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Developing and Maintaining Trust in Hastily Formed Relief Networks

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ABSTRACT

Although there is a vast body of academic and practitioner literature championing the importance of trust in long-term business relationships, relatively little has been written which discusses the development and maintenance of trust in networks that are formed at short notice and that often operate for a limited period of time. Some models of trust and trusting behavior in such “hastily formed relief networks” (HFRN) do, however, exist and the aim of this chapter is to consider the theoretical application of one of the most prominent examples – that known as “swift trust” – to a post-disaster humanitarian logistics scenario. Presented from the perspective of a HFRN, the chapter presents a discussion of the practical application of the swift trust model.

INTRODUCTION

Pick up almost any supply chain management textbook, and it is a near certainty that one or more sections will be devoted to the challenges of achieving trust between the parties that form the supply chain or network. For example, Christopher’s (2005) definition of supply chain management (SCM) focuses firmly on this area suggesting that SCM is “the management of upstream and downstream relationships with suppliers and customers to deliver superior customer value at less cost to the supply chain as a whole” (p. 5). Indeed, the area of trust can be seen as a core concept in supply chain management (Barratt, 2004; Mentzer *et al.*, 2001), and particularly in the literature relating to supply chain collaboration (e.g. Skjøtt-Larsen *et al.*, 2003). Whilst, in the opposite sense, Fawcett *et al.* (2008) list a lack of trust as one of the most significant barriers to effective management of supply chains and networks.

Given the importance of trust in many walks of life, the last three decades have seen significant research into inter-organizational, intra-organizational and inter-personal trust from a range of perspectives that includes economic, psychological and sociological (Rousseau *et al.*, 1998). Yet, in general, such research has focused on the development and maintenance of trust in long-term relationships with much of the relationship management literature focusing on trust in this context where it often seen as interrelated with risk (Das and Teng, 2001), being the obverse of control (e.g. Grey and Garsten, 2001; Knights *et al.*, 2001). Studies on trust in different types of temporary networks, on the other hand, are relatively scarce – even though there is a recognition that different types of such networks exist including planned ones in project industries, virtual teams and even agile virtual networks (Bal and Teo, 2001; Sarkis *et al.*, 2007), “minimal organizations” (e.g. fire fighting teams, Weick, 1993), “emergent multi-organizational networks” (NRCNA, 2006), “emergent response groups” (Majchrzak *et al.*, 2007), and hastily formed networks (HFN Research Group, 2006).

Studies that consider trust in any type of temporary network stress the importance of trust to develop at the very beginning of a project (Bal and Teo, 2001). This is the more important in the case of disaster relief in the absence of prior rules, a common training or a common history. At the same time the link between trust and higher (team) performance can be established in similar veins to supply chain collaboration literature. In specific, Uhr and Ekman (2008) argue that the challenge of developing and maintaining trust in disaster relief networks is significant and can have a major bearing on the success of such relief – or, to put it more starkly, a failure in this regard has the

potential to lead to unnecessary loss of life and/or distress to those affected by the disaster. The initial development of trust is at the heart of Meyerson *et al.* (1996) article that outlines the psychological processes at work in the formation of inter-personal trust and coined the phrase “swift trust” to describe them. However, to date, there has been only limited consideration of how the swift trust model might be applied in a hastily formed network in a post-disaster context, that is, in a hastily formed relief network (HFRN).

With the above introduction in mind, the aim of this chapter is to further the understanding of how, from a theoretical perspective, the concept of swift trust might be used to develop and maintain inter-personal trust in hastily formed networks. To achieve this, the chapter will begin by discussing hastily formed networks in the context of disaster relief in greater detail before a model of swift trust, developed from the work of Meyerson *et al.* (1996), will be used to consider the implications from the perspective of the leader of a HFRN. In the final section, a suggested route for further research to assist the application of the concept is developed.

BACKGROUND

Supply chain management literature describes trust as a basis of collaboration which, in turn, is propagated and leads to high firm and supply chain performance, and as such is an alternative path to the focus on control mechanisms for key assets and resources in traditional management literature. In embracing trust and collaboration in this way, supply chain management offers the possibility for flexible ways of organizing at the same time as observing the traditional aims of effectiveness and efficiency.

Disaster relief is an activity that epitomizes high flexibility requirements. Not surprisingly, relief supply chains have been described as “most agile” (Oloruntoba and Gray, 2006) or “fully flexible” (Gattorna, 2006). In addition to the sheer number of companies involved, relief supply chains also interact with each other in back-office planning operations, in sharing suppliers and forming purchasing consortia to, most importantly, organizing relief activities in the field where members of different humanitarian organizations come together in the aftermath of a disaster. Although such organizations may specialize in different activities, or clusters of activities (such as providing shelter or health care, providing water and organizing sanitation etc.), all observe the overall aim of humanitarian logistics which is that of meeting the end beneficiaries’ requirements (cf. Thomas and Mizushima, 2005). To achieve this, the members of these organizations quickly form a network that needs to meet regularly, share information and work together. In other words, they constitute a hastily formed network.

Hastily Formed Networks

The concept of a hastily formed network (HFN), as described by the HFN Research Group (2006) has five elements. It is a network of people

- established rapidly,
- from different communities,
- working together in a shared conversation space,
- in which they plan, commit to, and execute actions,
- to fulfill a large, urgent mission.

Importantly, hastily formed networks should be distinguished from Weick’s (1993) “minimal organizations” (such as fire fighters) whose members are likely to share a common aim, background, approaches and working practices. A further stream of literature that is concerned with temporary networks is that of “virtual networks”, and virtual teams. These are teams of individuals coming together from different companies, working on a particular common goal (Bal and Teo, 2001). By contrast, the individual in a HFN, whilst sharing the same high level goals, may have not worked with other members previously nor have undergone the same training – nor in fact share particular goals

set for the team deployed in a disaster area. At the same time, the conversation space for an HFRN is determined by the co-location of its key members, unlike the distributed teams of virtual networks.

Other concepts similar to HFNs are those of “emergent (or emerging) multi-organizational networks” (NRCNA, 2006) or “emergent response groups” (Majchrzak *et al.*, 2007). Head (2000) describes these as (1) crisis driven, (2) task-orientated, (3) self-evolving, (4) time-sensitive, (5) composite and (6) temporary. Majchrzak *et al.* (2007) emphasize their self-evolving nature suggesting that their membership has no pre-existing structure, roles, tasks or expertise. In other words, an emergent response group develops, migrates, reorganizes, gains and loses membership in an unstructured way. Thus, there is a clear difference between such groups and HFRNs as the aims, policies, doctrine and role of the latter organizations are unlikely to change. In summary, the disaster response situation brings together both organizations with their pre-fixed aims and policies, as well as individuals who do not know each other, do not belong to the same organization, and have not undergone the same training. Therefore the concept of HFNs is preferred to other, similar concepts in the humanitarian context – albeit the swift trust model is applicable to all of the above (cf. Majchrzak *et al.*, 2007).

In a disaster relief context, therefore, HFRNs can be described as “co-located teams in short term local projects” (Fitzgerald, 2004, p. 162) with inter-sectoral partnerships that link humanitarian organizations (i.e. aid agencies and NGOs) to governments, local communities, businesses (suppliers and logistics service providers) and the military, in order to form the humanitarian aid supply network (Kovács and Spens, 2008). But while project-based temporary networks are characterized by clear starting and ending dates (though the same companies and, indeed, their competitors can be involved in several projects in a row), the key characteristic of an HFRN is its quick formation which reduces the opportunity for set procedures and even trust-building tools that Bal and Teo (2001) discuss for virtual teams. Furthermore, in most cases, neither the members nor the network will have a shared history or a shared future beyond the relatively short term (Järvenpää and Leidner, 1999). Thus, trust building in HFRNs needs to follow a different pattern from trust in long-term relationships, i.e. that described by Meyerson *et al.* (1996) as “swift trust” (and McKnight *et al.*, 1998, as “initial trust”).

Hastily Formed Relief Networks

Having introduced the concept of a hastily formed network in a general sense, the aim of this section is to situate it within the context of disaster relief. In doing so, it will be appreciated that there has been a significant increase in the focus on improving the response to rapid onset disasters following such high profile events as the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami, the 2005 Pakistan earthquake, Hurricane Katrina (2005), Cyclone Nargis (2008), the Wenchuan earthquake (2008) and the Haiti earthquake (2010). Tsunamis and earthquakes are indeed rapid onset disasters in the sense of occurring with little or no prior warning – while, for example, hurricanes are more predictable and often cyclical in nature. But rapid onset disasters do not need to have a natural causality as terrorist attacks or infrastructure failure (such as the explosion of BP’s oil drilling rig that has resulted in the enormous oil slick in the Gulf of Mexico in 2010) can also be seen as falling into this category. The key point is that a common feature of such disasters is their sudden occurrence (compared to, say, the evolution of a drought), and equal need for quick response.

With this in mind, it is clear that the effectiveness of the relief depends, in part, on the speed of logisticians’ ability to “procure, transport and receive supplies at the site of a humanitarian relief effort” (Thomas, 2003, p. 4). Furthermore, it is suggested that humanitarian logistics represents a major contribution to the disaster relief effort, with estimates suggesting that this represents as much as 80% of the cost of an operation (van Wassenhove, 2006). It is argued, therefore, that humanitarian organizations are in effect logistics organizations, albeit with, typically, a particular mandate and a target set of beneficiaries.

Smith and Dowell (2000) therefore characterize relief supply chains in rapid onset disasters as “incident organizations” (i.e. similar to Fitzgerald’s, 2004, “collaborative entities”). In other words they represent teams of previously independent individuals, groups and organizations that come

together temporarily on the basis of a particular event. Whilst it is suggested that such a newly formed team works towards a common goal and needs to combine the resources of otherwise independent organizations (Smith and Dowell, 2000), Fitzgerald (2004) argues the importance of a “catalyst” in the form of an individual or organization that coordinates (and ideally, leads and monitors) the entire team. In high-impact international disasters, this would be the role of Logistics Cluster (or the United Nations Joint Logistics Centre, UNJLC, as part of the Logistics Cluster), and this is exemplified by the deployment of a UNJLC team to coordinate the overall relief to Cyclone Nargis in May 2008. This included team members (secondees) from nine different humanitarian organizations and was based in two distinct locations (Bangkok and Yangon), as well as the head office in Rome (UNJLC, 2008). This was in effect a HFRN consisting of individuals of at least ten organizations which acted as the coordinating agency for the relief efforts of many more.

Interestingly for HFRNs it is not only the complexity of the relief supply chain, but also the calls for coordination (Oloruntoba and Gray, 2006; van Wassenhove, 2006) as humanitarian organizations compete for financial and material resources (i.e. from donors) as well as media attention (Oloruntoba and Gray, 2009; Kovács and Spens, 2010). Were the aftermath of a disaster to reflect normal market economics, such competition might well be viewed as healthy, but in the humanitarian context, it results in a reduction in the propensity for organizations to cooperate and this, in turn, can lead to inefficiencies through duplication and/or overlap. This is a significant challenge not least because of the sheer numbers of humanitarian organizations (and the individuals working within them) involved in disaster relief – Roberts (2001) putting the number at 30,000 international humanitarian organizations worldwide. As a result, a rapid onset disaster can be typified by the descent of many such organizations into the disaster area leading to huge coordination challenges – 72 inter-agency coordination meetings were held weekly in Banda Aceh alone (Völz, 2005).

Trust in Disaster Relief

In discussing various models of trust, it is appropriate to begin with a definition of the concept – although, as observed by Rousseau *et al.* (1998, p. 72) in a cross-disciplinary review, it is a “...a ‘meso’ concept integrating micro level psychological processes and group dynamics with macro level institutional arrangements.” Indeed, McKnight *et al.* (1998, p. 474) go further by suggesting that “... the word “trust” is so confusing and broad that it defies careful definition”, whilst Kramer (1999, p. 571) notes that “a concise and universally accepted definition has remained elusive.” Thus the following definition is adopted in this chapter:

Trust is present when the one party has a fundamental belief that the other can be relied upon to fulfill their obligations with integrity, and will act in the best interests of the other.

Importantly, this definition of trust focuses on inter-personal, rather than intra- or inter-organizational relationships. To support this viewpoint, it is argued that decisions within organizations are made by individuals and, therefore, the level of intra/inter-organizational trust can be seen as reflecting those individual relationships. Thus, the extent of the intra/inter-organizational trust will be developed and shaped by the inter-personal components and, for this reason, this chapter will concentrate on this latter unit of account, notwithstanding the problem of distinguishing trust invested in people from trust placed in institutional mechanisms as Knights *et al.* (2001) point out.

That said, it is the nature of HFRNs that such institutional mechanisms may at best be tenuous given the ad hoc nature of the organization/network and, especially in a post-disaster situation, the speed with which the crisis can unfold. Nevertheless, it is considered to be a reasonable assumption that all members of the HFRN, be they located in the field, in a local subordinate headquarters or in the main (remote) headquarters, will be working to common goal or goal(s) set by the organization, and in line with the philosophy and ideals of that organization. Thus, instances in which members of the HFRN are actively working against each other are perceived to be relatively limited. This latter point is important because the above definition does not imply bi-lateral trust; rather, it is suggested that trust

exists when A trusts B, and the fact that this is not reciprocated (or is reciprocated at a lesser level) does not obviate the existence of the A->B relationship.

But how does such inter-personal trust develop in the very short time frame of the creation of an HFRN? The work of Meyerson *et al.* (1996) introduced earlier has been expanded into a more general framework by Hung *et al.* (2004) who suggest that there are three different routes to the achievement of trust, namely the peripheral, the central, and the habitual. If seen in sequence, the peripheral route refers to the early establishment of trust, the central route to its further development in relationships with a long-term perspective, and the habitual route to a next level where trust is based on patterns that have developed in long-term relationships.

Thus, the peripheral route reflects the early stages of a relationship in which individuals meet either physically or virtually to form a team or organization. Trust at this stage is based on (peripheral) cues such as those provided by third parties. Hung *et al.* (2004) argue that the underlying psychological mechanism at work here is that the peripheral route to trust involves less cognitive effort than making one's own judgments and is, therefore, the preferred route in the initial stages of a relationship. Once teams or organizations have formed, individuals are able to cognitively engage in consideration of the other party's perceived ability, integrity and benevolence, and this may lead to the development of trust through the central route. The final route, that of habitual trust, reflects the historical build up of successful trust transactions and often leads to strong emotional bonds (Hung *et al.*, 2004).

The peripheral route of developing trust is key to the HFRN as it reflects the post-disaster scenario in which many individuals descend on the affected location from a variety of organizations (and associated organizational cultures) to form a multiplicity of networks. The composition of these is likely to be further complicated by the presence of individuals in the disaster area as well as those in headquarters who are connected to the network by virtual means, and who manage parts of it remotely, e.g. when headquarters manage not only their own but also national staff of implementing partners (ALNAP, 2008). Such virtual vs. face-to-face members of networks are, of course, also prevalent in other industries (see the review of agile virtual enterprises in Sarkis *et al.*, 2007). However, whilst other industries can often provide the time and space to develop long-term relationships in such mixed virtual and face-to-face networks, the nature of HFRNs calls for a closer investigation of the peripheral route of trust development. Important to HFRNs is the assertion from agile virtual enterprises that trust is essential from the very beginning of the project, if it cannot be already built before (Bal and Teo, 2001).

Developing Swift Trust

The suggestion that trust can be formed by the peripheral route stems from the work of Meyerson *et al.* (1996) who coined the term "swift trust" to describe the need to manage the issues of vulnerability, uncertainty, risk and expectations that surface with the formation of a HFRN. Such networks "exhibit behavior that presupposes trust, yet traditional forms of trust – familiarity, shared experience, reciprocal disclosure, threats and deterrents, fulfilled promises and demonstrations of non-exploitation of vulnerability – are not obvious in such systems" (Meyerson *et al.*, 1996, p. 167). In developing this concept, Hung *et al.* (2004) suggest that their equivalent (the peripheral route) has five elements that influence trust formation (see Fig.1):

- third party information,
- dispositional trust,
- rule,
- category, and
- role.

Whilst Kramer (1999) also see historical trust as another condition, Hung *et al.* (2004) purposefully exclude this element in the peripheral route, as they argue that the peripheral route to trust formation is based on limited prior interaction among the members of the network.

Figure 1. Developing swift trust (based on Hung *et al.*, 2004, p.4)

The other routes to trust discussed by Hung *et al.* (2004), namely the central, and habitual routes, result from the maturation of the trusting relationship. However, HFRNs are by definition not drawing on previous trusting relationships, thus the focus in this chapter is on the peripheral route to trust, i.e. swift trust (see Fig.1). Subsequent developments in the trusting relationship reflect the level of trust itself and the trusting behaviors and subsequent outcomes that are generated. Importantly, it is argued that, in addition to the simple feedback loop generated by improved knowledge of the others in the relationship, the process is mediated by the perceived level of risk which, in turn, reflects the communications environment within the network.

In addition, trusting behavior is mediated by the perceived risk of the possible gains and losses of any interaction in the network, so that a high perceived risk may even lead to the deliberate withholding of relevant information. However, Hung *et al.* (2004), whose research focused on virtual teams, also see the communication environment as means to exercise social control. Importantly, in the HFRNs of humanitarian logistics, not only is the network as a whole, and the associated communication environment, composed of both face-to-face elements (of logisticians of different organizations on the ground) and virtual ones (with remote headquarters), but also the communications links may well be of poor quality as a result of the impact of the disaster on this element of the infrastructure. This incorporation of a virtual element adds a further layer of complexity because, as Järvenpää and Leidner (1999) observe, such networks are composed of “individuals with differing competencies who are located across time, space and culture” (p. 791), which is why Handy (1995) questions whether virtual teams can ever function effectively in the absence of frequent face-to-face contact.

The literature also indicates that trusting behavior leads to specific outcomes, e.g. better network performance, and it is on this basis of the expectation of an improved outcome that investment into the development of trust in relationships can be justified. Furthermore, Laaksonen *et al.* (2009) show that trust can decrease the transaction costs of a relationship. This thought is captured in the model at Figure 1 as it is anticipated that the nature of the trust will change as the relationship matures with, ultimately, the level of habitual trust being reached. Individuals who trust each other in this way (i.e. habitually) need expend little mental or emotional effort (i.e. low transaction costs) as they are happy to accept the judgment of their colleague even if this may appear to be unorthodox. Unsurprisingly, however, betrayal of such habitual trust is catastrophic and is likely to lead to an irrevocable breakdown in the relationship.

However, in considering this model it is important to recognize both its contingent and integrated nature. Thus, in relation to the former aspect, the particular circumstances of the disaster, the resultant HFRN, its membership (and the extent to which individuals have been drawn from a diverse set of cultures, backgrounds and experiences), and the physical dispersion of the HFRN members will all (amongst other aspects) have an impact on the relevance and importance of the suggested elements of the model. Similarly, many of the elements will not just influence the peripheral route to the development of trust, but also will, in all probability, apply in the later stages.

SWIFT TRUST IN HASTILY FORMED RELIEF NETWORKS

Given the plethora of actors in relief supply chain management in the aftermath of a disaster, it will be appreciated that issues of the development and maintenance of inter-personal trust will apply both within a humanitarian organization and between organizations. Furthermore, the strategic approach to the response will differ from country to country for, as Drabek (1985) noted, the United States has a much more decentralized system than other countries. Nevertheless, whilst some disaster response staff within a humanitarian organization are permanent employees, many are drawn from a wider network of logisticians who form an “on call” roster such as those held by Oxfam, RedR and the Red Cross movement in many countries (ALNAP, 2008). Clearly the influx of staff from many sources and backgrounds will lead to problems of distrust (which can be even more emphasized in disaster areas where different ethnic groups are at war, cf. Scheper *et al.*, 2006). In addition, given that such on call staff typically only remain for a relatively short period (2-4 weeks), in effect the relief supply chain has to repeatedly re-form and, hence, re-develop the required inter-personal trust with staff turnover depleting institutional memory (Weick, 1988), even in the case of HFRNs.

In addition, each organization involved in a relief supply chain must form appropriate relationships with other actors, be they competitors or even different types of organizations (humanitarian organization and military, NGO and government etc.). But do such inter-organizational relationships lie within the spectrum to which the model of swift trust applies? Zolin (2002, p.4) suggests that “an initial condition for swift trust is that participants perceive that they belong to a team, i.e. that they perceive a shared goal.” Humanitarian organizations do, indeed, share the overall goal of alleviating the suffering of beneficiaries, yet at the same time they also compete for funding and media attention (Kovács and Spens, 2010). The competition aspect is an unfortunate, but inevitable, outcome of the funding regime in which donors provide the majority of support after a disaster has taken place (Oloruntoba and Gray, 2009). Apart from the fact that this is unquestionably inefficient in the longer term, it also leads to a desire on the part of humanitarian organizations to be seen to be delivering aid. The subliminal message being that success breeds success and that a given humanitarian organization should be favored above others in terms of donor funding (The Lancet, 2010).

On the other hand, and notwithstanding elements of competition, humanitarian logisticians engaged in operations relating to the same disaster can develop a sense of belonging to the same team even though relationships between their organizations may not be formalized. Thus, at the operational level there seems to be broad agreement over the need to support the beneficiaries, to operate within the humanitarian charter, and follow minimum standards of the Sphere Project which lays down a set of values and behaviors that are designed to guide humanitarian response (Sphere, 2004). In short, whilst humanitarian organizations do see themselves as part of a broad community responding to a disaster, it is argued that a greater measure of inter-personal and inter-organizational trust will improve the efficiency and effectiveness of that response. In this regard, Denning (2006, p.18) notes: “The more overwhelming the event, the more likely turf-asserting tendencies will occur and interfere with the effectiveness of the network.”, although it is unclear whether any research has been conducted that can substantiate this proposition. On the organizational and inter-organizational level, a lack of risk-sharing, credit- and cost-sharing essentially inhibits collaboration; yet inter-personal trust can still develop in the absence of these mechanisms.

A second key point is, again, the interdependence of the trusting relationships. In essence, there is no one trustor or trustee, but each member of the network engages in a relationship with the other members. What is more, the outcomes of any interchange between the parties will affect each party but, potentially, in different ways. Thus, to the extent that the concept of swift trust incorporates certain elements (see Fig.1) and that these are capable of promotion and/or maintenance of trust, the actions proposed in this paper should apply to all actors in the relief supply chain, and particularly, those in HFRNs.

Thirdly, the level of trust within a relationship is by no means static. Indeed, as Hung *et al.* (2004) argue, the peripheral route to trust can give rise to the central route in a next stage. Over time, the relatively fragile swift trust can thus develop to the robust habitual form. On the other hand, trust can also decline, and the different routes to trust are not necessarily forming a direct sequence. Furthermore, there is no absolute level of trust at any given time in a relationship, rather, parties may trust each other in relation to one issue, but not another.

Finally, there is good evidence to suggest that, subject to any negative impacts of the perceived success of prior alliances (Gulati, 1995), individual members of a network often act as if trust was in place and this leads to self-fulfillment (Jones and George, 1998). The very act of forming a network may of itself trigger an initial level of trust, where a positive assumption about the trusting behavior of others becomes the baseline position (Meyerson *et al.*, 1996). However, Coppola *et al.* (2004) and Ben-Shalom *et al.* (2005) suggest that this baseline is also affected by the expectations of trust that members import from other settings with which they are familiar. In the HFRN, similar familiar settings include previous interactions with other humanitarian organizations and their logisticians in other disasters.

With the above discussion in mind, in the following sections will discuss the elements of swift trust (see Fig. 1) from the perspective of an HFRN.

Third Party Information

Third party information enables the formation of trust based not on the, as yet, unidentified capabilities of an individual, but on their prior reputation and/or the reputation of their employing organization. Clearly such information about reputation is important as it helps mitigate the risk of unreliability or incompetency of the other party, whilst the role of third parties is important because of their ability to diffuse relevant trust information (Kramer, 1999). Uzzi (1997, p.48) suggests that a third party contributes to the formation of embedded ties or networks (or, as in our case, HFRNs) as a “go-between” that “transfers the expectations and opportunities of an existing embedded social structure to a newly formed one, furnishing a basis for trust and subsequent commitment to be offered and discharged”.

Importantly, and as discussed earlier, in the disaster relief context, the HFRN itself does not (by definition) have a shared history, but the individuals within it may have carried out similar roles under different circumstances (such as in different disasters). This provides reputational evidence of how individuals behaved and are, thus, expected to behave in the new HFRN. In such a case, third parties play a crucial role in substantiating the effectiveness of such individuals and organizations. In essence, whilst the leader of the HFRN may not know member “A”, he or she is known to member “B” who, in turn, is known to the leader. Thus “B” can provide third party testimony of the competence/ability (and, hence, trustworthiness) of “A” on which the leader can draw.

Within the existing community of humanitarian logisticians (as with all such communities of shared interest), it is inevitable that third party information will be exchanged and, depending on its content, it may have a positive or negative impact on the development of swift trust. Moreover, databases on humanitarian logisticians who are available to provide support in the event of an emergency can also include such third party information about each individual. There is, thus, potential for an organization to provide a repository of individuals’ names, qualifications and experience. Were such a

central database to be developed and maintained, it could provide useful and neutral third party information to inform the development of HFRNs.

More broadly, it is suggested that humanitarian organizations have a responsibility to “advertise” the skills of their employees (or teams of employees) both within the organization itself and between organizations. The aim here is, obviously, not to develop an elitist mentality, but rather to support the formation of trust by emphasizing that individuals are likely to have the appropriate skills in advance of their demonstration of these.

Such a suggestion raises the issue of the competence of a particular humanitarian organization to achieve its mandate. As discussed earlier, there are a vast number of humanitarian organizations world-wide (Roberts, 2001). Notwithstanding the assertion by most (if not all) that they adhere to the Sphere standards, informal discussion with those active in the field would indicate that there is a considerable degree of variability in the levels of competence displayed. That such concerns have not been formally documented is unsurprising, but it does raise the question of whether some form of certification of humanitarian organizations should be introduced – and, indeed, this subject is beginning to appear on the public agenda (Stocking, 2010). From the perspective of this chapter, such an approach would inform the development of swift trust on the basis that a particular organization has been judged competent and, by implication, so too are its staff. On this basis, an *a priori* assumption of trust can be made.

Dispositional Trust

Dispositional trust is another element that forms part of the peripheral route to trust. This refers to the general disposition of an individual to trust other people, in other words, that some people are more trusting than others. There are ample differences between individuals’ general predispositions to trust documented in the literature (e.g. Kramer, 1999; Hung *et al.*, 2004) and, as trust in HFRNs is developed between individuals, each individual member’s predisposition to trust impacts on the formation of inter-personal trust in the HFRN in the round.

From the perspective of a potential leader of an HFRN, it would, for example, be totally impractical to attempt to select individuals on the basis of their trusting disposition or even their cultural background. At the same time, the very nature of an HFRN prevents a “leader” from selecting individuals. Even the Logistics Cluster cannot offer such leadership, nor, as a matter of fact, a single such leader, as cluster leads in the field may be exchanged on the basis of their rotation which is not always in tune with the length of disaster relief activities. Thus, the simplest and most obvious prescription is for the leader of the HFRN to be constantly aware of the need to ensure that individuals recognize the existence of such important differences in the comparative approach of their colleagues. In this way, differential dispositions to trust can be taken into consideration when organizations are forming up and trust is being developed.

Rule

The presence of rules, under which heading one can include processes and procedures, is deemed by Kramer (1999) to be of considerable significance in supporting the development of swift trust. Put simply, the suggestion here is that, by following such rules, individuals are deemed by their peers to be trustworthy (Greenberg *et al.*, 2007). More explicitly, Kramer (1999, p.579) suggests that “explicit and tacit understandings regarding transactional norms, interactional routines and exchange practices provide an important basis for inferring that others in the organization are likely to behave in a trustworthy fashion”. In short, the presence of rules, and the adherence to them, is a guard against maverick behavior which has the potential to destabilize an organization and reduce the level of inter-personal and inter-organizational trust. Indeed, this perspective has considerable resonance with the work of other researchers such as Grey and Garsten (2001) who conceptualize trust as enabling individuals to behave in a predictable way.

However, when it comes to initial the development of swift trust, rule-based behavior refers to issues such as the normality of the situation and, potentially, the assurance of organizational structures (cf. Hung *et al.*, 2004). But for humanitarian logisticians, the normality of the situation may well be the situation of disaster relief which is, almost by definition, a highly fluid and uncertain. Thus, there is unlikely to be one organizational structure that will optimize the output of the HFRN. That said, the development of common approaches, sets of rules (Bal and Teo, 2001) and the general concept of “structuration” (Butcher *et al.*, 2008) has clear relevance to HFRNs as it would help to ensure that individuals who join the network from different humanitarian organizations can make the transition with the minimum of effort. In this respect, coordinating initiatives such as the logistics operational guide (the LOG) of the Logistics Cluster, and the work of the Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport (CILT) in the development of a common “Need Assessment” template are clearly important. Such initiatives point towards the long term possibility of developing organizational structures that can underpin the rule-based development of swift trust in the HFRN.

Rules in the business context can refer to both pricing mechanisms and contracts – leading to the rise of “contractual trust” as a type of trust in the commercial context (cf. Fynes *et al.*, 2005). Humanitarian organizations do, indeed, employ contracts with their global suppliers and logistics service providers, but the fluid nature of the evolving post-disaster scenario would, unquestionably, make the prior-development of contracts for their on-call workforce a massive challenge. The alternative approach of attempting to write a contract in the immediate aftermath of a disaster is perceived to be equally challenging as it would doubtless (and, arguably correctly) be viewed by the members of the HFRN as a bureaucratic sideshow that detracted individuals from the time-sensitive business of saving lives.

Therefore, in the absence of such an approach, HFRNs have to resort to other types of rules. Here, Greenberg *et al.* (2007) note that rules, processes and procedures need to relate not just to the management of a particular office (i.e. the underpinning bureaucracy of the organization), but also to inter-personal communication. Thus, it is the areas of communication rules that the leader of an HFRN may be able to target in nurturing the development of inter-personal trust within his or her team.

In this regard, the focus of the Logistics Cluster on the development of forms and standards of communication among humanitarian organizations (in addition to its role of operational coordination) can be clearly seen as supporting the development of rule-based trust. However, in the disaster relief context, the development of well documented processes and procedures (i.e. “rules”) is counter-cultural. Those working within humanitarian organizations are, understandably, output and outcome focused; their *raison d’être* is the relief of hardship and suffering of those affected by a disaster and adherence to “bureaucracy” is seen as a diversion from this real objective. On the other hand, when responding to a major disaster, humanitarian organizations almost universally are forced to use staff who are not part of their core teams, i.e. those from “on call” rosters and other augmenters. In all probability these additional resources will have had limited experience of working within the particular humanitarian organization and, therefore, will have even more limited exposure to that organization’s rules. This results in the potential for inadvertent maverick behavior with its concomitant negative effect on the development of inter-personal trust. Obviously there is a balance to be struck here, as it could be argued that such behavior in the guise of strong leadership could be valuable in cementing relationships within a team. However, from the perspective of the “swift trust” model there is clear benefit in the advance development and exposition of clear simple and easy to follow rules that will help ensure new comers can fit into the organization and become effective both speedily and with the minimum of effort.

Category

According to the swift trust model, individual members of a HFRN are also likely to unconsciously categories other team members as belonging to the same or a different social group or category. It is stressed that such membership (and the resultant perception by their fellow team members) is often a

fact over which the individual has no choice, and may include simple differences like their gender or race, as well as more complex ones such as their parent organization. Within the context of disaster relief, this is potentially a highly divisive area – indeed, evidence of the negative effects of such categorization has been noted by Zolin (2002, p.7) who observed: “difficulties in establishing interpersonal working relationships between [US Military] and [NGOs] due to perceived differences in organizational goals, strongly held negative organizational stereotypes and perceived ideological differences”.

Such trust judgments may be based on stereotypes of gender, ethnicity, religion, race or age. Given that such stereotypes undoubtedly exist, the implication of the swift trust model is that when the trustor and trustee belong (or perceive that they belong) to different categories, this will have a negative impact on the development of trust. To the extent that both are, say, logisticians or both belong to the same humanitarian organization, this negative impact is more likely to occur in inter- rather than intra-organizational trust situations. The challenge is to develop mechanisms to overcome this issue through advanced dialogue and understanding. Excellent examples of this can be found in the ongoing exchanges between the Irish Defence Forces and Irish NGOs in which the latter give presentations to the former on a regular basis, and the former conduct training and education courses for the latter. It is not just the content of the discussions that is important, but the associated knowledge and understanding of each others’ perspectives and concerns that will help to break down potential “category” barriers.

From the perspective of a HFRN, in the same way as for the area of dispositional trust, the challenge for the leader is to recognize that the sorts of stereotype that have been mentioned above will exist. In many cases, however, the categorization will take place within an individual’s mind in an unconscious way, making its management even more complex. However it is strongly advocated that such challenges are best met by recognizing the existence of the problem and its implications for restraining the development of the desired inter-personal trust.

Role

In the context of the formation of swift trust, using roles as the basis for making initial assumptions has the benefit of being de-personalized. In other words, the trustor can make an assessment of an individual’s ability based on the fact that they are fulfilling a particular role rather than through specific knowledge about their competence, motives etc. (Kramer, 1999). A typical example of role-based trust is the positive predisposition of individuals to trust a medical doctor for her/his medical expertise even in their first consultation is based simply on the fact that the doctor holds the relevant professional qualifications. Role-based trust can therefore, be seen as “competence trust”, as it is based on the confidence that the other partner carries the competence to perform her/his task (cf. Fynes *et al.*, 2005).

In the context of an HFRN, the fact that a particular humanitarian organization is employing an individual in the role of, say, a logistician leads others to assume that the individual has been judged to have the relevant competencies and capabilities, and can therefore be trusted. However, for this means of developing trust to be effective, there is a very clear onus on humanitarian organizations to fulfill their side of this notional bargain – in other words only to employ staff who does, indeed, possess the relevant competencies etc. As Bal and Teo (2001) suggest for virtual teams, the performance and competence of individuals impacts on their in- or exclusion from informal communication and meetings. Thus the competence of an individual plays an important role for trusting the individual, and ultimately, for the performance of the HFRN. That said, it is far from established which competences are required or expected from humanitarian logisticians (Tatham *et al.*, 2010). Nevertheless, to the extent that humanitarian organizations are clearly embarking on a series of programs designed to improve the competence levels of their staff (Walker and Russ, 2010), there is clear potential for swift trust to be based, in part, on the possession by an individual of the relevant qualification.

It is therefore suggested that humanitarian organizations should continue to press ahead with their training and certification schemes and that, whenever possible, individuals with the appropriate qualifications should be employed as permanent or on call team members. It is, of course, recognized that there are significant challenges associated with such international certification schemes including ensuring the achievement of a common standards and, indeed, that any examination accurately tests for the existence of the right skills. However, it is argued that such hurdles are not insuperable, and that the balance of benefit lies with pursuing such an approach. Such an approach might, for example, be based on existing schemes such as those provided by the UK Chartered Institute for Logistics and Transport (CILT) which are delivered in concert with the NGO RedR. In any event, successful anchoring of skills and experience on an internationally recognized framework would provide a valuable underpinning for the element of role within the swift trust model and, hence, support the development of the desired inter-personal trust.

The Impact of the Communication Environment

In considering the swift trust model (Figure 1), it is not only important to note the five elements of peripheral trust, but also to distinguish between trust and trusting behavior. Hung *et al.* (2004) depict the latter as being mediated by the perceived risk of potential gains (or losses) of acting on the basis of inter-personal trust (see also Meyerson *et al.*, 1996; Kramer, 1999; Hung *et al.*, 2004; Ben-Shalom *et al.*, 2005). In the disaster relief context, perceived risks can encompass physical danger as well as the loss of reputation as a result of depending on the behavior of other members of the HFRN. In essence, the act of trusting is one in which the trustor is prepared to increase their vulnerability to the actions of others. It follows, therefore, that if level of perceived risk is greater than the level of trust, the individual is less likely to engage in trusting behavior (Hung *et al.*, 2004).

This aspect of the swift trust model is related to various streams of literature on the psychological, physiological and organizational aspects of perception. For example, Laaksonen *et al.* (2009) argue that rules such as contracts or pricing mechanisms help to codify the level of risk and ensure a mutual perception in a business context. In the absence of contracts and pricing mechanisms (such as in the swift trust model), the communication environment takes their place (cf. Hung *et al.*, 2004). The scenario surrounding HFRNs precludes lengthy contractual discussions and associated understanding of financial and reputational risk. Rather, an assessment is made by an individual of the impact of trusting his or her colleague but, critically, it is suggested that this is heavily impacted by the effectiveness of the communications environment (Järvenpää and Leidner, 1999).

The two extremes of such a communication environment might be characterized as a face-to-face office conversation, and a telephone call on a poor line between an operator in the field and his or her headquarters located in another country, away from the various mental stimuli of the operational situation. Put simply, through the ease of communication and the presence of additional non-verbal clues in the former scenario, it will be easier for an individual to determine whether or not to trust their informant than in the latter. Furthermore, the effect of the communications medium in virtual environments operates in both directions and so, from the headquarters perspective, the perceived risks are increased due to a reduction in the degree of control individuals from within the headquarters can exert (Järvenpää *et al.*, 1998). Other examples for increasing the perceived risks in virtual environments include role ambiguity and role overload as a result of a lack of face-to-face communication (Järvenpää *et al.*, 1998).

The importance of communication is also emphasized by Weick (1993) in his analysis of the Mann Gulch disaster in which 13 US fire fighters lost their lives. One of key organizational failings was the near absence of communication between the team members and consequential reduction in the level of intra-team coordination. In short, the lack of communication in the early stages of the development of this temporary group heightened its vulnerability to disruption. When stressed by the advancing wild fire, the inter-team ties (which, in part, reflect the level of inter-personal trust) were insufficient to prevent fragmentation of the group and a reversion to self-interest (or, perhaps more accurately, self-preservation). This point is equally emphasized by Drabek (1985) whose analysis of emergency

response organizations in the United States indicates that cross-agency communication was perceived to be the greatest weakness and the source of most difficulties. In summary, there would appear to be broad support for the proposition that the clarity of the communications environment has an effect on the formation of trust and, by extension, the view of Hung *et al.* (2004) that computer mediated communications environments increase the perceived risk and, hence, reduce the propensity to convert trust into trusting behavior.

Once again, in terms of mitigating these problems and difficulties, the key would appear to lie in an understanding of the problem (i.e. the effect of the perception of risk) on the actions of individuals, and the role that the effectiveness of inter-personal communication has to play. Clearly a number of technological solutions (such as the use of video-conferencing) may help overcome the inherent defects of simple computer-based interaction (e-mails etc.), but there would also appear to be support for attempting to achieve face-to-face communication (e.g. visits to the field by headquarter staff) wherever possible. Once again, however, the role of the HFRN leader would appear critical in ensuring that team members are aware of this facet of the problem through appropriate guidance, training and education.

Implications of the Swift Trust Model

Whilst swift trust is a model that focuses on trust in inter-personal relationships, the model has important implications for individual members of the HFRN, the leaders of the HFRN (e.g. cluster leads), the HFRN as an entity, as well as the organizations from which its members are drawn. Table 1 summarizes these implications for the different levels.

Table 1. Implications of the swift trust model

Elements of the Swift Trust Model	Implications for			
	Individual HFRN members	Leaders of the HFRN	The HFRN	Organizations of HFRN members
Third party information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Be inclusive also of individuals where prior contact has not been established - Look beyond the reputation of other individual's organizations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Establish prior common experiences (e.g. training) to facilitate trust among HFRN members - Organize get-togethers at an early stage and exchange background information about organizations and the expertise of individuals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Draw on third party information on the expertise of individuals to determine the mix of expertise - Establish (virtual) social networks for the HFRN 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Use secondments / secondees to facilitate the sharing of knowledge of each other's organizations - Include experiences and evaluations of individuals in roster databases - Advertise the competence of individual representatives
Dispositional trust	- Acknowledge different dispositions to trust that reflect individual character traits that may, in turn, reflect cultural norms.			
Rule	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Adhere to "common" rules of the HFRN even if unorthodox for the organization of the individual - Avoid maverick behaviour 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Establish rules and procedures for meetings - Establish common performance indicators that need to be reported to the HFRN 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Establish communication rules - Establish pipeline and indicator visibility across organizations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Establish prior collaboration mechanisms and cross-organizational teams facilitates their common deployment - Standardize processes across organizations
Category	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Look beyond stereotypes of individuals and organizations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Recognize categories and stereotypes and discuss them openly to mitigate their 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Meet regularly also socially as to overcome categories and stereotypes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Establish common training to counteract categorization and stereotyping - Select individuals

		effects		with an open mindset beyond the mission of the organization
Role	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Learn from each other on the job - Undergo certification schemes for humanitarian logisticians 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Establish a common understanding of logistics, related activities and processes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Focus on commonalities (common pipeline) rather than differences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Constantly improve the competence level of staff - Recognize certifications and logistics education

Much of the discussion of the different elements of swift trust has focused on the perspective of the leader of an HFRN. In doing so, it needs to be acknowledged that such leadership may run counter to the values of individual HFRN members and, indeed, member organizations themselves. Various conflicts based on mandates and the very elements of swift trust can constitute barriers to not only for trust to emerge, but also for leadership to be effective. Categories not only refer to stereotypes but also hierarchies in organizations. Command and control structures, while applicable to some actors of the humanitarian aid supply network, constitute rather the exception than the rule. Hence, coordination in the HFRN is based on many-to-many communication and not established rules of command. Nevertheless, there are some established mechanisms for e.g. cluster leads globally and in disaster areas. Leadership here is thus attributed foremost to current and actual cluster leads in the field.

Turning to the logistic implications of the swift trust model, it is suggested that the establishment of meeting procedures and a common set of performance indicators that are to be reported to the HFRN will facilitate the adherence to common rules. Also, process standardization across humanitarian organizations will facilitate the emergence of trust, as individuals will be able to trust a common course of action whilst agreeing to distribute different activities in the HFRN. Last but not least, establishing pipeline (and indicator) visibility across organizations will facilitate not only the adherence to common rules, but also supports a focus on the common aim rather than individual differences in stereotypes as well as in the understanding of the job of a humanitarian logistician.

FURTHER RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

It is hoped that this chapter has successfully demonstrated that, in a disaster relief operation which typically includes a number of HFRNs, the ability of the members to work together has far-reaching consequences for the success or failure of the disaster response. But, given the nature of a HFRN, this leads to the question of how such inter-personal trust can be created and developed. With this in mind, the chapter has focused on the model of swift trust that originated in the work of Meyerson *et al.* (1996) with the aim of suggesting, from a theoretical perspective, how this model might be operationalized in such a scenario.

Clearly, it is necessary for the swift trust model to be evaluated in an empirical setting and it is initially considered that this could be explored in two phases. The first might be undertaken in an experimental setting in, for example, a university setting in which a class of students are set a suitable exercise to be conducted in groups. In parallel with their task to resolve the particular leadership challenge, individual members of the group would be extracted and interviewed using the five elements of the swift trust model as the broad agenda. Indeed, if circumstances permit, additional realism could be injected by having some members of the group operating in a “virtual” way, and the resulting levels of trust between the core team and its virtual members compared.

Evaluating the swift trust framework in an operational setting would be the next stage. This, unfortunately, would require the advent of a significant rapid onset disaster in which multi-sourced team (including the Logistics Cluster) are deployed. With the approval of their host humanitarian organization, it is anticipated that researchers could undertake a number of interviews with key personnel both in the field and at the headquarters which were, again, based around investigation of the impact of the five elements of the swift trust model. Self-evidently, such research would require

particularly careful management so as to be timely, and yet not interfere with the vital life-saving work of the organization itself.

Alternatively, the swift trust model could be tested through a survey. Instead of exploring the actual challenges of developing and maintaining swift trust, a survey could contribute to the evaluation of the interdependencies of trust elements, and the mediating effects of perceived risk and the communication environment. However, these very interdependencies pose the challenge to develop independent scales for each element of swift trust.

A further, and clearly more complex strand of research, be that of understanding, from the perspective of the humanitarian logistician, how one might distinguish a successful organization (i.e. that in which a high level of inter-personal trust exists) from an unsuccessful one. In the case of the latter, not only would it be instructive to understand the nature of the perceived failings, but also the implications for the beneficiaries. It is anticipated that such an analysis, which reflects the reverse of the obvious line of enquiry, would help to triangulate the practical development of this model.

Finally, and although some research is currently being conducted in this area, greater clarity is needed over the skills and attributes that make a “good” humanitarian logistician and, in particular, how a linkage between these and logistics performance can be demonstrated.

In drawing up the research agenda outlined above, it is important to acknowledge the complexity of the subject as a whole. The difficulty lies in designing a suitable approach to the next stages of the research that will enable valid conclusions to be drawn in the face of the many variables within the model.

CONCLUSIONS

Any particular disaster relief operation includes a number of logisticians from various organizations (and, hence, organizational types and cultures) who come together to form one or more HFRNs. Such HFRN(s) will have the common aim of alleviating the suffering of those affected by the disaster and are likely to show all of the characteristics described above:

- their network is established rapidly;
- they come from different communities, in fact different organizations, countries and cultures;
- they work together in a shared conversation space, with a need to coordinate their activities;
- in which they plan, commit to, and execute actions;
- to fulfill a large, urgent mission. (HFN Research Group, 2006)

But, whilst they may share a common high level goal, the ability of members of an HFRN to work together will have far-reaching consequences and, ultimately, it will have an impact on the success or failure of the disaster response.

Trust, both inter-personal and inter-organizational, has been argued to have positive consequences for the success of a relationship, even to the extent of reducing transaction costs (cf. Laaksonen *et al.*, 2009). Unsurprisingly, therefore, the supply chain collaboration literature draws on trust as a key success factor, although this literature is generally focused in the challenges associated with the development and maintenance of long-term relationships (Skjøtt-Larsen *et al.*, 2003; Barratt, 2004; Fawcett *et al.*, 2008).

However, this chapter has concentrated on the less well researched issues surrounding inter-personal trust in HFRNs and, in particular, those created in the aftermath of a disaster. In doing so, it has drawn on the work of Meyerson *et al.* (1996) who offered the model of swift trust, and the aim of the chapter was to consider how this approach might be operationalized in a disaster relief context. In order to achieve this, each of the elements of swift trust model (see Hung *et al.*, 2004, and Figure 1) has been discussed from the perspective of the leader of such an HFRN.

The swift trust model does, indeed, appear to be highly applicable to this scenario, and its consideration leads to a number of important conclusions. Firstly, it shows that the central and habitual routes to trust that supply network management traditionally considers are, indeed, important aspects in the collaboration between humanitarian organizations and their global suppliers and logistics service providers.

Secondly, in terms of the elements of the swift trust model, the third party information about humanitarian organizations and the individuals they send in response to a disaster, are important aspects in the development of trust in a HFRN. Information on which individuals have been part of a previous successful operation can help in the formation of (parts of) inter-organizational teams that can be co-deployed to a similar operation. Thus, it is in the interest of humanitarian organizations to provide information about the individuals they send to a particular disaster area both to the leader of their own team and also to other humanitarian organizations. This will help to facilitate the individual-individual interaction on the ground even in absence of historical encounters.

Turning to the challenge of dispositional trust, it is clear that selecting individuals on the basis of this particular trait would be impractical and unethical – even if it were it possible to undertake this in anything approaching a rigorous (scientific) way. More important, therefore, is the development of common rules such as standard operating procedures and common forms, to help ensure the inter-operability of logisticians from different humanitarian organizations. The creation of a common set of needs assessment templates represents a good example of where such an approach would pay dividends in terms of efficiency and effectiveness. Similarly, developing standard rules of communication would appear to be important in the context of trust building as these would help enable maverick behavior to be recognized and managed at an early stage.

The categorization of individuals by their colleagues (which is frequently an unconscious process) is clearly more often an impediment rather than an enabler to trust. But, in the same way as for the dispositional element, the key would appear for the HFRN leadership to recognize the potential difficulties here and to ensure that the members of their team and the wider network are fully aware of these challenges. In this sense, a simple awareness of the problem may be sufficient to reduce its negative impact.

The swift trust model suggests that members of an HFRN use their knowledge of an individual's role as a proxy for their competence (and, hence, trustworthiness). Whilst this may be a convenient approach in terms of reducing an individual's cognitive workload, it is undermined by the systemic weakness reflected by the absence of a universally held picture of what skills and attributes makes for a "good" humanitarian logistician. Furthermore, unlike military personnel or fire fighters, there is currently no common training for humanitarian logisticians of different organizations. There would, therefore, appear to be an onus on the broader humanitarian community to play its part by developing pan-humanitarian professionalization mechanisms such as a suite of standard courses (and associated certification) for humanitarian logisticians, together with a register of those who are appropriately qualified. It is recognized that this is not a simpler task, not least because of the concomitant requirement for agreement on, for example, what qualities are needed to be a successful humanitarian logistician. Such an approach also implies the existence of some form of audit function and, indeed, agreement amongst humanitarian organizations that they should be subject to such a regime. Nevertheless, the fact that these are clearly tricky issues is not, of itself, a reason for failing to embark on such a course of action. In this respect, the recent joint training efforts sponsored by the Logistics Cluster and the Humanitarian Logistics Association are to be applauded. Nevertheless, it is clear that much significantly effort is required before appropriate internationally recognized (and audited) certification programmes are developed.

So what can one conclude from the discussion within this chapter? From a theoretical perspective, the model of swift trust would appear to have considerable relevance to the management of post-disaster HFRNs, not least as it provides the leadership of such HFRNs with an agenda that they should bear in mind as the network forms up and develops. In doing so, however, it underlines the fact that the

leadership of a given HFRN can, with the best will in the world, only go so far. As with many other aspects of the relief supply chain challenge, the key would appear to be the need for the community as a whole to recognize their broader strategic responsibilities that surmount their specific organizational mandate. The challenge of preparing for, and responding to, disasters will, without question, become more complex and difficult as the century proceeds – in turn, therefore, the community as a whole must learn respond in a way that truly maximizes their ability to support those affected.

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KEY TERMS & DEFINITIONS

Trust is present when one party has a fundamental belief that the other can be relied upon to fulfill their obligations with integrity, and will act in the best interests of the other.

A **hastily formed network** is a network of people established rapidly, from different communities, working together in a shared conversation space, in which they plan, commit to, and execute actions (HFN Research Group, 2006).

Hastily formed relief networks (HFRN) are co-located teams in disaster areas with inter-sectoral partnerships that link humanitarian organizations to governments, local communities, businesses and the military, in order to form the humanitarian aid supply network. Members of a hastily formed relief network share the mission of bringing disaster relief but do not subscribe to common goals and do not share a common history or future beyond the short term deployment.