to avoid large gatherings at distribution zones, to minimize the spread of the virus. The UN agency was able to do so since they had already prepositioned food items for six months in advance, considering the coming rainy season, which was expected to cut off parts of the country (WFP (a), 2020). While most of the borders to neighbouring countries had been closed, most of them remained open for humanitarian transport, with the exclusion of two border points at the Sudan side. The closure of those borders caused extra delays on this part of the country, and Covid-19 testing and quarantine requirements at all other border points caused delays in logistics of food items as well. However, with the coming rainy season in mind, the organisation continued the prepositioning of food items all over the country (WFP (a), 2020).

To reduce health risks for malnourished children, UNOCHA reduced the visit times of health staff in nutrition centres. However, in order to keep assisting the children in the centres, the organisation increased its supplies of ready-to-use therapeutic food (RUTF), a paste of peanut butter, powdered milk and micro-nutrients, used to treat severe acute malnutrition (Schlein, 2020). The trainings the Logistics Cluster gave in South Sudan were put on hold, in order to prevent the virus from spreading since these trainings require gathering in larger groups (Logistics Cluster (b), 2020).

Remote working

The concept of remote working has been in place for quite some time already, for example in Somalia and Darfur where aid workers faced security threats and denial of access. Due to the troubled access and health threats for humanitarian aid workers to South Sudan, an increasing number of international staff started to make use of remote working (Jaspars, 2020). Unfortunately, further details of this remote working are not mentioned. WFP shares that their remote process monitoring coverage has increased with 14 percent from April to May 2020 (WFP (b), 2020).

Research states that digital technology can be used remotely for assessments, education and information sharing, which is very useful in a time where social distancing is largely promoted (Jaspars, 2020). An upside of remote working is that local organisations are much more needed on

the ground in order to do the work that international staff had been doing before. This could be an acceleration in the development, determined by of part of the humanitarian world, to shift towards a more localised way of working (Barbelet, et al., 2020).

A downside to remote working is that it could change how aid workers perceive the reality in the field since they are not able to physically be present, which could then lead to losing awareness on local knowledge, priorities and critiques. This means that they would have to work in close partnerships with local organisations (Jaspars, 2020).

Financial challenges

Another change organisations have had to adapt to was regarding funding. For many years the funding gap for humanitarian work has been growing, due to a higher increase in needs in comparison to the rise of funds. The funding requirements for food security worldwide alone has already risen from 5 billion USD in 2015 to 9 billion USD in 2020. (UNOCHA (a), 2020).

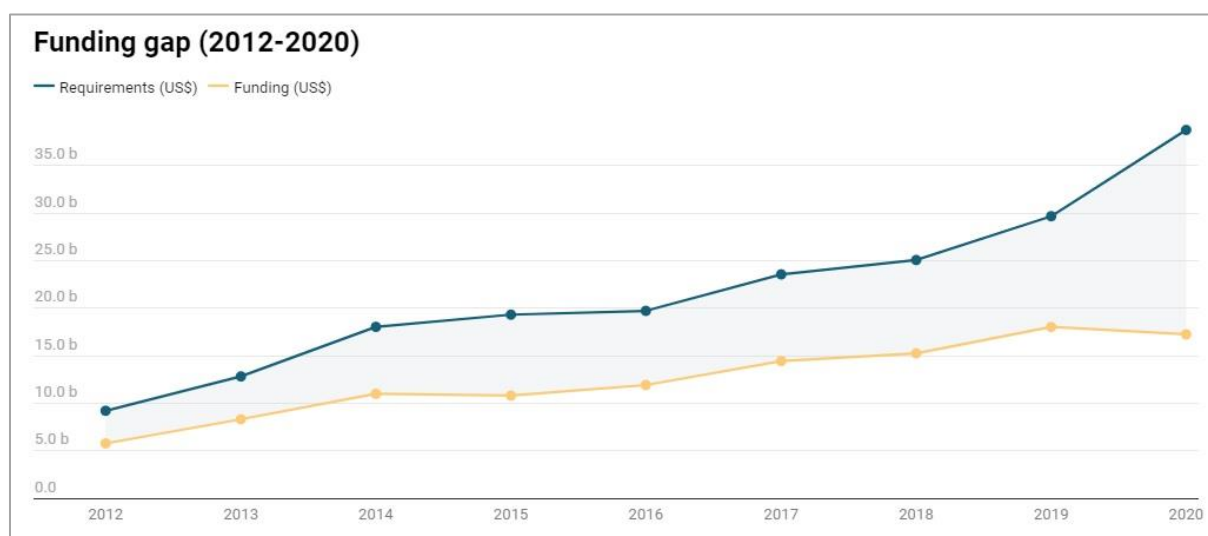


Figure 2 – Funding Gap (2012-2020) (UNOCHA (a), 2020)

The Covid-19 pandemic has brought more challenges in funding. Generally, UN agencies have spoken out about the growing funding challenges. WFP states that they have a 60 million funding shortage for June to December 2020 when it comes to distributions (WFP (b), 2020) and in their situation report of August 2020, UNICEF states they have a funding gap of 96 million and that without the funding the organisation and its partners will not be able to provide the people in need, even though the needs are only growing, especially in the time of the pandemic (UNICEF (a), 2020) (UNICEF (b), 2020).

UNOCHA shares that the funding gap limits the ability for response operations, meaning that fewer purchases can be made for the distribution of support of livelihoods (UNOCHA (b), 2020).

As shown in figure 2, the funding gap has been growing for multiple years, however, due to Covid-19 the need for humanitarian assistance, and therefore the need for funding, has been growing rapidly globally. UNHCR, therefore, describes Covid-19 as a ‘force multiplier’, stating that the needs for humanitarian aid were already existing, but only grown larger due to the pandemic (UNHCR, 2020).

Many reports and researches state things that have been done to prevent Covid-19 from spreading, for example by education about hygiene or why social distancing is necessary. However, no research has been found on how the logistics of food aid exactly was affected by Covid-19, and what this means for how NGOs or UN agencies have executed their work. The sources in this section (section 2.2) state that there have been changes in their way of work, though not exactly how, neither how they have adapted to these changes.

2.3 Sub Question 3

'What impact did the Covid-19 crisis have on the role and the decision-making power of local actors in emergency response?'

There are sources that state that the Covid-19 crisis has brought a change in the role of local organisations (Barbelet, et al., 2020; Korane, 2020). Where predominantly international organisations have been operational in the provision of food aid, research shows that the pandemic has brought a change in this.

Since many international aid organisations sent, at least part of their international staff back home, due to health concerns, the travel restrictions, interstate travel ban and quarantine requirements (Barbelet, et al., 2020), these organisations now rely on national and local organisations for direct information about the current situation on the ground.

Where the commitments of the Grand Bargain were set up to try to change more towards a localised way of working and have only shown limited progress over the years (Moro, et al., 2020), this change is now spearheaded by the pandemic, out of necessity, and may pave the way of an organisational change for food aid in the longer term (Barbelet, et al., 2020).

In other countries, for example the Democratic Republic of the Congo, this change has taken further steps already. There, the Covid-19 pandemic caused for international organisations to already start looking at options for planning towards more national and local strategies, prioritising partnerships with local organisations and focussing on a funding strategy to support local humanitarian organisations (Barbelet, et al., 2020). Whether or not this could be an option for organisations in South Sudan will be discussed in sub-question 4.

As mentioned in section 2.2, there have been organisations that weren't able to give their employees time off to spend with their families and destress from the work, which is standard procedure. To lift the workload and take away the pressure from these organisations national NGOs have stepped in. Through cultural and lingual connections national NGOs have the possibilities to build up relationships with local communities, through which the organisations are able to provide their international partners with vital information about security updates and changing scenarios on ongoing local conflict. This seems to be part of the role national NGOs are now taking upon themselves even more than before Covid-19 (Korane, 2020).

Sources show that the Covid-19 pandemic brought a change in the position of local organisations. However, other than the increase in need from international organisations for partnership with national organisations to keep updated, accurate information about the situation on the ground, there is not much information to be found about the impact of Covid-19 on the role of national and/or local organisations.

2.4 Sub Question 4

'What are opportunities and challenges for increasing localisation of humanitarian logistics in South Sudan?'

Challenges

Grand Bargain commitments

When it comes to shifting towards more localised management of humanitarian aid, the second commitment of the Grand Bargain plays a considerably large role. The commitment discusses that at least 25% of humanitarian funding should go to local and national responders, as directly as possible (IASC, 2020). This way national and local organisations would gain more potential to become key players in humanitarian aid in the country, which potentially increases effectiveness of aid. The target for this commitment was set at 2020, however, in 2017 only 4,4% of the total direct funding was received by NGOs, government organisations and the Red Cross. This was even lower for local

and national NGOs (Ali, et al., 2018). Consequently, this means that it can be very hard for local and national NGOs to work independent or even be leading organisation in food aid missions and the managing of food aid supplies.

High need for humanitarian assistance

Next to the international organisations and UN agencies present in South Sudan, an increasing number of national and local organisations are starting to be active in humanitarian aid as well. Whereas in 2012 92 NNGOs were registered with the South Sudan NGO Forum, this increased to 263 NNGO registrations in 2019 (Moro, et al., 2020).

For over forty years South Sudan has been dependent on humanitarian aid, most of which has been and still is executed by international aid organisations. Aid has become so necessary in daily life that it has been part of the shaping of the country and therefore has caused it to become an integral part of the country's politics, economy and society. Given that humanitarian assistance has for the biggest part been given by international actors it has overshadowed the role and opportunities of upcoming and already existing national and local NGOs (Deng, 2018). The outcome of a research focus group with multiple national NGOs shows the barriers these organisations face for trying to participate in the humanitarian system, barriers that are mostly due to inadequate funding towards L/NGOs (Tanner & Moro, 2016).

Funding

As described in chapter 2.2 organisations have noticed an increase in the funding gap over the past years. National NGOs have noticed this growing problem as well, and it feeds the barrier for them to compete with international organisations, due to the already existing financial gap between the two. And while the Grand Bargain was set up with the aim to reform the structure of funding in humanitarian aid in the country, research shows that there are only a few activities that carry out the aimed improvement of funding, therefore progress is still limited. The reason for this would be that ongoing conflicts in the country have made it hard to implement localisation efforts, despite the fact that food aid operations largely depend on national NGOs and local organisations in the form of security updates and information on access to hard-to-reach and unsafe areas (Moro, et al., 2020).

Decision-making power

While the implementation of the Grand Bargain has increased the localisation of aid in some way, this cannot yet be seen in the decision-making power of local and national NGOs. Research from 2019 shows that these organisations still believe they have very limited decision-making power in humanitarian activities, and the influence is still much more in the hands of donors and UN agencies (IRMA, 2019). This is a challenge for the promotion of localisation in the country.

Opportunities

Language and culture barrier

Despite the disadvantage of lower funding, research has shown that working with L/NGOs has many benefits for INGOs. While INGOs have extensive experience in humanitarian aid and therewith a broad understanding of the need of people in South Sudan, national organisations have a greater understanding of local context, language, traditions and culture in the country. At the start of new projects L/NGOs often are able to gather information from community members and local authorities to understand their needs and to build relationships, which they are able to do due to a smaller barrier in language and culture, which is something INGOs do face. As a result of the relationships L/NGOs could build up with local communities, the organisations are able to provide their international partners with vital information about security updates and changing scenarios on ongoing local conflict.

Training and increasing capacity

Some INGOs have mentioned that logistics in food aid is not one of the national organisations' strong suit. However, all other advantages mentioned above are reasons to consider collaboration with L/NGOs, since these assets can be used to improve the food aid logistics flow (Tanner & Moro, 2016).

And in order to change towards a more local managing of food aid it is important to keep training local NGO staff and work on building skills and knowledge, on all parts of the humanitarian aid field, but in this case especially in logistics of food aid (Ali, et al., 2018).

There is a fair chance that the Covid-19 pandemic brings a shift in the localisation of aid in South Sudan. However, since the crisis is continuing and adequate research on its direct effects on localisation has not yet been done, there is only limited information to be found on the topic. It can be said that if the situation in South Sudan will stay as it is currently, it is going to be hard for national organisations to take over the work of international organisations, due to the lack of knowledge on the topic and skills, plus a lack of direct funding at this moment (Ali, et al., 2018).

Further literature on this topic of the relation between Covid-19 and localisation of aid in South Sudan is lacking at this moment.

Chapter 3. Methodology

The research is mainly based on previous studies on the different topics (chapter 2), which led to the creation of the conceptual framework, and on qualitative data gained from multiple interviews. The framework, which was used by forming the question list for the interviews, is further explained below, alike the methodology on the conduct of interviews and the analysis thereof. Furthermore, an overview is given on the limitations of this research.

3.1 Conceptual framework

To illustrate the relations between the different concepts used in this research a conceptual framework was created, which gives a comprehensive picture of the research topic. The most important concepts are highlighted. This framework derives from chapter 1 and 2, the background and the literature review.

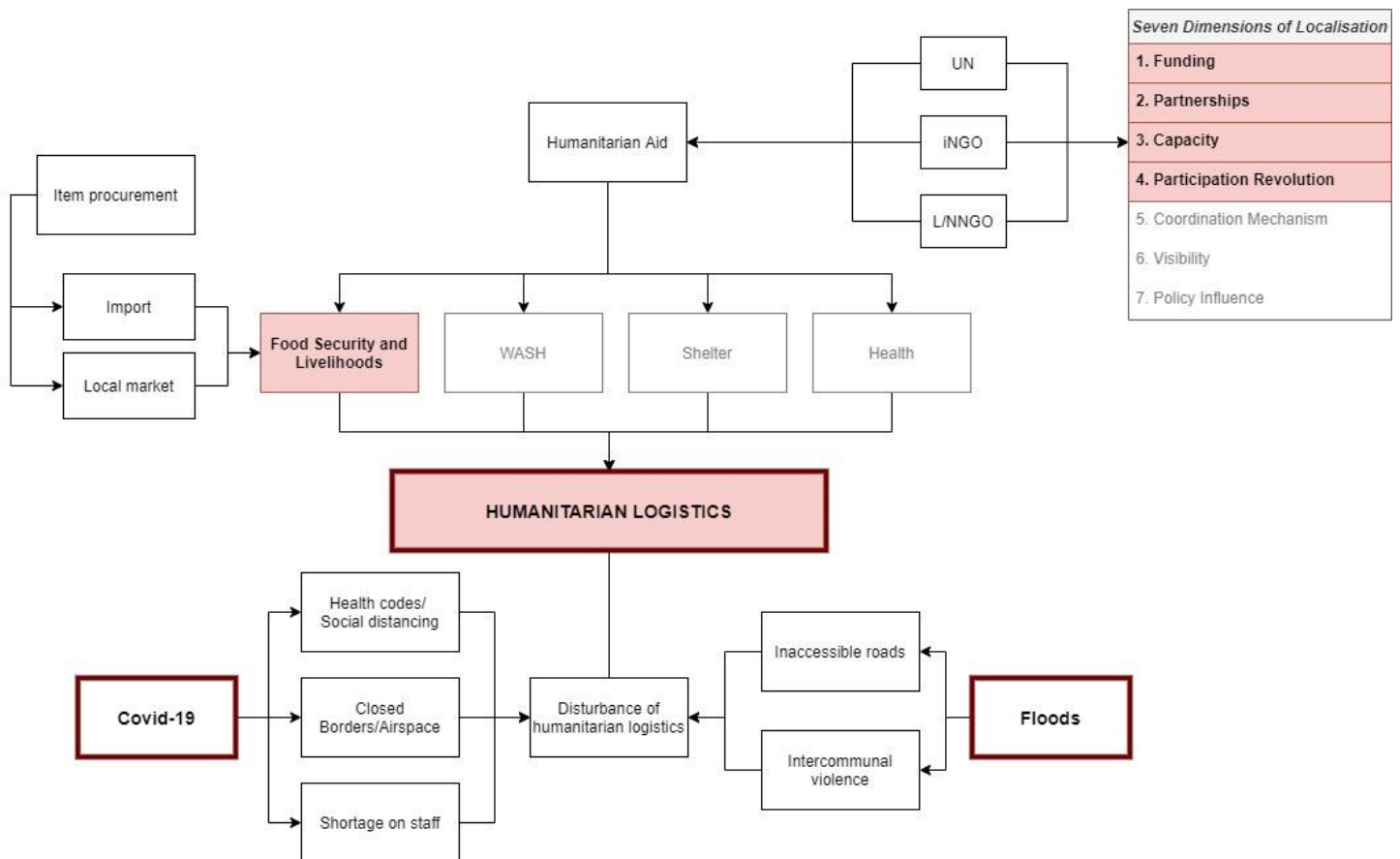


Figure 3 - Conceptual Framework

Humanitarian logistics

Humanitarian logistics involves all transport, planning and communication of supplies in humanitarian aid. This contains transport via road, air and water, imported from other countries globally as well as within a country. It also contains the distribution of supplies from an organisation to the beneficiaries and includes all supplies, like water, food and agricultural tools. Without humanitarian logistics, humanitarian aid is simply impossible to function.

Disturbance of humanitarian logistics

The disruption of logistics could have multiple sources. In South Sudan, many natural and manmade disasters can cause problems for the transport of goods or even reaching beneficiaries in hard-to-reach areas. This research focusses on two disasters that occurred in 2019-2020, that had significant impact on humanitarian logistics in the country.

- Covid-19
The Covid-19 pandemic has caused major challenges for logistics operations in South Sudan. Measures taken by the government to prevent a rapid spread of the virus disrupted the logistics flow. When borders were closed and interstate travel was forbidden, supplies could not be imported in the country, and the available supplies could not be transported to beneficiaries. Social distancing and other health codes, like quarantine restrictions and frequent testing caused delays, even so the shortage of staff, due to the return of international staff to their home countries.
- Floods
The floods of 2019 were the heaviest in over 60 years and caused many challenges in the logistics flow. Not only were many roads in the country impassable, but the floods also caused an uprising in intercommunal violence, making transport of goods a dangerous operation.

Food security and livelihoods

Humanitarian aid included four main programmes: Food Security and Livelihoods, Water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH), Shelter and Health. To implement the Food security and livelihoods programme, organisations need to purchase food items to support the beneficiaries. These food supplies can either be purchased at the local market, however, this supports only a small portion of the needed stock. A high percentage of the food items consumed in South Sudan is imported from neighbouring countries, like Uganda and Kenya. Organisations either purchase their food from these foreign markets and transport them to the designated location themselves or buy their items from suppliers which transport them to the preferred location.

Seven dimensions of localisation

In this report actors active in humanitarian aid are divided into three categories: UN agencies, international Non-Governmental Organisations and Local- or National Non-Governmental Organisations. All have their expertise and experience, making partnerships between the different organisations a valuable concept. The Grand Bargain, set up in 2016, promotes these partnerships in the form of localisation, focussing on the value of and leadership by Local- or National NGOs. Building upon this principle, the Start Network formed the 'Seven Dimensions of Localisation', of which four dimensions are used in this research.

- Funding
'The commitment to ensure that at least 25% of internationally raised funding reaches national and local actors 'as directly as possible'. For local actors, it is as much the quality of funding that is important (flexible, covering core costs, maintaining cash flow etc.) as it is the quantity'
- Partnerships
'More Genuine and equitable partnerships, and less sub-contracting'
- Capacity
'More effective support for strong and sustainable institutional capacities, and less undermining of those capacities by international actors (e.g. funding direct project costs; hiring away the best staff of national actors for their surge capacity)'
- Participation Revolution
'Fuller and more influential involvement of crisis-affected people in what relief is provided to them, and how' (Start Network, 2017)

3.2 Research methodology

The moment enough information was gathered through the literature review the next step was to start searching for possible interviewees. Beforehand, it was clear that finding suitable interviewees would take up a fair amount of time, therefore it was deemed logical to start with the interviews in an early stage of the research.

Interviews

In total 9 interviews were done. An overview of the organisations that were involved is shown in the table below, with a short description of the work carried out by the organisation and the significance to the research. The selected organisations derive from snowball sampling, meaning that interviewees were recruited from networks of previous interviewed organisations.

Since the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs has played a significant part in the fight for localisation, it seemed important to include its vision in the research. Few of the contacts were shared by the commissioner, which in turn lead to network connections with the remaining organisations.

All organisations were selected by their involvement in either flood responses, logistics, distribution of food items or Food Security and Livelihoods programmes.

Overview interviewed organisations
<i>International organisation</i>
Cordaid Humanitarian Aid Coordinator/Programme Manager of Cordaid in Juba Focus areas of the organisation are Humanitarian Response, Health, Resilience and Security and Justice. The organisation has been part of flood response programmes and other emergency response activities, including distribution of food and non-food items.
Dorcas Country Director of Dorcas in South Sudan Implements programmes like Food Security and Livelihoods, WASH, nutrition, and technical training programmes. Active in flood prone regions in South Sudan, has been part of flood response programmes.
Help a Child Disaster Response Coordinator, mainly working on DRA projects in SSD Implements protracted crisis programmes and acute crisis programmes, including flood response in South Sudan. The organisations implemented an emergency relief aid project for food aid and WASH, through the Dutch Relief Alliance.
<i>Local/national organisation</i>
ACROSS Food Security and Livelihoods Officer Works on emergency assessment and response, as well as disaster preparedness and mitigation efforts. ACROSS is a larger national NGO in South Sudan, with approximately 200 staff. Works in close cooperation with partner organisations on flood response, food distribution and FSL-training.
Mary Help Association Head of Organisation Small local organisation, mainly focussing on health activities. Operating in a local hospital, but also carries out distribution of food and non-food items in emergency response. Usually work on first response until bigger/international organisations can take over the response.
Women Development Group Executive Director Smaller NGO mainly focussed on women protection activities. Worked in partnership with UN on monitoring of protection of people with specific needs. Part of flood response activities with DRA regarding food security.
<i>Other</i>
WFP/Logistics Cluster (UN) Logistics Cluster Coordinator

Leading organisation of the Logistics Cluster in South Sudan, working on food security. Many aid organisations are dependent on logistical services of the cluster. Coordinator of all humanitarian logistics in the country, including distribution and transport security.
Ministry of Foreign Affairs (NL) 1. Employee of 'Directie Stabiliteit en Humanitaire Hulp' in the team Humanitarian Aid, focus on the DRA 2. The Dutch ambassador in South Sudan
The Ministry is the financier of the DRA joint responses in South Sudan, monitoring of the activities carried out by the organisations and works in close cooperation with authorities and UN agencies. The Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs is one of the frontrunners of the Grand Bargain, focusses on improvement of localisations efforts in humanitarian aid worldwide.

Analysis

The interviews were completed quite early in the research process (see Annex 4). Interviews have been transcribed in edited form, meaning that the most important parts have been taken up in the analysis. The interviews have been summarised on the hand of the questions set up in the Interview Checklist (see Annex 1), and since the interviews were conducted in a semi-structured setting, all interviews have a different setup. Therefore, it would only make sense to analyse and compare the interview results when done in an edited transcript in order to find consistency in the different answers.

Comparing of the interviews is done on the hand of analysis per interview question, similarities and contradictions in answers of the interviewees are highlighted, in this case with numbers. To make it possible to write out the results and find answers on the research questions, the information given by the interviewees is highlighted in different colours, per research question.

Discussion

Comparison of the literature and the results from the interviews was done per research question, comparing all found results to seek similarities and differences.

Conclusions and recommendations derive from all gathered and analysed data.

Chapter 4. Results

This chapter shows the results derived from the interviews done with 7 aid organisations in South Sudan and two employees of the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The results are written out on the hand of the four sub research questions. Through this method, the main research question will be answered in chapter 6 of this report. A distinction is made between the International NGOs/UN agencies, Local/National NGOs and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Considering the privacy of the organisations and its interviewed employees the international NGOs are listed as Organisations A, B and C, and the local/national NGOs are listed as Organisations D, E and F.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs is mentioned as such, and the WFP is mentioned as WFP, Logistics Cluster or as Un agency.

4.1 Sub Question 1

'How did aid organisations manage humanitarian logistics in South Sudan before the Covid-19 crisis?'

4.1.1 International Non-Governmental Organisations / Un agencies

There are multiple ways to handle transport in South Sudan. Transport can be done in three different ways:

- Road transport, which is only possible in the dry season, causing only a small window for transportation, meaning that all organisations are urged by the Logistics Cluster to preposition supplies.
- River transport, supplies are transported by boats. This is only useful for the destinations that are positioned near the river Nile. However, this is the cheapest options and can be used all year round.
- Air transport, with the use of charter planes. This is an expensive transporting method and therefore usually only used as a last alternative.

WFP is the lead organisation for the Logistics Cluster (LC). The LC supports all kinds of organisations, iNGO, UN agencies, local or national NGOs that are reliant on cluster services.

All 3 interviewed iNGOs use the help of the Logistics Cluster in their own way.

Organisation B states that most of their logistics go via the LC, via WFP and UNICEF, because the LC is faster and can do it safer. Especially in times of floods and conflict, the bigger actors have the right equipment and people for this.

Organisation A usually takes care of logistics responsibilities themselves, especially in onset emergency response, since they state that in that way, they can act faster and timelier. Companies are hired which have a fleet of trucks, and the organisation has a fleet of their own, which they both use whenever needed. If, however, the organisation is not able to do it themselves, they do depend on the LC. This is only possible for them when the designated location is among the LC's top priorities, otherwise the delivery may come with undesired delays. However, the LC has the means to access hard to reach locations, where the organisation does not, hence the reason for partnership with the LC.

Organisation C works with a local partner who takes care of the logistics and combines the transport, if possible, with other organisations that have the same source and destination to form a convoy of trucks. Occasionally, this organisation works with the LC, which looks at overlapping scheduled transports and connects them to form a convoy, or possibly even share material, to lower costs for both parties. They also make use of the LC's armed escorts on the road when WFP knows there is possible danger along the way.

The WFP sources their products locally, from neighbouring countries (mostly Uganda) and broader internationally.

All interviewed iNGOs usually try to buy their supplies locally. Whatever is not available locally will be sourced from Juba. Whenever even that is not enough, the organisations purchase their supplies across the border, mostly in Uganda, where most of the stocks for South Sudan come from in the first place.

4.1.2 Local / National Non-Governmental Organisations

All three L/NNGOs take care of their logistics in different ways:

Organisation D combines its suppliers and transport with partner organisations, which lowers costs and a convoy creates safer transport. At times they cooperate with WFP, which tries to combine the transport of different organisations to create convoys or share materials. Whenever roads are too dangerous due to conflicts, WFP provides security for the trucks, as an armed escort for the road.

Organisation F buys its supplies mainly from local markets, and occasionally orders from suppliers that import their products from Sudan and Uganda.

Organisation E does not take care of the logistics themselves but has a contract with a supplier who delivers the items directly to the beneficiaries. The distribution of the items goes from Juba throughout the country, by car.

4.2 Sub Question 2

'What adaptations have aid organisations made in order to cope with the Covid-19 measures and restrictions imposed by the South Sudan government?'

4.2.1 International Non-Governmental Organisations / Un agencies

Closed borders

In an effort to keep the Covid-19 virus from spreading rapidly through the country, the South Sudan government ordered the borders to be closed for all traffic. With most of the food supplies utilised in South Sudan coming from neighbouring countries Uganda and Kenya, this caused a food shortage. Food prices started to rise swiftly and became very expensive for aid organisations, let alone affordable for citizens.

Adaptation: Instead of buying supplies across the border, organisation A prioritised purchasing of goods from local vendors and suppliers, that way the organisation had enough supplies to overcome the weeks the borders were closed.

Organisation B used parts of their budget from other activities for the purchase of food items, to overcome a food shortage in the relief aid. They had the fortune to have flexible donors and be able to change the budget planning and even do a couple of extra activities on top of the activities usually carried out, however not as many as they had planned at the beginning of the year.

Contradicting to this, organisation C stated that they simply had to cut back financially, meaning fewer supplies of relief items, and accept the fact that for the period the borders were closed, they could help a lot fewer people in need. Where their project had three parts: Food provision, agricultural input and hygiene kits, they had to cut out the agricultural input, because they could not afford the complete thought out programme.

Transport

All interviewed international organisations reported the problem of delayed supplies at the start of the pandemic. Since a lot of relief products come from neighbouring countries and trucks could not enter from those countries, all organisations faced problems with delays in transportation of stocks. The ban to travel between different states that was put up by the government made it impossible to transport food and other important items from Juba to other states.

The moment the borders opened again, all drivers were required to undergo mandatory testing, or a truck needed a different driver at the other side of the border to avoid the testing. This either cost delays due to testing, or more driver capacity when changing drivers at the border.

Adaptation: All the organisations could do is wait for the borders to open again. However, considering the high demand for humanitarian aid in the country, humanitarian organisations and

UN agencies advocated with the government and pressure them to reopen the borders, which happened after a certain time. For some organisations the delays were noticeable for a couple of days, others were still struggling with this issue at the moment the interviews were conducted, several months after the first restrictions issued.

Interstate travel ban

The interstate travel ban did not only make it difficult to transport goods from Juba to other states, but this also meant that humanitarians could not travel from one project area to another, and if they did travel to other states they had to quarantine for 14 days or be tested for Covid-19. The test capacity was very low at that moment and the 14-day quarantine caused delays in many programmes. This especially affected organisations that carry out activities in multiple states.

The interviewed UN agency shared that the interstate travel-ban has caused some delays in the projects, or left people trapped in the field for a longer time than expected, but with a high amount of staff in South Sudan and a very low number of employees leaving in the time of lockdown (only 3%), the agency has not been much affected by the Covid-19 pandemic and the measures that have come with it.

Adaptations: If travel to other states was necessary, the organisations planned in the required quarantine days. Apart from that, all they were able to do was to stay within the state borders and advocate with the South Sudan government to reopen these borders, seen the high demand for humanitarian aid.

Personnel

The 14-day quarantine is still mandatory for people coming in from outside South Sudan. For organisation B and for the UN agency this has caused trouble with personnel planning and leave options for expats. Most expats opted to stay in South Sudan and only after half a year took a few weeks of leave to their home country.

Adaptation: The employees of the respective organisations chose to stay in South Sudan and only take leave after six or seven months. This was done because the leave of (international) staff would cause too many personnel planning issues. Now that interstate travel has become possible again and organisations have become used to the Covid-19 caused restrictions, aid workers have been able to take leave again. The UN agency implemented a new Rest and Recuperation cycle for international and national staff were given a time of absence in Juba as well. Organisation B mainly works with local employees, but the leave of expats caused the organisation to miss some key workers for a longer time. The quarantine rule is still in place to this day but is taken up in the planning for said organisations.

Financial challenges

As will be pointed out in the answers on sub-question 4, some organisations mentioned the lack of budget, with an increasing need for humanitarian aid in South Sudan. Organisation B stated that many donors now specify their funding for health interventions, with an eye on Covid-19, however, this means that there will be fewer financial resources available for other interventions. This could cause problems for the coming months, since the most recent IPC-updates show that there is an increasing food shortage in the coming months, due to a combination of floods, Covid-19 and economic issues in the country. The UN agency added that regardless of being well funded over the recent couple of years, due to solid performances in the past, they had to spend more money on storage and air operations, because Covid-19 caused increasing deliveries added to just normal programme interventions. Although they could cope with the increasing costs this year, the interviewee had outspoken concerns for lower funding in the coming years.

Adaptation: Like every year, but this in 2020/2021 in particular, the organisations are advocating for an increase funding for humanitarian aid in the coming years and for more freedom in spending the respective funds.

Remote working

Organisation A mentioned that due to travel restrictions they were forced to work more online, including conducting meetings online and remote monitoring. Through this they have discovered that this saved them a lot of time, mainly due to the absence of travel time. They see both the online meetings and remote monitoring as new ways of working in humanitarian aid.

Further adaptations iNGOs

Next to the previously mentioned ways the organisations have adapted to the restrictions and measures put up due to Covid-19, there have been some other ways iNGOs have reacted to the restrictions and the impact it has had on their work. Organisation B shared the extra work the restrictions and measures had put on their plate, like the training of (local) staff on social distancing, washing hands and minimise the contact with beneficiaries: how to distribute food during the pandemic. Additionally, the activities that usually were done in bigger groups now had to be scaled down in smaller groups, which took up more time than before.

Further adaptations Logistics Cluster

The interviewee of the Logistics Cluster admitted that their organisation, like the others, needed to adapt to new ways of working. However, stated that since even before the Covid-19 outbreak they were already operating in a Level 3 emergency, because of internal conflicts and floods, the pandemic was seen as just an additional response on top of the current response in South Sudan.

The way they have seen it was that the flooding has created more of an impact for the population in certain areas than Covid-19. Taking away the mitigation measures and some internal issues that impact to some degree, the logistics operation was up and running anyway and had been since late 2013. Therefore, Covid-19 has not created many big adaptations for the Logistics Cluster.

4.2.2 Local / National Non-Governmental Organisations

Transport

Organisation D, the largest of the three L/NNGOs, stated that their organisation has had trouble with delays in the transport of food items. The movement restrictions caused delays, which pushed the delivery of the items to the rainy season, which caused even more delays due to flooding and seasonal insecurity. In combination with the required 14-day quarantine and virus testing the delivery of items was increasingly difficult to carry out. Often, states required aid workers travelling from one state to another an extra week of quarantine, just to make sure they would not transfer the virus from one place to the other. This especially had a negative impact on the handling of certain emergency cases.

The respondent said that at the moment of the interview, some of the items were still delayed and they were afraid that many of the items would pass the expiration date.

Adaptation: The organisation made much effort to make sure all items were delivered and with the help of the Logistics Cluster they were able to deliver 90% of the food items, this year even in places they had not been able to deliver before.

In contrast to all this, organisation F shared that Covid-19 has not had a big impact on South Sudan so far and when the travel ban was lifted, no further problems regarding the transport of items would be existing and that the only challenges regarding food items they could think of were financially (more about this is discussed later this chapter).

Personnel

Organisation D mentioned the impact the Covid-19 pandemic has had on their employees. Due to the political unrest in South Sudan many South Sudanese have taken refuge in neighbouring countries, meaning that families and loved ones of the L/NNGOs' employees reside in these countries. The movement restrictions and closed borders caused that these aid workers could not visit their families and therefore would not take time off. This caused stress and affected their performances.

Adaptation: All the employees could do was wait until the restrictions were lifted and do their work as well as possible. As soon as all restrictions were lifted the employees took time off in turns to recharge for their work.

Financial challenges

The only thing all three interviewed L/NNGOs shared were the problems they faced regarding finance. As mentioned before, the closing of borders and therewith the shortage in supplies in the country caused a rapid increase in prices for food items, non-food items (NFI) and fuel. The latter caused a rise in transport costs, which increased financial challenges for organisations E and F, which are considerably smaller L/NNGOs than organisation D. Another reason for the increase of prices was lockdowns in the neighbouring countries, where South Sudan imports its food supplies from. Because of the lockdowns, the usual production of food items was far lower than usual, causing a price raise on the available items. This all had an impact on the financial sources for emergency aid by the respective organisations.

Organisations D and E shared their concern regarding funding. They said donors moved parts of the budgets towards Covid-19 preventative activities, leaving a negative impact on people in need who are supposed to benefit from the projected activities.

Adaptation: To be able to purchase enough food items and emergency supplies the organisations had to cut back budget for other activities, meaning that they weren't able to carry out all the activities they initially planned for.

Remote working

Two of the respondents shared the troubles they had concerning communication during the uprising pandemic. Organisation D said that many of the localisations they usually visit, which they could not do during the time of restrictions, had bad or simply no internet connection and were therefore impossible to reach. The ones that did not have an internet connection were only reachable with satellite phones, however, due to travel restrictions, not all locations could receive one. Organisation F shared that relationship suffered during the pandemic. Usually meetings were face-to-face, however, this was not possible now. All the work had to be done online and that meant that human connection was fading away, which means that people they worked with in partnerships felt more and more like strangers.

Adaptation: With the lift of the travel ban the locations could be reached again and connection via satellite phone was made possible. However, due to the social distance requirements, face-to-face meetings are overall still not feasible, there is not much the organisations can do about that, it is an adaptation they had to make.

4.2.3 Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Since many activities and programmes of Dutch Relief Alliance (DRA) member organisations and other aid organisations had been delayed, due to the Covid-19 restrictions in many countries, within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in The Hague the issue was raised if more money should be made available for the longevity of said programmes. This is the way Covid-19 has impacted the Ministry, but it also shows how they reacted.

The travel restrictions and 14-day quarantine requirement were cause for discussion between the Dutch embassy and the government of South Sudan since it was seen as a double standard that South Sudanese politicians were seemingly excluded from the restrictions, where international politicians and humanitarians working in South Sudan were not. Consequently, along with international aid organisations, the Dutch embassy had been advocating for the reopening of borders and lifting the interstate travel ban.

4.3 Sub Question 3

'What impact did the Covid-19 crisis have on the role and the decision-making power of local actors in emergency response?'

4.3.1 International Non-Governmental Organisations / Un agencies

The Un agency and organisation B stated that Covid-19 had not affected any of their partnerships with local organisations, consequently not changing the position or power of local actors. The representative of the iNGO shares they and their partners all have a lot of local workers, and not many expats, meaning that they could keep working and stay in the country. The restrictions within the country have been the same for local and national as for international organisations, resulting in the position for local organisations to stay as before the pandemic started.

Both other iNGOs stated that the pandemic changed the position of and partnership with their local partners positively. Organisation A said the organisations' mandate is to always work through partners, even before starting the implementation of the activities, but due to Covid-19, they had to depend even more on their partners, since these are the workers closer to the beneficiaries. The only way they could accomplish the tasks was through the local partners, in the time borders were closed and travel restrictions were sustained.

Organisation C has always worked with one local partner, by carrying out activities together, but also in involving them in the coordination of locations and shaping the content of projects. The Covid-19 pandemic prevented Dutch staff to visit the locations and therefore could not support the national staff the way they usually do. Simultaneously, this meant that the local organisation had to do more work themselves and show the capacity and knowledge they have, rather than following the iNGOs guidance.

4.3.2 Local / National Non-Governmental Organisations

Organisation F stated that since Covid-19 has not been a widespread issue in South Sudan it did not have much effect on the organisation either. Organisation E said that during the pandemic it became clear that some iNGOs and UN agencies were focussed on implementing their activities by themselves, much without the help of local organisations, more clearly: they competed with local organisations on who got to implement the activities rather than working together. This has put a lot of pressure on the position of local organisations.

Organisation D mentioned that the pandemic impacted their work, mainly because the partnerships were put under pressure. Usually, international partners would visit South Sudan to help with activity planning, identifying gaps in project implementation or trainings on capacity building. The closed borders made it impossible for these partners to visit and these activities had to be done online. This had an impact on the efficiency of the organisations' work and with that on their position in emergency response. On the other hand, Covid-19 has left a positive mark. Additional funding was given for awareness activities for both aid workers and local citizens. For some local organisations, this has given them more work, at locations they previously were not active, it has broadened their operating area. Furthermore, the pandemic has shone a light on the importance of localisation. The moment many international aid workers left the country because of the uprising virus, local and national NGOs stepped up to take over the workload. It shows that L/NGOs are needed so services can continue whenever international organisation fall away.

4.4. Sub Question 4

'What are the opportunities and challenges for increasing localisation of humanitarian logistics in South Sudan?'

4.4.1 International Non-Governmental Organisations / Un agencies

All interviewed organisations pointed out multiple challenges and opportunities for the implementations of localisation in South Sudan, which are listed below. In answering this question,

the interviewees focussed more on general localisation of aid rather than localisation of humanitarian logistics. However, the answers are applicable to both concepts.

Challenges

Donors and funding

It is difficult for local organisations to understand the requirements donors put on funding, which makes it hard for local organisations to gather enough funding to be a significant actor in the field. The challenge is twofold: on the one hand, the requirements, documentation and understanding about these are made very difficult by donors for local organisations to understand. Therefore, it is easier for international organisations to gather funding from international donors since these iNGOs have more knowledge of the ways of work. On the other hand, local organisations have a lack of knowledge about the process of gathering funding from international donors.

Lack of budget

It was pointed out that there is a fear for a lack of overall budget for humanitarian aid in the coming year, due to the forecast of economic recession due to Covid-19. Big donor countries have been spending more budget on domestic organisations, on keeping people employed in their home countries. Therefore, the expected budget for humanitarian action in the coming years will be lower than it used to be, despite an expected growth of humanitarian need.

High need for humanitarian assistance

Additionally, the humanitarian need South Sudan already is so high that widespread interventions are really needed to effectively take on this problem, and the majority of local organisations is currently still too small and unexperienced to take that on and to give aid on a large scale. It is a big issue for local organisations: they usually are quite small, and they usually work in only one place in the country, unlike many bigger iNGOs they don't work in different places on different programmes throughout the country. And certainly, it is easier to work with one organisation in 10 different places, rather than work with 10 organisations in one place. When there is more peace and stability, international organisations will look for options to hand over their work to local organisations.

Interpretation of localisation

A statement was made that the concept of localisation comes with the question to when an organisation is seen as local or international. When an iNGO has been working in the same country with mainly local staff, should it still be seen as an international organisation and therefore see part of their donor's money go to local organisations, due to the interpretation of the concept of localisation? As long as the issue of interpretation of localisation exists, it will be hard for iNGOs and donors support the progress of localisation of aid in a correct way.

Knowledge and experience

Furthermore, the question was raised whether it is wise to push localisation more and more when the most knowledge and experience on humanitarian aid issues still lies with international NGOs and UN agencies, knowing that most local organisations in South Sudan were only set up in the past five years.

Corruption, neutrality and impartiality

The last issue raised was that local organisations have a harder time to distance themselves from conflicts when it comes to ethnic violence, intercommunal violence, but also neutrality and impartiality in choosing which communities to provide aid to and which not. Local organisations seem more prone to corruption or bribery, and favouritism in politics, according to interviewees of international organisations. This is also a reason for donors to put more trust in international organisations, rather than local or national organisations.

Opportunities

Organisations B and C openly spoke about the opportunities they take and see for localisation in humanitarian aid in South Sudan.

Training and increasing capacity

Organisation B stated that they would like to increase the number of local partners to work with. What they notice, however, is that local organisations are dependent on financing and they have a high turnover of staff, so their capacity is varying. They are trying to put a lot of focus on capacity building, by training the local organisations. This is done by assigning one of their own local employees to the local organisations to train them and help when a report has to be made or a procurement procedure has to be done. They stated that this way of training, instead of workshops or classes, works better for them, since the aid worker does the work on their own and will only require support when they get stuck. The focus of this iNGO lies mainly on the requirements donors put to the budgets they spend on organisations. In order to meet these requirements, local organisations are taught the protocols for auditing, budgeting and reporting to donors.

The organisation stated that they deemed it important that the assigned employee of the iNGO is a local since they speak the local language and makes it easier to break down cultural barriers since expats always noticed a power dynamic, which made sharing information in a proper way more difficult than with a local employee.

For the subjects the iNGO does not have enough professional knowledge about, they hire a consultant who has knowledge and experience on the subject to teach the local partner about this.

Partnership and increasing decision-making power

Organisation C spoke openly about the ways of interpreting the word localisation and instead call it a partnership, especially in South Sudan, where handing over tasks to local organisations purely for the purpose of reaching localisation seems inefficient. This organisation rather sees the inclusion of local organisations in the decision making of the content of the programmes and activities carried out. This is seen as necessary since local organisations know the local dynamic, culture and language, but international organisations have more knowledge of and experience with humanitarian aid. Combining these, hence the use of the word partnerships, increase the decision-making power and interference with the programmes by local organisations, but still uses the experience and knowledge of international organisations. This seems to be a good way for local NGOs to learn from iNGOs and vice versa.

4.4.2 Local / National Non-Governmental Organisations

Challenges

Donors and funding

Organisation D pointed out that donors and funding are part of the challenges that South Sudanese organisations are facing in localisation. They feel that local organisations are not getting the space they need to show what they are capable of. Meaning that at this moment they are not able to show their capacity, the capacity they claim they have in order to deliver the aid that is needed. The interviewee pointed out that part of the problem could be that localisation is a fairly new concept and not fully understood and supported by donors.

On the other hand, many local and national organisations do lack the capacity and logistics that are required by many donors, meaning that, even though they might have good presentation, they are lacking implementation, policy, accountability or technology. Therefore, donors would rather fund international organisations that do meet these requirements.

Underestimation of L/NGOs

This same organisation pointed out that iNGOs and UN agencies often underestimate the capacity and credibility of local NGOs as well, even if these organisations have existed for many years already

(this particular organisation was formed in 1972) and have the portfolio that shows their experience and competences. This way local NGOs feel undervalued and not stimulated in their work.

Corruption, neutrality and impartiality

Organisation F argued that the misuse of financial capital by country leaders in South Sudan might cause mistrust by funders towards L/NNGOs which challenges the improvement of localisation. Additionally, L/NNGOs can be one-sided leaning more towards their own tribe or communities, leaving out other people in need, this does not comply with impartiality of humanitarian aid. On top of that, there is a high possibility of monopoly or domination by bigger or stronger local or national NGOs, which might lead to lower effectiveness of aid, as there would be fewer organisations to reach the many people in need. This is an issue towards the high need for humanitarian aid and a big challenge in the localisation of aid.

Opportunities

Partnerships

Partnerships with iNGOs are found to be very valuable, because it strengthens the capacity of local organisations, due to the availability of funds through the iNGOs, as well as the professional guidance in the work. The South Sudan Joint Response project has played a big part in this for both smaller L/NNGOs.

Organisation D was very outspoken about the meaning of localisation. They stated that localisation does not mean 'to hand over all the work from iNGOs to local organisations', but rather share resources and responsibilities as well as the risks in the work field, to reach improved, efficient, cost-effective and above all timely delivery of humanitarian aid. L/NNGOs can be working on the frontline to make sure the activities are done, which does not mean iNGOs can sit back, but they should support these organisations in the work.

Financial opportunities

Through the partnership with international NGOs, L/NNGOs were funded directly to improve the internal structure, improve their policies, set up different facilities and have been able to work more online.

Since a high proportion of those working with local organisations are indigenous people of South Sudan, improvement of localisation will improve the livelihoods of these communities and therewith stimulate the economic chances within the country.

One other financial advantage localisation brings is that, according to organisation D, in comparison to iNGOs, local organisations spend money directly on the implementation of activities, because they have lower overhead costs. This would mean that local organisations need less financial capital for the same activities compared to iNGOs.

Training and increasing capacity

Regarding training and increasing capacity, organisation D talked about capacitating the local community on top of local organisations. When local communities are educated on the challenges they are facing regarding hazards and how to mitigate these, there are a lot of things they can do for themselves. The interviewee said that localisation also means focussing on the improvement of resilience of locals so that when they face problems, they can take care at least part of it themselves.

Language and culture barrier

At last, one argument all interviewed L/NNGOs commented on, was the ability of L/NNGOs to communicate with the local communities. Local people working with these organisations don't have the language barrier and understand the culture, which makes it easier to reach out to the local communities and facilitate communication between beneficiaries and aid services. Through local organisations, a better and faster understanding of the interventions that are needed locally can be provided.

4.4.3 Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs

For the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the need for localisation is not a debate, there simply needs to be progress in localisation and L/NGOs need to be able to take the lead in humanitarian aid, at all times.

Challenges

Donors and funding

Interviewees for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs argued that the donors and the Dutch parliament need to take more political risk when talking about setting up humanitarian aid in South Sudan. There are some risks in setting it up, in handing over tasks to local organisations, in any other country, an unstable country, but that is something that politicians need to learn to accept.

There is a need for enough financing for local organisations to manage the risks: a security officer, a proper IT-system, enough vehicles to reach locations or to get out when that is needed. It is important to keep training local responders, although, what is needed in the end is financial stability. Both respondents mentioned that when it comes to the Grand Bargain, South Sudan is quite close to the commitment of 25% of budget spent on and by local organisations because there are some very strong local actors around. However, this number is staggering, which makes it hard to reach the new goal of 35%. One respondent has had conversations with a UN agency about localisation which revealed that 40% of the Humanitarian Fund went to local organisations. While this might seem like a high amount, this fund only holds 7% of the monetary aid volume. Increased localisation can only be realised by taking risks in funding L/NGOs.

High need for humanitarian assistance

Alike the answers by interviewees of INGOs, the government employees shared the opinion that the humanitarian crisis is so big that all organisations, local, national and international are needed to book any achievements. The number of victims, the need is much bigger than the capacity of aid. Consequently, there is no possibility of retrieving aid workers from South Sudan thus far.

Knowledge and experience

In the eyes of the interviewees it looks like INGOs don't want to lose their share in work field. It involves organisations that have years' worth of experience, doctrines, programmes and logistical capabilities, which are things they might want to keep in their own hands since they know that as long as that is possible activities and programmes will go well, they can justify what happens and know that the maximum can be done. For those organisations to put the work in the hands of local organisations is something they must be pressured in to doing.

Opportunities

Training and sharing knowledge

Promoting localisation means training local organisations. Currently, trainings are given on multiple things: how to create a good workforce, finances, what does the donor want to see, how to survive the audit and what kind of procedures and protocols should you follow, also in logistics. Those are trainings that are usually offered to local partners.

It is up to INGOs and donors to say: with these basic requirements in place, local organisations have to do it on their own now, we trust the contract and hand over the money to work with. However, organisations can also learn along the way. One can't expect a local organisation to instantly deliver the same quality as an INGO that leads operations in 120 countries.

Financial opportunities

One respondent mentioned that the current business model of flying international aid workers from one country to another is highly inefficient and is something that needs to change. This can be solved by letting L/NGOs take the lead and have INGOs guide from a distance.

Partnership and increasing decision-making power

So far, the partners usually cooperate in the design of the response, but the decision-making is more focused on The Hague and the iNGOs. Of course, there are the organisations' own policies and procedures that are put on paper quite well, which is why donors trust them. They know the organisations have these channels, the expertise and the procedures to take care of all kinds of tasks in different situations, which is something local organisations are struggling more with. They usually work with smaller funds, so they don't always have to have very strict procedures, they can use their funds easily and on the local markets. Nevertheless, if local organisations are determined to take this all on, the first step is taken. In that case, it is up to the iNGOs to let them do this and help whenever this is asked for.

The country still largely relies on iNGOs and UN agencies, however, L/NNGOs have been coming up very quickly lately when it comes to capacity development. This is partly due to the cooperation of the UN or iNGOs with local NGOs. On the other hand, L/NNGOs start to manifest and show that they are present and capable of doing the work. There already are quite some iNGOs that work in partnership with local NGOs, where the local NGOs can show their capabilities and how they take on the responsibilities, how they would work in a direct relationship with the donors and where they implement programmes on their own.

Concluding this subchapter and looking back to the Seven Dimensions of Localisation in the conceptual framework (figure 3), three out of the four selected dimensions were discussed by the interviewed organisations: 'funding', 'partnerships' and 'capacity'. The fourth selected dimension, 'participation revolution', was not mentioned by any of the organisations as one of the concepts to work on in localisation in South Sudan.

Chapter 5. Discussion

Considering the setup of chapters two and four, this chapter is organised by sub-research question as well. First, differences between literature and results are mentioned, and second, the similarities between the two.

5.1 Sub Question 1

'How did aid organisations manage humanitarian logistics in South Sudan before the Covid-19 crisis?'

The literature found mainly links humanitarian logistics in South Sudan to the Logistics Cluster and merely gives a general overview about the origin of supplies, not mentioning the different ways organisations manage the logistics and transport goods from supplier to beneficiary. While the Logistics Cluster is a partner for four of six interviewed organisations, for all except one, the benefits of this partnership only come from a security point of view. Which, however, is not a concept mentioned in literature.

Literature and research results overlap in the overview of different transport options: road, water and air, which is used at what time and the reasoning behind this.

Beforehand it was expected that there would be limited literature regarding logistics management by humanitarian organisations, excluding the Logistics Cluster. While logistics management is a process all organisation deal with one way or another, many humanitarian organisations do not see it as an important activity to share detailed information on, resulting in an absence of literature on the topic. The Logistics Cluster is a widely known cluster in the humanitarian field, it was therefore expected that there would be adequate literature available. However, even with the global overview that can be found on their logistics management, after the literature review it was still not clear how they execute the work in detail, for example on choices made in purchase of goods and details on transportation from A to B.

In conclusion, to come to a clear answer on the research question it was necessary to do more research on this topic by the hand of interviews. The literature and the interview results share some overlapping information, confirming credibility of the sources, however, the interviews result in more detailed information.

5.2 Sub Question 2

'What adaptations have aid organisations made in order to cope with the Covid-19 measures and restrictions imposed by the South Sudan government?'

In the literature, it was mentioned that international humanitarians leaving South Sudan, for health reasons or due to xenophobia, has caused many problems. However, none of the iNGOs have pointed this out as a problem. On the contrary, all iNGOs shared that their humanitarians have been able to stay on duty during the outbreak of the pandemic.

Although the literature pointed out that Covid-19 has caused many problems for all organisations, the results show that this does not count for all interviewed organisations. Some have even said that it was only an extra challenge on top of the Level 3 emergency in the country, creating extra work, but not making it the biggest issue to work on.

Literature sources mentioned that remote working could have a downside since the iNGOs are not physically present. This means that it is important to work with local organisations, who will be present. However, one of the local NGOs says they have had this problem as well, missing the physical contact with beneficiaries themselves, meaning that this issue does not only apply to iNGOs but to local NGOs as well.

On the other hand, when it comes to remote working the research results also complements the literature. The literary data says remote working has happened more often, but it does not elaborate in what way, while the results state clearly what it means: more online meetings and online monitoring. For some organisations, this worked out positively, for others work became more difficult since not all beneficiaries were reached via online connections.

All sources, literature and research results, refer to the impact of the nationwide restrictions due to Covid-19: transport delays, shortage of fuel, food and non-food items in the country, leading to increasing costs for all supplies.

There are mentions about the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the mentality of aid workers. Literature states that UNMISS had issues with sending their employees on leave, in order to take time off and recharge for further duty. The research results show the same challenges. Many organisations have found difficulties in the extra workload Covid-19 has brought, not having the possibility to send their employees on leave, leading to higher stress levels in the work environment. All sources agree about one issue that has grown because of the pandemic. The financial challenges that were already existing and increasing, have only grown to a bigger funding gap for humanitarian aid. The funding that was meant for certain activities was directed towards Covid-19 related programmes, decreasing the funds for usual aid activities. All interviewed organisations have had to cope with this certain problem during the already challenging time of an upcoming pandemic.

Since the Covid-19 pandemic was still ongoing during the research period, it was expected that there would be limited pre-existing information available in the literature on this topic, the information that did exist mostly came from media sources like newspaper articles, and that most valuable information would be gathered via interviews. Even though there were only limited sources in the literature, the information that was available mostly corresponded with the results from the interviews.

5.3 Sub Question 3

‘What impact did the Covid-19 crisis have on the role and the decision-making power of local actors in emergency response?’

Both from a literature and research results perspective there is not much information about the impact of Covid-19 on the position of local organisations in South Sudan. The information that has come forward is quite conflicting. Where the literature is mainly positive about the impact, the research results show a different outcome. The literature sources say that since international aid workers returned home, L/NNGOs have gotten a better position since the iNGOs did not have enough staff to do the work. Concluding that due to Covid-19 the Grand Bargain commitments of localisation were spearheaded in South Sudan over the past year. Only two interviewed iNGOs and one L/NNGO agree with these statements.

Additionally, the literature says there is more work for local actors in the country since they were able to reach the beneficiaries and provide iNGOs with updates on the work field since these organisations weren’t affected by the travel ban as much as iNGOs.

However, the UN agency, one iNGO and one L/NNGO stated that the Covid-19 crisis did not affect the position of local organisations, since all restrictions put up by the government applied to all organisations, both international and national.

One local NGO shared that the pandemic changed their position negatively because international actors claimed more work during the pandemic and worked even less in partnership with local actors.

There was no substantial amount sources that could answer this research question, leading to the expectation that the outcome of the interviews would give a clearer overview of the change of role and decision-making power of local actors. Unfortunately, the analysis of the interviews shows that

there is no unequivocal answer to this question, since the replies of organisations were either positive, negative, or neutral.

5.4 Sub Question 4

'What are opportunities and challenges for increasing localisation of humanitarian logistics in South Sudan?'

Even though all sources agree there is an overall lack of budget in international humanitarian aid, localisation of said aid could lift a small part of this issue. L/NNGOs and the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs share the opinion that local and national organisations overall have lower overhead costs, including the fact that they don't use the current model of international aid workers flying from one country to another. When local organisations can take the lead in activities and iNGOs can guide them through remote working, a part of the financial gap can be filled, even if this only fixes a small part of the issue.

All interviewees shared the opinion that one of the biggest challenges in realising increased localisation is the lack of direct funding to local organisations, mainly caused by requirements set by donors to receive funds. It was pointed out that, to continue the progress of localisation, donors need to change requirements to make it easier for L/NNGOs to understand them and possible to meet them.

Some of the interviewed iNGOs and the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs say that localisation should not be pushed because of the lack of knowledge and experience L/NNGOs have compared to iNGOs and UN agencies. However, literature and L/NNGOs say that the advantages of local organisations lie in the knowledge about the local culture, language and therefore the needs of the beneficiaries, which might fasten the humanitarian aid in the country and create more trust with the local communities.

Both iNGOs and L/NNGOs point out the issue that donors might mistrust local organisations with funding due to corruption of South Sudanese authorities, while literature is not as elaborate on this issue.

The literature sources, the iNGOs and the Ministry indicate that the need for humanitarian assistance at this moment is still too high for iNGOs to retreat and completely hand over their work to L/NNGOs.

But adding to that they all mention that the key to increased localisation is increasing training of local actors and by doing so increase capacity. Of course, this will take time, but the more training is given, the more knowledge the L/NNGOs will gain and the more they can actively do in the humanitarian field.

All sources agree that increasing partnerships should be the first step in localisation and is a better step towards localisation than simply handing over the work from iNGOs to L/NNGO. This includes sharing the workload, sharing resources, but most importantly letting local actors have a bigger part in the set-up of activities, increasing their decision-making power.

The outcome of the results on this research question did meet the expectations of the researcher. Many literature sources and interviewees share opportunities and challenges for improvement of localisation in South Sudan, whether they correlate with each other or not.

5.5 Research limitations

Since the Covid-19 pandemic was still ongoing during the conduct of the research, the data used for this is still continuously updated, meaning that numbers and figures in the report will be outdated the moment the document is presented.

Additionally, there have been limited previous studies on the impact Covid-19 on humanitarian aid since a pandemic of this size has not occurred in recent years and the current Covid-19 pandemic is still ongoing.

The situation the Covid-19 pandemic has brought worldwide has given some challenges to this research. Due to travel restrictions the option to travel to South Sudan for conducting interviews in person did not exist. Unsteady internet connections, difference in time-zones, language barriers and filled schedules made it difficult to plan interviewees in South Sudan and when connections were possible interviews were often done without visuals, taking away the option to read faces and body language.

The researcher did not have many connections to L/NNGOs in South Sudan, meaning that all connections for interviews had to come from shared network from interviewed iNGOs, called snowball sampling. Even though many local organisations have been reached by email, many did not reply to requests for an interview.

Other organisations were not open to cooperation since they were not able to share organisation information, as stated in their policies or because they were not able to provide enough information related to the Covid-19 pandemic at that time.

Combined, this caused a relatively small sample size in data for the research and an absence of quantitative data, since there was no option for a questionnaire or survey. However, all interviewed organisations have been spoken to one-on-one, and all interviewees seemed to be able and eager to share their information and opinions without limitation.

Despite those challenges, the research has succeeded in presenting the views and experiences from a diversity of NGOs in South Sudan, local and national NGOs, iNGOs and present UN agencies. The research provides valuable insights into partnerships and beyond that can assist all humanitarian stakeholders in designing and co-creating strategies to accelerate the localisation of humanitarian action.

5.6 Possibilities for further research

The following options are presented for future research on this topic:

- This research did not include the question and answer of what impact Covid-19 has had on the preparedness for the rainy season of 2020-2021 and how organisations adapt to the challenges the pandemic has brought to the preparation of emergency activities.
- Furthermore, deeper research should be done on the impact of Covid-19 on the position and decision-making power of local actors.

The sample size for this research has been rather small, possibly resulting in a different outcome to the research compared to the same research with a more substantial number of interviews. A bigger sample size could give a more conclusive result of the research topic.

5.7 Functioning of researcher

Looking at the functioning of the researcher during the research period, it can be said that the researcher has faced certain issues, due to the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic. These challenges had an organisational aspect: questioning how the research could be conducted properly, abiding all imposed restrictions due to the Covid-19 crisis: restrictions to travel, restrictions to psychically meeting people. This meant that interviews with organisations, and progress discussions with commissioner and thesis coach had to be done online. Additionally, it had led to psychological challenges: the researcher experienced difficulty in the new way of working and living due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Logically, this had consequences to the research itself: the research has taken up more time than estimated beforehand. Primarily, due to unforeseen difficulties in reaching organisations that were

interested in cooperation to the research, and secondly because the researcher found difficulty in reaching out to organisations in the first place, feeling it could be a burden to organisations to take time out of their schedule for participation in the research, especially during an ongoing pandemic.

As a consequence, it could be that the researcher has accepted the data that was gathered, even though there could have been a possibility to gather additional data if the researcher did not feel like a burden to the organisations.

Chapter 6. Conclusion

6.1 Sub Question 1

'How did aid organisations manage humanitarian logistics in South Sudan before the Covid-19 crisis?'

There are multiple ways in which humanitarian actors manage their logistics of aid supplies. Figure 4 shows the different routes organisations take, from purchase to distribution to beneficiaries. All organisations have their own methods and own preference in which route to take, which depends on the kind of supplies they need, the partnerships they have with other organisations and suppliers, the material they own and on their financial capital. Generally, smaller local actors do not have their own transportation material and therefore join partners for transport of supplies or order supplies directly from suppliers, which transport the goods for them. International actors and bigger local actors generally use their own transportation system and only cooperate with partners or the Logistics Cluster for reducing costs of transport or for security purposes.

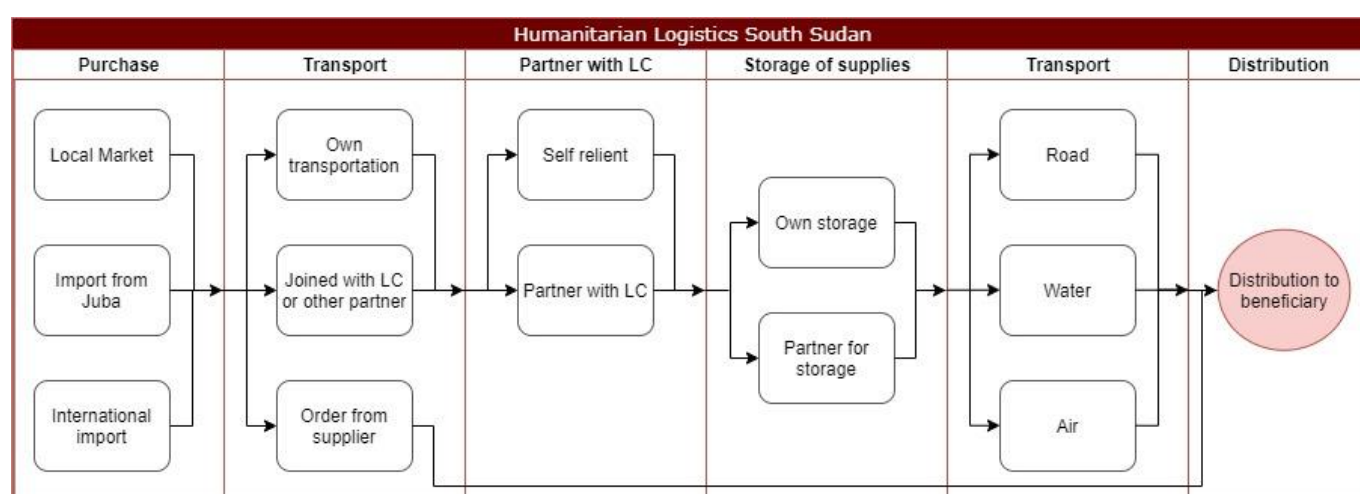


Figure 4 - Logistics Flow Humanitarian Logistics South Sudan

6.2 Sub Question 2

'What adaptations have aid organisations made in order to cope with the Covid-19 measures and restrictions imposed by the South Sudan government?'

The flood response of 2019-2020 was already finished when the Covid-19 pandemic reached South Sudan, and therefore the pandemic and its subsequent restrictions did not have a massive impact on the transport of emergency supplies for this response. However, some organisations discussed that due to flooded, inaccessible roads, part of their emergency response supplies was delayed. The Covid-19 restrictions had an added impact on these supplies, further delaying the delivery. All organisations mentioned that restrictions had a negative impact on the general supply flow of humanitarian aid supplies.

Altogether, the restrictions led to even more substantial delays in the delivery of emergency aid supplies to beneficiaries, mainly to those in hard-to-reach areas.

The biggest challenges that have appeared due to the measures and restrictions in response to the Covid-19 pandemic in South Sudan can be summarised in four categories:

Delays in transportation and distribution of aid supplies	
Caused by	Adaptations made
- Closed borders	Wait for restrictions to be lifted, meanwhile:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Interstate travel-ban and/or 14-day quarantine - Extra testing of drivers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Pressing government to reopen borders and lift interstate travel-ban, especially for humanitarian cargo and workers - Include required quarantine time in personnel and transport planning
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Increased stress in the work environment, due to unfeasibility in personnel leave options	
<i>Caused by</i>	<i>Adaptations made</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Closed borders - Interstate travel-ban and/or 14-day quarantine 	<p>Wait for restrictions to be lifted, meanwhile:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Include required quarantine time in personnel and transport planning for interstate travel - Most aid workers kept working for more months than usual (6-7 months) before taking time off when borders reopened

Communication difficulties between both partners and beneficiaries	
<i>Caused by</i>	<i>Adaptations made</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Closed borders - Interstate travel-ban or 14-day quarantine - Absence of international partners (partners who guide from other countries) 	<p>More work was done online: online meetings, training and remote monitoring of programmes</p> <p>+ Saved time, mainly because now there was no travel time</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Change in relationships with partners and beneficiaries, because there were no face-to-face meetings - Some partners or beneficiaries were not reachable online, leading to loss of relationships

Increased financial challenges in humanitarian aid	
<i>Caused by</i>	<i>Adaptations made</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Closed borders caused stop on all supply import, increasing the prices on food and fuel - More funding redirected to Covid-19 related interventions - Financial challenges in global humanitarian aid 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Continuous advocating for more funding for humanitarian aid - Redirecting funding from other activities towards most needed interventions, cutting back in emergency supplies to be handed out

In comparing the outcome of sub questions 1 and 2, it shows that the restrictions put up by the South Sudan government had the most consequences for the following parts of the logistics flow:

Transport: Heavy delays in transportation of goods to and within South Sudan had serious consequences for the distribution of goods to beneficiaries

Purchase: The increase in prices, caused also by the closing of borders, made planned purchase of aid supplies difficult, and required organisations to rearrange the budgets for planned activities

6.3 Sub Question 3

‘What impact did the Covid-19 crisis have on the role and the decision-making power of local actors in emergency response?’

Some organisations experienced a positive change in the position and decision-making power of local actors, due to Covid-19. Others, however, did not notice any change at all. And last, one organisation experienced a negative impact.

With the number of interviews, the diversity in answers and the motivation on the answers, the conclusion can be drawn that this research cannot give a uniform answer on the sub-question.

Impact	Type organisation	Reasoning
Positive	2 INGOs 1 L/NNGO Literature	International organisations missed a part of their staff, due to leave, therefore local organisations were more needed than before to fill the gap, hence the change in their position
None	UN agency 1 INGO 1 L/NNGO	The restrictions put in place by South Sudan government weighed the same for international and local workers, so there would be no substantial reason for change in the position of local actors
Negative	1 L/NNGO	International organisations and UN agencies claimed more of the work field during the pandemic and choose to work less in partnership with local organisations, even when they did work in partnership with them previously. This led to a negative change in the position of local actors

6.4 Sub Question 4

'What are opportunities and challenges for increasing localisation of humanitarian logistics in South Sudan?'

Overall, the interviewed local and national organisations were more optimistic in their answers, which mostly consisted of reasons why local organisations are important in humanitarian aid and shared more opportunities or provided solutions to the challenges that were mentioned. Contrarily, international organisations were more reluctant and negative in their opinions on the localisation of aid.

One of the possible reasons for the negativity of international NGOs was stated by one of the respondents of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs by saying that it would be possible that the organisations are hesitant to make the definitive step towards localisation because they feel it means that they lose a part of the job they have been doing for a very long time. In this case, localisation is understood as to hand over all the work they are doing now and drop it in the hands of local organisations. L/NNGOs have pointed out that this is not the core of localisation, but rather to let local organisations cooperate in the set-up of activities, share resources, and guide and support local actors in the work field when they take the lead in aid programmes.

Listed below are the concluding challenges and opportunities that have been stated by the interviewed organisations, divided into six main categories. Three of which are part of the Seven Dimensions of Localisation.

	Challenges	Opportunities
<i>Finance</i>	There is a global financial gap in humanitarian aid funds, which is increasing, including through the Covid-19 pandemic, making it harder for local organisations to receive funding	Local organisations have generally lower overhead costs, not having to fly aid workers from one country to the other
<i>Donors and funding</i>	Donor requirements are difficult for local actors to understand and hard to meet. Both are reasons for donors to choose for international actors.	
<i>Knowledge and capacity</i>	The lack of knowledge by local actors currently makes international organisations hesitate to start partnership or hand over tasks	Training and increasing capacity are key elements to the implementation of localisation and should come from international actors

		The advantage of local actors lies in the knowledge of local languages, culture and needs, which fastens aid and creates trust with local communities
<i>High need of assistance</i>	The high need for humanitarian assistance in South Sudan makes it hard to hand over tasks and the lead in activities to organisations that have less experience	Localisation does not mean for international actors to retreat from the work field, but rather guide local actors in the work
<i>Partnerships</i>		With the high need of capacity in the work field, partnerships are a first step in increased localisation: sharing workload and resources, increasing decision-making power of local actors
<i>Corruption and impartiality</i>	Corruption by the government in South Sudan might place mistrust from donor towards local organisations. Favouritism by authorities and intercommunal conflict makes donors and international actors hesitate to work with (certain) local actors	

As shown in the table, most of the opportunities mentioned above give a solution, or at least a step forward, in how to attack the challenges in the implementation of localisation.

Recommendations on how to take these challenges and opportunities into account when working on the implementation of localisation in South Sudan are given in chapter 7.

In summary, the localisation of humanitarian logistics does not mean to hand over all logistical efforts to local organisations. For this to happen local actors need their own vehicles, and need an increased knowledge on logistics, which as of this moment they lack, due to lack of logistics professionals. However, the knowledge of local culture, language and geography are of high value to increasing effectiveness of humanitarian logistics. Local organisations have this knowledge and the connection with local communities, leading to a better knowledge of the beneficiaries' needs. In conclusion, partnerships between international organisations and local organisations lead to more efficient purchase of emergency supplies and more efficient humanitarian logistics.

6.5 Main Research Question

'How do aid actors respond and adapt to the effects of the Covid-19 crisis on the logistics flow of food aid supplies to and within South Sudan concerning emergency response? And what are opportunities and challenges of shifting towards localisation of humanitarian logistics?'

The effect of the restrictions implemented by the South Sudan government concerning the Covid-19 pandemic is visible in the **main challenges** that emerged from them:

- Delays in transportation and distribution of aid supplies
- Increased stress in the work environment and personnel planning issues due to the impossibility for aid workers to take leave and recharge by visiting their families
- Communication difficulties between organisations and their partners as well as with beneficiaries
- Increased financial challenges in humanitarian aid

The **main causes** of these challenges were:

- Closed borders, resulting in restricted import of goods
- Interstate travel-ban
- Required 14-day quarantine when travelling

As far as possible in these cases, the following **adaptations** were made by aid organisations:

- Advocate with the South Sudan government for lifting said restrictions, particularly for humanitarian work
- Simply wait for the restrictions to be lifted
- Include transport delays and quarantine days in transport and personnel planning
- Start online monitoring, online meetings and online training with partner organisations and beneficiaries, as much as possible
- Increase advocacy for funding for humanitarian aid and redirect funding from other programmes to most pressing activities

Some of the opportunities given already show a possible part of a solution to the challenges that obstruct the implementation of localisation.

Challenges

- The growing **funding** gap in humanitarian aid worldwide, with Covid-19 playing a part in this, along with the funding requirements set up by international donors, make it hard for local organisations to receive funding
- The lack of **capacity, experience, and knowledge** of the humanitarian field, by local actors compared to that of international actors, makes international organisations hesitate to increase localisation
- The **high need for humanitarian assistance** in South Sudan is seen as a reason for international organisations to keep working in the country and not simply hand over the work to local organisations. The increasing need for aid over the past years means that all organisations, no matter knowledge and experience, are needed in the work field.
- **Corruption** by leaders in South Sudan and favouritism by authorities for certain local organisations are a reason for international actors to hesitate to invest in localisation or start partnerships with local organisations

Opportunities

- Local organisations generally have lower overhead costs, due to direct use of funding on aid activities and the absence of travelling international workers. Therefore, having local organisations take the lead in activities, with support from international organisations either close by or remotely, has a **financial** advantage.
- Training of local actors by transfer of **knowledge and** therewith **increase capacity** are key elements of the implementation of localisation. Local organisations might have less experience and knowledge of humanitarian aid compared to international actors, their advantage, however, lies in the knowledge of local languages, culture, and needs, which fastens aid and creates trust with beneficiaries
- The **high need for humanitarian assistance** in South Sudan must not be a reason for international actors to be reluctant on implementation of localisation. The meaning of the concept of localisation is often misused in this situation, by interpreting the concept as handing over all the work to local organisations and retreat. However, localisation does not mean for international actors to pull back from the work field, surely not in a Level 3 emergency like South Sudan, but rather guide local actors in the work
- With the high need for capacity in the work field, **partnerships** are seen as the first step in increasing localisation efforts. This means sharing the workload, sharing knowledge and

resources, increasing the decision-making power of local actors and include local actors in the setup and implementation of activities and programmes

Interesting to note is that the results of this research show that local and national organisations tend to be more optimistic about the concept of localisation, where international actors are more hesitant to increase the implementation of it.

Localisation of humanitarian logistics does not simply mean for international organisations to hand over all logistical activities to local organisations, but rather to start partnerships with them to increase efficiency of humanitarian logistics. Local organisations currently lack transport material and logistical knowledge, but do have more on local language, culture and geography, things international organisations lack. Combining these capacities will lead to better understanding of beneficiaries' needs, which in turn leads to efficiency in purchase of emergency supplies and therefore to more efficient humanitarian logistics.

Chapter 7. Recommendations

Plan logistics cooperation for future similar crises

Since some of the international organisations mentioned, the Logistics Cluster in particular, that the restrictions did not have a massive impact on their transportation, it is advised for these organisations to already start conversations and plan partnerships with local organisations for logistics operations. By doing so organisations can provide support to one another when a similar crisis event happens in the future, or a new wave of Covid-19 reaches South Sudan. In this way, when the South Sudan government were to implement restrictions like travel-bans and closed borders in the future, the organisations can support each other, to ensure delays are not as massive, organisations can still reach their beneficiaries and humanitarian aid work can continue. The government of South Sudan is advised to work in close cooperation with the organisations regarding their needs regarding nationwide restrictions.

Facilitate discussions on the understanding of localisation of humanitarian aid

Based on the challenges and opportunities found for localisation of humanitarian aid it is advised to hold discussions between local, national, and international organisations to come to a common understanding of the meaning, values and principles of localisation. Localisation does not mean to hand over activities, but rather let local organisations lead activities, and give them more power in the decision-making from the start of setting up activities to carrying out said activities.

Values mentioned by L/NNGOs such as financial advantages, timeliness and knowledge of language and culture, should be discussed to understand the need for localisation. Challenges like tendency to corruption and possible misuse of funding by L/NNGOs should be discussed and how this can be incorporated in policies. It is important to listen to local organisations when it comes to matters like these, their opinions are often overlooked.

As a pioneer in the field of localisation, the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs could facilitate the discussions.

Increase training and partnerships

Start dialogue between local and international organisations about the knowledge and skills they are both missing, how they can complement each other and how international organisations can support local organisations while they take the lead in the field. From this, international organisations can start or improve training of local organisations to increase their knowledge about humanitarian work, finance, HR, donor policy and organisational policy, and how to meet donor requirements. These trainings will lead to an increased capacity in the work field and create more opportunities to increase funding from donors directly to local organisations. For training, international organisations are advised to follow the example of Dorcas South Sudan, by training aid workers one-on-one, executed by local employees, to avoid power dynamic and cultural and lingual barriers. The methods of training can vary in learning events, in-person or online training, mentoring, guidance or shadowing during work activities, simulations and learning by doing.

Pressure donors and helping local organisations meet funding requirements

The current requirements donors have set for funding appliances leads to confusion and difficulty for local organisations to acquire direct funding, which in turn holds back sufficient progress on localisation efforts in South Sudan. It is therefore advised that governments and international organisations keep pressuring donor agencies to direct funding more towards local organisations.

International agencies should press L/NNGO staff to join meetings with relevant donors and have discussions that emphasise to donors the role and necessity of local organisations and reason for direct funding towards them. International agencies should share reports and documents submitted to donors with local partners for transparency and training purposes.

Localisation takes time

The following should be seen more as a note rather than a recommendation:

All humanitarian stakeholders in South Sudan, including government bodies, are advised to have an open dialogue about the timeframe of the progress of localisation. It should be known that it is realistic that international agencies may, at least in the short-term, still receive the larger amount of humanitarian funding, and as long as localisation is still progressing local organisations largely receive their funding through them.

Meanwhile, international agencies and donors are encouraged work on systems where local organisations are directly funded. Increasing knowledge on donor requirements and convincing international donors to direct funding towards local organisations does take time, starting dialogues with donors and make them understand why it is useful for them to direct the money and trust local organisations is not something that happens overnight, it requires time.

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Annex 1 – Interview Checklist

Interview about the impact of Covid-19 on humanitarian aid in South Sudan and the chances and challenges for localisation of humanitarian logistics

Semi-structured interviews with (humanitarian) actors working and/or located in South Sudan

General information

Type of interview:	Semi-structured
Number of interviews:	4 iNGO/UN, ... L/NNGO, 2 government
Way of interviewing:	Digital, videocall
Time:	± 30 minutes
Way of recording:	Recording of interview, taking notes

General Introduction

1. Introduction of researcher
 - a. Name
 - b. Name of study
2. Explain to interviewee why they are being interviewed, introduction on the research
3. Ask interviewee to introduce themselves, name, job description and job activities
4. Ask where the person is usually located (if in SSD, are they there now? Why/why not)

Interview Questions International Organisations

1. How is your organisation involved in humanitarian aid? And what activities did/does your organisation carry out during the flood response in South Sudan?
2. How did, in your opinion, Covid-19 affect the general flood response?
3. How do you usually manage your humanitarian logistics, mainly Food Security and Livelihood items? Do you purchase your items locally, from neighbouring countries, or wider international?
4. In what way did you have to adapt to the Covid-19 measurements and how did Covid-19 affect the logistics of Food Security and Livelihood items?
5. Even with a possible vaccine against Covid-19, the virus and its consequences could be around for a longer time.
 - a. What would that mean for humanitarian aid in South Sudan?
 - b. And for humanitarian logistics?
 - c. And for localisation of humanitarian aid?
6. Does your organisation work in partnership with local or national organisations in South Sudan?
 - a. Why do you have a partnership with these respective organisations?
7. (How)Did the relationship with your organisation and local/national partners change due to Covid-19?
8. The Grand Bargain, the Charter for Change and the Start Network all aim to improve localisation in humanitarian aid. How is this implemented in your organisations' work in South Sudan?
9. South Sudan has been dependent on iNGOs/UN agencies for humanitarian aid for a very long time. How do you see the possibilities and challenges for more localisation in humanitarian aid in South Sudan, and how can these possibilities be converted to reality?

Interview Questions National Organisations

1. How is your organisation involved in humanitarian aid? And what activities did/does your organisation carry out during the flood response in South Sudan?
2. How did/does, in your opinion, Covid-19 affect the general flood response?
3. How do you usually manage your humanitarian logistics, mainly Food Security and Livelihood items? Do you purchase your items locally, from neighbouring countries, or wider international?
4. In what way did you have to adapt to the Covid-19 measurements and how did Covid-19 affect the logistics of Food Security and Livelihood items?
5. Even with a possible vaccine against Covid-19, the virus and its consequences could be around for a longer time.
 - a. What would that mean for humanitarian aid in South Sudan?
 - b. And for humanitarian logistics?
 - c. And for localisation of humanitarian aid?
6. Does your organisation work in partnership with other aid organisations?
 - a. Why do you have a partnership with these respective organisations?
7. (How)Did the relationship with the partners change due to Covid-19?
8. The Grand Bargain, the Charter for Change and the Start Network all aim to improve localisation in humanitarian aid.
 - a. Have you noticed steps forward in localisation of aid in South Sudan? If so, which were these?
 - b. Where do you think localisation of aid in South Sudan is still lacking?
9. South Sudan has been dependent on iNGOs/UN agencies for humanitarian aid for a very long time. How do you see the possibilities and challenges for more localisation in humanitarian aid in South Sudan, and how can these possibilities be converted to reality?

Interview Questions the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs

1. How is the Ministry of Foreign Affairs involved in humanitarian aid in South Sudan?
2. Does the Ministry of Foreign Affairs play any role in logistics of relief supplies?
3. What was the role of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs during the Dutch relief Alliance Joint Flood Response of last year?
4. Did you/ has the Ministry of Foreign Affairs /Dutch Relief Alliance have any trouble with the measurements taken by the governments concerning Covid-19, in the Netherlands or in South Sudan?
5. How is Ministry of Foreign Affairs currently working on the promotion of localisation in Humanitarian aid?
6. Where is localisation still lacking at this moment?
7. What are challenges in the promotion of localisation at this point?

Additional/optional question

1. Looking at the four stages of emergency management: preparedness, response, recover and mitigation, at what stage are you usually working?
 - a. Is mitigation of the disasters in South Sudan possible?

Annex 2 – Interview Analysis

This interview analysis emerges from interviews done with different actors in the humanitarian field in South Sudan. In total 9 interviews were done. The first four interviews were conducted with international aid organisations and an UN agency, three of which are based in South Sudan, and one in the Netherlands, but has staff in South Sudan. Three interviews were done with local or national NGOs in South Sudan. This includes one bigger organisation, with over 200 staff, and offices in other countries next to South Sudan, the remaining two organisations are smaller local/national organisations. The last two interviews were done with employees of the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The colours in the text result from the analysis and show different themes, which are defined in the legend below. The results of the analysis are shown in chapter 4 of this report.

Interviews International Organisations

Legend	
Black	Neutral information
Green ⁽¹⁾ ... ⁽¹⁾	Similarity
Red ⁽¹⁾ ... ⁽¹⁾	Contradiction
Blue	Information for Sub Question 1
Purple	Information for Sub Question 2
Orange	Information for Sub Question 3
Pink	Information for Sub Question 4

Respondent	Organisation, location of respondent and job description
R1	Cordaid – Juba, South Sudan
R2	Dorcas – Wau, South Sudan
R3	Help a Child – Zwolle, the Netherlands
R4	World Food Programme – Juba, South Sudan

1. How is your organisation involved in humanitarian aid? And what activities did/does your organisation carry out in during the flood response in South Sudan?	
R1	We have four focus areas: Humanitarian Response, Health, Resilience, Security and Justice.
R2	<p>We implement a couple of different programmes. FSL: Food distribution and handing it out to people in need, also handing out seeds, ox ploughs, giving training on how to do sustainable (long-term) farming, how to use your agricultural tools, which is partly also resilience programming, how to be more resilience when a crisis comes around.</p> <p>Next to that we take care of WASH, nutrition, we have training centres for more technical trainings like sewing, computer skills, cultivation, setting up business plans.</p> <p>We do this in 2 states: Wester Bahr el Ghazal and one in Warrap, they are connected in the North east of SSD, we do that to combine the different programmes, so we don't only have stand-alone programmes, but we do have nutrition and connect that with agriculture training to let them be able to feed their own children.</p> <p>⁽¹⁾During the past flood response, we were only able to do a handful of extra activities, due to a lack of funding. These additional interventions were: Multi-purpose cash assistance and distribution of seeds.⁽¹⁾</p>
R3	<p>We work on protracted crisis programmes, which can continue for multiple years, and on acute crisis programmes, which take about 6 to 9 months, like the flood responses. Next to that we work on innovation projects and one of those is a psychosocial aid programme for children in SSD.</p> <p>We plan our response on the hand of the Humanitarian Needs Overview and the Humanitarian Response Plan of SSD, because they change basically every year. And it sounds really nice to work in a place where the need is highest but there is a big financial side to it as well. To change offices every time a need is high somewhere else is timely and costly. So, we compromise, and we choose an area for about 2 or 3 years, which justifies the investment you make to an office, and if the priorities of the HRP change, we can change places as well. First, we were placed in Yei for a couple of years and then we moved to Pibor.</p> <p>Through the DRA we have setup an emergency relief aid project, for food aid and WASH. This was a big</p>

	challenge, the area of the disaster was so large that many NGOs and UN started their procurement of aid supplies in Juba, but there was a serious lack of stock. So, the prices started to rise quick or you had to go to neighbouring countries to get your items. We were able to get our supplies from Uganda, where most of the stocks for SSD come from anyway. We also have many contacts in Uganda, so that went pretty well for us. ⁽¹⁾ Our project had three parts: 1 was food – sacks of flour, oil, salt and cans of beans, 2 was agricultural input, seeds and tools for cultivation and 3 was hygiene kits. But because we couldn't afford everything due to the increasing prices, we skipped part 2. ⁽¹⁾ This way we could feed even more people than we expected.
R4	WFP is the lead agency of the Logistics Cluster (LC), since 2009. WFP is working on food security, works on assessment analysis and food for the most vulnerable populations in SSD. Engaged in that is obviously a development aspect, nutrition aspect and all kinds of other things. I personally am in charge of the LC. WFP here is also the lead agency for the emergency telecoms for the FSL cluster with the FAO. We are here to support all the organisations, INGOs/UN agencies/L/NGOs that are reliant on cluster services. WFP itself does not use the cluster for transportation themselves, they have their own logistics arm for that, although they are part of the cluster itself, so they support all the other organisations (200+ partners). We work in conjunction with WFP for the movement of items in the field. We are a part of WFP but also, we coordinate with them.

2. How did, in your opinion, Covid-19 affect the general flood response?	
R1	⁽¹⁾ The flood response was successful, and it was completed before Covid-19 was in the picture. We finished the flood response before April, which was the time the first case of Covid was in SSD. ⁽¹⁾
R2	⁽¹⁾ During the floods of last year Covid-19 was not around yet. ⁽¹⁾ Unfortunately, a big part of the country was flooded again and now it does have impact on the response, especially with the extra measures taken against the spreading of the virus (smaller groups, social distance, etc.). I don't really know what the implications of Covid-19 on the current rainy season have been, although we have noticed that Covid-19 caused a high increase of food prices and a decrease in availability of seeds.
R3	⁽¹⁾ Not very much, our Joint Flood Response programme was finished by the time Covid-19 made its first case in the country. ⁽¹⁾ But I am worried about the funding that is available for the humanitarian aid in the next year, due to the forecast of economic recession.
R4	⁽¹⁾ For us, not too much. ⁽¹⁾ You must remember that even before the COVID-19 we were already operating in a Level 3 emergency, because of internal conflicts and the floods here in SSD. So, this is an additional emergency. The flooding is creating more of an impact for the population in areas of Jonglei and Unity State and Upper Nile, than COVID-19. There was already a strong logistics operation in the country, with WFP and the Logs Cluster, and other organisations. So, it is an emergency on top of the emergencies that we have been dealing with on a regular basis. Did we have to do a rapid shift due to COVID? Taking away the mitigation measures and some internal issues that impact to some degree, the logistics operation was up and running anyway and had been since late 2013. Some countries around here have done more development work and there they had to scale up to cope with Covid-19, so there have been issues with funding and such, because it was a new sort of response. But for us it is basically an additional response on top of the current response in SSD.

3. How do you usually manage your humanitarian logistics, mainly Food Security and Livelihood items? Do you purchase your items locally, from neighbouring countries, or wider international?	
R1	Humanitarian Response is an emergency response, and it involves also logistics, because it is fast onset response, which happens before other departments can take over with a long-term response. When it comes to onset emergency response, we take care of the logistics responsibilities because we act fast and timely, so it is better to do it ourselves. We have multiple ways to reach the people: Road transport, which is only possible in the dry season, so we have only a small window for that, so it comes down to prepositioning of supplies. We can also use the riverbanks, where we are using big boats, and we can use that year around, but only for locations around the Nile. We can use it all year, but mainly we do it in the rainy season, because it is the cheapest option. But the last resort is the use of charter planes. It is very expensive so it really is our last resort, but if it can save lives, we use that option.

	<p>If Cordaid does not take the responsibility of the logistics themselves, we depend on the Logistics Cluster. Sometimes they are quite rapid, but they also prioritise other locations. So, when the location you are responding to is not among their top priority, then they deliver your items and supplies with delay. So that is why we mainly use the first two options (road or river) and we only use the Logistics Cluster when it is a hard-to-reach location and the only access is through them.</p> <p>We hire companies who have a fleet of trucks, but on the ground, we have our own fleet. So, we work it out between the two.</p>
R2	<p>Quite a lot of supplies we get via the WFP (Log Cluster), and food and nutrition supplies, we usually get via UNICEF. If that is not enough, we buy our own supplies, but that is very difficult, because it is hard to get that to its destination. So, when it comes to food, we work together with bigger actors. The logistics of agricultural tools we take care of ourselves. For seeds, we worked with a seed fair for the first time this year. We signed contracts with local suppliers and the beneficiaries got vouchers so they could choose which seeds they wanted to buy. This created less dependency on us, because this is logistically a difficult task. The area is huge and the roads in SSD are not safe enough to transport. The bigger guys that do this like WFP, do this via air, but also have bigger convoys, so they can drive the food supplies through the country more safely. What makes it even more complex is the rain season, so a lot of areas are not or not well accessible. Roads are flooded or not usable. So, logistically it is a difficult task and we gratefully use the help of the bigger partners (Log Cluster) to take care of this.</p> <p>We do a little bit of logistics. We try to locally purchase whatever is available. For supplies that are not locally available we go to Juba, so we have an employee located in Juba that looks for suppliers and businesses that can provide for us. If that is not possible than we source internationally in a procurement setup. And that is a whole different kind of procedure, where we say what supplies we want to have and then all kinds of businesses and organisations can sign up and on the hand of different criteria there is a decision on who can work the case. And eventually that will be brought to us, either by road or air, to our programme locations.</p>
R3	<p>We work with ACROSS for that, a local organisation. We usually buy our stock in Uganda, where we have many contacts. We share our supplier contacts with our DRA partners, and we try to combine our transport, schedule wise, like putting a convoy together of some of our trucks and some of another organisation.</p> <p>WFP does a lot of transport via road, but also with food drops from planes, they work with helicopters and boats on the river Nile.</p> <p>We don't always work together with WFP, but we always let them know when we send a truck somewhere. They will look if there are other organisations going the same direction so we can create a convoy of some sorts. But they can also share their transport material, which means lower costs for us. And they can always say when it is dangerous along the road and in that case they will send security with our trucks, so we have armed escort for the road. It is always nice to discuss our plans with them.</p>
R4	<p>We source our products locally, from neighbouring countries (mostly Uganda) and broader internationally. Since we have such a wide range of places, we could find our products, Covid did not change where we sourced the food from.</p>

4. In what way did you have to adapt to the Covid-19 measurements and how did Covid-19 affect the logistics of Food Security and Livelihood items?	
R1	<p>⁽¹⁾We no longer able to source materials and supplies on time. Because the amount of supplies in Juba was reducing. Juba could not resupply on time, because of the border closing in Uganda and Kenya. And the truck drivers had to undergo mandatory testing. All of that caused a lot of delays for bringing supplies into SSD. It was a challenge to getting the supplies on time. ⁽¹⁾</p> <p>⁽²⁾Also, there was the lockdown within SSD, interstate travels were banned, so no one was allowed into another state. That made it difficult to move the supplies into Juba as well. ⁽²⁾</p> <p>⁽³⁾We did change our way of work, because instead of buying our supplies in neighbouring countries, we prioritised the vendors or supplies locally. We looked if they had enough stocks that can be used during that period of time. ⁽³⁾</p> <p>⁽⁴⁾Also, we scaled up our advocacy, of why humanitarian assistance should not be broken up in a time that it is so much more needed. The advocacy worked quite well, the government had to take back some of the covid-19 measures when it came to humanitarian responses and access to humanitarian aid. ⁽⁴⁾</p>
R2	<p>Our office has never been closed, so we have always been able to continue our work. ⁽⁴⁾Because</p>

	<p>humanitarians deliver lifesaving support to people, we got an exclusion from the SSD government that NGOs could stay open and continue their work.⁽⁴⁾ But this came with a lot of precautions, like training of our own staff on social distancing, washing hands, how to work like this in the field, how to distribute food to people during Covid-19. So, all our activities were only possible in smaller groups, so activities took up way more time, causing delays. Before we did activities with 50-100 people, we now had to do this in groups of 10 x 10, which takes a lot more time.</p> <p>⁽²⁾Next to that, for a while it was not possible to travel between states, and because we work in two different states, we could not travel from our main office in Wau to our project area in Warrap. Also, we couldn't travel to Juba anymore and people couldn't come to our states from Juba either, or it was really difficult, because you had to be tested but there was not test capacity, or you had to be in Q14, which takes up so much time. Since a couple of weeks, it has become possible again to travel between different states, that restriction has been lifted.⁽²⁾</p> <p>⁽⁵⁾What is still in place is that people from outside SSD must be in Q14 still. Fortunately, we mainly have local workers, 60 locals and 3 expats (incl. me), so for me and my 2 international colleagues it was difficult to travel back to the Netherlands for a leave, however I did it recently after more than half a year, but I still had to be in Q14. This is a problem for our planning, because you miss some key workers for a longer time, since the Q14 must be in Juba, not in your workplace. So that all makes it a little complicated. ⁽⁵⁾</p> <p>⁽¹⁾Some borders have been closed as well, e.g. to Uganda. That was mainly for just people, cargo traffic was able to continue, but there were delays. You had to change drivers, from one on the Uganda side to another on the SSD side, or if you wanted to keep the same driver they had to be tested or put in Q14, so that caused much delay. ⁽¹⁾</p> <p>⁽³⁾Food prices have gone up, but that is not a problem you can solve by buying internationally. When you purchase your items internationally you will have the added costs of transport. So eventually it doesn't really make a difference when it comes to the added costs. But when you have budgeted to source your items locally and the price suddenly increases things will get a little difficult of course. However, it is not always the solution to buy your items internationally, because then you often have to buy in bulk in order to reach your economy of scale which lowers your transport costs.⁽³⁾</p> <p>Financially it has not been that bad for us and we are quite lucky with our donors, because they have always been pretty flexible. Simply they said, you will not get more money from us, but there is a flexibility between budget-lines. So, when you have to spend more money on one thing, we can reduce that amount on other budgets. There we have seen flexibility with our donor. Yes, we did have to adjust at some points, but mostly we have been able to our work the way we were used to.</p>
R3	<p>Of course, they have to adapt. Social distance, 1,5 meters, use of facemasks etc. But, the percentage of Covid-19 in SSD is not very high, much lower than in NL, so we are working more on the preventive side.</p> <p>⁽³⁾The biggest problems are for logistics and procurement, because the prices and costs have been rising gigantically, the prices of food have increased with 40%.⁽³⁾ So, calculated this means that you can help about 40% less people. And that is what we have noticed in the past months. ⁽¹⁾Logistically it is difficult to get your items from foreign countries, and with the border checks that have been more intense, it all causes for many delays. For the protracted crisis programme we had done a procurement in Uganda, and when we had everything loaded on the trucks the borders closed⁽¹⁾, ⁽¹⁾and we had to wait for 5 weeks.⁽¹⁾ Then the moment the trucks finally could enter SSD the rain season started, so, again we couldn't enter the area of the programme. Therefore, we had to store all our supplies with the UN and wait until it was dry again to drive the supplies further. That didn't happen, because it is still raining. Now we are transporting the supplies for the last part of the way by boat and per helicopter. The supplies have been stored for about two months now and finally we can ship it. For us that has been a difficult thing with a lot of arrangements to be made, but for the people who are living without the food it has been catastrophic. So, yes, Covid has caused a lot of trouble.</p>
R4	<p>⁽¹⁾The borders have only been closed for a few days and that was on the Uganda side. There have been delays that had some impact, but that was expected, since we do not have a rulebook for COVID-19 yet.⁽¹⁾ Our regional bureau helped facilitate with the health partners and local authorities, and other organisations have certainly helped with the backlog at the borders. ⁽¹⁾But the borders were literally closed for only a few days.⁽¹⁾</p> <p>When it comes to airspace. The airspace has not been closed for too long, we haven't had delays there at all. There has been movement of cargo and humanitarian personnel into SSD. There have been restrictions on who can come in, but that is all.</p> <p>⁽⁴⁾There was a big push towards the government to keep those borders open.⁽⁴⁾ Example: In SSD we all rely on bottled water, there is only limited filtered water, so the water is brought in via the south border,</p>

	<p>same with the food. If we don't have the food or the water, all our programmes will shut down. If the humanitarians cannot work because of a lack on food and water, we cannot operate on programmes for the many people that rely on our help.</p> <p>⁽²⁾There were requirements to get into 14-day quarantine (Q14), Q14 when traveling outside of Juba, in SSD. So, this has caused some delays in certain responses, but you basically had to just program that in. The quarantines mainly have been lifted now. It has affected humanitarians that were trapped outside in the field for a long period of time, trapped in duty stations, not being able to move. This is a pandemic we are talking about, so not only has this affected us in SSD, or the region, but the whole world. And there is a shortage of humanitarians in our work field, and that does not only affect WFP. But WFP has been able to maintain missions during the whole Covid-19 period. We have had very little staff that went out of the country, those who did went due to underlying health conditions. We have been able to maintain our staff on 97% throughout the period of time. So, we were able to carry on, even out in the field. I am sure that other/smaller organisations have had a different experience, but we have 1200 staff here in SSD, second biggest to UNMISS, the peacebuilding UN agency. That brings some benefits when it comes to Covid impact.⁽²⁾</p> <p>⁽⁵⁾Personnel planning was impacted. Usually we are on a 6-week rotation cycle, so in for 6 weeks, out for 1 and for many NGOs that is different. But now we had staff here that was in for 5 or 6 months without a break, without seeing their families, many of the national staff as well. I myself, have been here for 7+ months, without going out of the country, but that is just the reality of the situation. But now that is changing, we are moving out of the country again, in the early days that was impossible, we couldn't really travel anywhere. Now we are rapidly giving our national and international staff a break before getting back here. Of course, the Q-14 has an impact on the amount of time you are out of the country. So, they just implemented a new Rest and Recuperation Cycle for internationals, and we are also trying to give our national staff some break in Juba, so they have some time off as well. Because the national staff is the core staffing in any organisation in SSD, we rely incredibly on them and everyone has really stepped up.⁽⁵⁾ So, the biggest impact has been on staffing, I think.</p> <p>Covid is ongoing, the preparedness for next rainy season is ongoing. My unit is responsible for support to the National Response Plan, we co-lead the operation in the logistics pillar, with WHO and South Sudan Ministry of Health, on behalf of WFP. Internally in WFP, my unit picked up all the SOPs, all the practices, mitigation measures, briefings, trainings for the Covid response. So, there was quite a change and it was a huge amount of work, but we share that work with amounts of organisations. None of the Covid measures are rocket science though, it's all about social distancing, hand washing, wearing a mask in closed spaces etc. All of us humanitarians have shared information, there is no-one inventing the wheel in every organisation, we are just helping each other out, to get through it.</p>
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5. Even with a possible vaccine against Covid-19, the virus and its consequences could be around for a longer time. What would that mean for humanitarian aid in South Sudan? And for humanitarian logistics and localisation of humanitarian aid?	
R1	<p>⁽¹⁾Well, I think it all comes down to adaptation.⁽¹⁾ We have to adapt to the new conditions and as human beings we are very flexible and very adaptive, so I think even now people now are already accepting the truth: that Covid-19 is going to be here for some time. We have to live with it, and we have to continue practicing all the Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), and preventive measures, as well as continue living the normal way of live. Basically, we have to accept it and I think the humanitarian aid here is already doing that and we are adapting with a new way of working. One way of working is through online work, conducting meetings online. This has been really effective, because it saves a lot of time (travel etc.). And we do remote monitoring. Both are really effective new ways of working humanitarian aid.</p> <p>I think, also in terms of supplies, the government is coming to terms with that. They have already reopened the borders. And they are doing other things as well. Within Eastern Africa they are looking at trades to bring in more cargo. So, I think that the supplies issue will not be a long-term problem, the humanitarian aid will still have the access to supplies and stocks.</p>
R2	<p>⁽¹⁾It means that we would have to keep working, but in adapted ways.⁽¹⁾ So, we have to minimise the contact with beneficiaries (e.g. providing food rations for a longer period of time at once), scale down all activities to smaller groups, etc. Next to that, I think that part of the donors will specify their funding for health interventions, meaning that there will be less money for other interventions. Either way, the need for emergency relief will increase further. The most recent IPC-updates show that there is a high change of huge food shortage in the coming months (due to a combination of flooding, Covid-19, economic</p>

	issues). I don't know if that would have consequences for localisation of aid, because local organisations are being confronted with the same issues as INGOs.
R3	<p>I have the idea that it wouldn't be the biggest problem for SSD. Asia/India have been hit very hard, but you don't see that in Africa. Maybe because these countries are less densely populated, that could help in this case. But I don't think that it will explode here, to be honest. It is going quite well in SSD when it comes to Covid, and the same in Kenya, which is a quite richer country in Africa.</p> <p>In SSD they have had many epidemics to deal with like measles and cholera. Those aren't diseases you can prevent by social distancing, but maybe people have a little more understanding of how to deal with something like this. But on the other hand, there is very little knowledge on basic hygiene and the transfer of diseases that I don't know if it really true. It could be, but I am not very sure.</p>
R4	<p>Beneficiaries outside of Juba are more concerned about malaria, measles, diarrhoea, especially in the flooding season. Not saying that they are not concerned about Covid, but the real tangible concern they got in front of them is malaria. Hence, we are delivering a lot of mosquito nets, water treatment items to flood affected areas, because that's a bigger concern for them at this current time. They are still struggling with the aftermaths of the biggest floods in SSD for a very long-time last year.</p> <p>I don't want to say that we are undermining Covid, but in some ways we have just gotten used to it right now. It has impacted, money wise as well, but we have had luck that we are internationally very well-funded, but that is also based on a very solid performance for the past number of years. But we had to spend some more money on storage, a bit more money on air operations because Covid means that we have ongoing deliveries as opposed to just a normal programme intervention. So there has been a little more money spent, but not too much more to be honest. We are a well-funded cluster, so we were able to cope with that. The massive concerns are for next year. How do we move Covid into the Humanitarian Response Programme for next year, how do we incorporate Covid into that? Covid is not going to be on the top of the response plan, it is just going to be part of it. How are we going to do a Food Security Response in a Covid environment, which we are doing now as well already. But we are getting better at it as we are moving along. There is no rulebook for Covid, there is no book where you can look up research about dealing with a Covid environment, because advise on it continuously changes. ⁽¹⁾Now it is just putting your best foot forward, doing what you can and learning as we go along. ⁽¹⁾</p>

6. Does your organisation work in partnership with local or national organisations in South Sudan? Why do you have a partnership with these respective organisations?	
R1	⁽¹⁾ Yes, absolutely. ⁽¹⁾ ⁽¹⁾ Local partners are very important to us for multiple reasons. One is that they can access the locations that we as international NGOs cannot access. So, they have that advantage over us. They can easily get reliable information, because they are part of the community and can easily penetrate locations that we can't benefit, because they can easily identify themselves with the locals. ⁽¹⁾
R2	⁽¹⁾ We work with 2 local partners ⁽¹⁾ , ⁽¹⁾ so we have a combination of our own interpretation and that of the local partners. ⁽¹⁾ One of the partners is a health partner, they have expertise in healthcare and have their own small hospital. Even though health is not one of our priorities, we do work together with them now more than ever to support them in preparing and handling Covid-19 cases.
R3	⁽¹⁾ We work in partnership with one local partner ⁽¹⁾ , ACROSS in Pibor. All of them are SSD or Kenyan staff. And in Wau we have our own office, which we share with Dorcas, where we work 100% on protection, which we do on our own, not in partnership with local organisations. We do that because that is our core expertise, we have the most knowledge on it, both in NL and in SSD.
R4	⁽¹⁾ We work with numerous organisations, mostly UN agencies, all the big INGOs, but also National NGOs. ⁽¹⁾ In total we work together with over 200 partners. We rely on organisations to support WFP in all aspects, this is our mandate. ⁽¹⁾ It supports partnerships, capacity building, allows flexibility in our programmes and such. ⁽¹⁾

7. (How) Did the relationship with your organisation and local/national partners change due to Covid-19?	
R1	⁽¹⁾ Actually, our relationships changed positively, ⁽¹⁾ because we had to depend more on them, because they are on the ground when we weren't. The only way we could accomplish the tasks was through them. So, it did change in a positive way.
R2	⁽²⁾ Eventually it did not. ⁽²⁾ We already work a lot with our local partners. Except for the partner that

	works on the Covid-19 cases, our health partner. And part of our budget we directly passed through to that partner. The restrictions for local partners have never been different than for us, so that did not really make a difference. We have the fortune that we have a lot of local workers, that can still keep doing their job at the place that they are located. So, I think when you compare it with other organisations, we are a little lucky, because we don't have many expats, which makes it a little easier for us.
R3	<p>⁽¹⁾The relationship has become even better.⁽¹⁾ The relationship was good already, due to the regular visits to their HQ in Juba and the projects in the field, by our employees from NL, and the close collaboration of our team with ACROSS. Next to that, in 2019 we both signed a Memorandum of Understanding in which we formally say that we highly appreciate each other and have the intention to work together even more.</p> <p>Also, a funding of 34K EUR was reserved for Covid-19 awareness and prevention work in Pibor, as addition to the already ongoing South Sudan Joint Response Project, in which we provided food and gave agricultural training. This year we have gained, together with ACROSS, a Covid-19 prevention project in Rumbek and a new big Joint Response Project which specifically focusses on Covid-19. In both these we have collaborated closely with ACROSS, to coordinate the location and the content of the projects.</p> <p>On the other hand, Covid-19 caused many delayed convoys to the disaster affected areas, but that is alright as long as we keep in contact about that. So, the partnership has not negatively been affected by Covid-19. The only real disadvantage was that we couldn't visit the projects from the NL and therefore couldn't support the staff the way we wanted. Simultaneously, this stimulates them to do the work themselves and show everyone that they are good at what they do; which they did.</p>
R4	⁽²⁾ Covid has not affected any of our partnerships, ⁽²⁾ we could work basically as usual, of course working according the measures taken by the government.

8. The Grand Bargain, the Charter for Change and the Start Network all aim to improve localisation in humanitarian aid. How is this implemented in your organisations' work in South Sudan?	
R1	One of the mandates of Cordaid is that they, before starting the direct implementation, they work it through partners. We work with multiple local and national organisations.
R2	<p>We currently have 2 local partners, but we are working on the annual plan for next year and we stated that we want to identify even more local partners we can work with. What we notice is that local organisations are dependent on financing and they have a high turnover of staff, so their capacity is varying. We are trying to put a lot of focus on capacity building.</p> <p>However, more difficult are the requirement that donors put on the funding, the handing over of reports, procurement (making sure you stick to the budget or you have to go through many procedures to be able to buy certain items). We notice that our local partners are struggling with this.</p> <p>Donors speak a lot about localisation, but in reality, they still rather sign a contract with an international organisation. And I think that makes us responsible for the requirements that donors put to the budgets they spend on us. They want some security that a local partner acts according to those requirements, so when an auditor comes to visit that everything is up to date, that protocols are taken into account, because otherwise you have the unfortunate possibility that you have to pay back part of the subsidy, and you don't want that. Therefore, localisation and working together with partners.</p> <p>We do provide trainings, but my own experience with trainings is that during the training everything seems clear and logical. But, when you have to put it in practice yourself, you start to notice where things go wrong or what makes it difficult. So, what we did is we assigned one of our own employees to the local organisations, but it is always a local employee, which is very important, because they speak the local language, and it is easier to break down cultural barriers. And as an expat there is always a power dynamic into place, which makes things unnecessarily difficult. So we put one of our local employees literally next to a local partner, like a financial worker and who keeps an eye on what they do and helps when a report has to be made or a procurement procedure has to be done, and at that place and time they can advise and support them when needed. Of course, the employee we send to them does not have the knowledge about all the different departments and subjects. So, when there is a question about financial work and the employee does not have financial knowledge, we send our financial worker to the partners to give advice, or we invite them over in order to help them out. It all comes down to working together and look at the problems together and coach them on the job.</p> <p>Additionally, we hired a consultant who has a lot of knowledge and experience by setting up a financial</p>

	<p>notebook, who helped our local partners with doing this.</p> <p>So, we use different strategies to help our local partners and to improve their capacities.</p>
R3	<p>Of our budget in SSD 60% goes directly to our local partner, in our case ACROSS in Pibor, and we work very closely together. They are our executive party when it comes to logistics etc. (Q9-R4) But I am worried about the funding that is available for the humanitarian aid in the next year, due to the forecast of economic recession. (Q9-R4)</p>
R4	<p>Pretty much not right now. For that to happen you need two things: a stable country when it comes to peace, and funding for the organisations. See question 9.</p>

9. South Sudan has been dependent on INGOs/UN agencies for humanitarian aid for a very long time. How do you see the possibilities and challenges for more localisation in humanitarian aid in South Sudan, and how can these possibilities be converted to reality?	
R1	----
R2	<p>I think that the most difficult thing is that local organisations have a harder time to distance themselves from the conflicts, so when it comes to ethnic violence, intercommunal violence. I even notice this with different employees here, we work with people from different tribes and there often is some friction between them, or at least you feel that there is something in the air between them. I think that for local organisations that is even a bigger issue.</p> <p>But mainly what we see is that there is a big number of local organisations, but capacity wise, to meet all donor requirements is really difficult. And next to that, the need here in SSD is so enormously big, that you really need widespread interventions to take on that problem and I think that the majority of local organisations is currently still too small to take that on and to give aid on a large scale. That is a big issue for local organisations: usually they are quite small, they usually work in only one place in the country, unlike many bigger international organisations they don't work in different places and context in the country. And of course, it is easier to work with one organisation in 10 different places, rather than work with 10 organisations in one place.</p>
R3	<p>I am a supporter of localisation, but what is local in this case? I mean, if there is an office of an INGO located in SSD for 40 years, with only local staff, a huge network and it has done a lot of work in the country, is it then called local or not? Only because the origin of the country is not SSD? Should this office not receive funding, but a local organisation that is not 5 years old and not very professional should get the money?</p> <p>I feel localisation is being glorified a bit. People say that the local organisations know very much about the local context etc. which might be true, I don't have anything against them, but it is true that local organisations are more prone to corruption, favouritism in politics, preference in which communities they would want to help and which not, and in the contacts with government a lot can go wrong in the sense of corruption and bribery.</p> <p>I am very pro localisation, but there are still a lot of implications in this thing. Let us not act as if local organisations are so much better in doing this job. It is just true that organisations from northern countries have more experience, knowledge, flow of money and donors, which is very valuable.</p> <p>Right now, every little detail for aid is being thought out in The Hague with the DRA, and then we say what aid should be given, to how many people and where, and then we ask local organisations to do the work. But that isn't really localisation, that is just outsourcing.</p> <p>So instead of localisation call it partnership, and also, I would like to go further than that and look into the decision making of the content of the programmes by a local organisation. More interference and decision-making power, which is, of course, part of partnership.</p>
R4	<p>This is something for the future, with peace stability in SSD. Then you would look into handing it over to the government, to local organisations etc, but only when it doesn't require a Logistics Cluster anymore. But we are not in that stage yet.</p> <p>The last peace still that was signed in February, was basically the last straw that we needed. But unfortunately, we still need some authority positions, like local ministers out in the states. The peace still is not completed yet but should have been completed in February. We are now working on our sixth year, but the needs are still growing year by year, because of the consistent displacement of the population, so we are not in the short-term future looking at any changes and operations on localisations. Every aid organisation in the world clearly knows what our big donor countries have been spending internally on keeping people employed and such in their own home countries. I am not saying it comes directly out of</p>

	the aid budget...But there have been other political moves as well, like the UK have been centralising aid in the foreign office, same with the US, which were 2 large donors. So that in combination with a peace still that is not fully implemented after a pretty much last change operation makes it difficult. (Q8-R3)Next year is going to be very tough for everyone. Needs will be there, but will we get the funding to come to those needs, I think is highly unlikely. (Q8-R3)
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Additional: Looking at the four stages of emergency management: preparedness, response, recover and mitigation, at what stage are you usually working? Is mitigation of the disasters in South Sudan possible?

Respondent 3

There are two sides to this. A response is about 5 times as expensive as mitigation, but on the other side it is true that is almost impossible to purely do mitigation. For example, past year it has been very dry in the country at the beginning of the year and after that the worst floods in 60 years came along. Those are such excesses that it is impossible to plan around that. Even if you would have the most amazing community-based mitigation, it would have been wiped out by the floods. Next to that, heavy fights broke out in the first half year. As an NGO it's impossible to do anything against that. Even though we do work with peacebuilding activities, intercommunal violence that the different tribes carry out against each other, mostly about cattle and grasslands, is very complex. The root causes of the problem lie for a big part in the physical climatic aspect. Big parts of the areas are not even suitable for crop cultivation, one part of the year it goes down in massive heat and the other half it faces the monsoon, which is disastrous for agricultural activities. And due to colonial legacy, the French and the English created borders through areas where nomads just used to roam through what are now different countries and different states. They are now trapped in one particular country or place, which makes it impossible for them to live how they used to, this is similar to Afghanistan.

Also, SSD is only an independent country since 2011, faced 6 years of civil war and there is still so much hate and inequality of tribes, it will take dozens of years before there will be some ease in that.

Economically speaking there aren't many possibilities, apart from oil, but in those states the heaviest fights exist (Unity state and Warau). It is incredibly difficult to do something about the root causes or dynamic pressures. We have been looking into this last year, with Dorcas, WUR and TU Delft, if we could contribute to the country with our Dutch knowledge on water. However, the scale of the problem is so enormous that it wouldn't be very effective, for an area that is as big as the Benelux. It is impossible to work on that, when a country isn't in a stable condition.

I think handing out food to people can be disastrous to their independency and self-reliance, but what else can you do? We try to do a lot with agricultural training, fishing training, village and loan saving associations, self-help groups etc. We carry on with that, to work as much as possible on mindset and life skills, but every season you see that an area is flooded again, the harvest is being destroyed, half of the cattle drowns and again intercommunal fight lasts for four months... it is harrowing. On the one hand we say that we should be as much on the mitigation side of things as possible, but on the other hand it is almost impossible to do.

Interviews Local/National Organisations

Legend	
Black	Neutral information
Green ⁽¹⁾ ... ⁽¹⁾	Similarity
Red ⁽¹⁾ ... ⁽¹⁾	Contradiction
Blue	Information for Sub Question 1
Purple	Information for Sub Question 2
Orange	Information for Sub Question 3
Pink	Information for Sub Question 4

Respondent	Organisation, location of respondent and job description
R1	ACROSS (big NGO) – Juba, South Sudan
R2	Women Development Group (small NGO) – Wau, South Sudan
R3	Mary Help Association (small NGO) – Wau, South Sudan

1. How is your organisation involved in humanitarian aid? And what activities did/does your organisation carry out during the flood response in South Sudan?	
R1	<p>That depends on the kind of emergency. We have the emergency phase, the ‘humanitarian’ phase, and the developmental phase. When a shock strikes, we go to the location, we do an assessment, then we look for funds in order to start the response.</p> <p>We had to joint efforts with others to support the victims of the flood, we had some emergency responses, we shared some food items, we gave trainings on how they could handle things when a shock like this happens, in regard to FSL, we shared non-food items as well.</p> <p>For this year a warning was broadcasted for a high possibility of new floods. So, we warned the communities in the areas, to what they should do in order to prepare. However, this is difficult, most of them are pastoralists, and they rather stay where they are, which makes it difficult to act fast in emergency cases.</p>
R2	We mainly have a history in women protection activities. In partnership with UN agencies as UNHCR we worked on monitoring of protection of people with specific needs and food security under project of SSJR in partnership with DORCAS the lead of SSJR consortium and other members of the consortium.
R3	We run a Hospital. When there is emergency, we have a medical team, which goes out and helps the victims. When people are in need of medicines, food and NFI we distribute those until other bigger agencies come and take over the activities. We distribute food items (Emergency relief) to the IDPs and continue supporting them with seeds and tools with the hope that their situation improves. We have also opened emergency schools for primary school children to educate them even in the midst of conflicts. Next to that, we have prepared wash facilities and educate and create awareness about hygiene and the consequences of a lack thereof, and we give Regular Health education. A few people that were affected by Covid-19 close to our Hospital we gave support in terms of food distribution.

2. How did/does, in your opinion, Covid-19 affect the general flood response?	
R1	It did not really, since the first cases of Covid only came after the last flood response. It does impact the preparations for the coming rainy season (for this see question 4)
R2	---
R3	^(Q4) Actually, in South Sudan Covid-19 is not a very big issue. Yet, due to the travel restrictions it was not easy to go out for assessments and without assessments it is difficult to carry out the relief services. ^(Q4)

3. How do you usually manage your humanitarian logistics, mainly Food Security and Livelihood items? Do you purchase your items locally, from neighbouring countries, or wider international?	
R1	South Sudan is dependent on imported food items from neighbouring countries, ranging from the raw (fresh harvest) to a processed one. such as the cereals, pulses, basic needs supplies from outside the country these include (food items, seeds and tool, medicals, NFIs, etc.) which are in dare need to the vulnerable population. The small amount of food production within the country are far too little to

	<p>support the emergency responses.</p> <p>⁽¹⁾Most of our stock we purchase from Uganda, and we share the suppliers with partners. This way we can try to combine our transport and drive together to the places we need to go. Sometimes we do this is WFP or WFP takes care of that for us. We don't always work together with WFP, but we always let them know when move our truck to any place. WFP then will look if there are other organisations going the same direction so we can create a convoy or if they can share their transport material, which lowers the costs for us. And sometimes when it is too dangerous on the road, they send security with our trucks, so we have armed escort for the road. ⁽¹⁾</p>
R2	<p>⁽¹⁾We do not take care of the logistics ourselves. We have a contract with a supplier who delivers items to the beneficiaries directly. The products are moved from Juba where it is brought by flight. The distribution throughout the country is done by car. ⁽¹⁾</p>
R3	<p>⁽¹⁾Mainly we buy from the local markets. Sometimes we order from suppliers who get the items from Sudan and Uganda, but not very often. ⁽¹⁾</p>

4. In what way did you have to adapt to the Covid-19 measurements and how did Covid-19 affect the logistics of Food Security and Livelihood items?	
R1	<p>It has had a lot of impact on the logistics, on the operations, even in the programming of emergencies, and in the relationships with international partners.</p> <p>COVID 19 definitely had a lot of impacts on delivery of services. Mainly in the area of logistics. Movement restrictions resulted in project delays and in some cases resulted in pushing delivery into the rainy season, where we suffered compounded delays due to flooding and seasonal insecurity. ^(Q5R3)In fact, some food is still delayed, and we have to mitigate pest infestation and now we are pushing against the clock to deliver before the food's expiration date. ^(Q5R3)</p> <p>Other than the poor development of the infrastructures like the road, electricity and insecurity, ⁽¹⁾the restriction on the work in all the different industries in South Sudan, this has happened in neighbouring countries as well. They have had the same type of restrictions, so the production has slowed down. This has slowed down importation which in turn has driven prices of the cereal and other food commodities and emergency aid very high. ⁽¹⁾</p> <p>The continuous fluctuation of the South Sudanese pound against the United states Dollar has had a lot of exchange losses given the fact that the country's currency continued a far-reaching devaluation against the hard current, since there has been reduced exportation of the oil resource to the world market that could act as a foreign exchange gain. The prices of normal products have become so high that households can't purchase it anymore.</p> <p>^(Q2-R3)Given the measures employed to contain the spread of the pandemic, even when the aid workers were allowed to move on a limited occasion, the quarantine and the restricted movement kept the work force low as movement was limited and movement of goods as well.</p> <p>The restrictions also caused much delay in activities, given the need for social distancing and the restriction on public gathering, which has also affected the achievement of some project goals timely as the number of beneficiaries per training and distribution for instance have to be reduced to meet the set standard thereby, time consuming to meet the target. ^(Q2-R3) ⁽¹⁾And when something is time consuming, it will increase costs for things that you did not initially plan for. We had to spend more money on WASH facilities for example, which were not things we planned for. ⁽¹⁾</p> <p>We have also seen that this time of Covid has put a lot of stress to employees. With the nature of the political stands and insecurity in South Sudan, many South Sudanese have taken refuge to the neighbouring Countries like Ethiopia, Kenya, and Uganda mainly and now that the borders were closed the staff could not visit their families. When you do work like this, you need time to relax, see your family, your kids and when this is not possible this stresses up the staff and could in turn affect their performance. But we all just had some leave to see our family and take some time off, to recharge again.</p> <p>Even though we had much delays, 90% of the deliveries were made and even to places that in other years were not accessible, we were able to now. Even with the delays and stress, we were able to do our work, also with the help of the Logistics Cluster, that helped us going to these places.</p> <p>Although some aid workers and supplies of emergency reliefs were exempted, you will have to undergo two weeks quarantine, and being tested for the corona virus before traveling. Sometimes, when you have arrived somewhere, you are asked to go into one-week quarantine again, since you could contract the virus during you travel. This has had negative impact in handling some emergency cases that</p>

	needed immediate respond and therefore, delaying the delivery of services and items needed by the vulnerable population at the countryside.
R2	<p>It mainly has affected refugees returning from Sudan to the border, with the greatest challenges that for them there were no preventive measures against COVID19. They had to wait for the borders to reopen, which has led to high sexual exploitation against women and girls while waiting.</p> <p>In terms of logistics and FSL: ⁽¹⁾The prices of transport have become higher, because of lockdown of the borders there was no adequate fuel in the market. Next to that, the items for food security & livelihoods as well as livestock activities are affected the market raised high, which affected the quantity of items we could provide to the need people. ⁽¹⁾</p> <p>^(Q2-R3)The training to the beneficiaries moved beyond the time frame, this forced some projects to request for non-cost extension. ^(Q2-R3)</p>
R3	<p>⁽¹⁾The prices in the market raised a lot due to the closed borders and interstate travel-ban. This affected the price of the transport, which increased a lot as well. Many people took advantage of the situation and hiked the prices of food and NFI.</p> <p>Most needed items like facemasks were sold in the market 10 for times more than the usual price. In all the places Covid-19 preventive measures were in place and awareness was created about the prevention of Covid-19 and the situation globally. Usually people were very cooperative, so everything went well. ⁽¹⁾</p>

5. Even with a possible vaccine against Covid-19, the virus and its consequences could be around for a longer time. What would that mean for humanitarian aid in South Sudan? And for humanitarian logistics and localisation of humanitarian aid?	
R1	<p>Despite the initial plans of emergency response for 2020, the invasion of the pandemic has caused funding to be shifted from the intended purpose to the carter for the Covid-19. We were doing very well at first, but this has altered the target for instance in the HRP 2020 plan made in 2019.</p> <p>I think in this case, we need to put more focus on capacitating the locals as well. We can give them aid, but we also need to say to them that we can only give them a certain basic aid, to carry them to a higher level of security, but we inform them that they live in high risk areas and they still don't want to replace. It is important that we inform them that these are not the best locations for them to stay. They can be relocated, so we need them to know that even though we are there to help, there are also a lot of things they can do for themselves. So, when I look at next year, I think as much as we are there to help in times of need, we also need to focus on resilience, which leads to capacity building, so we know that, even after we go away, they are able to look after themselves. This also decreases the need for higher funding. And for this it is useful to use local and national organisations, which can reach the people and speak the language more easily.</p>
R2	<p>The Covid-19 became a pandemic that people are going to have to live with, therefore the support for eliminating Covid-19 must be continuously provided by humanitarian organisations.</p> <p>Localization is very important for the elimination of Covid-19, it is a responsibility of individuals, organization/CBOs, women groups, youth groups and networks, community leaders and authorities. Those are the groups that can widen the outreach wherever the needy people are. ^(Q9R3)Also, the localization of humanitarian aid is important in the aspect of communication. Local organisations know the language of local people, know the culture, and therefore localisation facilitates communication among the needy people and the service providers. Through local organisations, other actors can faster understand the interventions that are needed locally. ^(Q9R3)</p>
R3	<p>In South Sudan COVID 19 is not a big problem. In fact, it actually feels if the South Sudanese are immune to the virus already, compared to other countries like Italy or Spain. We have put up Covid-19 emergency ward and triage facilities, but so far, we did not get cases.</p> <p>Since Covid-19 is so far not a big issue in our country, I don't think it has had much effect on our organisation either really. ^(Q4R1)If the travel ban is lifted and all borders reopen there should be no further problems for logistics. ^(Q4R1)</p>

6. Does your organisation work in partnership with other aid organisations?	
R1	Yes, there are many aid organisations that we work with, among which Help a Child, UNICEF, UNHCR, South Sudan Humanitarian Fund, FAO, and many others on different locations and programmes.

R2	<p>Yes, our organization works in partnership with UN agencies like UNHCR, INGOs like DORCAS.</p> <p>^{1(Q8R3)}We work with UN agencies and INGOs, because they are here to build the capacity of local partners to enabling them to deliver better services to vulnerable community. ^{1(Q8R3)}</p> <p>^{2(Q8R3)}International organisations and UN agencies can advocate strongly at global level and hold the country accountable to better the situation of vulnerable people in the fragile countries like South Sudan. ^{2(Q8R3)}</p>
R3	<p>^(Q8R2)We do have partnerships with other organisations. We do this to complement each other in our work and to learn from each other. We depended on the funding that largely comes through the partnerships. And we depend on them to carry out Humanitarian Aid like Food and NFIs to get to help the people in need. ^(Q8R2)</p>

7. (How)Did the relationship with the partners change due to Covid-19?

R1	<p>It has had a positive and negative effect on the relationships with these partners.</p> <p>⁽¹⁾Given the disruption of normal operations, as a result of the pandemic, there is an anticipated decline in funding in the coming year(s), since most of the countries that used to support humanitarian funding were affected by the waves of the COVID-19 pandemic which has greater economic impact. ⁽¹⁾</p> <p>The coordination, capacity strengthening and experience sharing between the local organizations and the partners, like Help a Child, has been disrupted. Usually before the implementation of the activities we go over it together and we see where there are still problems, we can work this out. E.g. A partners' team was supposed to come to SSD to help with capacity building, but because of Covid this was not possible. Same with Help a Child, they help us with the problems we face in activity planning, they usually come to SSD to physically help us with this, but that was not possible. This has impact on the efficiency of implementation as the identified gaps which were to be addressed at start or during the project implementation were not met.</p> <p>⁽²⁾Some of the hard to reach locations have bad internet connection, but most of the coordination is done through social media, Zoom, Skype. Some locations do not have this. To be able to still do this coordination we need to send them a satellite phone. But this is not as easy as before. ⁽²⁾</p> <p>Despite the numerous setback that came along with the epidemic, there were also advantages. For instance, there was additional funding given to start awareness activities in how to behave in times of this pandemic, both to national aid workers as to local citizens. For some (local) organisations this has given them more work, in locations that they hadn't worked in before. But because other organisations could not go due to the virus, they have broadened their area where they work.</p> <p>On another note, the COVID-19 pandemic has brought about positive mindset and behavioural changes in terms of improved sanitation and hygiene. For instance, the hand wash frequency, when and how to do it. Now, everywhere you see people that are washing their hands, before that did not happen as much or as good as they do now.</p>
R2	<p>⁽¹⁾Some partners accepted reallocation of the budget for Covid-19, and our partner Dorcas allocate a new budget for Covid-19 related activities. Some partners moved the budget to other partners, which indeed brings a disadvantage to the partnership. There have been some activities that we were not able to do, because of the lack of funding. The Covid-19 preventative measures have cost a lot of funding from partners and this way affected the needy people who were supposed to benefit from the projected activities. ⁽¹⁾</p>
R3	<p>⁽²⁾There have been some changes. There are no more face-to-face meetings, or at least they very rarely take place. So, everything works online now and with that human relationships are going away. This way people will not know each really, or at least you are missing a human connection and people you are working with in partnership will become more like strangers. ⁽²⁾</p>

8. The Grand Bargain, the Charter for Change and the Start Network all aim to improve localisation in humanitarian aid. Have you noticed steps forward in localisation of aid in South Sudan? If so, which were these? Where do you think localisation of aid in South Sudan is still lacking?

R1	<p>Localisation sounds new, but it is something that has been going on for a while of course. I think that the covid-19 has shined more light on the importance of localisation and that national NGOs should be capacitated. When Covid started many international NGO retrieved their workers or quarantined them, and in that time local organisations needed to step up to do the work. This shows that national NGOs need to be there, in case things like this happen, so the services can still continue when needed. When</p>
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	<p>you only have international NGOs and they have to leave due to certain reasons, things won't work out. So, localisation is important on that point. And we see that at moments that has been happening.</p> <p>When you want localisation to work it is important to share some of the risks but also the resources and responsibilities for effective and efficient work. We should know that localisation means that we should work together, and it is not for international to just sit back, we also need their effort to make sure things are going well. They can put national NGOs on the frontline to make sure the activities are done, but they should not sit back.</p> <p>International donors need to give more space to local actors and improve partnerships with them. And in return local organisations need to claim their operational space. This is to tell the international donors that we are here, and we do have the capacity, we have the materials to deliver.</p> <p>We are seeing that local organisations do have some advantages. One of these is that in comparison to international NGOs, most of the money we spend is directly spend on implementation of activities, because we have less overhead costs and our policies are more ground based.</p> <p>Also, localisation builds the capacity of local institutions, which in return will create trust on the existing capacity, since a high proportion of those working are indigenous people of the country.</p> <p>And it improves the income earning of the country where people are operating. There is minimum exporting of the returns as all the money will be used within the country. It will improve the livelihoods of the people working and living in the country.</p> <p>But, localisation also has downsides. One of them is that localisation is a fairly new concept and not fully understood and supported by donors. It is delaying the adaption of the localisation policies. ⁽²⁾And there is a high possibility of monopoly and/or domination by already existing and stronger local or national NGOs. This might lead to low effectiveness of aid, as there would be fewer competitors to execute the tasks of the already increasing humanitarian needs, especially in an underdeveloped country like South Sudan, engulfed with numerous shocks. ⁽²⁾ This is one of the worries that I see.</p> <p>Next to that, some of the local or national NGOs lack the capacity and logistics that are needed to do the work effectively. They do have good presentation and such, but when it comes to implementation, policies, accountability or technology they are not up to the task. And therefore, they will struggle with the donor's compliance and accountability.</p> <p>We also see that INGOs and UN agencies often undermine the capacity of local NGOs and their credibility. Even though, organisations like ACROSS and many others have been around for way longer (ACROSS was formed in 1972) than the forming of this country and we have years of experience, and they have been very competitive with international NGOs.</p>
R2	<p>Very unfortunately some INGOs and UN agencies want to implement their activities by themselves, they don't appreciate the local partners. In fact, they compete with the local organisations, for who gets to do the work, instead of working together or letting local organisations do the work.</p> <p>But there are also steps forward. ^(Q6R3)We appreciate the organizations that are funded by the Dutch Government, the fund of SSJR, which is implemented by local partners. ^(Q6R3) ^{1(Q8R3)}Also, it has a component of localization with focus on capacity building of local partners. The DRA program which supports the NNGOs consortium, this a very vibrant approach to strengthen the capacity of local partners. At the moment there are some big organisations, like the Dutch Save the Children that are taking a vital role in realising localisation in the country. ^{1(Q8R3)}</p>
R3	<p>^{1(Q6R2)}Due to the SSJR project over the past two years NNGOs have been able to strengthen their structure. They are funded directly to improve the internal structure, like preparing different types of policies, setting up internet facilities and web sites etc....The INGOs helping to update the NNGOs. ^{1(Q6R2)} ^{(2-Q6R2) / (2)}Maybe the corruption of the South Sudanese leaders and misuse of countries money by them has caused mistrust that NNGOs can misuse the money like their countries' leaders. ^{(2-Q6R2) / (2)}</p>

9. South Sudan has been dependent on INGOs/UN agencies for humanitarian aid for a very long time. How do you see the possibilities and challenges for more localisation in humanitarian aid in South Sudan, and how can these possibilities be converted to reality?	
R1	<p>To take a stance, localization is an idea worth adoption, but that does not mean the international NGOs will have to sit back and see the Local National Organization do the humanitarian support. Localisation still needs collective responsibility to realise the improved, effective, realistic, cost effective and above all timely delivery of service to those in dare need of humanitarian assistance not only in South Sudan, but also in the different parts of the world.</p>
R2	

R3	<p>(Q5R2) The ability of NNGOs to reach out to the needy in the country is much higher than that of international organisations. It is easier for NNGOs to reach out to the local communities, they can take up the leadership in their own communities and the NNGOs more are accepted by the local people and their communities. (Q5R2)</p> <p>2(Q6R2) The challenges are that they can misuse the funds, like the country leaders. This causes a mistrust by funders, which is a challenge in localisation. Also, the NGO can be one sided, leaning to their own tribe or clan or relatives, leaving out other people in need. Or the NGO might not be accepted due to tribal or cultural conflicts. 2(Q6R2)</p>
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Interviews Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Legend	
Black	Neutral information
Purple	Information for Sub Question 2
Orange	Information for Sub Question 3
Pink	Information for Sub Question 4

Respondent	Location of respondent and job description
R1	The Hague, The Netherlands <i>Employee of 'Directie Stabiliteit en Humanitaire Hulp' (DSH) in the team Humanitarian Aid, focus on the DRA, their joint response and acute responses</i>
R2	Juba, South Sudan <i>Dutch ambassador in South Sudan.</i>

1. How is the MFA involved in humanitarian aid in South Sudan?	
R1	Since 2015 we finance the DRA Joint Responses in SSD. And next to that every year we have an allocation to the Humanitarian Fund, which is managed by UNOCHA, and it finances emergency relief. We have a humanitarian as post in SSD, who often observes the projects and sometimes does monitoring visits and reports problematic situations to authorities.
R2	Financial mainly, which is taken care of from out The Hague. Humanitarian aid does not have a delegated budget, so that is not something we are accountable for in the embassy. In Humanitarian Aid you basically have three monetary channels: The UN channel, which is absolutely the largest, it circulates the most money. The second is the Red Cross channel, both through the organisation and the ICRC, which is quite big in SSD as well. And the third is the NGO channel, which is mostly regulated by the DRA, but officially with all iNGOs from over the world. These three channels can be found in our policies as well.

2. Does the MFA play any role in logistics of relief supplies?	
R2	No. The DRA decides how they want to spend the allocation we make to them. Logistic is in their hands and that of their partner organisations. We only play a role in it when things get out of hand. Once during the rainy season, we saw that Food Security and Livelihood items, like food and seeds or crops didn't get on location at the right time. The rainy season just started and at that time it is difficult to plant your seeds. So, at that moment we start asking questions about what went wrong, how come the items arrive too late, was something wrong in the schedule? But apart from that we don't do much with logistics.
R2	---

3. What was the role of the MFA during the Dutch relief Alliance Joint Flood Response of last year?	
R1	Contractual. The embassy let us know what was going on and that there was a big need of aid, followed by the DRA that wanted to set up a Joint Response. At the beginning of the year we transfer a budget to the DRA organisations, and they can use the money to finance emergency relief projects. There are some criteria that need to be met and with agreement from the MFA they can start a 6-month long project. We only review the proposal, let our post in SSD know that DRA is starting this up and sometimes someone visits the programme. So, mainly this is quite an autonomic implementation and decision-making process.
R2	---

4. Did you/ has the MFA/DRA have any trouble with the measurements taken by the governments concerning Covid-19, in the Netherlands or in South Sudan?	
R1	Yes, a lot. <i>Many programmes have been delayed, trainings have been called off, national staff stayed home. Some international staff had been called back to NL, even so on the embassy.</i>

	Many activities were put on hold and expenditures were delayed. We had to start thinking if we should, in this time of pandemic, should make more money available, since many projects would take longer due to delays. It is how we have been hit, but also how we have reacted.
R2	<p>We are bound to the rules set by the government, 2 weeks of quarantine. Apart from that there aren't any restrictions anymore. Everything is opening up again, schools are open, churches etc. International flights are coming back up, however there are still many cancelations because there is a lack of interest for them. But there were many travel restrictions indeed, mainly between the different states, but those have been lifted after pressure on the government by the international communities. So, when you come in to SSD as a humanitarian and you have been in Q14, you are free to travel all over the country again.</p> <p>It was a point of discussion between the embassies and the government. We thought it there was a double standard because they enforced the international people to do this, but not their own political people because they travelled without restrictions. So now they have put that on the same line, without restrictions for anyone.</p>

5. How is MFA currently working on the promotion of localisation in Humanitarian aid?

R1	We tried to pursue to pressure the DRA to hand over more of the work to local organisations. Since it is high on the agenda of the Grand Bargain, it is something the MFA is working on a lot. The Covid-19 pandemic caused a situation where we thought it would be a great moment to work more with local partners. I don't know if that happened in reality, since DRA is working with local partners a lot already within the Joint Response.
R2	We are in discussion about that with members of the DRA on a high level in Juba. We are promoting localisation as much as possible, by keeping the conversation going, but there is still a lot of work to do. (see also question 6)

6. Where is localisation still lacking at this moment?

R1	<p>We finance a DRA-member for four years, but the local partners are involved in a project for only 6 months. So, you don't have much room for correction when something goes wrong, like a flood or a pandemic, there is not much room to change your way of work. When on the other hand, we give 60 million times 4 years to the DRA to finance the programmes. I think that has been an eye opener to start questioning the DRA partners a little more on the conditions they put to the partnerships. Also, up until now the partners usually cooperate in the design of the response, but the decision-making is more focused on The Hague and the iNGOs, and that can change.</p> <p>And of course there are the organisations' own policies and procedures that are put on paper quite well, which is why donors trust them, because they know the organisations have these channels and the expertise and the procedures to take care of all kinds of tasks in different situations, which is something local organisations are struggling more with. They usually work with smaller funds, so they don't always have to have very strict procedures, they can use their funds easily and on the local markets. But if you want to directly purchase medicines, that involves a lot of paperwork and protocols. Although, I think that local organisations are very able to do this, and they are willing to as well. And that is the important part. If they want to do it, the first step is taken, if they don't wait for iNGOs to start arranging things, but they just start doing it themselves.</p> <p>Another part of promoting localisation is training local organisations. Currently, trainings are given on multiple things: how to create a good workforce, finances, what does the donor want to see, how to survive the audit and what kind of procedures and protocols should you follow, also in logistics. Those are trainings that are usually offered to local partners. So, I think that local organisations know what is expected of them and how the DRA works. However, I think it is time that the iNGOs and donors say: with these basic requirements in place, you have to do it on your own now, we trust the contract and here you have the money to work with.</p> <p>At the same time, this means a next step in capacity building. If you want your local actor to have enough knowledge and to show that on paper. But one can also learn along the way. You can't expect a local organisation to instantly deliver the same quality as an iNGO that leads operations in 120 countries. That is just impossible. There is a bit of Risk Management in place. Donors need to dare and take some political risk, towards the parliament as well, when talking about setting up humanitarian</p>
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	<p>aid in SSD. There just are some risks in that and that is something that politicians need to learn to accept. And in that iNGOs have certain responsibilities, and so have local NGOs. But we have to prevent that everything is put on the shoulders of the local partners and that next to that they don't have the proper financing to secure those risks. You have to be able to find a line in that and you need enough financing for local organisations to manage the risks: do they have a security officer, a proper IT-system, do they have enough cars to reach location or to get out when that is needed. You can keep training, but in the end, you just need money to manage the risks. I think that is the step we now need to take: how to we manage the Risk Management as well as possible, how to arrange that as equally as possible and then hopefully we can take steps fast.</p>
R2	<p>The country is still very much relying on iNGOs and UN agencies, however, L/NNGOs have been coming up very quickly lately when it comes to capacity development. That is partly due to the cooperation of the UN with local NGOs and of iNGOs with local NGOs. But you also see that L/NNGOs start to manifest and say 'well, guys, we can do this as well'. And they are actually quite right about that. DRA is a good example of that, they work with a lot of local NGOs and say 'It is going so well now, let's just try and see if they can handle the responsibilities', in the way of a direct relationship with the donors, planning programmes on their own and conducting them with their responsibility. So, that is a step in the right direction, even though it is still going quite slow.</p> <p>The problem with SSD is that the humanitarian crisis is so big that you actually need all hands-on deck to achieve the bare minimum. And the number of victims is way bigger than the capacity of aid. So, there is no way of retrieving aid workers from SSD.</p> <p>And there is the financial issue. I have recently had a conversation with UNOCHA about this, and I asked them how they work on localisation, and the answer is: 40% of the money in the SSD Humanitarian Fund goes to local organisations. Now that sounds really good, but when you realise that that fund only holds 7% of the monetary aid volume, it says enough... So, there is a lot of work to do there. That is one of the things I intend to do here, to put it on my agenda when I work here in SSD: to speak up to iNGOs and UN agencies that they have to take the Grand Bargain seriously and invest in it.</p> <p>These are all organisations that have years and years of experience and doctrines and programmes and logistics, things they want to keep in their own hands, because they know that as long as that is possible things will go right, they can justify things and they know that the maximum can be done. And for those organisations to put it in the hands of others, something they do on automatic pilot, that is something they have to be pressured on. And it is the financiers that have to do that, the donors. Meaning saying to organisations that they are obligated to invest in the capacity of their local partners, and then they will do it, but saying that is up to us.</p>

7. What are challenges in the promotion of localisation at this point?	
R1	<p>To start up new partnerships leads to new arrangements that are supposed to be made, new contracts and different payments. Those contractual issues are bumps in the road when we press for 30% of the budget that should be spend locally and to work more with local organisations.</p> <p>I think that in SSD they are quite close to the 25% of budget spend on and by local organisations, because there are some very strong local actors around. The problem will be next year. The goal then is to reach 35%, but we now see that we are staggering around the 25%, so I wonder if next years' goal isn't a little too ambitious. I think that the biggest obstacle will be the risk management. We need to have that cleared out: what are the risks, where are they, with which donor, which iNGO and which NGO and what means are needed to manage these risks well.</p> <p>I think that things are held up: Where the risks are and at the same time iNGOs don't want to lose their share in the work. I understand that, but it is something that needs to happen. The local expertise is there, and often it is very good. And additionally, it is a way to react very fast in HA, way faster than with international NGOs.</p>
R2	<p>I think that the Dutch NGOs are still a little scared to work on a thing like this. And when I am honest, but I can't officially substantiate this, but I think that they are quite scared that when the localisation happens on a large scale worldwide, there won't be much left for them to do.</p> <p>It is difficult for both parties to be 100% happy with the outcome, but that shouldn't even be a question.</p> <p>Localisation means: L/NNGOs in the lead, in any way or form possible. One, because you need that capacity in these countries, because there is just too much sufferage, so you need to build up that capacity. Two, there are people in those organisations that know the country, the culture, they speak</p>

	the language, so they can respond way better and faster. Three, the current business model of flying around international aid workers is very inefficient, so you should not try to enhance that, it is something you need to step away from.
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Additional interesting information (from respondent 2):

The numbers on Covid-19 are quite unreliable. The official numbers say that since April 5th (date of the first case) there have been 2500 cases identified, however in a country with 11/12 million people that seems highly unlikely. Everyone knows that the numbers are not correct because there is a very low test-capacity, but it is clear the pandemic is not spreading rapidly in this country. WHO also says that, even though there is a low test-capacity, their own numbers do not say that there is a growth in the amount of Covid-19 cases.

I think there are a couple of reasons for that: SSD is a very young country, citizen wise: more than half the population of SSD is younger than 18 years old. Many people are infected but do not show symptoms. At the moment the rainy season has started, which is also the time malaria is coming up again and I think that many people mistake the symptoms of Covid for malaria.

Annex 3 – Physical Access Constraints Map October 2020

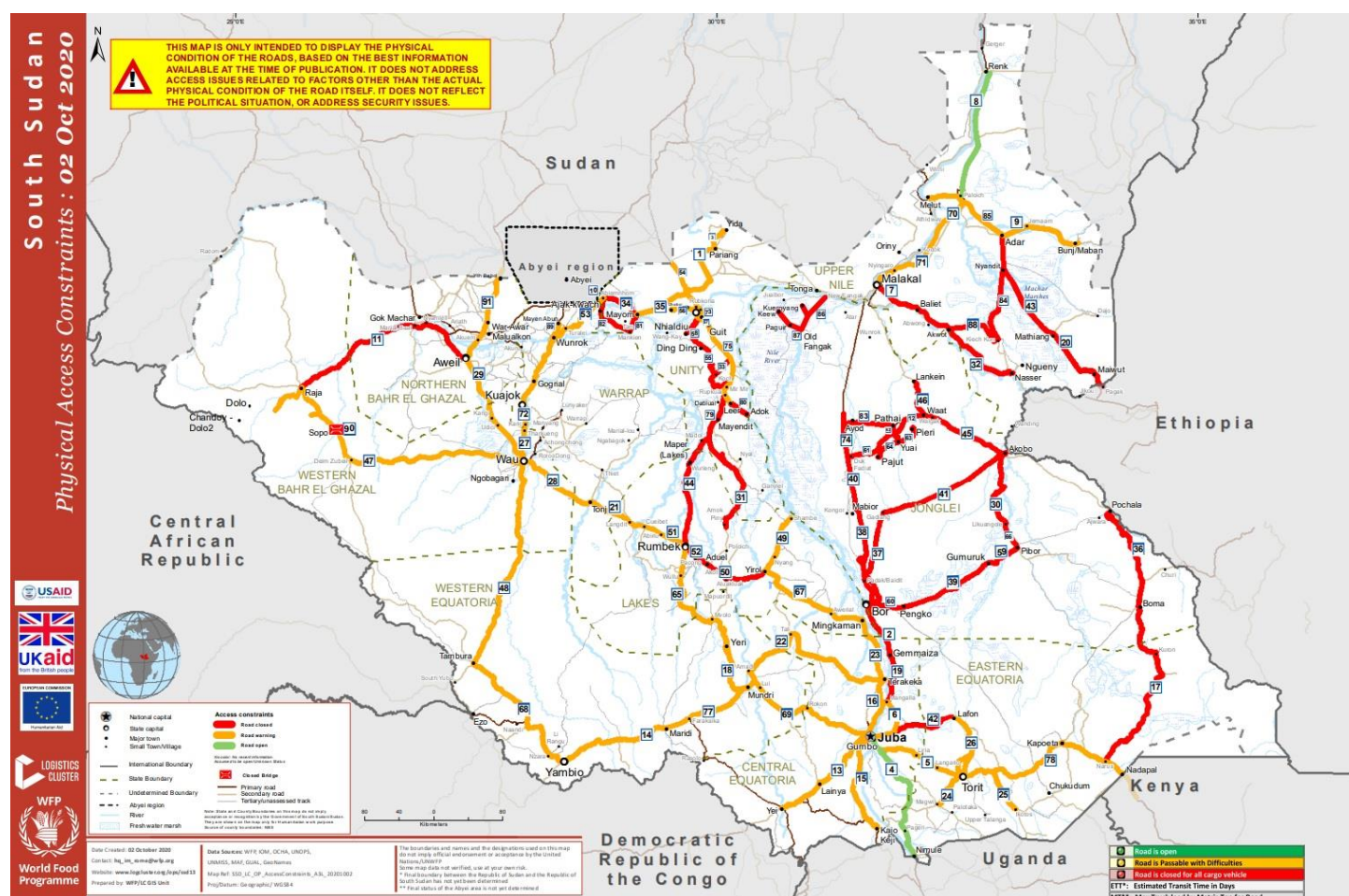


Figure 5 - Physical Access Constraints Map October 2020 (Logistics Cluster (c), 2020)

Annex 4 – Research timeframe

Activity ↓	wk. 1	wk. 2	wk. 3	wk. 4	wk. 5	wk. 6 - 14	wk. 15 - 16	wk. 17 - 21	wk. 22
Start thesis research									
Start interview search									
Literature review									
Prepare interviews									
Writing report									
Carry out interviews iNGO/UN/MFA									
Carry out interviews L/NNGOs									
Transcribing of interviews									
Interview analysis and results									
Finish report									