CHALLENGES OF HUMANITARIAN AID INTERNATIONAL NON-GOVERNMENT

ORGANIZATIONS (INGOs)

IN MYANMAR

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ABSTRACT

In Myanmar, there are currently over 100 INGOs, and out of these, 43 are providing humanitarian aid and development activities in conjunction with eight UN organizations. However, whether humanitarian operations have positively or negatively impacted Myanmar is underreported. A backlash against INGOs arose in the wake of 2012, and suspicions about misappropriation of aid resources and mismanagement of funds seem to have become more controversial after the aid agencies jumped into the Rakhine crisis under the agenda of humanitarian violations. This research is based on a literature review, relevant case study analysis, and 10 semi-structured interviews with humanitarian activists of the Myanmar Diaspora in Canada. The primary objective of this research is to investigate how humanitarian aid INGOs contextualize their work in Myanmar's post-democracy period and to see how said work links to the challenges associated with projects in the area of ethnic conflict. Based on the findings, a culturally appropriate framework is introduced for the efficacy of Myanmar's humanitarian aid INGOs. In this study, I argue that humanitarian aid INGOs fail to apply "outside-in thinking" in the decision-making process when implementing aid projects in Myanmar, which is a developing country with multi-rooted conflicts.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATION

ASSK	Aung San Suu Kyi
AI	Amnesty International
ARIF	Arakan Rohingya Islamic Front
ARSA	Arakan Rohinga Salvation Army
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
CBO	Community-based Organization
COAST	Coastal Association for Social Transformation Trust
CSO	Civil Society Organization
E/R	Emergency/Relief
EU	European Union
GRO	Grass-roots Organization
HRW	Human Rights Watch
ICC	International Criminal Court
IDP	Internally Displaced People
IMA	Itihadul Mozahadin of Arakan
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IMT	International Military Tribunal
INGO	International Non-Government Organization
ISO	International Organization for Standardization
LNGO	Local Non-Government Organizations
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MSF	Médecins Sans Frontières
NATO	North Altantic Treaty Organization
NDF	National Democratic Front
NGO	Non-Government Organization
NLD	National League for Democracy
NRC	National Registration Card
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
OIC	Organization of Islamic Countries
R/D	Rehabilitation/Development
RLO	Rohingya Liberation Organization

RPF	Rohingya Patriotic Front
RSO	Rohingya Solidarity Organization
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
UNA	United Nationalities Alliance
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund (formerly the United Nations Fund for Population Activities
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
USA	United States of America
WB	World Bank
WFP	World Food Program
WHO	World Health Organization

CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

Background and Context

Democracy has not always fulfilled what it means to the people (Sernau, 2012), especially for Myanmar during its transition period, which has seen the country be plagued by corruption, human rights abuses, suppression of minority rights, and isolation from the world under a military regime of about fifty years. Myanmar has had foreign aid donors and their implementing partners rushing into the country to deliver development assistance in order to support the country's nascent reforms and its transition to democracy. For example, there are approximately 20 international donors (multilateral and bilateral), and the international NGOs (INGOs) become increasingly active in Myanmar, going beyond emergency relief and humanitarian response to pursue longer-term development in a variety of sectors, including education, environment, health, livelihoods and civil society capacity building (Dugay, 2015). The INGO development agencies from the USA and the EU governments have increased the assistance projects, and Japan has offered to take part in the development projects of roads, ports, and infrastructure inside Myanmar (Jacobs, 2017).

Moreover, the INGO forum, a body of over 100 INGOs working in the humanitarian, peace-building, and development spheres was established in 2007 with the goal of influencing and increasing the effectiveness and coherence of humanitarian relief and development aid in Myanmar (http://www.ingoforummyanmar.org/en/membership-information). Nevertheless, how they address the underlying causes of human suffering and socio-economic inequality in Myanmar and to what extent the forum members' common interest and activities reflect the forum's goals are still under-researched. Moreover, aside from its vulnerability to natural

disaster, the country continues to face significant humanitarian challenges related to the recent crisis in Rakhine state via large-scale displacement, an ongoing armed conflict in some parts of the country, and inter-communal tensions. The United Nations (UN) 2018 Interim Humanitarian Response Plan indicates that there are 43 INGOs and 8 UN organizations that are providing humanitarian aid and development activities in the affected regions of the country. However, to which extent, the aids and its related projects have created and whether humanitarian operations have impacted positively or negatively Myanmar, are under-reported. On the other hand, a backlash against INGOs has risen in post-2012, and suspicious about misappropriation of aid resources and mismanagement of funds seem to be more controversial after the aid agencies jumped into the Rakhine crisis under the agenda of the humanitarian violations (Jacobs, 2017; Myo Oo, 2017).

Another interesting point is that such a backlash and mistrust of the INGOs have been exposed after the military regime era although that is not something scholars and observers often highlight in terms of local's perception on INGOs in the past. For example, according to past empirical studies in Myanmar, the aid is perceived as a "donation" [*ahlu*] in the Buddhist sense (Brac de la Perriere, 2010) and the donor as a "master of donation" [*ahu shin*] (Boutry, 2008). In addition, according to South et al., (2011), based on the findings of studying INGOs' operations in Delta region in the aftermath of Nargis cyclone, the beneficiaries in the Delta region would not raise any discontent regarding INGO action because they were afraid of being excluded from the distribution lists or of being categorized as problematic villages on the donation (humanitarian aid) matter.

Notably in 2017, the aid operations were severely disrupted in conflict area. It includes refusing travel visa to most INGOs and some UN agencies, unwillingness to do any business

with aid agencies by the locals (Arkin, 2017), and furious public's accusations of INGOs backing the terrorists and making a war in the Rakhine State (Holmes, 2017). On the other hand, the INGO forum Myanmar (2017) portrayed the people of Myanmar as Anti-INGOs and violent persons towards aid workers. Why has Myanmar citizens' attitudes toward INGOs turned down negatively in post-democracy period?

Rationale of Investigation

Many scholars discuss the characterization of the aid projects in regard to rare complexity, the high delicacy and relative intangibility of ultimate objective poverty reduction, multi-layer stakeholders, and attractiveness to politicians, while also challenging the profound cultural and geographical gap amongst the stakeholders, the prevalence of bureaucratic rules and procedures (Honadle & Rosengard, 1983; Rondinelli, 1983; Gow & Morss, 1988; Youker, 1999; Kwak, 2002; Crawford & Bryce, 2003; Diallo & Thuillier, 2004, 2005; Khang & Moe, 2008; Ika et al., 2010). However, there has been a limited focus on how the aid projects contextualize their work in complex and multifaceted conflict areas via humanitarian perspectives.

Based on the work of existing literature and empirical country-specific studies and success criteria as well as critical success factors (Khang & Moe, 2005; Diallo & Thuillier, 2005; MayKyawt, 2006), appropriate life-cycle-based frameworks (Khang & Moe, 2005,2008) have been introduced from the project management perspective. On the other hand, some literature has studied the problems and possibilities inherent in demonstrating NGO performance from a scientific approach (Carvalho & White, 1993), from a contextual approach (Marsden et al., 1994), and via multiple analyses in determination of NGO effectiveness and performance (Kanter, 1979; Drucker, 1990; Smith & Lipsky, 1993; Hawley, 1993; Lawrie, 1993). Nevertheless, there has been a little attention in discussing the challenges and behaviors of

NGOs from sector-specific perspectives (for example, the humanitarian sector, educational sector, and the infrastructural sector). In fact, the issues of whether long-term aid projects positively or negatively affect the 'poor' and the recipient countries are under-reported.

This study discusses the previously neglected area by centering on three objectives. First, it will investigate how humanitarian aid INGOs contextualize their work in Myanmar's post-democracy period and to see how said work links to the challenges associated with projects in the area of ethnic conflict. Second, it will address the accountability of humanitarian aid INGOs to advocacy groups, and examine if there are any questions of improper behavior relating to acquiring support for their projects in the conflict area. Third, a culturally appropriate framework will be introduced for the efficacy of humanitarian aid INGOs in Myanmar based on some case studies and findings from 10 semi-structured interviews with humanitarian activists of the Myanmar Diaspora in Canada.

In this study, I argue that humanitarian aid INGOs fail to apply "outside-in thinking" in the decision-making process when implementing aid projects in Myanmar, which is a developing country with multi-rooted conflicts. They should observe what's best for the clients/ beneficiaries by listening to the locals and understand their culture in terms of socioeconomic and religious/social belief. If the INGOs make decisions as if they know what is best for the project or for the customers (end users) without taking consideration of the given clients' perspective/culture, particularly in a sensitive political context such as Myanmar, then the effectiveness and accountability of the humanitarian aid projects would leave a lot of questions to be answered. Does the existence of INGOs cause more harm than good or foment the level of issues in the conflict area? Are the humanitarian operations the right answers to the recipient country?

The following sections outline the theoretical framework, methodology, scope and limitation of the research, as well as highlight the ongoing ethnic conflicts including recent Rakhine crisis, an overview of NGOs/INGOs in Myanmar, and current debates about humanitarian aid INGOs in the context of managing aids and their behaviors.

Theoretical Approach

This research examines the behaviors of humanitarian aid INGOs and how they deal with the aid resources in Myanmar's post-democracy period, in addition to exploring the obstacles to delivering effective humanitarian assistance in the ethnic and armed conflict areas, especially in the northern part of Myanmar. I will analyze the challenges faced by humanitarian aid INGOs in developing countries via an interdisciplinary approach, which employs different theoretical perspectives. The areas of study will include colonialism, multiculturalism and human rights, and criminology within a humanitarian perspective.

Moreover, I have also applied a combination of two conceptions of interdisciplinary as presented by (Klein, 1996): "instrumental interdisciplinary" (a focus on the diversity of literature and perspectives rather than a rejection of their legitimacy) to investigate multifaceted ethnic conflicts in developing countries, and "critical interdisciplinary" (challenging existing power structures and responding to the needs and problems of ignored groups) to view the conflicts based on theoretical perspectives.

Methodology

Data collection and analysis were conducted in two stages. In the first stage, secondary research was done by drawing materials from and engaging in, relevant literature and analysis of relevant case studies on humanitarian aid projects. Additionally, I analyzed past empirical studies of

INGOs in Myanmar that were completed by different scholars during the military regime era and post-democracy period of Myanmar In the second stage, a qualitative method of analysis was employed via a semi-structured email interview with the people of the Myanmar Diaspora in Canada. Due to there being no adequate database of Myanmar Diaspora individuals from which to select the respondents, comparable samples of 10 respondents who have experienced or who have knowledge of humanitarian aid INGOs and activities inside Myanmar were chosen by adopting 'snowball' sampling (Bryman & Bell, 2016) technique. The theoretical perspectives on colonialism, multiculturalism and human rights, and criminology yield additional contributions to the semi-structured email interview results.

Scope and Limitation

My research examines the contemporary challenges of humanitarian aid INGOs in developing countries, in addition to providing an empirical study of their behaviors in the conflict area of Myanmar. The study also reveals why understanding culture matters when it comes to providing humanitarian assistance in developing countries via some case studies and findings from semi-structured interviews with the people of the Myanmar Diaspora in Canada. The study is limited to recruiting interview participants (who have experiences or are knowledgeable about humanitarian INGOs in the conflict area of Myanmar) to attain complete and accurate information and achieve the objectives of my research. The proposed framework based on this study may not be appropriate for other developing countries or non-humanitarian aid projects.

Myanmar and its Ongoing Ethnic Conflicts

Myanmar, formerly known as Burma, is located in South East Asia and is bordered by India and Bangladesh to its west, Thailand and Laos to its east, and China to its north and northeast.

Myanmar is ethnically very diverse, with about 135 ethnic groups making up its population of approximately 54 million (Myanmar Population and Household Census, 2014). The country was ruled by a military junta with absolute power for almost fifty years (1962 to 2011). The civilian government was installed in 2011, and since April 2016 Aung San Suu Kyi (ASSK), leader of the National League for Democracy (NLD) and a Nobel Peace Prize recipient, has served as incumbent State Counsellor (www.nationsonline.org/oneworld/myanmar.htm).

The NLD government has initiated such positive steps as ratifying the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), engaging in resolving past land confiscation cases, and enacting minor reforms to laws regulating speech and assembly. Nevertheless, attempts to amend the 2008 constitution, which allows the military to appoint 25% of parliamentary seats, have been unsuccessful, with the army remaining the primary power-holder over national security and public administration via three ministries: defense, home affairs, and border affairs (https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2018/country-chapters/burma).

Myanmar Economic Monitor Report (October 2017) said that the country's macroeconomic growth was projected for 6.4% in the 2017/18 fiscal year, with a recovery in agriculture, service exports, and incoming transfers including grant aid, as compared to 5.9% in 2016/17 and 7% in 2015/16.(http://www.worldbank.org/en/country/myanmar/publication/myanmar-economic-monitor-october-2017). Poverty declined from 32.1% in 2004/05 to 25.6% in 2009/10 and 19.4% in 2015. This acknowledged, poverty remains substantial, especially in rural areas where people rely on agricultural and casual employment for their livelihoods. Ongoing brain drain seems to result from a shortage of skilled labor in the economy. Due to conflicts and environmental migration, it is now estimated that 4.25 million Myanmar nationals

are living abroad in neighboring countries in a quest for better jobs and higher wages (The International Organization for Migration, 2016).

Myanmar has the lowest life expectancy and the second-highest rate of infant and child mortality among ASEAN countries. In fact, Myanmar is described as one of the world's most disaster-prone countries given its exposure to multiple hazards, including floods, cyclones, earthquakes, landslides, and droughts. Currently, it ranks second out of 187 countries in the 2016 Global Climate Risk Index and ninth out of 191 countries on the Index for Risk Management (World Bank Report, 2018) (http://www.worldbank.org/en/country/myanmar/overview).

For Myanmar, ethnicity tends to be perceived as what Barth (1969) has termed a "boundary" that divides between "us and them" based on some presumed common ancestry. The complexity of highly diverse ethnic groups perpetuate inter and intra community issues, and particular subgroups within minority communities have historically assumed leading roles in seeking to reimagine a heterogeneous ethnic group within a stylized image of cultural and linguistic practice. In contrast, internal migration of non-indigenous people within the states and region dilute the traditional character of ethnic states. Although identification among mixed ethnic group seems not the issues because of social orientation and their manner shade each other, the National Registration Card (NRC) remains a crucial document to benefit from social, political and economic resources (South & Lall, 2018).

Myanmar's national identity comprised the eight major "national races" identified by corresponding language (for example, Bamar speak Bamar language, Rakhine speak Rakhine language, etc.), however the Bamar (ethnic) majority military government (1962-88) promoted an ideology of foregrounding Bamar identity as the basis of national belonging in order to assimilate ethnic groups under one national identity, thereby creating long-lasting mutual distrust

and violent ethnic boundary-making that inhibited nation-building (Gravers, 1999). Many ethnic groups perceived this ideology as "Burmanization" (Lewis, 1924; Taylor, 2005; Walton, 2013), and they have waged armed struggles against the military for many decades for their self-determination, in addition to fighting for the *de facto* assurance of ethnic minority rights (Kyed & Gravers, 2018).

Most ethnic leaders have trusted Aung San Suu Kyi (ASSK) to include them in any peace process, albeit with a wariness of the NLD leadership, which is composed mainly of ex-Myanmar army officers who share a common political culture and conceptions of state-society relations based on a strong centralized system. There are three main ethnic nationalist communities in Myanmar: (i) the United Nationalities Alliance (UNA), which represents sixty-five ethnic nationality candidates elected in 1990; (ii) some twenty armed ethnic organizations, which have agreed on ceasefires since 1989; (iii) those insurgent groups still at war with the Myanmar army, most of whom are also members of the National Democratic Front (the NDF was established in 1976, and several members have ceasefire agreements) (South, 2004).

As stated above, since April 2016, the NLD (democratic) government led by the State Counsellor ASSK attempted to assume complete control over the country through the peace process. For many decades up until 2010, the political system in Myanmar was a centralized bureaucracy entirely shaped by the Tatmadaw (Military junta). The 2008 constitution was deliberately structured and overwhelmingly approved by over 90% of the 22 million voters in a country prone to cheating and fraud. It not only provides the opportunities for the military to reserve 25% of parliamentary seats and for the Senior General to control three important ministries (Defense, Home Affairs, and Border Affairs), but it also grants the military the

constitutional rights to declare a state of emergency and to seize power when deemed necessary (http://factsanddetails.com/southeast-asia/Myanmar/sub5_5f/entry-3100.html).

Recent Rakhine Crisis

Unfortunately, in 2017, the Myanmar military had to carry out counterinsurgency in Rakhine State after an attack on the border post in October 2016 (resulting in the loss of lives of the members of security forces), and in November 2016 (the clash allegedly left 69 insurgents and 17 security forces dead). Although the attacks were carried out by a Muslim militant group called Harakah al-Yaqin (later renamed Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army "ARSA") that was residing in Saudi Arabia, the subsequent military and police operation led to a significant number of Muslims fleeing across the borders to Bangladesh, and the security forces were accused of serious human rights violations by the international community (Anna Advisory Commission Report, 2017).

The latest attack by ARSA on 25 August 2017, a couple of days after the Anna commission's final report including 88 recommendations based on findings was released, sparked a military response forcing thousands of refugees into neighboring Bangladesh and thousands of others to temporary camps in Southern Rakhine (Global New Light of Myanmar, 2017). The government declared the ARSA and its supporters as a terrorist group under the Counter-Terrorism Law Section 6, Sub-Section 5 (State Counsellor Office Myanmar, 2017). On the other hand, the State Counsellor Aung San Suu Kyi (ASSK) responded that not only Muslims and Rakhines but also small minority indigenous people such as Daing-net, Mro, Thet, Magyi and Hindu have had to flee their homes but the world was unaware. The ARSA members committed the atrocities and crimes against Hindu minority such as massacre, abductions, and

other abuses (http://www.globalnewlightofmyanmar.com/state-counsellor-myanmar-not-fear-world-scrutiny/).

According to Amnesty International report, 99 Hindus were killed, 46 disappeared with unknown fate to present. The victims were men, women and the young children under the age of eight, and some women could manage to survive on the condition of agreeing to convert from Hinduism to Islam and then many of survivor women force-married by the ARSA fighters (Amnesty International Report, 2018). Nevertheless, this latest ethnic conflict enhanced the Muslim Bengalis as a portrait of the desperate Rohingya. Myanmar was suspected of latent Islamophobia and the Buddhist population of the Rakhine state, continuously featured in the news, were portrayed as the nasty henchmen of the military (Leider, 2018).

The 2008 constitution poses an added dimension to the challenges that the NLD government has to face when dealing with the deep-rooted Rakhine crisis. Despite the fact that the committee for the rule of law and development in the Rakhine state had been formed upon its assuming power in April 2016, the country is not yet a wholly democratic society and its elected government cannot direct military operations (Interview with Aung San Suu Kyi by NHK News, 2018). Moreover, the victimization claims of the Muslims of Northern Rakhine State have been constructed according to the Rohingya elite's criteria of universal human rights, which is relevant to Loytomaki's (2012) discussion of human rights law as a means of empowerment in struggles for recognition as well as in gaining recognition by obtaining victim status.

The word "Rohingya," which means "the natives of Arakan" in Bengali (Saw, 2011; Saw, 2016; Win, 2018), elicits the animosity of the people of Myanmar who perceive them as illegal migrants, as well as Rakhine people perceive themselves, victims of British colonization. Nevertheless, the state's performance in the Rakhine crisis has been weak, and it has been unable

to compete with the international community's intervention as the new democratic government is still struggling to reach a wholly democratic society. On the other hand, the multiple failures of the Myanmar authorities have created a vacuum to be filled by an internationally accepted account of Rohingya (Leider, 2018) via a purely human rights violation ground, which becomes a positive impact for the stateless Muslim Bengalis in the 21st century while also entailing a negative impact for the indigenous people of the Rakhine state.

Overview of NGOs/INGOs in Myanmar

Overseas-based activists often assume that there is no civil society in Myanmar. This is far from correct, and the emergence of civil society networks within and between ethnic communities has been under-examined over the past decade (South, 2004). Myanmar's civil society is structured by three types of organizations: Community-based Organization (CBOs), Local Non-Government Organizations (LNGOs), and International Non-Government Organizations (INGOs). The CBOs are informal or voluntary associations at the village level, and they perform social and religious functions via unpaid staff members. Despite official statistics being unavailable for CBOs, it is estimated that there are as many as 214,000 in Myanmar (Heidel, 2006).

The LNGOs were typically originated from cities, townships or population centers, and in the 1990s, some LNGOs were founded by different ethnic groups, youths, and women's environmental and human rights groups in the border areas. While all LNGOs may not register with the government, they are operated by paid and skilled staff and increasingly connected to (overseas based) regional NGO and INGO networks, especially in armed conflict-affected areas. Estimated statistics of LNGOs in Myanmar vary: one article claimed more than 10000 (International Center for Not-for-Profit Law, 2014) , while 'Save the Children' declared there to

be 270 in 2003 (ADB-Civil Society Briefs Myanmar, 2015). Additionally, since the early 1990s, the ethnic group led LNGOs such as Karen, Chin, Shan, Karenni and Mon provided humanitarian relief and community development programs among the displaced communities (South, 2004).

The International NGOs (INGOs) have entered Myanmar since the 1990s and have been actively working in humanitarian response and longer-term development sectors including environment, health, education, livelihoods, rule of law, advocacy, and civil society capacity building. The numbers of INGOs significantly grow in the aftermath of cyclone Nargis in 2008 and forming of the civilian government in early 2011. Consequently, the local civil society (CBOs and LNGOs) have to network to the INGO communities with the influx of expanding operations by the foreign stakeholders in Myanmar (https://www.adb.org/publications/civil-society-briefs-myanmar).

The behaviors of INGOs in a post-democracy period of Myanmar, especially in the Rakhine crisis in 2017, tend to be more questionable than before. Until 2015, the international media exclusively paid attention to the conditions of the internally displaced people – whether they be Bengalis (Rohingyas) or indigenous people in the camps of the Rakhine state -- but did not address the people at the border of Bangladesh (Leider, 2018). The massive counterinsurgency in Rakhine State in August-September 2017 after the ARSA attacks led to a fleeing of people (in particular Bengali Muslims and Hindu) from Myanmar in a mass exodus that the UN called a "textbook example of ethnic cleansing." However, it was not new for the Myanmar army applying the tool of "Four Cuts Policy," which entails eliminating the access of armed opposition groups to recruits, information, supplies, and financial support, while simultaneously countering the ethnic armed groups. For example, as of October 2005, at least

540,000 people were internally displaced in eastern Burma, with the majority being the Karen, Karenni, Shan, and Mon. There were 11000 IDPs (Internally Displaced People) in the Karen state in March-April of 2006 (Win, 2018). Why did the UN and the international community remain silent when the military was employing these tactics against the ethnic nationalities for many decades? Why did they care only for the Rohingya (Bengali Muslims), and why did they not show concern for the indigenous people in the region?

The UN and the international community downplay ARSA's role in the Rakhine crisis, but there are many observers based in Asia who have explored how ASRA's achievements have come at the expense of the roughly 700,000 Muslim Bengalis who have fled from the Rakhine state and who are now stuck in wretched camps in Bangladesh. ASRA obtains funding from West Asia, mainly Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, and recruits angry young men to join them (Saikia, 2017; Win, 2018) by propagating the claims of ethnic and religious minority legitimacy in Myanmar (Neelakantan, 2018). Some analysists and researchers reveal the ideologies of ARSA who claim themselves and some of the diplomats have perceived them as "freedom fighters", intended to protect the Rohingyas from Myanmar military abuses, and an ethno-nationalist group rather than the jihadist organization. Lintner (2019) argues the ARSA's claim that true ethno-nationalistic group do not call themselves a faith movement. Lintner also criticizes the leader of the ARSA, Ataullah Abu Ammar Junjuni, born in Pakistan and lived in Saudi Arabia, for started jumping into the issue around 2012, but even cannot pronounce the name of a single place in Rakhine state correctly and speaks a Chittagonian dialect of Bengali peppered with Urdu words.

Similarly, Leider (2018) has highlighted the rise of the ARSA in late 2016 that they bring back the militant tradition, not as a political movement with a defined program, instead, exposing

as a representative ethno-nationalist organization among other politically active groups in the country. In contrast, ARSA expands opportunities for terrorists' recruitment in the South and South Asia, in addition to developing the groundwork to acquire international advocacy via Diaspora Muslim supporters because the Rohingya identifies itself more with religious affiliation than with their race and cultures (Win, 2018).

On the other hand, the NLD government appears to have mounted a slow response to the crisis due to complex internal politics, and the Rohingya has acquired strong support from the international community, especially from western nations via international Rohingya caretakers such as NGOs, think tanks, academics, and legal experts, who have analyzed the crisis via a purely human rights-based approach (Leider, 2018) but who fail to see the problem in its entirety. In this particular ethnic conflict, I argue that the INGOs and the western nations looked at the issues only through the humanitarian ground while ignoring historical context and the complex internal-political issues between the new democratic government and the Myanmar army. They also overlook a trap of the 2008 constitution that has positioned ASSK to navigate the fragile relationship with the Senior General who represents the military.

In contrast, ASSK has been facing increasing international pressure -- including from the INGOs -- for being unable to stop the brutalities of Myanmar's military and for failing to issue condemnations against the army. Some pertinent examples are: Amnesty International's withdrawal of its most prestigious human rights prize from ASSK in November 2018 (www.amnesty.org); Canada's stripping of ASSK of her honorary citizenship in October 2018 (www.channelnewsasia.com); Carleton University's rescinding of an honorary degree granted to ASSK in October 2018 (www.cbc.ca/news); Oxford's withdrawal of ASSK's Freedom of the City Award in November 2017 (www.thedailystar.net). Furthermore, the U.S considered

denouncing Myanmar for "crimes against humanity", and Vice President Mike Pence warned ASSK during their meeting that her country's persecution of Rohingya is inexcusable and that those responsible for the violence would be held accountable. Nevertheless, ASSK has responded that we understand our country better than any other country does (https://www.cnbc.com). In other words, she signals to the world that while she remains in power for the foreseeable future she has other priorities than confronting the military.

Humanitarian Aid INGOs: Controversy about aid and behaviors

According to the INGO Forum Myanmar, established in 2007, there are currently over 100 INGOs, and the growth rate is approximately 125% compared to 45% in 2004 (May-Kyawt, 2006). Out of those INGOs, the United Nations (UN) 2018 Interim Humanitarian Response Plan indicates that 43 INGOs are providing humanitarian aid and development activities together with 8 UN organizations in the affected regions of the country. However, whether humanitarian operations have positively or negatively impacted Myanmar is under-reported. Aid may be helpful in some areas, however, the question as to who is most likely to benefit, the implementing agency or the targeted people, will be ongoing so long as the country's civil society and true local leaders remain excluded in developing agendas and implementing policies.

Jacobs (2017) suggests that the INGOs need to take direction from true local leaders and community agencies/local NGOs in order to achieve more positive outcomes given that the imposition of the donor's view and the failure to understand local cultures can result in toxic relationships amongst stakeholders. Controversy about foreign aid in Myanmar has existed since 2001. Eight UN agencies then began to provide humanitarian assistance to affected communities, though this was often supported only via ethnic nationality and democracy groups that did not

consider the degree of accountability to the communities they claimed to represent (South, 2004).

Most international donors channel the funds through INGOs, a process usually led by foreign citizens subordinated by local people (Jacobs, 2017). According to Financial Tracking Service (FTS), in 2018, various international donors provided the total amount of $188.8 million in humanitarian funding to Myanmar through INGOs (https://fts.unocha.org/countries/153/summary/2018). There is an ongoing argument among the observers and the scholars concerning the accountability of INGOs in Myanmar. Jacobs (2017) argues that the INGOs working in Myanmar with the subordination of local NGOs and community are not only for needed development action, but also, it is a lucrative profession for the foreign workers in the "helping" industry. Shrestha (2014) has underlined the INGOs' lack of accountability in terms of their operating cost and performance in Myanmar, remarking that the existence of these organizations can become counterproductive and threatening to the political environment, especially when the government is working on the peace process with all armed groups.

It is because the INGOs are creating a parallel and competing system that weakens the government's system rather than developing the country and its people. Positions with high salary and a good expatriate facility for the foreign workers at the top level seem to create disapproval from locals towards the growing INGOs. Locals believe that only small percentages of funds contribute to the project because of their high operational cost. Before one aid associated project is completed, Western aid workers seem to find another cause in the country to champion the new project with new aid, positioning themselves as "free-lance contractors", and

that makes INGOs become perceived as parasites under the agenda of poverty and development (Jacobs, 2017).

Backlash against INGOs regarding a lack of transparency in operational cost and their interests in continual of aid projects seems to be more controversial in Rohingya crisis. Based on the survey results of 42 local NGOs and 19 INGOs including UN agencies, the Coastal Association for Social Transformation Trust (COAST) has reported that the operational cost of the INGOs in Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh is five times higher than the operational cost of local NGOs in that region. According to one calculation based on a case study of an INGO working in Cox's Bazar over a one-year period, a certain INGO had spent 18% of its budget for their program while allocating 82% for operations. The vast amount spent on transportation costs - the daily movement of some 545-575 cars from Cox's Bazar to Rohingya camps - has forced local children to stop attending schools (https://www.thedailystar.net/rohingya-crisis/news/ingos-spending-rohingyas-operations-eating-thick-slice-1667980).

Bangladeshi police in the Cox's Bazar district also address in an internal report how local and international NGOs, as well as UN agencies, are interested in allowing the crisis to extend in order to provide themselves with jobs with good salaries. Therefore they misinterpret the "dignified and protected repatriation of the refugees" as a discouragement to the Rohingya refugees and have been making delays in the nature of the development activity and repatriation process to Myanmar (Roshid, 2018). As referred to in a memorandum of understanding (MOU) between the Myanmar government, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) on the repatriation of refugees, Myanmar has been ready for refugee repatriation since January 23, 2018. However, the Bangladeshi government fails to fulfil their part of the bilateral agreement because it has differing views and

interests on the role of INGOs in the repatriation of refugees. The Myanmar lawmakers criticize human rights NGOs for suggesting that refugees not go back to Myanmar until a guarantee of citizenship is given, which is not something easily done without appropriate verification processes (Naing Zaw, 2018).

The UN refugee agencies opposed the repatriation plan and aid groups as being unsafe for the refugees while hundreds of Rohingya refugees protested in November against their repatriation in Cox's Bazar camp, chanting the slogan of "we never return to Myanmar without citizenship and our rights" (Rashid, 2018). In this respect, it seems that the bilateral repatriation plan is gloomy. This paper addresses various aspects of the ethnic conflicts and their related refugee crisis in an attempt to understand these problems in their historical and political contexts rather than merely as an issue of humanitarian violation. In addition, the paper concerns the behaviors of humanitarian aid INGOs and UN agencies, focusing on how they intervene in the refugee crisis under the pretext of human rights violations while effectively supporting their own interests in the process. Do INGOs do good or do they actually harm the lives of thousands of displaced people in wretched refugee camps? The following chapter will review the literature relevant to the study, and that will contribute to identifying scholarship gaps as well as generating further questions based on the previously neglected area of past studies.

CHAPTER TWO

Review of Related NGO Literature

This chapter is composed of important topics related to conceptualization of NGOs/INGOs, its characteristics and activities that connect to the rise of criticism under the agenda of aid and humanitarian, the power corruption at the UN and its development agencies, and the various performance management frameworks applied to NGOs. The literature review assists me in obtaining a well-understanding of the thesis-related background, identifying gaps and further questions based on the work done of past studies. The relevant literature is also linked to what is happening in Myanmar concerning aid, and humanitarian that helps to achieve the objectives of the thesis. This chapter was accomplished by drawing materials from and engaging with different works of INGO/NGO related literature, in addition to employing a multi-analysis of extracted case studies on humanitarian aid projects and past empirical studies of INGOs in Myanmar that were completed by different scholars. Moreover, I have extended the readings of newspapers, magazines, reports, and official websites regarding humanitarian issues in Myanmar in order to support my critical analysis with different approach as well as to make effective conclusion and recommendation at the end of the thesis. Details of the material incorporated into this study are provided in the Bibliography.

Conceptualization of NGOs and INGOs

NGOs are commonly defined as voluntary, not-for-profit organizations, independent of government and business (Michael, 2004). The United Nations, UN describes an NGO as

> A non-governmental organization (NGO) is any non-profit, voluntary citizens' group which is organized on a local, national or international level. Task-oriented and driven by people with a common interest, NGOs perform a variety of services and humanitarian functions, bring citizens' concerns to Governments, monitor policies, and encourage political participation at the community level. NGOs provide analysis and expertise,

serve as early warning mechanisms and help monitor and implement international agreements, including Agenda 2030 and the Sustainable Development Goals. Typically, they are organized around specific issues, such as the UN pillars of peace and security, human rights, and development. NGOs often promote UN observances and international years and decades established by the General Assembly to focus world attention on important issues facing humanity. Their relationships with offices and agencies of the United Nations System differ depending on their location and mandate. (https://outreach.un.org/ngorelations/content/about-us-0).

Nevertheless, the boundaries are still unclear in reality and to which extent NGOs are 'non-governmental' for a close working relationship between Northern and Southern states is a source of much debate (Hearn, 2007). Willetts (2002) argues that there is no generally accepted definition of NGO, and the term carries different connotations in different circumstances. Additionally, Willetts has highlighted three generally accepted characteristics that match the conditions for recognition by the United Nations (UN), which are (i) NGO will not be constituted as a political party, (ii) It will be non-profit making, and (iii) it will not be a criminal group, in particular it will be non-violent. Willetts' ideology is related to Vakil (1997)'s perception that acronym NGO is not very helpful in describing the organizations it defines, but it explains what the organizations are not rather than what they are.

Teegen et al., (2004) define the NGO with the perspective of social purpose as "NGOs are private, not-for-profit organizations that aim to serve particular societal interests by focusing advocacy and/or operational efforts on social, political and economic goals, including equity, education, health, environmental protection and human rights." The major players in social purpose NGOs are NGO staff, private foundations, governments, and multilateral funding supporters (donors), and their performance is evaluated based on their impact on the clients and its communities (Woller & Parsons, 2002). Some examples of social purpose clients include people with HIV/AIDs, ethnic minorities threatened with genocide, particular animal or plant

species facing extinction, discriminated women in accessing public services and future opportunities (Teegen et al., 2002).

Country-wide organizations in which individual people work in local groups co-ordinate in provinces, and the headquarters are located in the capital cities, are called national NGOs. The national NGOs join together with international NGO (INGO) which may consist of regional groups of countries. However, all the levels of hierarchy may not necessarily exist when the countries are too small to have provincial structures. With respond to the new politics, various terminologies have been introduced in referring local NGOs such as grass-roots organizations (GRO), community-based organizations (CBOs), and civil society organizations (CSOs) (Willetts, 2002). However, whether these new terms cover organizations that only operate at the local level or also include local branches of national organizations are still unanswered questions.

In the case of Myanmar, the civil society is structured by three types: Community-based Organizations (CBOs) which are informal or voluntary, Local Non-Government Organizations (LNGOs) which are formed by different ethnic, youth, women's environmental and human rights groups, and International NGOs (INGOs) that connect to LNGOs when operating the activities (ADB Civil Society Briefs Myanmar, 2015). The below figure illustrates the general concept of how the NGOs connect and conduct their activities between the multi-levels: National, Regional, and Local.

Figure 1: Conceptualization of NGOs


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┌─────────────────────────┐                    ┌─────────────────────────┐
│ National NGOs (NNGOs)   │                    │ International NGOs       │
│  ✓ HQ offices located in│   Join Together    │ (INGOs)                 │
│    the capital cities   │  ───────────────►  │  ✓ Consists of          │
│  ✓ Countrywide          │                    │    regional groups      │
│    organizations work   │                    │    of countries         │
│    in local groups      │                    └─────────────────────────┘
│  ✓ Co-ordinate in       │                              │
│    provinces            │                         Connect to
└─────────────────────────┘                              ▼
                                              ┌─────────────────────────┐
                                              │ Local NGOs (LNGOs):     │
                                              │  ✓ Grass-roots          │
                                              │    organizations (GRO)  │
Source: author's own work                     │  ✓ Community based       │
                                              │    organizations (CBOs) │
                                              │  ✓ Civil society         │
                                              │    organizations (CSOs) │
                                              └─────────────────────────┘
```
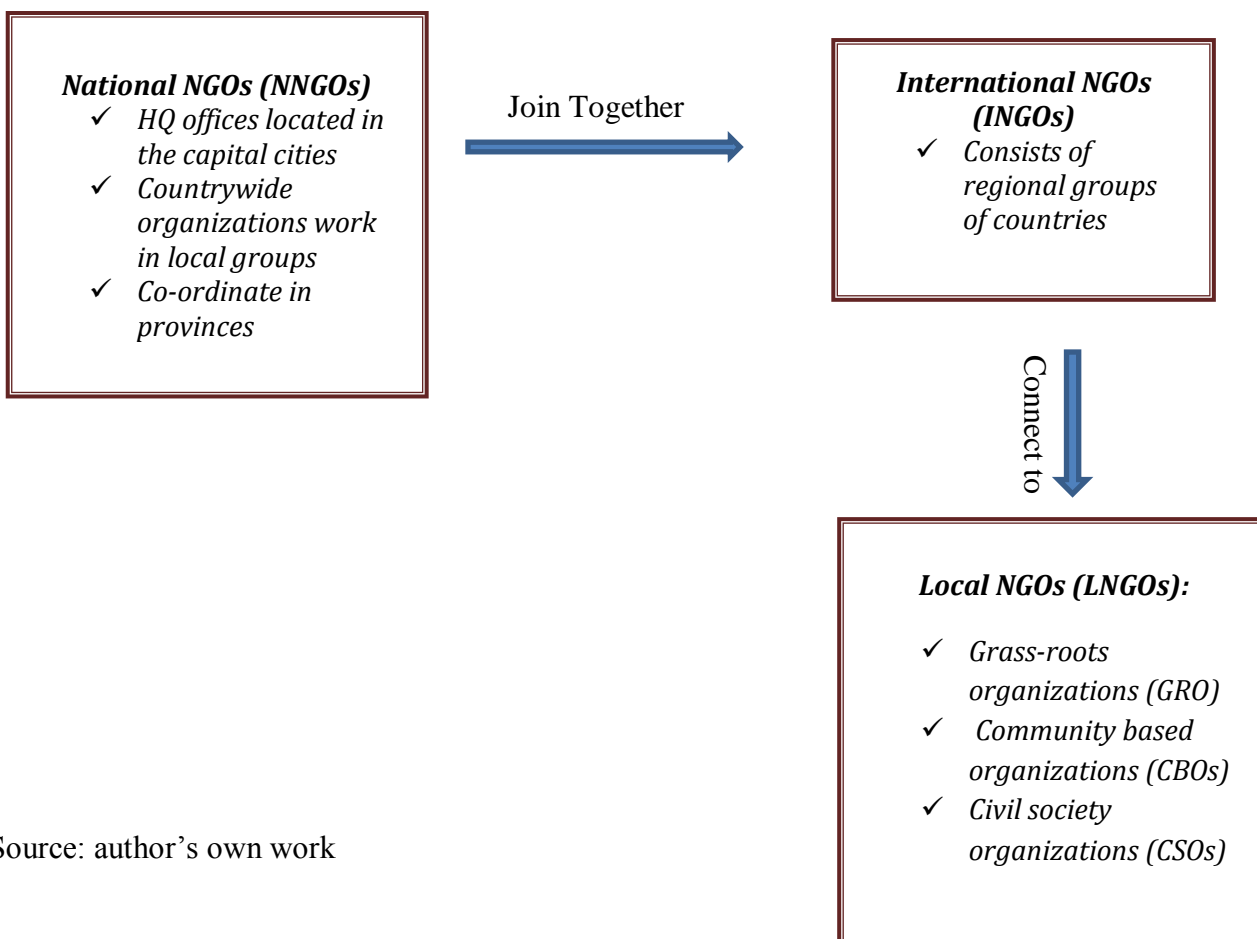
Advocacy and the Rise of NGOs in the global context

As Stromquist (1998) suggests, NGOs may be well positioned in understanding specific needs and providing effective voices to people especially when the market ignores these needs (Korten, 1990) and governmental regimes are deemed too repressive, too weak, or too resource-strapped to serve them (Keck & Sikkink, 1998; Meyer, 1999). The presence of NGOs in conflict areas started in the Cold War time, mainly in relief assistance, and protection of human rights and minorities. The new culture of humanitarian intervention was introduced with the birth of Amnesty International (AI) in 1961, Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) in 1971, and the

organization that subsequently became Human Rights Watch (HRW) in 1978, and continued to be at present (Irrera, 2010). According to Cooley and Ron (2002), the number of NGOs in and near armed conflict zones has risen in the 1980s and 1990s: 37 foreign relief agencies in a major Cambodian refugee camp along the Thai border in 1980; more than 200 NGOs in Goma by 1995; 240 NGOs in Bosnia in 1996. Generally, their actions emphasize on human and civil rights, peace promotion, and environment and social issues as moderate actors and specialized groups of experts (Rucht, 2006).

There has been no doubt that many INGOs are skillful in providing certain goods and services in a trusted position because they have gained technical expertise resulting from working in a difficult situation or with underserved populations. For example, my previous research about INGOs in Myanmar (2006) revealed that the operating conditions for INGOs in Myanmar at that time were very challenging under the military regime who looked at international aid organizations with high suspicion. The military government felt that the INGOs would act as a conduit to transmit potentially damaging information out of the country. The challenges included lack of accurate data, lack of access to all parts of the country, inability to address the underlying problems such as forced labour, forced relocations, armed conflicts, etc. Moreover, Thailand bordered base INGOs were restricted to work only in the refugee camps. Yangon bomb attacks in May 2005 made restrictions on importing vital equipment, and a lack of access to outer-lying projects was increased. However, the INGO staff attempted to get actual data from non-government media when implementing 103 projects under education sector, 228 under healthcare sector, 81 under social sector, 76 under economic sector, 16 under the environmental sector, and 19 under the integrated sector (totaling 523 projects) (May Kyawt, 2006). In other words, the INGOs were well positioned in understanding the specific needs of

Myanmar people and provided effective voices to people when the military regime ignore these needs, that was relevant to what Stromquist has discussed above.

Peterson (1992) describes two NGOs' advocacy strategies: 'insider' strategy that influences decision makers directly, and 'outsider' strategy that intends to mobilize public opinion. The NGOs incorporate themselves into established political and business systems (Keohane & Nye, 1971; Mathews, 1997). They involve in the full range of exchanges among business, society, and government through both insider activities in which they work within the powerful institution frameworks (Deslauriers & Kotschwar, 2003) or as partners with key decision makers, and outsider activities in which they challenge those institutions' existence or limit their impact by appealing to public opinion (Deri, 2003; Florini, 2003). There are large numbers of NGOs at least at the local level in all societies in modern times. However, the presence or absence of a democratic political culture can be varied in determining the number of NGOs depending on the size of a country, its religious and cultural diversity, the economic complexity and the infrastructure development. For example, there are tens of thousands of NGOs in countries such as Bangladesh and India, despite relatively few in Iceland or Finland (Willetts, 2002).

Nevertheless, the argument about NGOs predominantly being a feature of Western societies is ongoing among Scholars. Willetts (2002) argues that it might be a practical necessity for an international NGO to have a headquarters office in a particular building, but the location of the office in North American or a European city does not convert a global NGO into a Northern NGO. Willetts suggests the proper criteria to access whether an organization is global, to be based on the location of membership, the staffing of its headquarters, the sources of funding and the program contents.

Typically, international aid and development projects are designed by the resource transfer approach, including money and people from rich countries to the 'poor' communities to improve their development. The INGOs perceive that people remain poor is not just because of insufficient resources or knowledge, but because of power imbalance, which means lack of power in terms of gender, ethnicity, religion, political and economic, prevent people from taking action for their development (Kelly, 2002). As a response, the INGOs tend to engage directly in advocating for changes in multi-levels and systems where people are discriminated and oppressed from developing them (Fowler, 2000; Hudson, 2000a; Hudson, 2000b; Davies, 2001). However, to which extent, the involvement of INGOs in the "change" process of recipient country can leave a positive impact, should be examined by the scholars to ensure the positive outcomes rather than polarizing the conflict communities.

Although the estimated number of NGOs ranges mainly due to varied definitions, the proliferation is pointed in recent years (Spar & La Mure, 2003). Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) notes an increasing number of NGOs from 1600 in 1980 to 2500 in 1990 within OECD member countries (Van Tuijl, 1999). Many NGOs are small and local organizations, but the rest are larger multinational entities employable thousands of people (Teegen et al., 2004). The increasing range of Northern funded NGOs in developing countries is dramatic within the period of the 1990s to 20th centuries. For example, the registered African NGOs in Kenya increase to 2511 in 2003 comparing 511 in 1996 (World Resource Institute, 2005); in Tanzania, there were 41 registered NGOs in 1990, and the figure was more than 10,000 by 2000 (Reuben, 2002). Early in the 20th century, some global human rights issues become noticeable that resulted in the civil society actors organized activity to temper individual states' power (Florini, 2003). On the other hand, the advance of globalization has had some significant

adverse effects on society, especially within national borders, and these effects become the world's problem today (Teegen et al., 2004). Some examples, such as the SARS epidemic, ethnic crises, and illegal immigration issues caused more demands in humanitarian assistance needs that consequently permitted NGOs and even fostered their existence. In contrast, how the humanitarian aid NGOs will position themselves at the intractable environments created by the various political, historical and geopolitics of the recipient countries become controversy amongst the governments, civilians, international observers and researchers.

Impact of INGOs' Contextualization

According to the Conflict Sensitivity Consortium (formerly Africa Peace Forum et al., 2004), the 'context' that INGOs typically operate are political, economic, socio-cultural and historical factors, from the micro-level (GRO, CBOs, CSOs and local NGOs) to the macro-level of the national and international (INGOs, National NGOs) scene (Ware, 2011). There is no identified pattern or system for the development programs as aid agencies, and donors recognize that every context is unique, as well as it is understandable that how INGOs contextualize their work in one country may not work in another (Stokes, 2010). However, all forms of international assistance have a political context arising from international relations, donors' concerns, and the complexities in the recipient country (Inwood, 2008). Evans and Newnham (1998) suggest that humanitarian assistance to be viewed as the voluntary non-political provision of relief assistance to those suffering from conflict and natural disaster.

In contrast, some forms of aid assistance, especially in the armed conflicts, generate a new sense of political interference rather than as the voluntary non-political provision assistance. This interference can further complicate the war and give more harm than good to the civilians.

Also, some humanitarian actions have attributed to a sense of political and security linkages (Vaux, 2006). For example, the rise in the use of military personnel when carrying out development and humanitarian aid in Afghanistan and Iraq (Inwood, 2008), as well as military interventions such as NATO bombing during the Kosovo crisis, and a combination of bombing and food aid in Afghanistan (Hilhorst, 2002). Such an unfortunate label of humanitarian action tend to raise the questions: what is good humanitarian assistance?; what constitutes the humanitarian actions in the sense of preventing and alleviating human suffering? (Hilhorst, 2002). If the humanitarian aid agencies remain confining in the narrow box of their specialization without developing the broader understanding of the context (Uvin, 1999), and they fail to acknowledge that people's perceptions of politics shape their interpretation (Fernando & Hilhorst, 2006), how quickly the recipient country can remake state of stability will leave under the question mark.

The intervention of donor governments under the agenda of humanitarian in a crisis or conflict situation is allowed in a less complicated and safer way. However, if it is acting as a more forceful approach to political change (Harmer & Macrae, 200) than a provision of humanitarian relief, that action will not prevent the potential root causes of the crisis and may relieve only the immediate suffering (Vogel, 1996). On the other hand, agencies' avoiding government attention and over-maintaining independence to get the government's approval for access to the areas create excessive consciousness when producing the reports. That further weakens the recipient country's political situation and will not be able to stop the humanitarian crisis effectively. It happened in Myanmar during the absolute power of the junta when the aid agencies were required to rely on the regime for approval to access the crisis region (Inwood, 2008).

Most INGOs' engagement with the military government was not transparent, and it entrenched the junta's illegitimate position (ALTSEAN Burma, 2002) despite there were successfully coordinated programs with the commitment of government officials for the benefit of civilians (UNAIDS, 2006a).

Inwood's findings based on semi-structured interviews and discussions with groups of representatives from INGOs, UN agencies, donor agencies, journalists, members of exile groups, and academics between 2006 and 2008, have concluded that effective humanitarian assistance is possible in the contexts of historical and political in Myanmar. This concept resulted from ruling by a series of kings, colonialists, foreign military commanders, local political leaders and the senior generals. Another interesting study was conducted by Ware (2011) via interviewing with key practitioners from INGOs and UN organizations based in Myanmar. The study suggested that a more nuanced understanding of the complex socio-political context and its deep historical antecedent support how the INGOs contextualize the way they work with different stakeholders in maximizing the development effectiveness in the intractable environment due to over abuse of power, human rights violations and suppression of democracy by the military regime. Ware's fieldwork also clearly demonstrates that socio-political context in Myanmar has had a significant impact on the best practice implementation of international development principles and approaches by INGOs as well as the most complex factors requiring to understand what the people need in each context are cultural.

The studies of Inwood and Ware have highlighted the importance of non-confrontational INGO advocacy which emphasizes equity approach development in more humanitarian than excessive rights-based principles. To be able to access to conflict area and poor communities, the INGOs applied adequate contextualization in the sense of not only political but also socio-

political, historical and cultural to achieve positive outcomes on particular issues even under the military government. Moreover, Ware (2010)'s analysis of how INGOs contextualize their implementation of project-based interventions to be most sensitive to the context of Myanmar has explored the different approaches of INGOs when working with multi-layer stakeholders in facilitating greater effectiveness in community development programs. For example, the INGOs contextualize their work with officials, donors and civil society, under the ideas of partnerships, capacity building, advocacy, rights-based approach, and accountability. On the other hand, they deal with local communities under the notions of participation, equity, sustainability, context sensitivity, and active citizenship.

The civilian government was installed in 2011. However, attempts to amend the 2008 constitution, which allows the military to appoint 25% of parliamentary seats, have been unsuccessful, with the army remaining the primary power-holder over national security and public administration via three ministries: defense, home affairs, and border affairs (World Report, 2018). Concurrently, the INGO development agencies from the USA and the EU governments have increased the assistance projects (Jacobs, 2017) to support the country's nascent reforms and transition to democracy. In contrast, the country continues to face significant humanitarian challenges related to the recent crisis in Rakhine State, large-scale displacement, an ongoing armed conflict in some parts of the country, inter-communal tensions and vulnerability to natural disasters. Unfortunately, post-2012 period remarks on the track record as the local people expose a backlash against the behaviors of INGOs in the conflict area, especially after the communal violence exploded in 2012 between the two groups.

The criticism against the INGOs is based on three facts. First, serious doubt about the legitimacy when the INGO forum-Myanmar portrays the Myanmar Buddhists as 'terrorists' on

the social media with regards to the violence against the Muslims in Rakhine and other parts of Myanmar, originated from three Muslim men raped and murdered a young Buddhist woman in 2012 (Jacobs, 2017). Second, media professionals turn to study the self-identified Rohingya history (after communal violence of 2012) mainly on the historiography produced by Rohingya advocates between 1980s and early 1990s and ignore the original arrival of Bengali Muslims before that period. Consequently, the Western-based INGOs have firmly established a word of the Rohingya as the "most persecuted minority" and wrongly attributed to the UN which does not have a level of persecution around the world (Leider, 2018). Third, imbalance resource allocation by the INGOs between the conflict communities, that has fostered the perception of socially and politically- motivated locals (Arakanese) as being "left out" at the expense of the "other" (Rohingya) (Myo Oo, 2017). INGOs exclude locals from aid benefits, with the reason being that the locals are economically better off than the migrant (Bengali Muslim) community despite the fact that the conflict region (Rakhine State) suffer from deprivation and rank as Myanmar's poorest state (UNDP Myanmar, 2015).

The frustration of the locals burst to the explosion on 26 and 27 March 2014 by attempting to raid the international 33 premises belonging to seven UN agencies and seven INGOs in Sittwe, Rakhine State that accounted the estimated total damages of over US$1million (Humanitarian Bulletin Myanmar, March 2014). The tension between the INGOs and the locals has reached a peak when finding World Food Program (WFP) biscuits and "US Agency for International Development parcels" in the ARSA camp on August 30, 2017. It was followed by the furious public's accused of INGOs providing aids to the terrorists, made a war in Rakhine state and then run away from there (The Guardian News, 2017). Loss of trust between the government, civilians and the INGOs has badly disrupted the aid operations in the conflict area in 2017. The disruptions include sudden refusal of travel authorization to most INGOs and some

UN agencies, the denial of local transport contractors to take WFP food deliveries to the camps (Humanitarian Bulletin Myanmar, 2017), the indigenous landlords' unwillingness to rent offices and the pressure from nationalists who refuse to rent vehicles and fuels to the UN and INGOs (Arkin, 2017).

The ethnic conflicts in Northern Rakhine of Myanmar were exaggerated due to the premature and partial reports by the Western-based INGOs and human rights actors (Aung Zeya, 2018; Lawi Weng, 2018). The reports accuse of extreme words such as "genocide", "holocaust", "crime against humanity", and "ethnic cleansing" to the State's army but sideline the attacks and atrocities of ARSA terrorist groups who claimed to fight for the rights of the Rohingya people (Moe Myint, 2018). The ARSA's attacks provoked the massive military "clearance operations" and created a mass exodus of the victims to attract the international attention of Muslims forced to flee the Rakhine state although all of them are not the Muslims (Moe, 2017). The INGOs fail to unfold that ARSA is backed, financed, trained and controlled by AL Qaeda and Islamic State (IS) cells (Aung Zaya, 2018). The rise of backlash against the INGOs' behaviors under the agenda of aid and humanitarian in a post- 2012 alarm the urgent needs of the investigation. How does the humanitarian aid INGOs contextualize their work in Myanmar, especially in a complexed and multifaceted conflict area in terms of different ethnic groups, during democracy transaction period? To which extent, how do any new aspects and ideologies of those INGOs shape the consequences and impact positively or negatively the country and conflict communities?

Criticism in the NGO Community under the Agenda of Aid and Humanitarian

The international NGO community starts receiving strong criticism and warning against a loss of autonomy and legitimacy in the 1990s (Hearn, 2007). Fowler (1991), one of the first writers has underlined the NGO revolution on the continent within a broader historical and political context. Fowler expresses the irony result that Africa is again the subject of two- scrambles after one hundred years of European power ending in the Berlin Conference of 1884: the scramble of non-governmental development organizations in participating in the continent's development, and the scramble of official aid agencies in financing and working with and through NGOs. Fowler's study is supported by Hanlon (1991) who argue that aid has been used just to recolonize Mozambique based on the research's findings. Hanlon's investigation reveals that aid is received below the average for low-income sub-Saharan African countries, as well as the typical characteristic of the aid in Mozambique in the 1970s such as detailed consultation and tight control. The interview with the director of a Ugandan NGO by Titeca (2005) has witnessed that the NGO's first priority is its own survival, and second is about other people's survival. In addition, the African NGO sector is characterized by external financial dependence and external orientation. It was related to Flower (1995)'s survey finding of foreign NGOs relying 90% of their funds on foreign aids.

Boutry (2008) unfolds the Western's forcing their values on the developing countries under the "humanitarian aid" agenda as the assertion of a new form of dominion that is powerful and quasi-monolithic in shaping the consequences during and after the aid based on the empirical study of the Ayeyarwaddy Delta in Myanmar in the aftermath of Cyclone Nargis May 2008. Boutry argues the characteristics of the emergency response that create a time and space in which the humanitarian aid agency are relatively restricted to the humanitarian sphere itself,

which is opposite of how it is defined. Moreover, Boutry criticizes the humanitarian aid INGOs for excluding the patrons from aid benefits and ostensibly breaking up the existing relationships between the patrons (e.g., landowners, money lenders, small business owners) and the clients (e.g., landless villagers, workers, farmers, fishermen), that humanitarian action weakens the resilience capacity of the delta's economic sector. Boutry's findings also highlight the INGOs' failure to consider the long-term recovery solution that is providing production tools and other assistance to the patrons in order to retrieve their means of production and consequently to be able to procure employment for daily workers as early as possible because the Nargis cyclone affected the entire delta region, regardless of income. Although some NGO actors are aware that helping a few "rich people" can help dozens of "poor people", it seems that this practice is hardly justifiable among the donors and the UN body's agencies (INGOs).

As South et al. (2011) have discussed, the poorest-of-the-poor remain dependent on outside assistance (NGOs) without access to local jobs. However, four years after the Nargis cyclone, newly arrived NGOs have gained ground in many areas other than those struck by the cyclone. 48 NGOs were present in the field before the cyclone, and 169 NGOs were present by the end of October 2008. These NGOs were represented by hundreds of new foreigners working in the country, including the aid agencies of UN bodies (Boutry, 2008). Did the "need for humanitarian assistance" in Myanmar create job opportunities for international NGOs in the context of Nargis cyclone? On the other hand, the racist ideology of the INGOs when fundraising or begging to the public for donations, such as depicting negative images of developing countries or its own people, can be perceived by the world as those countries will never be able to cope without the INGOs (Jacobs, 2017). In contrast, this perception tends to support the doubt that is the INGOs' funds-raising creates more causes (projects) for them at the expense of developing

countries and their people. Many sources have exposed concerns about whether NGOs can cause severe harm or foment the levels of conflict (Lipschutz, 1992; Carothers, 1999; Rieff, 1999; Naim, 2002) when they spread inaccurate information against the public opinion (Simmons, 1998; Florini, 2003). Those NGOs motivated by commercialism and availability of donor funds are incapable of providing a positive impact, and even successful NGOs may compromise their effectiveness by just addressing the symptoms rather than root causes of problems, conceal their failure, or tackle issues that are too complex (Fowler & Biekart, 1996).

The question about the effectiveness of NGOs in addressing issues related to poverty and inequality (Slim, 1997) is left unanswered, and NGOs tend to be less effective in finding long-term solutions than in identifying short-term responses (James, 1998; Clark, 1995). All the similar concerns discussed by different literature in this section are relevant to Jacobs (2017) who has criticized the INGO forum in Myanmar for portraying the Myanmar Buddhists as 'terrorists' on the social media with regards to the violence against the Muslims in Rakhine and other parts of Myanmar. However, the INGO forum ignored the root cause of the conflicts, which was that three Muslim men raped and murdered a young Buddhist woman in 2012. Jacobs (Developing countries and In-Equity, p.215) states:

> These INGOs did not take into account the people of Myanmar and their suffering under the leadership of a repressive military junta as well as the pent up anger over the immigration of Indians under the British. The lack of cultural competency and understanding of the historical grievances of many ethnic groups led to distrust of the locals against the INGOs and the UN…

This example shows that spread inaccurate information against public opinion and addressing the symptoms rather than root causes of problems by the INGOs foment the levels of conflict and incapable of providing the positive impact to the people they served. Consequently, the Buddhist in Myanmar are disappointed that Western political leaders and INGOs corrupt the world and they view the Muslims as an 'oppressed minority', but they fail to address about the

real outrage of rape and murder of a young Rakhine woman in the West media (Jacobs, 2017).

Baemon & Balcik (2008) discuss that legitimacy is no longer based on values and voluntarism.

Instead, legitimacy is based on the fulfilment of the terms and contract made between the NGOs

and the donors. If such a notion of legitimacy perpetuates, their relationships with 'the poor' and

their right to intervene in the development process seem to be in danger because the possible

erosion of NGOs and grass-roots organizations (GROs) legitimacy as a result of reliance on

foreign funds (Esman & Uphoff, 1984; Bratton, 1990) will become uncontrollable.

Another criticism that the international NGO community has been facing is related to the

excessive political interference of the aid agencies in the recipient country in the context of

geopolitics. NGOs have been under doubtful watch by the observers who realize that the West

nations focus on the developing countries is about their particular self-interest, which becomes a

thread versus opportunity for the developing countries. For example, Myanmar is located in a

critical geopolitical position among China, India, and Bangladesh. The United States and the

European Union ended decades of economic sanctions in 2013, hoping China, a major player in

the past, to be displaced. Then, the foreign companies and investors were keen to enter the

resource-rich country to exploit the untapped consumer market under the agenda of "economic

development and helping to build freedom and democracy" (Jacobs, 2017).

Concurrently, NGOs have participated as one of the change agents in the political and

economic process in developing countries. The actions of NGOs have contributed to some social

and political changes positively (Irvin & Stansbury, 2004). However, Jacobs warns that critical

evaluation in terms of who (participants), what (procedures of ruling), and how (effective in the

decision-making process) is a requirement in order to recognize and witness the positive impact

due to the rise of moral issues around the UN's development program. Jacobs' warning reflects

many disgruntled ethnic Rakhine in northern Myanmar who have consistently demonstrated against INGOs' operation in the state in post-2012, claiming that projects have been benefited only to the self-identifying Rohingya (Bengalis) Muslims but by transporting the aid supplies through the Rakhine community. The perception of some Rakhine people may be misguided. However, some expect the INGOs to have better communication with the local people to lessen the feeling suspicious of projects with unanswered questions: why they are excluded in benefiting from the aids?; why do the locals have to buy the learning materials that NGOs provided from the black market (through Muslim students)?; why are local farmers restricted to access water reservoirs built by INGOs while only Muslims are accessible?. The INGOs' failure to communicate and consult ethnic locals burst into crowd attempted to raid an NGO premise in the state capital Sittwe (Irrawaddy News, September 2017). In other words, the existence and actions of INGO in Rakhine State have enhanced the harmful relations between the two communities rather than contributing positively to social and political change process because of failing to include local Rakhines in development projects.

Similarly, there is another alarm discussed by Edwards & Hulme (1992) regarding the NGOs' attempts to influence on government policy at local and sometimes at national levels, especially when the agencies come together as alliances and federations. This ideology seems to get worst in the 21st century, and the NGOs even fail to abide the rules and policy of recipient country as well as promoting their religious interests under the pretext which is voluntary religious conversion is not considered a crime. The pertinent example is the misbehavior of aid workers in the refugee camps of Cox's Bazer in Bangladesh under the agenda of humanitarian relief activities. More than 60 foreign NGO workers including British, Italian, Norway, Brazil, the Netherlands, South Korea, Kenya, Belgium and Turkey, were detained by Bangladesh's elite

Rapid Action Battalion (RAB) and Cox's Bazar district police in February and March 2018 because of not carrying the required documents and original passports to proceed for work permits and visas. Bangladesh's immigration requires work permits as a must for any foreign workers despite the process may be long for aid workers to get visas on arrival. However, the British Red Cross states that Bangladeshi authorities stopped the foreign aid workers on their way to the camps that made stuck them to provide sanitation at the camp. Actually, requiring work permits and valid visas by the Bangladesh authorities to permit foreigners working in the city of Cox's Bazar is not the new policy, and more than 1700 foreigners are currently staying there, as well as two-thirds of them are the staff of local and international NGOs (https://www.irrawaddy.com/news/bangladesh-heightens-scrutiny-ngos-coxs-bazar.html). The aids are supposed to be delivered by the NGOs for the needy people in the refugee camps. Nevertheless, this should not be justification to violate or influence on the rules and policy of recipient country.

The law enforcement officials in Bangladesh are also concerned about various reports that some NGOs have promoted their religious beliefs among the refugees. Moreover, the officials have interrogated a top worker of a Dhaka-based Catholic charity working in Cox's Bazar after hearing the conversion of more than 350 Rohingya Muslims to Christianity without changing their Muslim names for safety. However, this aid worker has to be released as the country does not consider a voluntary religious conversion as a crime. On the other hand, security and intelligence agencies have interrogated some aid workers from faith-based groups, including Islamic charities to investigate whether they have involved in encouraging extremist views (Rashid, 2018). In summing up, the rise of criticism in the NGO community under the

agenda of aid and humanitarian seems to root not only in the multiple contexts such as political, geopolitical, historical but also misuse and misguide of the humanitarian crisis.

The UN and the Development Agencies

The United Nations (UN) eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) strive to fight extreme poverty, halt the spread of HIV/AIDS, and provide universal primary education by the target date of 2015 using 1990 as the baseline to measure. Additionally, its framework set to monitor progress on extreme poverty and hunger, education, gender equality, child survival, health, environmental sustainability and global partnership. Unprecedented efforts have resulted in profound achievements. Some examples are: the undernourished people in the developing regions has fallen from 23.3% (in 1990-92) to 12.9% (in 2014-16); Sub-Saharan Africa has had the best record of improvement in primary education of 20% net enrolment increase from 8% comparing 2000-15 and 1990-2000; In Southern Asia, the maternal mortality ratio declined by 64% between 1990 and 2013, and in sub-Saharan Africa it fell by 49% ((MDG 2015 Report).

Nevertheless, the poorest and most vulnerable people were being left behind. Conflicts remained the biggest threat to human development and had forced almost 60 million people to abandon their homes by the end of 2014, which was the highest level recorded since the Second World War. Children accounted for half of the global refugee population under the responsibility of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in 2014. About 800 millions of poor people still live in poverty and hunger, without access to basic services (http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/reports.shtml). This report left several questions for the UN and aid agencies: How do they function behind the closed door?; Does the UN equally available for all countries?; Does the aid delivery to the developing countries through corrupted leaders?; What will happen to the local people when the donors withdraw funds? (Jacobs, 2017).

According to the UN website, its main objectives are to maintain worldwide peace, protect human rights, and deliver humanitarian aid, moreover the central mission of the UN is

> "the maintenance of international peace and security by working to prevent conflict; helping parties in conflict make peace; peacekeeping; and creating the conditions to allow peace to hold and flourish" (http://www.un.org/en/sections/what-we-do/).

These statements do not reflect especially for the developing country in the contemporary world, in which the immediacy of humanitarian crisis tends to ignore the complexity of the historical roots of the conflicts (Leider, 2018). Concurrently, the USA and the Organization of Islamic Countries (OIC) play a crucial role in the UN that has been challenging the balance of power and its empowerment when tackling the conflicts. Saw (2016) has underlined the "power corruption" (dishonestly using the position/ power to get an advantage) in the UN resulting from Petrol Dollars support of Middle East nations as well as after the Arabic became an official language of the UN next to English, French, Spanish, Russian and Chinese in the 1980s.

The difference in treating rights for Muslim in two different countries (Myanmar and Yemen) by the UN and its allies supports Saw's opinion. The UN and the West collaborate with Middle East nations who are waging wars in Syria, Yemen, and Libya, killing and displacing hundreds of individuals. The war in Yemen began more than two years ago, not less than10, 000 civilians have been killed, and some 3 million have been displaced. The World Health Organization (WHO) has recorded an unprecedented cholera outbreak that ravages a growing percentage of the country with 500,000 known cases and 2,000 dead, as well as estimates that one in every 45 people in 600,000 Yemenis in the country will be affected cholera by the end of the year. The UN labels Yemen the world's greatest humanitarian disaster which is a preventable, human-made catastrophe, directly the result of the war that the Saudi-led coalition is waging in Yemen, but how Saudi Arabia will be charged for this humanitarian crisis is still a

question mark. (http://www.newsweek.com/children-war-death-yemen-saudi-bombs-cholera-iran-houthis-worlds-worst-668520).

In the case of Rohingya (Bengali Muslim) crisis in northern Myanmar, the former US Secretary of State, Rex Tillerson accused the Myanmar military operation against the Rohingya population "ethnic cleansing" and said that the United States would consider targeted sanctions against those responsible. The violence began on 25 August 2017 when the Rohingya militants attacked police posts in northern Rakhine, and thousands of people (Muslim/Hindu Bengalis & Indigenous people from Rakhine State) fled from the affected area after the military's operation. Tillerson also said in a statement, "After a careful and thorough analysis of available facts, it is clear that the situation in northern Rakhine state constitutes ethnic cleansing against the Rohingya". The UN Human Rights chief, Zeid Raad Al Hussein also remarks that the security operation targeting Rohingya Muslims in Myanmar "seems a textbook example of ethnic cleansing". (http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-41224108).

Rather than helping conflict groups to lessen the tension in Myanmar and being impartial, the UN ignores many of the security forces, government servants, innocent civilians and indigenous people including Hindus, who were killed by the Rohingya militants (ARSA). In contrast, the UN and OIC intervened in the sovereign nation's internal affairs. The Myanmar government has been pressured to resettle an estimated 1.5 million Muslims in Northern Rakhine with the ignorance of verification process as mandated by the 1982 Citizenship law under the pretext of humanitarian, by referring to the unfounded and exaggerated report generated by the pro-Rohingya, like-minded groups, and mainstream media (Aung Zeya, 2018). The UN fails to rank the levels of persecution around the world, however, have accepted the entrenched description of the Rohingya identity as primordial and the most persecuted minority in the world

that tend to lift their condition beyond a deep historical contextualization (Leider, 2018). Jacobs (2017) argues that the difference in pushing Muslim rights in northern Myanmar and being silent when Saudi Arabia's bombing on Yemen civilians is an example of the power relationship existing at the UN. According to Amnesty International USA (2017), millions of civilians in Yemen are on the brink of starvation because of a full blockade imposed by Saudi Arabia, and humanitarian assistance, including food and medicine, is being prevented from reaching Yemeni civilians.

There is another ongoing debate regarding the performance of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank (WB) which are the institutions in the UN system and share the same goal of raising living standards in their member countries. The IMF focuses on macroeconomic issues, and the WB concentrates on long-term economic development and poverty reduction. The mandate of IMF is promoting international monetary cooperation and supporting capacity development inclusive of providing loans to developing countries (https://www.imf.org/en/About/Factsheets/Sheets/2016/07/27/15/31/IMF-World-Bank). The US, having a veto on the IMF's Executive Board, makes it more powerful to the developing countries (Jacobs, 2017) in the context of political and economic advantage. Consequently, the UN has treated the US like permitting to violate international law and complicit in war crimes. For example, the finding of Amnesty International researchers reveals the US's continuous selling arms to Saudi Arabia. Actually, the Arms Export Control Act (AECA) under the US law, prohibits the government's selling weapons to other countries that might use them in committing war crimes (Brook, 2017: Amnesty International USA).

On the other hand, the relationship between the UN and the World Bank is governed by the agreement of 1947, in which the World Bank (WB) is recognized as a specialized agency

working for sustainable solutions that reduce poverty and build prosperity in developing countries (http://www.worldbank.org/en/who-we-are). But the WB does not implement the projects itself, and two key participants are involved in its funded projects: the WB project supervisor and the national project coordinator. The projects are evaluated by an Independent Institution Group (IGE) after two years of completion (Ika, Diallo & Thuillier, 2012). Due to many developing countries never deliver all the economic returns that they imagined and only the massive debt incurred in the early years, the WB tends to encourage smaller projects with stricter environmental standard and financial accountability. The WB has increased rejecting for funding of showy development projects, including big dam projects and expensive showpiece over time. However, it is still arguable that the WB lures developing countries into deep debt and ignores the innovative micro-projects that can provide not only employment opportunities but also empowerment to the people of the recipient country (Sernau, 2012).

Performance Management Frameworks Applied to NGOs

As Ramandan & Borgonovi, 2015 suggest, the overall effectiveness of the NGOs is required to evaluate from multiple perspectives, not only taking into account the agenda of donors, but also the needs of beneficiaries and internal effectiveness. It is because the concept and elements of performance management are vital in the decision-making process, additionally, needed for transparency and accountability toward different stakeholders. Some researchers have discussed NGOs performance measurement in two main issues: internal indicators and external indicators, while some have addressed in general through not only creating performance indicator but also gathering information related to these indicators. In summary, the internal indicators are described as 'access to funding', 'budgeting efficiency', 'expenses and costs' that all relate to

financial performance (Argyris, 196; Bennis, 1966; Ritchie & Kolodinsky, 2003; Gill et al., 2005).

Despite many models and frameworks related to the NGO performance are not available like the private sector that generally relies on financial-based indicators: return on assessment, liabilities or profitability ratios (Herman & Renz, 1997), many authors have developed the performance measurement frameworks from its elements and indicator perspectives in the recent years. Following table summarizes the different framework developed by various literature:

Table 1: Frameworks and indicators developed by different authors/ organizations

	Framework	**Its elements/measurement indicators**
Ritchie & Kolodinsky, 2003	A framework for assessing the financial performance	*Fundraising efficiency *Public support *Expenses and cost efficiency
Standards for Charity Accountability of the Better Business Bureau	A framework for measuring NGOs performance	*Financial aspect *Effectiveness *Governance
American Association of Retired Persons	AARP performance matrix	*Resources and stewardship (input) *People (outcome) *Organization leadership and integration (outputs) *Social impact value (impact)
Buckmaster (1998); Poole et al,.(2000); Poister (2003), Tom & Frentzel (2005); Epstein & Buhovac (2009)	Program/Project-Based frameworks for measuring NGOs performance	*Inputs *Outputs *Activities *Outcomes *Impacts
Buckmaster (1999)	Outcome management framework	*Inputs *Process *Outputs *Outcomes
Poole et al., (2000)	Performance Accountability Quality Scale (PAQS)	*Resources *Activities *Outputs *Outcomes *Goals *Indicators; regarding whether the program has

		achieved an intended outcome
Tom & Frentzel (2005)	Hierarchy of Cause and Effect	*Activities *Outputs *Outcomes *Ultimate impacts
Epstein & Buhovac (2009)	Input-Impact framework	*Mission & vision of NGO *Inputs: Strategy, Organizational structure & system *Outputs internally & externally *Outcomes *Impacts

Source: adapted from Ramadan & Borgonovi (2015)

Do We Need a Culturally Appropriate "Framework" for NGO's Efficacy?

All the above frameworks presented have been developed to measure the NGOs' performance in general. However, the specific framework for humanitarian aid projects is still under-researched. Moreover, the root causes for the needs of humanitarian assistance usually originate from internal conflicts, natural disasters, and political and historical complications. Having sufficient local cultural knowledge plays a vital role when interacting with the host country and implementing the planned activities to achieve the expected outcomes and positive impacts (Jacobs, 2017; Boutry, 2008). According to an empirical study on Myanmar by May-Kyawt (2006), the most influential critical success factor for overall project success is "the availability of local capacities." This study showed that the overall success of INGO projects will not be satisfactory or sustainable without the inclusion of the local community/associations and the recipient country. Consequently, based on the interview findings (with INGO staff), May-Kyawt has suggested that the project managers and planners to have a clear understanding of not only socio-economic and political dimensions but also of the culture and the environment in which the project is implemented.

Ware (2011)'s finding in an empirical case study in Myanmar with respect to the best practice implementation of international development principles and approaches by INGOs in order to maximize development effectiveness, has warned that the local communities to act as primary decision-makers at the micro-level of development, local NGO or civil society partners at meso-levels, and INGOs at more macro-levels. Moreover, the key to build trust between the NGOs and the Myanmar people is providing not only the capacity building but also the inclusion of civil society and Buddhist philosophies (Jacobs, 2017). The next chapter will explore the contemporary challenges of humanitarian aid INGOs in developing countries that echo the need for a culturally appropriate framework for the efficacy of the humanitarian assistance in conflict and disaster-affected areas.

CHAPTER THREE

Contemporary Challenges of Humanitarian Aid INGOs

This chapter provides an overview of contemporary challenges facing by NGOs when delivering humanitarian assistance in developing countries. The discussion focuses on how the particular problems affect the efficacy of the international development projects under the agenda of humanitarian as well as a number of questions are raised with respect to the viability of INGOs' existence in the recipient countries. The challenges explored in this section will be linked to the literature review (Chapter Two) and influence significantly on the entire thesis. Moreover, in order to explore the challenges of humanitarian aid INGOs in Myanmar during the democracy transaction period, I have engaged in the relevant case studies conducted by different researchers and authors concerning humanitarian assistance in Myanmar between the periods of 2008 to 2018.

New Policy Agenda Vs Redefining Roles and Relationships

NGOs, along with other private-sector actors, have been treated as the "favored child" of the Western donor agencies, providing dominant development policies and unprecedented aid transfers, since the end of the Cold War. In contrast, NGOs have been pressured for greater accountability and the efficiency of the programs by contributors, donor agencies, scholars, and development practitioners, with the questions: do NGOs practice what they preach?; how do we know?; how effective are their programs and projects? (Beamon & Balcik, 2008). Moreover, a "New Policy Agenda'" which is combining elements of economic liberalism and Western political theory in ways that redefine the roles of, and relationships between the states, markets, and 'third sector' institutions, has been introduced (Robinson, 1993; Whitehead, 1993). The

NGOs are viewed from two perspectives. From an economic perspective, they are expected to deliver social welfare services to poor people at lower cost and higher standards of quality than the government (Fowler, 1998; Meyer, 1992). From political perspectives, they are to fulfil the desire of Western donor agencies in promoting 'democratization' among the aid recipient NGOs and grassroots organizations (GROs) in a central position as components of 'civil society' (Moore, 1993).

Despite the different roles and characteristics of 'intermediary' NGOs and membership organizations tend to be conflated and confused (Carroll, 1992) due to the evidence of economic and political linkages remain weak (Moore, 1993; Whitehead, 1993), the perceived comparative advantages of INGOs concerning the 'New Policy Agenda' have led the donors in channeling increased official aid to and through them (Beamon & Balcik, 2008). For example, the proportion of total funding from OECD Development Assistance Committee members channeled through NGOs 25% in 1985 comparing under 10% in the 1970s (Van de Heijden, 1987). The increasing availability of official funding has also lead the explosive growth in the South, for example, the NGOs registered in Nepal rose from 220 in 1990 to 1210 in 1993 (Rademacher & Taman, 1993); In Tunisia, from 1886 in 1988 to 5186 in 1991 (Marzouk, 1995). However, there are more questions to answer: what consequences do they have for the quality of development work undertaken and its impact on the lives of poor people?; what results do they leave for the relationships between governments and civil society, and NGO themselves? (Beamon & Balcik, 2008).

Not all the scholars have perceived positively on the increasing aid and funds due to a new policy agenda in the pretext of Northern resources into Southern benefits. I agree with South (2004)'s argument, which is Myanmar needs better-targeted aid, but not necessarily much more

money. It is because, as South has discussed, it is no doubt that changes will be coming gradually from civil society, hence, international donor society should encourage the INGOs to focus on the inclusion of local associations and potentially vulnerable groups as well as transferring empowerment to the locals rather than just finding causes for new projects. Similarly, Jacobs (2017) suggests the INGOs are to include empowerment as one of the goals in implementing aid projects since knowledge transferring to the recipient country's local community can leave the developing countries with well-trained local leaders to sustain the development after completion of the particular project. Moreover, the INGOs can build a trust relationship with the local citizens after realizing that leadership will be transferred to the locals for long term vision.

On the other hand, from a political perspective, democracy way may not be the best answers to all the problems of a nation (Sernau, 2012). Furthermore, as Zakaria (2003) suggests, making the world safe for democracy, the task for the twenty-first century is to make democracy safe for the world. In other words, promoting democratization excessively among the aid recipient NGOs and grassroots by the INGOs to fulfil the desire and interest of Western donors, can lead negative perception on the democracy by the recipient country's civilians who have fought for democracy in the past. It is because, the presence or absence of a democratic political culture can be varied in terms of religious and cultural diversity, historical context, political and economic complexity of the country. According to the findings from in-depth interviews with INGO staff in Myanmar, one of the critical challenges of implementing aid projects is tackling the military regime and deep understanding of the complexities of the political situation (May-Kyawt, 2006; Inwood, 2008; Ware, 2010). However, any significant conflict was not discovered between the INGOs and the civilians by those scholars as the INGOs attempted avoiding

unwanted government attention and maintained independence and neutral with the civilians during the absolute power of the military regime.

Another interesting analysis conducted by Jacobs (2017) during the democracy transaction time of Myanmar reveals that the behaviors and attitude of INGOs tend to create a parallel and weakening the nation's system rather than complementing the new government's efforts, and the INGOs became the modern development missionaries with attitude similar to colonial missionaries at the colonial era. Moreover, Jacobs argues that excessive political interference and unfair treatment on two different communities (Muslim Bengalis and Indigenous) under the agenda of humanitarian assistance by the INGOs and UN built up the outrage came to excel some NGO staff by the central government in 2014. Consequently, the relationship of INGOs as political forces instead of collaboration with local population has exacerbated the pre-existing tensions of two communities and the existence of INGOs starts to be significant concerns for the educated class within Myanmar. Jacob's analysis shows that the INGOs discontinue maintaining their independence and neutral with Myanmar's civilians in present days of Myanmar. Why does it change during the struggle transaction period of Myanmar's democratization?

Accountability Vs Humanitarian Principles

Accountability in the context of aid NGOs is how individuals and organizations report to a recognized authority /authorities and take responsibility for their actions (Edwards & Hulme, 1996). It is promoted through transparency (Raymond, 2000), while performance is promoted through responsive project management decision-making (Dickinson, 1997). Contrasting to democratically elected governments, NGOs serve diverse principals; clients, donors, individual

members, and staff. Moreover, the environments where they operate provide them with relative 'immunity from transparency' (Hayden, 2002; Florini, 2003). Some scholars reveal that International NGOs, particularly those headquartered in the North face challenges when interacting with Southern NGOs and elites for allegiance, sovereignty, and solutions that fail to respect local conditions (Bebbington & Riddell, 1995; Edwards, 1998; Fox & Brown, 1998; Ashman, 2001; Platteau & Gaspart, 2003). Ebrahim (2003) criticizes about most NGOs emphasize upward, and external accountability to donors, but downward and internal accountability mechanisms remain comparatively underdeveloped. Brinkerhoff et al., (2003) also suggest that the challenges associated with defining NGO effectiveness exacerbate the NGO accountability. Furthermore, Tandon (2004) has underlined the requirement of multiple accountabilities if the NGOs are representing membership organizations: 'upwards' to donors, trustee, and government regulators; 'downwards' to beneficiaries, staff, and supporters. That can create the danger of 'over-accounting' due to multiple demands, at the same time, 'under-accounting' as each authority accepts another authority's close action and results. Tandon also claims that equal accountability to those multiple demands is impossible because of the NGO's accountability is skewed to the most powerful stakeholder, the donors.

In particular, a critique of humanitarian assistance concerning performance and accountability of aid agencies has been controversial especially since the early 1990s in which the number of agencies and humanitarian crisis increases concurrently (Hilhorst, 2002). Based on a review of the literature and 27 interviews with representatives of humanitarian NGOs, donors and staff members in 2001, Hilhorst has discussed humanitarian assistance from four different views. First, Organizational Management Approach which adopts notions and instruments of quality enhancement originating from business industry (for example, the International

Organization for Standardization, ISO submits itself to develop a set of procedures mainly focus on finance and the project cycle, and design mechanisms to enhance transparency and accountability). Second, the "Rights Approach", which is grounded in international human rights standards, not only conceptualize the ends and means of development but also stipulate operational principles of particular participation (Slim, 1999). Third, the "Contingency Approach" which is based on the notion that the quality of humanitarian assistance is contingent upon the complexities of the situation involved by other humanitarian actors' network. This approach also stipulates that humanitarian assistance must be adjusted according to the account of the contingencies and vicissitudes caused by various disaster, countries, cultures and diversity among aid recipients. Fourth, the "Ownership Approach" which emphasizes participation and ownership. In contrast, its nature tends to be propagated by humanitarian agencies located in recipient countries, and not only the benefits but also the unintended consequences of humanitarian actions can be experienced.

Hilhorst has agreed with adopting additional humanitarian principals besides four classic ones; neutrality, impartiality, independence and voluntarism to increase parameters for quality. However, Hilhorst warned that those adopted additional may not always be equally compatible sets of principals such as human rights, justice that are directed to fair and equal relationships. Hilhorst's warning reflects Ware (2010)'s finding on an empirical study in Myanmar in which majority of interviewees (key practitioners of UN and INGOs) admits that the "Rights-Based Approach" is less feasible in Myanmar as there is no real rule of law written down on the paper. In fact, criticism from the international community and aid agencies in human rights language to the extent of the Myanmar military government believes those allegations are just exploited to destabilize the state for political advantage more than out of genuine humanitarian concerns

(New Light of Myanmar, July-2009). In other words, the Rights-Based Approach does not enhance the quality of humanitarian assistance in a country with difficult political context and significant post-colonial sensitivities.

In summary, for complexities of accountability, particularly for humanitarian aid NGOs, Hilhorst concludes that there is no single definition of quality of humanitarian action, and aid agencies are demanded to choose among the four approaches which are grounded in different rationales, but not mutually excluding or incompatible. Nevertheless, it should be cautious that humanitarian assistance may not be a right answer to the crisis if the diversion of political interference is exposed to the recipient country in the pretext of humanitarian as well as referred to the adopted additional humanitarian principles. Therefore, a more country-specific empirical study based on the different context in political, social, cultures and diversity is needed to suggest the single or multiple approaches appropriately to the humanitarian NGOs and other actors such as donors, UN, and foreign policy rulers.

Lack of Cultural Knowledge

When promoting sustainable development by the external lenders and global policy creators, having insufficient local cultural knowledge is the obstacle especially when they interact with the host country in implementing their financial goals and monitoring process (Jacobs, 2017). As Drucker (1990) suggests, the most important "do" for the non-profit organizations is building the organization around information and communication rather than hierarchy, as well as taking information responsibility. Development cannot happen without having a cultural perspective that links to historical beliefs, customs, and religious philosophies (Jacobs, 2011). This ideology has been well supported by Boutry (2008), based on his study of early recovery response in

Myanmar's delta region in the aftermath of Nargis cyclone, which has shown that the Western notion of human flaws may not fit with local societies or even local coping mechanisms in developing countries.

Boutry explains the different perception of indebtedness between West and East in a particular situation in the cultural context. The West conveys a negative representation on the "indebtedness", however, in the delta region (in Myanmar), the indebtedness relationship between farmers and casual workers as well as between the ship owners and fishermen is mostly positive, and their bargaining power is extreme, based on the Buddhist religious context. For example, in order to win the loyalty of the clients, the master must share part of his wealth within his social group, either in collective ritual ceremonies or by lending money to clients for extra-professional needs such as weddings, burials, or Buddhist initiation ceremonies. These relations are bound up within the Burmese word "*kyay-zu-shin*", which literally means the "master of one's good deeds", in a Buddhist context as "the master of one's life."

Although UNDP Myanmar's microfinance project targets the poor community who cannot qualify for credit through the Myanmar banking system (UNDP Myanmar, 2014) the program does not fulfil the social contract established with the patrons (money lender, "*ngwei-shin*") or will not lend the necessary money to perform a Buddhist initiation or wedding ceremony. Therefore, the role of the money lender remains more favorable than the aid agency's microfinance program in the delta's societies. According to Boutry's findings, during early recovery, rice seeds were mainly distributed to small-scale farmers while economic support such as small-scale fishing kits, gardening sets or livestock, and cash support were allocated to daily works, but the patrons were excluded. Nevertheless, such assistance to the 'poor' could not foster the economic recovery of the region in the long term as it would take place efficiently only if the

patrons who were less affected by the cyclone, could give back the employment to the daily workers. It was also observed by South et al. (2011), who argued that only by supporting landowners could local economies be restarted and provide the jobs to landless people.

In the context of a participatory approach, every NGO created the 'committees', but sometimes the membership of these committees was perceived as an onerous duty in most cases because the committees were not involved in setting priorities for distribution or in designing interventions (Boutry, 2008). After the acute phase of the disaster was over, there was still access, and room for long-term programming for these committees and the aid agency was extended its presence in the region (South, 2011), however, the sustainability of these committees and the development of the delta region are left in question. In this regard, I argue that humanitarian aid INGOs should apply the "outside-in thinking" paradigm to the decision-making process when delivering humanitarian assistance, to observe what's best for the clients/beneficiaries by understanding their culture in terms of socioeconomic, economic philosophy, and religious/social belief. Does the increasing quantity or existence of aid agencies in the (delta) region under the development agenda the panacea to solve all the humanitarian problems for long term perspective?

Controversy about Misappropriation and Mismanagement of Funds

The United Nations (UN), the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank (WB) have funded by the same developed industrial countries, and, the US takes the influential actor role as it has a veto on the IMF's Executive Board (Jacobs, 2017). Some scholars have concerned the mismanagement of aid transfers which can occur in class or caste-based village societies where landed elites use their dominant status in economic, social and political to appropriate the

aids for themselves and deliver only the leftovers to the poor (Bardhan, 2002; Bardhan & Mookherjee, 2002; Galasso & Ravallion, in press). Bierschenk et al., (2002) have also concerned the rapid multiplication of national NGOs, created by educated individuals and politicians, and acting as "development brokers" with the notion of creating an NGO is the best means of procuring funds from the international community. The description of Bierschenk et al., tend to become a wake-up alarm when Brendan Cox, who set up the two charities; "More in Common" and " the Jo Cox Foundation" as well as a Chief Strategic of "Save the Children", resigns from charities amid after being publicly accused of sexual assault in 2015 (Topping, 2018).

Four months after Brendan Cox's resignation, in early 2016, UNICEF Deputy Director Justin Forsyth has resigned of allegations on his misbehavior toward female staff members during his time as chief executive at Save the Children in 2011 and 2015. He was also accused of mishandling allegations of sexual harassment and abuse by a close ally and subordinate, Brendan Cox in 2015. The (Save the Children) charity's accounts indication of remuneration to Forsyth a £22,560 bonus as part of his £163,000 annual pay in 2012 as well as its support to him to get a job at Unicef in 2016 without mentioning the internal probes into Forsyth, were left as "outrageous" at the House of Commons' International Development Committee. These case examples further alarm the entire sector to review funding for the INGOs (Telegraph News, 2018). The questions I want to raise are: Do the high profile educated peoples working at the top management level of INGOs tend to become the modern poor-elites in 21st centuries?; Are the local NGOs, the subordinates of those leaders, centred in the corrupted sector at the expense of the disadvantaged?

Platteau and Gaspart (2003) have discussed concerning misappropriation by local elites of externally provided funds based on a case study of Western European development NGO

(whose identity was not disclosed). This study highlights that international donor agencies overlook the genuine nature of the links between elites, commoners, and rulers. On the other hand, the aid agencies' underestimating the leverage of the local leader within the group, or overestimating the degree of altruism, tend to become some of the root causes of misappropriation in community development projects. I further support the findings of Platteau and Gaspart (based on the above case examples of 'Save the Children' and 'Unicef') that their findings reflect not only to local elites, but also the external/foreign elites. What happens at the top level management staff at the two reputable INGOs have witnessed the overlooking and overestimation of international donors on the behaviours of high profile rulers, tend to create and reinforce the modern external elites as well as depict the world leading INGOs as the corrupted organizations. After engaging several years in research on elite perceptions of poverty in developing countries by discussing with the staff of aid agencies, Hossain and Moore (2002) observe that the developing country elites are unsupportive of, or hostile to, the efforts of aid donors when promoting pro-poor policies. If the donors' agencies or the INGOs are viewed as corrupted organizations due to the adverse story in the news and press, consequently, there could be more conflicts among the developing country elites, and aid donor elites that come to raise another question of whether the elites (with different self-interest) engage constructively in fighting the poverty together?

A lack of communication strategy and failing attempt to include all the affected communities or groups when delivering humanitarian assistance also can result in a toxic relationship between the INGOs and the host community of the conflict region. For example, over the last few years, many indigenous people in Rakhine State have consistently demonstrated NGO's operation in the state with the perception of development projects run by aid

organizations were benefited only for the self-identifying Rohingya (Bengalis) Muslims, but not the ethnic Arakanese community. The frustration of the Arakanese burst to the explosion in March 2014 and even attempted to raid an NGO premise in the state capital Sittwe. Imbalance of resource allocation by the NGOs between the conflict communities have fostered the perception of socially and politically- motivated Arakanese as being "left out" at the expense of the "other" (Rohingya). One member of a local CSO describes that one NGO-led project of building small water reservoirs in northern Rakhine for Muslim farmers, but the Arakanese farmers are not allowed to access it. Instead of attempting to try to be neutral and impartial between the conflicting groups, the NGOs who have been operating in Rakhine State for over 20 years, reason that the Arakanese communities are better-off than Muslim communities economically and receive more governmental social services despite Arakanese have been suffering from deprivation and standing as Myanmar's second most impoverished state. Another example is NGOs providing learning materials only to the Muslim students has ended up on the black market where the Arakanese students purchase (https://www.irrawaddy.com/opinion/guest-column/ngos-done-wrong-rakhine.html).

The above article also explores why the Rakhine people feel suspicious of NGOs' development projects although it plays a vital role in helping to develop the region based on interviewing some Indigenous people and member of local CSO. Positions with high salary and a good expatriate facility for the foreign workers (for example; expensive car, renting the best house or staying at the fancy hotel) in the region of deprivation seem to create disapproval from locals (Arakanese people) towards the growing INGOs. Moreover, the local people feel more suspicious about project beneficiaries with the question of who benefited most at the expense of

the poor, as well as, presence of the NGO staff in the town destabilize the property market and rental fees rising for local people. These findings support the argument of Jacobs (2017) stating:

> ,,,,,,,,,,.the foreign workers who get paid at the same rate as they would work in the donor country which hires them. They live in good homes, drive cars, and live a great lifestyle while looking after the needs of the poor" (Race in Equity, p. 231).

Moreover, Rakhine Buddhists perceive themselves as victims of "Burmanization" process by the past military regime that denies their cultural heritage, as well as victims of illegal migration and currently under threat by the rapid growth of self-centered Muslim society (Leider, 2018). Therefore, suspicious of misappropriation and mismanagement of aid resources tend to create new tension between the NGO workers and the host community rather than trying to eliminate the sense of animosity between the two main conflict groups.

The debate regarding the misappropriation of the resources does not end in northern Myanmar. It continues to the refugee camps of Cox's Bazar in Bangladesh where nearly 700,000 people fleeing from Myanmar have been accommodating after massive clearance operation by Myanmar's security forces to the ARSA militant attacks in northern Rakhine State in late August 2017. It has been reported by some daily newspapers in Bangladesh, regarding the local and international NGOs have been overpricing relief materials meant for the refugees besides the allegation of various religious motivational activities conducted at the camps. Those reports have raised the worries and suspect to the NGOs' operation and their movements by the law enforcement officials in Bangladesh. That further results heightening the scrutiny by the officials in terms of work permit and visa issues and detain more than 60 foreign nationals to review their work permits and visas until they provide written statements why they fail to carry the required documents including original passports (Rashid, 2018).

The Bangladesh government has banned the activities of 12 local NGOs from carrying out humanitarian assistance among self-identified Rohingya refugees in January 2018 as those NGOs are not registered with the NGO Affairs Bureau. The home ministry has argued that the humanitarian work of unregistered NGOs' accountability cannot be ensured. Almost all the Rohingyas have been living in makeshift camps with humanitarian assistance provided by the Bangladesh government and international aid groups, what the UN termed the world's fastest-developing refugee emergency. Nevertheless, according to the parliamentary standing committee on the foreign affairs ministry, the government has been monitoring all the NGOs working in Cox's Bazar starting October 2017 to prohibit the misguiding and misusing the humanitarian crisis (http://www.newagebd.net/article/31762/12-ngos-barred-from-aiding-rohingyas). In summary, the more refugees are dependent on the humanitarian assistance from the international aid groups, and the more jobs seem to create for the NGOs. In contrast, as illustrated above, the motivation and attitude towards the humanitarian aid workers appear doubtful and reinforcing the opportunity of resource misappropriation at the expense of the donors and the poor.

Disruption of Humanitarian Operation in Predicaments

Humanitarian action is governed by the key humanitarian principles of: humanity, impartiality, neutrality and independence with the aim of "save lives, alleviate suffering and maintain human dignity during and after man-made crises and disasters caused by natural hazards, as well as to prevent and strengthen preparedness for when such situations occur (http://devinit.org/defining-humanitarian-assistance/#). In the context of armed conflicts, humanitarian assistance can be defined as the providing all emergency action to ensure the survival of those directly affected by armed conflict of an international or internal character including material aid (e.g., food, water,

clothing, medicines, fuel, shelter, bedding, hospital equipment), and the services of trained personnel (Rottensteiner, 1999). For disaster-prone developing countries with multifaceted armed-conflicts exposure to multiple hazards, like Myanmar, humanitarian assistance seems more than its principle and nature of aid. It is because of the situation of a protracted crisis that demand humanitarian attention with mass numbers of forcibly displaced people and dire humanitarian needs, as well as disruption to INGO aid operations during armed conflicts in 2017 (Humanitarian Bulletin-Myanmar, 2017) and disaster caused by Cyclone Nargis in 2008 (Boutry, 2008).

Disruption of humanitarian operation from INGOs by the Myanmar government is not new. However, the root cause or the reason and the situation may not be the same on every occasion. My previous research on the empirical study of Myanmar in 2006 revealed the attitude of military junta towards foreign aid NGOs. In brief, the challenges faced by INGOs working in Myanmar included lack of accurate information, lack of access to all parts of the country, and an inability to address the underlying problems that affect health security, forced labor, forced relocations, and armed conflicts. A shortage of trained personnel had hampered INGOs in ethnic areas and political restrictions on who they associated with. In fact, INGOs were also frequently subject to arbitrary whims of military commanders and government officials regarding their status. After the Yangon bomb attacks in May 2005, restrictions on importing vital equipment and a lack of access to outer-lying projects had increased (May-Kyawt, 2006).

Another relevant example of disruption of humanitarian response is the Cyclone Nargis that hit Myanmar in May 2008. The military junta was reluctant to accept the depth of the disaster as the government did the same in the tsunami in 2004. However, in 2008, the development of internet connections and the presence of some INGOs on-site in the badly struck

Ayeyarwaddy delta region that could quickly alarm the reality of disaster to the civilians and the government. This cyclone, which occurred on May 2nd and 3rd, 2008 coincided with the referendum of May 12th, which purposed to ratify the new constitution drafted by the Myanmar army. Due to this sensitive national context of the demonized military government and its longstanding of international isolation from the USA and European countries, the international aid and cargoes were frozen to stop any foreign NGO access to the delta. However, the INGOs that already had been on-site in the delta region were able to provide aid by their ways with the assistance of local community leaders (Boutry, 2008).

I argue that humanitarian access constraints are also possible when the recipient country's civilians and governments lost trust in the aid agencies, especially when the misappropriation and mismanagement of aid supplies are in doubt. In the previous session, I have discussed the literature about mismanagement of aid transfers to recipient societies and appropriating the aid supplies for themselves by using their dominant economic, social, and political position, and then they allocate the leftovers only to the poor. On the other hand, Platteau & Gaspart (2003) underline the risk of resource misappropriation in community-driven development aid projects due to serious bias in the selection of most needy communities by the national elites in developing countries, who perceive benefits to themselves from poverty reduction programs. However, the risk of misappropriation and mismanagement of aid supplies in the context of implementing agencies (INGO itself) in multifaceted armed conflicts and ethnic crisis are under-researched. It may be because of unreported as either not enough evidence or benefited group on misappropriation, and the aid agencies are in the like-minded groups.

Humanitarian Bulleting Myanmar (2017), issued by the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), details the disruptions to aid operations in

Rakhine State following the attacks in late August. This document includes information on how the government suddenly discontinued valid travel authorizations to most INGOs and some UN agencies, as well as suspension of WFP food deliveries to the refugee camps for more than two weeks due to the denial of local transport contractors to take food to the camps. Another disruptive challenge that resulted in all INGOs and international staff leaving the conflict region was the indigenous (ethnic Rakhine groups) landlords' unwillingness to rent offices and the pressure from nationalists who refuse to rent vehicles and fuels to the UN and INGOs to discontinue the aid operations (Arkin, 2017).

As discussed above, the various military governments of Myanmar had bad reputations regarding their unwillingness to corporate with the humanitarian aid agencies in the past. However, the questions in this recent Rakhine crisis are: Why are the local transport contractors concerned with carrying the food to the camps? Why do the indigenous landlords no longer want to do business with INGOs who are supposed to help the needed community in the conflict region? Why do such disappointing responses to the aid agencies by the local nationalists only happen in this crisis? The Rakhine crisis originated from the ARSA's organized attacks in 2016 and 2017, not only completely destroyed the trust between the two communities: Bengali Muslims (who claimed themselves Rohingya) and Rakhine people, but also left the tension between the civilians and the aid agencies and human rights group after finding World Food Program (WFP) biscuits and "US Agency for International Development parcels" in an ARSA camp on August 30th, 2017. The National Security Adviser, Thaung Tun, reiterated the accusations of aid worker involvement due to the finding of ammonia and tubes used by development workers for construction, which had been turned into explosives (Arkin, 2017).

Additionally, there was a witness from a local reporter in Buthidaung who saw about 100 aid workers left in speed boats after the issuance of statement about finding aid supplies in ARSA camp from the State Counsellor Office. The furious public has accused the INGO of involvement in the recent ARSA attacks. The public has also accused the INGO of providing aid to the terrorists and provoking war in Rakhine state only to leave shortly thereafter (Holmes, 2017). The INGO forum Myanmar responded to the public's accusations in a statement (Report from INGO Forum Myanmar, 2017), dated August 31st, 2017 that says:

> "Recently, there have been public accusations of INGO involvement in the recent attacks and that humanitarian assistance is being provided as support to parties which have perpetrated violence. These allegations convey an untrue representation of INGOs and go against our common values and principles anchored in impartiality and humanity. We urge all stakeholders to cease the spread of misinformation which not only exacerbates tensions, but also invariably threatens the safety and security of humanitarian aid workers and hinders the provision of humanitarian and development services to all populations in Rakhine State. …………………….. We offer and provide our assistance to the most vulnerable and needy in an independent, neutral and impartial way. We do not side with any party in a conflict, nor do we make any distinctions in our assistance with respect to race, religion or ethnicity……." (https://reliefweb.int/report/myanmar/statement-ingo-s-myanmar-31-august-2017-enmy)

Nevertheless, there is no clear explanation about WFP biscuits and "US Agency for International Development parcels" that have been observed in ARSA camp following the attacks. In contrast, Myanmar has received more pressure and blame from the human rights watch and like-minded groups, stating that rumor and misinformation resulting from the State Counsellor's accusations fuel anti-UN and INGO sentiment as well as the accusations against aid workers, which were "profoundly irresponsible" (Phil Robertson, Deputy Asia director at Human Rights Watch). Another tension between the State Counsellor's office and NGOs related media is the terminology of describing the ARSA. Consequent to the attacks of ARSA in 2016 and the latest attacks in August 2017, the Myanmar government has declared the ARSA and its

supporters responsible for acts of terrorism as a terrorist group under the Counter-Terrorism Law Section 6, Subsection 5 (State Counsellor Office Myanmar, 2017). However, the INGOs and international media describe the ARSA as insurgent despite the State Counsellor's office has ordered to use the term terrorists rather than the insurgent in describing Rohingya militants (Holmes, 2017).

It is no doubt that disrupting humanitarian aid operation in the conflict zone can worsen the overall situation, putting tens of thousands of displaced people at risk, regardless of who they are, as well as the majority or minority of the affected community. On the other hand, finding the NGOs' aid supplies at the camp belongs to the ARSA who has been identified as the terrorists by the Myanmar government, while those terrorists have besieged a village in Rakhine state, is not something that could be hidden by the State Counsellor Office. Additionally, putting pressure to the State Counsellor and portraying her as the supporter of anti-Rohingya and anti-aid workers with one-side view by the like-minded groups (European Commission, Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch) has made the Indigenous people and the civilians more furious and become perceived the INGOs as terrorists' supporters or misappropriation of the aid supplies. Rakhine crisis follows by the ethnic identification debate between the past colonialism's victims (indigenous and the stateless Rohingya) cannot be solved in the short run. Because the British colony created the problem for more than 120 years ago, and, the young democracy government was taking the responsibility of this administration just two years ago.

As Jacobs (2017) has discussed, the Colonial Development Act, created by Britain with the aim of funding to help the colonized countries, even more, exacerbate the conflicts internally and externally if the aid is not delivered appropriately. Rakhine crisis is the pertinent example that has witnessed that losing trust in the aid agencies by the recipient country and its people is

one of the risks in challenging and disruption of aid operation. In this regard, the humanitarian scholars need to examine how the INGOs and their staff should react to the deep-rooted humanitarian crisis to be recognized them as neutral and impartial aid agencies, and how the INGOs will improve the implementation of humanitarian assistance effectively in a context-sensitive situation by collaborating with local community and national leader. Otherwise, the sustainable return and resettlement of affected communities may require many years more than necessary, and the collective impact of humanitarian assistance may not be able to achieve the targeted outputs and outcomes.

CHAPTER FOUR

Theoretical Perspectives

Three Major Disciplines

The interdisciplinary method is a cognitive process via which individuals employ a variety of disciplinary perspectives, integrating their insights and ways of thinking when trying to understand a complex problem and apply their findings to the advanced understanding of a real-world problem (Repko, Szostak & Buchberger, 2016). In this chapter, I employ three different disciplines: Colonialism, Multiculturalism and Human Rights, and Criminology via a humanitarian perspective, with the objective of integrating these three perspectives in order to construct a more comprehensive understanding of contemporary challenges of humanitarian aid NGOs in developing countries so that I can appreciate their efficacy and viability in the 21st century. Moreover, I have also applied a combination of two conceptions of interdisciplinary as presented by (Klein, 1996): "instrumental interdisciplinary" (a focus on the diversity of literature and perspectives rather than a rejection of their legitimacy) to investigate multifaceted ethnic conflicts in developing countries, and "critical interdisciplinary" (challenging existing power structures and responding to the needs and problems of ignored groups) to view the conflicts based on theoretical perspectives. The three disciplines that I employ use interrelated approaches that enhance the quality of my thesis in examining the problem area and achieving my objectives.

In arguing my thesis, colonialism assists me in examining the "old versus new" aspects of colonialism in the past colonized countries given the contexts of political and economic instruments via the study of relevant literature and different conflict case examples in post-colonial time. How the colonizer has created the socioeconomic differences in the colonized

country during the colonial administration and how this negatively impacts the people in terms of social, health, cultural, and economic opportunities from independence to present are detailed in this chapter. The second discipline, which is also essential to the completion of my thesis, is "Multiculturalism and Human Rights," because this discipline helps me to unpack multiculturalism as a discourse that entails positive and negative impacts, in addition to aiding me in approaching how the debates surrounding multiculturalism have been challenging human rights in the contemporary world via a humanitarian agenda. Additionally, Criminology within a humanitarian perspective is applied to study the ongoing controversy and debates regarding the behavior of NGOs in the context of criminal actors and humanitarian work. In other words, I study the phenomenon of "crimes against humanity" and the differing perceptions on the subject of "humanitarianism" in order to explore how such crimes can be shaped as a political concept while protecting the powerful and promoting the prestige of a group of insiders or outsiders at the expense of vulnerable people (victims) who are in need of assistance, as well as, of the rich (funders) who offers help.

Old Vs New Aspect of Colonialism

Colonialism is a policy or a system in which a country controls another country or area (Cambridge Dictionary). Its bigger brother, imperialism, was developed between the late 1400s and the 1800s and entailed taking control of the Americas and Africa and most of Asia. This practice was perpetrated by European countries seeking to gain access to the resources of the given colonized countries (FemNorthNet, 2016). Highlighting two facts, Jacobs (2017) argues that colonial rule did not approve of a wealthy indigenous population and merely generated a European presence in the countries they ruled. First, industrial production was employed as an

instrument of segregation where the colonists benefited at the expense of the indigenous people. Second, rural infrastructures and services were restricted if they did not support colonial trade and transportation. Jacobs' argument reflects the analysis of Saw (2016) on Myanmar during the era of Burmese Kings, the British colonial era, and the post-colonial era. The ethnic problems during the era of Burmese Kings are not as big as those of the post-colonial era, and the corrupted colonial rule ignored the rights of some indigenous peoples in particular states such as the Mon and the Rakhine. The British industrialization mechanisms were beneficial for Britain's exporting, but the native peasants were left poor, the unemployment rate was high, and most of the power and wealth remained in the hands of several British firms and Indian migrants during the colonial administration.

Jacobs has also highlighted the creation of socioeconomic differences in the colonized country at the expense of building social capital (Inoguchi, 2017; Posner & Boix, 2016). This is one of the colonial legacies that affect the people in terms of social, health, cultural, and economic opportunities. For example, according to the UNICEF report (2009), Canada's long history of European colonization is one of the root causes of social inequalities and ongoing poor health care problem amongst Aboriginal peoples today (Quirt, 2017). In essence, the Europeans aggressively took lands from Indigenous peoples as settler colonizers from the 15[th] century to the present, gradually displacing and greatly outnumbering them (FemNorthNet, 2016). In South East Asia, Myanmar (Burma) was one of the victimized countries under European colonialism, and the historical legacy of colonialism in Burma has played a significant role in the country's post-independence movements as well as in the present struggles of social inequality and ethnic conflicts. This is because religion and ethnicity sometimes integrate into a hyper-nationalism, which results from colonial administration and which becomes more powerful in inciting strife.

For example, two ethnic groups, the Hutus and the Tutsis, shared the land for centuries in Rwanda in Africa, and yet under European (Belgian) colonialism in the early 1900s, the Tutsis were favored at the expense of the Hutus, which resulted in a deepening of resentments between the two ethnic groups. When Rwanda obtained independence in 1962, some violent clashes occurred between the two groups and 1.5 million were killed. The international community -- including the Belgian, the French, and the U.N -- was slow to respond and too late to stop the bloodshed (Sernau, 2012).

Similarly in Myanmar, when the British Administration restarted in Rakhine (Arakan) in January 1945 after the Second World War (1939-1945), all Bengalis who went back to Bengal during the war went back to the Arakan along with many new settlers, but the native Arakanese refugees in Dinajpur were allowed to return to their homeland only in the month of December 1945. At that time, their original lands had been occupied by the Chittagonian Bengalis. The British policy favored the settlement of Bengali agricultural communities in the native Arakan's land by oppressing the natives, who became landless, and this stimulated a series of racial conflicts and bloodbaths from that period until post-independence (Saw, 2011). However, the awareness of a global audience entered only in post-colonial time, especially when communal tensions exploded in mid-2012 (Leider, 2018). Sernau has also highlighted other cases in which the colonizers responded quickly to the conflicts: the French stepped quickly into Cote D'Ivoire (Ivory Coast), its former colony, which was threatened with destabilization by fighting in Liberia; the British intervened to restore order in their old territory of Sierra during the civil war. Nevertheless, the question of whether this is a new form of colonialism remains unanswered.

New aspects of post-colonialism have been discussed by many scholars in the 21[st] century based on the analysis of contemporary and ongoing conflicts. In the developing

countries, one of the new aspects that can obscure the true history is "*the post-colonial jargon of the Western academy*." This phrase is employed by Leider (2018) to refer to foreign experts and expat journalists who have eagerly embraced a language that they speak and understand themselves and then wrongly attribute to the global language of diplomats, social media, and to a certain extent the UN, even though they know that the past colonized country's academy is unable to initiate the politically viable rights-based inputs to criticize, revise, enrich, or compete the foreign assessments propagated by the international media. The recent example that supports what Leider has discussed is the World Report 2018, produced by Human Rights Watch (HRW), which deals with the Rakhine crisis in the northern part of Myanmar. This report states that:

> Prior to August 25, the total Rohingya population in Burma was estimated to be more than 1 million, though precise figures do not exist as the Rohingya were excluded from the 2014 census. An estimated 120,000 Rohingya remain internally displaced in central Rakhine State from waves of violence in 2012. The military and government have denied that the Rohingya are a distinct ethnic group, effectively denying them citizenship, and calling them "Bengali" instead of "Rohingya" to label them as foreigners (World Report 2018, p.100)

The truth behind the report regarding the 2014 census, which is the first census in thirty years (the last was conducted in 1983), is that at the Union level, the breakdown by religious composition of the enumerated population is Buddhist (89.8%), Christian (6.3%), Islam (2.3%), Hindu (0.5%), Animist (0.8%), Other Religion (0.2%), and No Religion (0.1%). However, there is a note on page five stating that the estimated 1.09 million were not enumerated in the census because they were not allowed to self-identify using a name (Rohingya) and were not recognized by the Government, which assumed that the non-enumerated population in Rakhine is mainly affiliated with the Islamic faith. Working with this assumption, the impact at the Union level of including those non-enumerated Muslim populations in Rakhine State would make up the

following: Buddhist (87.9%), Christian (6.2%), Islam (4.3%), Hindu (0.5%), Animist (0.8%), Other religion (0.2%), and No Religion (0.1%) (2014 Census, volume 2C).

During the colonial administration (1824-1948), Britain brought in unfettered cheap Indian labour (Jacobs, 2017), and the 1983 census report indicated that all Muslims in Arakan (Rakhine) constituted 24.3% of the population and were categorized as Bangladeshi (infiltrators from Bangladesh) (Saw, 2013). The term "Rohingya" came to be invented in the 1950s by educated Bengali residents from the Mayu Frontier (Buthidaung and Maungdaw Townships of Arakan State) who were fighting for the autonomous Muslim region. However, many scholars have underscored this invented word by citing the old Census records of India and Burma Gazetteer 1881, 1871, 1872, 1901, 1906, 1911, 1924, 1931, as well as many books published by non-Burmese authors and British Colonial Officers (Chan 2005; Saw, 2011; Saw, 2017; Win, 2018; Leider, 2018).

According to the number of the peoples by state, exclusive of the over 1.09 million illegal migrants, there is a population of 2,098,807 (over 2 million) in Rakhine State. That figure proves that the Muslims (1.09 million) who identify as "Rohingyas" are not the minority of the Rakhine State, but rather a minority when compared to country's population of over 51 million. The World Report generated by the HRW has overgeneralized and disregarded the historical context, and wrongly attributed to the world that naming "Bengali" instead of "Rohingya" by Myanmar government is to label the Bengalis as foreigners. Another pertinent example that relates to imparting the wrong attribute to the international media and the UN to a certain extent is the Humanitarian Bulletin published by the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA). It states:

There are just five isolated Muslim communities left in all of Rathedaung Township and their situation remains extremely precarious. Following continuous threats from local Rakhine people to leave, many of these vulnerable people are so terrified that they calling the Government, the UN and others asking for additional measures to protect them or for help to be relocated to a safer place" (Humanitarian Bulletin Myanmar, Issue 2-2017)

As I have discussed above, the Muslims Bengalis (1.09 million) who identify themselves as "Rohingyas" are not the minority of the Rakhine State's population of 2 million. These diverse Muslim communities originated from colonial Arakan -- largely from East India and Bengal and marginally from the Middle East (Leider, 2018). The latest violence was provoked by the ARSA, who claimed to fight for the rights of Rohingya people via "conflict as an essential feature to have consequences" (Dahrendorf,1959) for the targeted community (Bengali Muslims), thereby seeking to attract the international attention of Muslims who were forced to flee the Rakhine State due to the military's clearance operation. However, the ARSA achieved their primary goal at the expense of the Rohingya community and the local Rakhine (Indigenous) people, in addition to many members of the security forces, government servants, and innocent civilians. The ARSA used women and children as human shields when they attacked 30 police stations in northern Rakhine, which was a violation of the basic human rights as referred to in the protocols in the 1974 Declaration on the Protection of Women and Children in Emergency and Armed Conflicts (Aung Zeya, 2018). However, the Western-based NGO's report tends to diminish the backdrop of the crisis, ignore the plight of the local Rakhine people, sideline the ARSA, and present the Rohingya in a narrative of Muslim victimhood.

Another similar example is articulated by the political analyst Hany Ghoraba (2018) in regard to HRW's report on the ongoing conflict between Islamist militants and Egyptian security forces, which have included attacks on the civilians of Sinai Peninsula in Egypt. In the report, the material sided with the aggressor, the Muslim Brotherhood and its terrorist allies in Sinai, and

accused the Egyptian army of causing a humanitarian crisis in Sinai by citing unnamed witnesses and unverified sources of information. Following the 2013 Egyptian revolution, which resulted in the ousting of Muslim Brotherhood former president Mohamed Morsi, there were unprecedented clashes between Islamist militants and the Egyptian army. Ghoraba argues that HRW's report has simultaneously ignored the thousands of lives lost by Egyptian military personnel, police forces, and innocent civilians, which resulted from the armed conflicts between the groups as well as the disrespected prerogative of the army to protect the lives of the civilians and its soldiers.

The international non-governmental organization HRW, established in 1978, was known for its accurate fact-finding, impartial reporting, effective use of media, and targeted advocacy due to its partnership with local human rights actors in some 90 countries (https://www.hrw.org/about). Nevertheless, the above case examples have demonstrated how the HRW has been subjected to criticism from scholars over alleged bias, shoddy reporting mechanisms, and misrepresentations of human rights issues that have often resulted in the international media, and to a certain extent the UN, being unjustly accused of faulty reporting. On the other hand, the Northern funded NGOs in colonized countries have risen significantly over a period spanning from the 1990s to the dawn of the 21st century (World Resource Institute, 2005; Reuben, 2002) via a "humanitarian" agenda, which has emerged as a new form of dominion that can shape events both during and after the aid implementation (Boutry, 2008). Moreover, the INGOs focus on poverty and the negative aspects of developing countries when engaging in public fundraising, as they consider such factors to be the "essentials" for the developing countries to be developed (Jacobs, 2017). In this broader context, the INGOs' behavior tends to threaten the developing countries with a new aspect of colonialism in the 21[st]

century. There is concern that the INGOs' actors, who are labeled as "modern development missionaries" by Jacobs, have a similar attitude to the missionaries of the colonial era and are driving the same (colonial) policy or system via the same old powers, which they are coating with some modern elements in order to expand their influence within the developing countries.

Multiculturalism and Struggling for Human Rights

In terms of political and legal discourses, multiculturalism relates to understanding and responding to the challenges associated with ethnic, cultural, and religious diversity (Jacobs & Ouedraogo, 2017). In the context of Western liberal democratic societies, Song (2016) discusses how multiculturalism is composed of a variety of prescriptive claims, such as the recognition of and respect for ethnic, religious, and cultural differences. Similar to Song, Colombo (2010) explains multiculturalism as the acceptance of multiple ethnic cultures for practical reasons or for the sake of diversity in relation to the demographics of specific places such as schools, business, neighborhoods, cities, or nations. The description of Jacobs and Ouedraogo seems to reflect the contemporary challenges of all the countries, regardless of whether they be eastern or western. As for the latter descriptions, they may not be appropriate for a developing or colonized country like Myanmar that is composed of originating multi-ethnic groups, for the recognition, acceptance, and respecting of "differences" tends to be more complex in reality, with historical context becoming crucial in defining multiculturalism.

For example, since Canada is an immigrant country and is proud of itself for its evolutionary tolerance for diversity and pluralism (Jacobs & Ouedraogo, 2017), the dominant culture and differences are recognized, respected, and finally assimilated by various minority (immigrant) groups. In contrast, diversity and pluralism cannot be expected for the evolutionary

process in relation to multiculturalism within developing or non-immigrant countries. In other words, the social or ethnic conflicts and inequality in developing countries may not be able to be solved through the lens of excessive multiculturalism; especially when past (legal or illegal) mass-migration is an issue. It is no doubt better to recognize the humanity of people migrating to a neighboring country in the hopes of a better future for themselves and their progeny. However, I argue that the extent to which the migrants consider assimilating to their host country's customs and culture depends on their respective dreams and attitudes. Another factor is, of course, the issue of whether mass migration impacts the people of the host country in a positive or negative manner. The ongoing Rakhine crisis in the northern part of Myanmar is a prolonged conflict between the indigenous people of Rakhine State and the Bengalis who infiltrated the Rakhine State from the border during colonial times. The British accepted unfettered Indian migrants at an immense scale and with no controls, using them as cheap laborers (peasants and coolies) in order to export Burmese rice to Europe by extending rice fields in the underpopulated Arkan (Rakhine) State of fertile soil and sufficient rain falls (Saw, 2016). The migratory dream of most of the Bengalis (also called Chittagonians) was "hunger for land" (Aye Chan, 2005), which complemented British colonial ideology at the expense of the Indigenous people from the Rakhine State. Indigenous farmers and landowners were to eventually give way to the colonial capitalists given that they could not compete with the advanced and corrupted British industrial management.

The Chittagonian migrants speak the Bengali language (the same as the people of Bangladesh), but they do not learn or speak Myanmar (national language) or the Arkanese dialect (Rakhine's native language), even though their forefathers have been residing in the Rakhine state for several centuries. When those Bengalis claim themselves as "Rohingya"

(Rohan = Arakan, Gya = Native in Bengali language), not only the people of Rakhine but also the whole population of Myanmar cannot accept their use of the term (Win, 2018; Saw, 2017), regardless of how many generations they have lived there. Failure to assimilate to the host indigenous people in addition to a "hunger for land" dream and attitude that is espoused by the illegal migrants have created hate between the two ethnic groups. In this respect, the matter connects to Horowitz's (2000) theories of ethnic conflict over the idea of competition. The struggles between the two communities (Rakhine vs. Bengalis), who are both fearful of losing and seeing their hope and way of life suppressed, have fueled the ethnic strife (Sernau, 2012). Consequently, diversity and pluralism have been disregarded and multiculturalism tends to be regarded with pessimism.

The conflicts related to ethnic, cultural, and religious diversity are not only about the competitive struggles between the (new) migrants and Indigenous people of the host country, as the conflicts may already be rooted amongst the multi-ethnic groups (civilians), who originated from the colonial administration in the context of the power and control that has been discussed in the previous section. Nevertheless, the cultural and religious diversity tie up with any ethnic conflicts that are more likely to leave a bitter taste about multiculturalism than to remain positive about it. For Myanmar, the British colonial administration's ignorance of the rights of particular indigenous groups such as the Mon and Rakhine (Jacobs, 2017) have transferred to the military regime (Tatmadaw) in the form of a lousy post-independence heritage. As Leider (2018) describes, the Tatmadaw's central state policies have been intended to divide the groups (for example: Buddhists and non-Buddhists; Bamar and non-Bamar; Buddhists and Muslims) rather than to unite them. This process is termed "making enemies" by Callahan (2003). Moreover, the Tatmadaw has employed such divide-and-rule tactics in countering ethnic armed insurgency in

order to prevent the formation of a united front of ethnic armed groups (Brenner, 2014). On the other hand, "essential Tatmadaw" terminology has been invented so that the Tatmadaw can maintain its power for many decades.

Multiculturalism can generally be viewed as positive, however, several negative facts have been underlined by scholars, even in Canada where multiculturalism is a source of pride despite the fact that not all Canadians are sure about what it means, what it is trying to promote, and how it can be effectively practiced (Fleras, 2008). As Fleras discusses, while multiculturalism creates a "structure of action" that promotes equality and participation, this can be a concurrent drawback when its previous supporters experience its political, social, and economic costs as excessive (Jacobs, 2011). In terms of its positive impact, a wide range of development has occurred in America under a multicultural framework over the last two decades, which witnessed attempts to neutralize and reverse the negative identification of "black," with the slogan "black is beautiful" emerging. Moreover, "blackness" has been standing strong in the world of fashion and model industries (Alexander, 2001). Alexander also positively explains multiculturalism in the context of various civil participations via a discussion of how Americans symbolically group around ethnicity as something interesting and attractive rather than viewing themselves and their culture as being unchanging.

In promoting and defending "multiculturalism," trying to understand and respond to the challenges associated with ethnic, cultural, and religious diversity in terms of the conflicts that originated from given context/s seems the appropriate ideology rather than attempting to do so via the ideology of Western societies, which inflect matters with a variety of prescriptive claims that attract ethnic, religious, and cultural differences. Otherwise, being a difference in interpretation of multiculturalism which is possible to involve various ethnic conflicts, likely to

create another type of struggle between West against the rest developing countries. Throughout the postwar period, millions of people and thousands of NGOs have been struggling for human rights in defense of oppressed groups via either explicit or implicit political agendas. Some of the root causes are a failure to re-conceptualize human rights as multicultural (Sousa Santos, 2002), as well as an excessive focus on difference that can spread into separateness and damage an appreciation of common humanity that undermines notions of universal rights and equal citizenship (Tatchell, 2009).

The debates amongst scholars in regard to how multiculturalism has been challenging human rights are not just new to the 21st century. Tatchell (2009) has warned about how a multicultural ethos can result in misinterpretation and lead to divisiveness and oppression in the name of respecting "ethnic diversity" and "cultural difference," thereby leading to the sort of betrayal of women's rights that are exemplified by the extreme oppression of tens of millions of women in the Middle East (forced marriages, execution by stoning, compulsory veiling, and the pervasive system of gender apartheid). Tatchell's case example extends to the United Kingdom, in which a perverse interpretation of multiculturalism has resulted in a tainted hierarchy of oppression that operates in the name of "unity" against Islamophobia and racism, which has resulted in much of the left tolerating misogyny and homophobia in minority communities (Weiner, 2009). Similarly, Ates (2007) and Sbai (2010) share the opinion that multiculturalism is a "mistake" as evidenced via Ates's work with immigrant women in Germany and Sbai's exploration of the condition of Muslim women in the West. Ates asserts that the practice of multiculturalism today is organized irresponsibility via unrestricted tolerance towards others. Sbai depicts multiculturalism as a deceit with two primary characteristics: the manipulation of

religion by fundamentalists who are pursuing their political agendas that involve the submission of women; and the abolition of civil liberties and the dignity of human beings (Colombo, 2010).

Human rights play an intrinsic part of international law, which recognizes and occasionally enforces the highest bodies of international adjudication such as the International Criminal Court and review at the level of the Human Rights Council of the UN (Clapham, 2007). The essentialism of human rights instruments aims to protect the rights of individuals and groups and has originated from colonialism, which is also termed "past abuses of power" by Wemmers (2012). Historically, human rights emerged as a distinct discourse on the international scene after the First World War, with the greatest impetus coming at the end of the Second World War and the establishment of the UN (Brienza, 2011). One of its priority tasks was the formation of the "Commission on Human Rights" and the writing of the "Universal Declaration of Human Rights" (UDHR) in 1948 (Wemmers, 2012), which was drafted without the participation of the majority of world's people (Sousa Santos, 2002). Moreover, in the post-World War II decades, a rights-based paradigm shift was accompanied by the emergence of different institutions seeking to label and promote and protect human rights (Quirt, 2017). For example, in Canada, human rights commissions emerged in various provinces in the 1960s, which were followed by the Canadian Human Rights Commission in 1977, which was formed to adjudicate cases that were not covered by provincial jurisdiction (Howe & Johnson, 1999).

There is no doubt that human rights are philosophically grounded on the basic essence of humanity, however, the UN's declaration is purposely generalized, non-binding, and merely an attempt to guide governments to accommodate the many different criminal justice systems that exist amongst the Member States (Wemmers, 2012). Therefore, as Sousa Santos argues, the concept of human rights rests on a well-known set of presuppositions, and Western perceptions

seem to dominate when it comes to interpreting human rights. Ignatieff (2001) has signaled that the purpose of the UDHR is not to promote Western moral superiority, but rather to warn Europeans not to redo their mistakes by abandoning individualism to collectivism. Wemmers describes the four major characteristics of human rights, which are *universal* (applicable to human beings everywhere); *inherent* (intrinsic to being human and not reliant on codification or some other external validation to exist); *indivisible* (these rights are interdependent and interrelated, hence one cannot prioritize one right without affecting other rights); and *inalienable* (these rights cannot be taken away by anyone). Nevertheless, there are more unanswered questions coming out due to the complexity of human rights (the West against the rest?), as well as the role of multiculturalism as it relates to human rights on social, economic, and political grounds. Shall we criticize multiculturalism to stop regressive interpretation that promotes social division and antagonism?

For example, land ownership or accessibility to land affects a broad range of fundamental human rights and is a vital source of capital that provides social safety and wealth to the next generation, especially when it comes to indigenous groups in rural areas. Moreover, recognition of citizenship also relates to land ownership, which can limit the landless person in travelling and participation in the political agendas within a domestic context (Wickeri & Kalhan, 2010). Brienza (2011) has questioned whether human rights are the product of an excessive individualist discourse that distracts from the positive and necessary forms of community construction. The answer is yes for a developing country such as Myanmar, which faces multiple ethical and political challenges. In their case study of the Rakhine vs. Rohingya conflict, Leider (2018) has found that while there is no doubt that human rights activism is a boon to human society, it can transform the grievances of a minority group into the politics of self-interest and

power-seeking those are perpetrated by a like-minded group via organized human rights discourse. Leider highlights organized human rights quotations of like-minded statements from such authorities as the UN, the New York Times (NYT) editorial and western politicians, which produce a wall of moral certainty about normative interpretations of Rohingya victim issues via a continual cycle of reaffirmation. These statements have not resulted in positive changes at the levels of government or civil society and multi-ethnic society.

In addition, Leider's analysis on the Rakhine crisis unfolds the human rights defenders as political actors who reiterate the centrality of the normative high-ground of human rights, which denounces present injustices and also reflects the victimization of the Rohingya in the past. On the other hand, victimhood is a complex term that is composed of explicit and implicit understandings of a violent relationship, and more than one party may claim victimhood at the same time (Leider, 2018). In addition, claims of victimhood can drive a process of exclusion (Rosland, 2009) if the analysis and investigation are done only for the one party's claim. In relation to the Rohingya crisis, I argue that human rights claims and the reaffirmation of victimhood for just the one party (Rohingya) by the UN and the like-minded groups tended to ignore the other party (Hindu community), which suffered execution-style losses at the hands of ARSA on the same early morning of 25 August 2017 (Amnesty International, 2018).

Amnesty's report details how ARSA members committed such criminal atrocities as massacres, abductions, and other atrocities against the Hindu minority in late August. These findings are based on in-depth interviews with the survivors both in the Rakhine State and the Hindu refugee camps, as well as in Bangladesh given the report of a forensic anthropological expert in Kha Maung Seik village where human remains were discovered in mass graves. According to the report, 99 Hindus were killed and 46 disappeared with their fate unknown to

this day. The victims were men, women, and young children under the age of eight. Some women managed to survive on the condition of agreeing to convert from Hinduism to Islam, and many of the surviving women were married by force to ARSA fighters. Besides, once arriving in Bangladesh on 28 August, the eight Hindu women were forced to produce a false statement on video, which claimed that the ethnic Rakhine villagers had committed the massacre. This report has highlighted the largely under-reported human rights abuses perpetrated by the ARSA during the crisis. However, the UN and the Human Rights activists play down ARSA's actions and its related human rights violations. The question is whether the human rights abuse is exposed on a large-scale side only and whether this tends to ignore the other side of a minority. If the victims' rights are human rights (Wemmers, 2012), then all the victims should be recognized, regardless of quantity (minority or majority), and their rights and privileges should be considered in parallel. Otherwise, as Baril (1985) has discussed, one person's rights may end where another person's rights are exposed.

Another problem with regard to human rights violations is generating a wrongly attributed report by the NGOs via the motto of "a government is guilty until proven innocent" (Ghoraba, 2018) in relation to armed conflicts, especially between the State military and terrorists. There have been many articles raising concerns about those shoddy reports under the pretext of human rights violations, which are gradually boiling up to the point that the international mainstream media supports their partiality without a full investigatory process. One example is a recent series of negative reports on Egypt by a US-based NGO, Human Rights Watch (HRW), which are grouped under the title of "Army intensifies Sinai home demolitions". This report was written by Sarah Leah Whitson, HRW's Middle East Director. It states that:

…the destruction, much of which is likely unlawful, has extended well beyond two government-designated security buffer zones in the cities of Arish and Rafah. The army also demolished several homes in Arish, in what appears to have been retaliation against terrorism suspects, political dissidents, and their relatives…
(http://weekly.ahram.org.eg/News/24647.aspx).

This report seems deeply misleading and provides no evidence of such destruction. It fails to address how the army has been building a new town to accommodate the evacuated people of Rafah and other towns during the fight against the Islamic State (IS)-affiliated terrorist group Ansar Beit Al-Maqdis. Since ousting the Muslim Brotherhood and former president Mohamed Morsi in the 30 June revolution, HRW became reliant on the terrorists' supporters for the report, barely mentioning the damage that resulted from the attacks of the members of the terrorist organizations and the thousands of military personnel and civilians killed by the Muslim Brotherhood and its affiliates (Ghoraba, 2018). Ghoraba focuses on HRW's reporting style of using anonymous witnesses/groups and unnamed sources, including Facebook links called "the People's Committee of North Sinai," which connects to North Sinai as it speaks the same language in its announcement to the public. Another criticism from Ghoraba is that HRW's accusation that the Egyptian army expanded the security perimeter in order to evacuate Rafah without announcing it in advance is senseless, as the State's army had the prerogative to protect the lives of civilians.

Similar examples relevant to Ghoraba's article pertain to the ongoing crisis in Northern Rakhine in Myanmar, in which the Western-based NGOs and human rights actors publish premature and partial reports about the conflict by covering only the Muslim Bengalis. These reports are based on some unfounded claims and listen only to one side, while ignoring the plight of non-Muslim indigenous peoples (Aung Zeya, 2018; Lawi Weng, 2018). Notably, the State's army was associated with such extreme terms as "genocide", "holocaust", "crime against

humanity", and "ethnic cleansing", even though the nature of the conflict is not like the one that unfolded in Yugoslavia (Clapp, 2016). This resulted in the sidelining of the attacks and atrocities that were committed by the ARSA terrorist groups against minority indigenous groups in the Rakhine State (Moe Myint, 2018). A series of biased and misleading statements generated by the NGOs on the crisis has gradually built up the immense pressure placed on Myanmar by the UN, EU, UK, and OIC countries. This has resulted in the repeated allegations of genocide allegedly being perpetrated by the State's army against the Muslim Bengalis despite there being a lack of material witnesses and evidence. Consequently, during the visit of the Human Rights Security Council delegation, only one Arakan and one Hindu woman were given time to speak with them, and there was no mention of ARSA terrorist attacks and violence being perpetrated against non-Muslim groups, despite there being a mass grave being located in Maungdaw Towhship-Rakhine in September 2017 with some 45 bodies of Hindu villagers (Moe Myint, 2018). Human rights have been introduced under the condition that all members have the same basic rights, opportunities, obligations, and social benefits (Jacobs, 2011), and these must be continually accepted in a world with ongoing controversy (Sernau, 2012).

In the context of Western modernity, human rights have been grouped into two highly divergent conceptions and practices: prioritizing civil and political rights by the liberal, and prioritizing social and economic rights by the social-democrat or Marxist (Sousa Santos, 2002). The world also needs to understand the importance of economic, social, and cultural rights and their links to civil and political rights in order to have a comprehensive debate on human rights. As Jacobs (2011) argues, the UN cannot consider it is simply good enough to base policy on the resolution-related papers of the elites who articulate human rights and social justice and by the INGOs and human rights actors. It should also be noted that no government on the planet,

regardless of whether it be democratic or non-democratic, can claim a proven formula to tackle terrorism (Ghoraba, 2018). This acknowledged, however, the UN should not be misused and exploited by powerful individuals and like-minded groups under the pretext of policing human rights violations. Otherwise, human rights are more likely to continue supporting Western moral superiority (Ignatieff, 2001) in the 21st century, with the same actors (nations) playing again for the sake of power and control.

Criminology within Humanitarian Perspective

The ideology of the term "crimes against humanity" originated in the late 18th and early 19th centuries, especially when used in the context of slavery and the slave trade in order to describe atrocities associated with European colonialism in Africa and elsewhere (for example, the atrocities committed by Leopold II of Belgium in the Congo Free State, and the mass killing of Armenians in the Ottoman Empire in 1915). After World War II in 1945, the charge of "crimes against humanity" was prosecuted at the International Military Tribunal (IMT) in Nuremberg for the first time, and it has since evolved under the international customary law and through the jurisdictions of international courts such as the International Criminal Court (ICC), the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia, and the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda. However, unlike genocide and war crimes, crimes against humanity have not yet been codified in a dedicated treaty of international law, despite there being efforts to do so (http://www.un.org/en/genocideprevention/crimes-against-humanity.html).

International jurisprudence and the adoption of the ICC Statute have helped in clarifying the definition of "crimes against humanity," which have been widely accepted as acts that have been committed against any civilian population and in a widespread or systematic manner. They

must be based on a policy by a State, an organization, or a group (Rottensteiner, 1999). In this regard, the pertinent example is the Myanmar military junta or the "Tatmadaw" who have ruled the country with absolute power for almost fifty years (1962 to 2011). The junta fails to afford human rights and humanitarianism to the civilians, including when dealing with the multi-ethnic and indigenous people involved in political and ethnic conflicts. Notably, in 1988 the Tatmadaw assumed power by slaughtering student activists. They then subsequently placed Aung San Suu Kyi, the key opposition leader and Nobel Peace Prize recipient, under house arrest from 1989 to 2010 (Saw, 2011). Moreover, the junta ruthlessly suppressed every single uprising, including that of the revered Buddhist monks at the 2007 saffron revolution (Smith, 1991; Booth, 2007; Women's League of Burma, 2007; Win, 2018).

According to Kosovo (1999), the concept of "systematic" from a criminological perspective is a regular pattern that has been thoroughly organized on the basis of a standard policy that involves substantial public or private resources. In the case of Myanmar, the military junta has thoroughly organized the longest running civil war (armed conflicts) by employing its own resources of soldiers and various weaponry in relation to the torturing and forced relocation of some of its own ethnic communities, such as Karen, Shan, Mon, and Rakhine (May Aung, 2011) as well as in relation to forced sexual violence against ethnic girls and women (Win, 2018). This example is related to Visano's (1998) discussion of structure (varieties of brutality) and shapes, which are in turn influenced by the nature of human agency (the military regime), with crime being written as a localized script within a larger narrative on the appropriateness of power control. Similarly, based on Social Conflict Theory, which tries to explain crime within economic and social contexts, Siegel, Brown, and Hoffman (2006) have discussed the role that government plays in creating a criminogenic environment as one of Conflict theory's concerns.

Nevertheless, the extent of the impact resulting from the criminogenic environment that shapes and has been shaped by the nature of dictatorship following a post-military regime or during a democracy transition period in developing countries is under-researched. In regard to how the international community views the Rakhin vs. Rohingya crisis in the wake of Myanmar's newly elected democratic government, there is a prevalence of bias from the international community, which focuses on how the military junta's past criminal behavior has not ended with the Tatmadaw. It also extends to the entire country, which has been portrayed as anti-Muslim, anti-foreigner, and anti-NGO. Besides, there is a controversy that surrounds claiming sexual violence against Rohingya women in relation to the State army, which has a bad reputation of using rape as a weapon against ethnic women in internal wars. (Women's League of Burma, 2014; ND-Burma, 2016; Win, 2018).

The displaced population of more than 700,000 mainly self-identified Rohingya Muslims in the camps of Bangladesh, resulting from Myanmar's army crackdown after the ARSA's attacks since late August 2017, includes an estimated 81,000 pregnant women (Bangladesh Health Ministry, 2017), though the UN puts the number at around 40,000. Many of the pregnant women are reported as victims of sexual assault that were perpetrated by the members of Myanmar's army (Tatmadaw), despite all accusations of rape being denied by the Tatmadaw (CTV News, May 2018). Based on some personal interviews with the Rohingya women as well as guesses and generalizations by the Rohingya advocates, all the claims have been accepted with no doubts by the Human Rights Groups, the NGOs, and the UN. For example, Dr Fariha Khan, a physician and director of Islamic Relief Canada, states "*they would like women up and take their pick and these rapes would just follow,……..*"

(https://www.ctvnews.ca/world/thousands-of-rohingya-rape-victims-expected-to-give-birth-1.39394666). Given that the UN declares around 60 babies a day are being born in vast refugee camps in Bangladesh, and the estimated population of the camps has passed 1 million within a couple of months with uncertainty existing as to how many babies have been born or will be born as a result of sexual violence, Bangladesh and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) have come to agree to cooperate on providing contraception to Rohingya refugee women from Myanmar (Nay Lin, 2018).

In contrast, there was another finding by the Guardian News (2017), which interviewed a dozen teenage girls who were as young as 12 and who had been forced to marry in the camps or had parents who were actively looking for husbands for them because an average family size of five was allocated 25 kg of rice rations every two weeks in the camps. Only one of the girls interviewed knew her husband before the wedding day, and none of the girls knew anything about sex. Nevertheless, a panel of UN women's rights experts has responded to mounting evidence that the Tatmadaw has committed acts of sexual violence against Rohingya women and has asked the Myanmar government to report the cases within six months (MacGregor, 2017). To what extents will identifying the Myanmar army as sexual abusers solve the problems of those Rohingya pregnant women? The World Health Organization (WHO) announced in May 2018 that 100,000 Rohingya children were expected to be born in 2018. At the same time, a Ukhiya-based NGO official has reported that Rohingya men had multiple wives in various camps. In fact, once a wife becomes pregnant, her husband often proceeds to have sex with another woman. The head of the family planning office in Cox's Bazar district has criticized the NGOs for focusing too much on financial and infrastructural assistance to Rohingya while neglecting the issue of birth control, which is complicated by religious matters, the issue of

wanting large families in the camp for survival, polygamy, force marriage and under-aged marriage (Rashid, 2018).

Those findings should be a wake-up call for Human Rights actors and Rohingya advocates, who should logically review them in relation to what extent the evidence can reasonably claim that the Tatmadaw committed sexual violence against Rohingya women and to what extent the Tatmadaw is deserving of such accusations. Based on the various findings illustrated above, I argue that crime is ungeneralizable and non-guessable when identifying the criminals based on the criminogenic environment in which the accused persons were involved in the past, as the true criminal actors will likely either be diminished or will escape under the shadow of Human Rights actors, NGOs, and the UN.

Based on Visano's (1998) discussion, the context of criminal actors can equally vary from single, simple, and uncontrollable individual offenders to more elusive, complex, global, sovereign, and corporate organizations, as they differ considerably in terms of privilege. Visano's notes reflect some case examples of contemporary controversy about these criminal actors, including those criminals who commit crimes against people who they are actually supposed to be helping. For example, the United Nations Peacekeeping aims to help countries torn by conflict by creating conditions for lasting peace, and this project is the largest and most visible representation of the UN given its collective investment in global peace, security, and stability (https://peacekeeping.un.org/en/what-is-peacekeeping). By contrast, poor Haitian girls and boys as young as 12 to 15 were bribed them with snacks, cookies, and a few cents or dollars for sex in exchange for performing sex with some UN peacekeepers. At least 134 Sri Lankan peacekeepers were found guilty of raping 9 children, as well as of running a paedophile ring around the Haitian children from soldier to soldier between 2004 and 2007. Out of those

offenders, 114 were sent home, though none were imprisoned. According to the Associated Press's (AP) interviews with the victims, it has been reported that in UN missions over the past 12 years, there were nearly 2000 allegations of sexual abuse and exploitation directed at peacekeepers and other personnel around the world. Sadly, more than 300 of the allegations involved children (Dodds, 2017)

Similarly, Peter Dalglish – a prominent Canadian aid worker who helped found the charity Street Kids International and who worked for decades for a number of humanitarian agencies including the UN – appears as the quintessential sexual offender given that he was charged with sexual abuse in Nepal. He lured children from poor families with promises of education, jobs, and trips, and then proceeded to sexually abuse them. An investigation has been expanded, with the officials finding evidence linked to cases of child abuse that occurred more than 12 years ago. In addition to Dalglish, 6 foreigners of unidentified nationalities were arrested in Nepal two years ago on allegations of sexually abusing underage children (The Globe and Mail, 2018). As Visano has addressed, is the crime conveniently incorporated within a discourse, which in this instance would support intrusions of the more powerful (aid workers)? Also, how do we control crime to reduce criminality (Siegel & et al., 2006) in the humanitarian community?

In the context of the "humanitarian," which defines a person who is involved in or is connected with improving people's lives and reducing suffering by assisting people who are generally in need of help (Cambridge Dictionary), the ongoing debate as to whether the people who are to be assisted in these particular regions are actually exposed to more harm than good is mainly due to how they are sometimes abused under the "humanitarian" agenda by the aid workers (from NGOs), who are supposed to be improving their lives. The above examples have

led to the question of whether these aid workers who are operating in association with the NGOs tend to become part of the criminal actors of the late 21st century.

From a culturally grounded approach, Visano has also discussed such issues of crime as its appropriateness of behavior, attributes, appearances, and relations. He suggests that while culture is a central aspect of society, crime can become a condition and a consequence of relation control via culturally grounded ideology and hegemony. There is a relevant example of the trafficking of human beings as a crime against humanity, which supports what Visano has claimed. A Rohingya girl of the age of 13, separated from her family while trying to escape from persecution, violence, and apartheid-like conditions in Rakhine, was caught by traffickers near the Thai-Malaysian border and held for weeks in a dirty and brutal jungle camp. She was to be offered for sale into marriage to Rohingya men in neighboring Malaysia, which was her only way to "freedom." As indicated above, child marriage is permitted in the culture of Rohingya or Islam, so in order for the girl to be freed from the traffickers, she must accept and marry some unknown Rohingya man and position herself though the culturally grounded ideology and hegemony of the captor (Latiff & Harris, 2017). Also, this example shows us that each society has its own distinctive ways of dealing with criminal behavior (Siegel & et al., 2006) and that criminals can be insiders rather than outsiders of a particular community under culturally grounded conditions.

Marxists have defined crime as a political concept designed to protect the power and position of the upper classes at the expense of the poor (Siegel & et al., 2006). With respect to crime within humanitarian perspectives, especially in the 21st century, I argue that crime has been shaped as a political concept based on social factors that pertain to protecting the powerful and promoting the prestige of a group of insiders or outsiders at the expense of the vulnerable,

who are in need of the assistance of the rich (donors/funders) who contribute help. When criminals are a group of outsiders, they can be controlled by increased law enforcement (Siegel & et al., 2006). By contrast, when the criminals are a group of insiders, criminal actors and their activities are positioned within certain identifiable settings, and crime is conveniently incorporated within a discourse that supports the intrusions of the more powerful (Visano, 1998). Therefore, to control insider criminals, increasing law enforcement may not work appropriately, and thus the only viable option to limit the criminality may reside in ending the social conflicts and inequality.

CHAPTER FIVE

Findings and Discussion

This chapter will compile the information obtained from 10 qualitative interviews and issues presented in earlier parts of the thesis as well as analyses the findings to answer the research questions and contribute to the overall conclusions made in the following chapter. The participants interviewed were the members of the Myanmar Diaspora in Canada who had experiences or knowledge with humanitarian issues inside Myanmar. The analysis of interview information will follow a process of reviewing and analyzing the answers by relating to the first stage of extracted (secondary data) materials from different works of INGO/NGO related literature and analysis of relevant case studies on humanitarian projects in Myanmar.

Firstly, I will explain the research methodology, sampling and process of the interview questionnaire. Secondly, I will discuss the interviews' findings by connecting to the issues that I raised in previous chapters, such as accountability, aid controversy, contextualization, and operational challenges within humanitarian INGO community in developing countries.

Methodology, Sampling and Interview Questionnaire Process

The methodology of my thesis was interpretive based on qualitative data. The semi-structured email-interview was applied to ensure greater accuracy and ease in processing respondents' answers. One open-ended question was included at the end of the questionnaire to check participant's consistency in answering aid disbursement related question as well as to provide an opportunity to the participants to add their opinion/comment on the overall questionnaire. To prevent from miss-recording, the participants are requested to write down their

remarks to open questions. A "snowball" sampling technique was adapted (Bryman & Bell, 2016) to recruit the participants from Myanmar diaspora in Canada.

Since having experiences or knowledge to the behavior of humanitarian aid NGOs in Myanmar is a requirement for the interviewees, I first approached to community activists who could refer me to the right diaspora members for the interview without limiting the participants' residential region (provinces or cities). Moreover, some participants were requested to refer me to the other relevant participants. There is no gender-specific requirement in identifying the participants. However, they must not be younger than 25. Out of 12 diaspora members that I approached, 10 people (5 from Toronto and 1 each from Brampton, London, Sarnia, Ottawa, and Vancouver) responded to participate in the interview process.

The structure of the interview followed the general pattern of:

(i)   Introduction and establishing rapport

(ii)   Informed consent

(iii)   Personal details to make sure eligibility to participate in the interview as well as background and nature of participants' involvement with Myanmar with respect to issues of humanitarian aid INGOs

(iv)   Specific questions regarding contextualization of aid INGOs in Myanmar's conflict area

(v)   An additional question regarding key issues/obstacles of humanitarian aid INGOs in Myanmar

(vi)   Asking participants' opinion regarding channeling aid funds

(vii) Open question related to aid disbursement and prevent misappropriation

Questionnaires were sent by emails as well as by prepaid mail for the convenience of research participants. All participants were offered to call me if they are not clear about the questions and some participants did so. Among 10 people, 6 responded to the interview questionnaires by post and the rest by email. Some respondents were very enthusiastic in

answering the open question, however, the answers outside the scope of my thesis were discarded. The interview documents were coded by numbers. The names of participants and the NGO/aid organizations they used to work/ volunteer or are currently working will not appear in any report of my thesis, and it has been addressed on the consent document.

Accountability

Critique of humanitarian assistance in Myanmar regarding performance and accountability of aid agencies has been more controversial ever in post-2012 concurrently by the increasing with foreign aid donors and their implementing partners in the country under the agenda of delivering development assistance to support the country's nascent reforms and transition to democracy. In this regard, in the case of Myanmar, INGO accountability means to interlink the identification of issues, financial transparency, beneficiary participation, and handling the locals' feedback to balance between upward versus downward, and external versus internal.

It has been noted from Leider's analysis on ethnic conflict in Rakhine State that Rohingya political organizations raise the international recognition of victimization of Bengali Muslims (claiming as Rohingya identity) since 40 years ago. Moreover, some groups' (RSO: Rohingya Solidarity Organization, ARIF: Arakan Rohingya Islamic Front, RPF: Rohingya Patriotic Front, RLO: Rohingya Liberation Organization, IMA: Itihadul Mozahadin of Arakan) main objective of their movement is to obtain the equal status like other ethnic groups in Myanmar by adopting radical ideology of founding a separate Muslim state (MyaWin, 1992; Aye Chan, 2005). As Leider has discussed, the INGOs have analyzed the crisis with a purely human rights-based approach, but fail to see the problem in its entirety. Such a wrong identification with the ignorance of historical context on the multifaceted ethnic crisis leads the

INGOs' accountability as problematic to the host community (indigenous people) who are also part of the crisis' victims. Consequently, the existence and action of INGOs in Rakhine State tends to be a threat to the locals and even enhance the tension and antipathy between the conflict ethnic groups.

Some interview participants of Myanmar Diaspora who worked for humanitarian aid INGOs in the past or currently involved in humanitarian activities in the conflict area of Myanmar are concerned about the INGOs' accountability related to wrong identification of problems with the excessive rights-based approach but focusing only on one community that reflect what Leider has discussed. Also, the participants underscored the INGOs' failure to handle the locals' feedback and lack of financial transparency to safeguard from misappropriation of aid resources.

> *"...............INGOs become organizations of advocating for their (financial) sponsors, own purpose and beliefs. The translation and meaning of Human Rights by the INGOs have become questionable and the viewpoints of the violation of human rights is debatable and a sensitive topic due to growing influence of the world's most powerful religious based organization such as OIC and powerful geopolitical organizations like EU...........focusing only on one religion and a community in a small part of country (2 million) without consideration of overall impact on the country's political democratic reform process and wellbeing of diverse 52 million people ...."* (#010)

> *"To be effective disbursement, regardless of which organization or agency, the most important fact is to build trust and accountability between the aid group and the local recipient community,.................There must be a sustainable policy on project establish between the aid group and the local elected committee to monitor the project & take feedback from the recipients to safeguard from misappropriation. All plan, project policy and feedback must be kept transparency to the public and the donors"* (#002)

One respondent pointed INGO's wrong identification to multifaceted ethnic conflict with the ignorance of historical and cultural contexts as well as exclusion of local's input (beneficiary

participation), that lead to wrong approach (naming and shaming) to the problem rather than trust building approach to effectively balance the external versus internal for project efficacy.

> *"…………..Trust building with local communities- both sides of the conflict- should not be overlooked and need a careful approach. International NGOs should also learn about the complex history and the root cause of the conflicts and should avoid siding with one community. They should also learn about cultural sensitivity and conflicting forces in play. The existence of strong nationalism should be observed and naming and shaming avoided."* (#007)

Besides, interview response from a retired Myanmar-Canadian who recently completed her one-year volunteer project in Myanmar, assigned by Canada based INGO, highlights that the aid channeling through only INGOs create more chance of official misappropriation of funds, leading to less accountability of the entire project.

> *"If disbursement targeted for the same aid is divided between one to two registered/ existing INGO/ NGOs and government organizations/department (for over-sight), there could be more of a check and balance to see how far the money can go for proper distribution and less misappropriation. If only one organization gets the bulk of funding, there is usually more chance of officials pocketing some funds for personal use (i.e., corruption, misappropriation) and less accountability"* (#003)

Humanitarian system is not positioned in the sense of every single part fit together and feed each other with complementary roles and responsibilities, but it is composed of complex elements such as shifting actors, diffuse boundaries, partially conflict of interests, and highly diversified relations and work styles, that cause problem in the accountability process (Hilhorst, 2002). Moreover, the internal ethnic conflicts mostly rooted from social issues historically, as Kopinak (2013) discussed, that have biological, behavioural and emotional components. Therefore, in order to be accountable in transparency related commitments such as identification

of issues in context sensitive environment, the intense rights-based approach will not work for Western INGOs regardless of who is governing the recipient country.

In the case of Rakhine Versus Muslim Bengalis (Rohingya) crisis, the firmly established word of the Rohingya as the "most persecuted minority" has been wrongly attributed by the INGOs to the UN which does not have a level of persecution around the world (Leider, 2018). The findings from the literature (discussed in Chapter 2) and qualitative interview demonstrate the dividing behaviours of aid agencies, resulting from the wrong identification of the conflicts with the inappropriate approach, ignorance of historical context, lack of knowledge about cultural sensitivity, and exclusion of a local community in the humanitarian operation. Consequently, INGOs fail to balance between upward versus downward, and external versus internal in the decision-making process. It is important to note that accountability is not a quick fix to the possible problem because the INGOs are in the position of protecting not only their survival but also their beneficiaries as well as the emergency character of humanitarian assistance (Hilhorst, 2002).

Aid Controversy and Suspicious of Misappropriation

It is evident from literature and case study analysis that Myanmar has been pressured from the international community on the pretext of the humanitarian violation. On the other hand, whether foreign aid exists for needed community or the sake of good survival of the western-oriented aid workers seems more suspicious in the eyes of the local community especially in the ethnic conflict area. The controversy of aid has not stopped regardless of who is governing the country (military junta or democratic government). During the power of the military regime, Inwood (2008)'s empirical study has revealed that some Western and exile political groups hamper the aid flow into Myanmar through sanctions and withdrawal of a major humanitarian agency, the

Global Fund, resulting from the political pressure in the US. Inwood has also underlined other reasons of donors' limiting on funds such as worrying that aid may be diverted away from intention by the junta by putting its own needs before delivering to the poor, and the donors perceive the government itself should provide basic services especially health to civilians.

The primary intention of limiting funds and aid assistance from the West was giving pressure to the junta for the political change at the expense of the poor. But the West's assumption was incorrect, and no evidence of achieving the West's desire outcome was made (Than Myint-U, 2006). Moreover, as Anderson (1999) argues, it is a moral and logical fallacy to conclude that a decision not to give aid would "do no harm" because aid can do harm. Donors have directly funded the INGOs for the international development projects to prohibit the misappropriation and diverting away from humanitarian needs by the junta (Inwood, 2008). However, I argue that the donors fail to concern the risks of misappropriation and mismanagement of aid resources that can also be committed by the INGOs and aid staff as well.

Some scholars have alarmed about the administrative expenses including expatriates' facilities such as housing and transportation besides the salaries that have been estimated as a total of 50% of the entire disbursed funds (Branczik, 2004). The NGO's claim nature of totaling expenses per program rather than a specific cost breakdown (Kopinak, 2013) despite a cost computation based on client versus labor cost can provide more efficient financial related information (Malki, 2008). As Jacobs (2017) argues, the foreign workers' exposing of a great lifestyle while looking after the needs of the poor, in my point of view, it seems discomfort to the poor to see the foreign aid workers as spending their career with a comfortable lifestyle in the midst of people who are suffering deprivation. A backlash against INGOs regarding a lack of transparency in operational cost and their interests in continual of aid projects seems more

controversial in Rohingya refugee crisis. The survey result of 42 local NGOs and 19 INGOs including UN agencies, conducted by Coastal Association for Social Transformation Trust (COAST, 2018 report) highlights the operational cost of the INGOs in Cox's Bazar, which is five times higher than the cost of the local NGOs in that region.

The COAST 2018 report also concerns about an INGO working in Cox's Bazar for the last one year according to one calculation based on a case study, that certain INGO has spent 18% for the programme while 82% allocated for operations. The findings from the literature are consistent with the concerns of interview participants with regards to aid disbursement.

> *"Whoever the recipient is, most of the funds channeled usually will go towards Staffing and administration and only a certain % is utilized for the targeted source………"* (#003)

> *"I was in the crisis area. They need direct support. I am not sure INGOs can be very effective. Directly support is the best way with my experience …………………also less cost to help them"* (#008)

Interview respondents believe that unfair allocation of aid resources between the conflict groups by INGOs with their interests create more conflicts/violence and adverse outcomes.

> *"Sadly, INGOs play along with those for their own interests and survival instead of focusing on noble cause of providing impartial humanitarian assistance. The*se *actions are producing the opposite negative results of more sufferings and violence…"* (#010)

> *"Conflict ethnic groups need humanitarian aid assistance by NGO/INGOs that who do not biased in their religion or political ways. Fair contributions and proper fund management for aid assistance are crucial between conflict ethnic groups in order not to create further more conflicts"* (#005)

It is noted that all the ten research participants perceive aid disbursement should not channel only through INGOs, and 3 have the same opinions of considering funding the aid through government organizations, registered charity/foundation groups, and local NGOs to be effective aid disbursement and prevent misappropriation. Regarding aid transparency, there has

been evidence that large funding disbursement is fungible and creates corruption and an unrealistic, unsustainable economy to the host country (Branczik, 2004; Moyo, 2009). Moreover, the findings from the interview reflect case analysis of Rakhine crises (discussed in chapter 3). The respondents' concern over the unequal resource allocation between the conflicting communities, as well as finding WFP biscuits and "US Agency for International Development parcels" at the ARSA camp left the local's backlash against the behaviours of aid agencies in the conflict area followed by the disruption of humanitarian operation by the indigenous community.

Another interesting point is that such a backlash and mistrust of the INGOs have been exposed after the military regime era although that is not something scholars and observers often highlight in terms of local's perception on INGOs in the past. For example, according to past empirical studies in Myanmar, the aid is perceived as a "donation" [*ahlu*] in the Buddhist sense (Brac de la Perriere, 2010) and the donor as a "master of donation" [*ahu shin*] (Boutry, 2008). In addition, according to South et al., (2011), based on the findings of studying INGOs' operations in Delta region in the aftermath of Nargis cyclone, the beneficiaries in the Delta region would not raise any discontent regarding INGO action because they were afraid of being excluded from the distribution lists or of being categorized as problematic villages on the donation (humanitarian aid) matter.

In my opinion, some forms of misappropriation and mismanagement of aid resources may not benefit to the aid workers, and it seems unintended consequences. In other words, the Western-based aid workers may not even realize what they have done wrong concerning aid delivery until the negative impact came up, especially when delivering humanitarian assistance in the disaster area. As discussed in Chapter 3 based on the Nargis cyclone case study by Boutry (2008), it was apparent that the aid assistance was excluded to the patrons under the ideology of

not considering them as most vulnerable or most impoverished. Unfortunately, this western-oriented misconception resulted in hampering the economic recovery of the Delta region after the acute phase of the disaster had overcome. It was because of the INGOs' insufficient cultural knowledge resulting from excluding locals in the decision-making process, rather than mismanagement or misallocation of aid resources for their self-interest or self-benefits.

It is reasonable to conclude that there has been a change in positive attitude (trust) towards a new democratic government regarding humanitarian aid operation comparing to the past military government in the local context. Findings from the interview show that humanitarian activists from Myanmar Diaspora tend to believe that the donor should collaborate with government and local NGOs/charitable organizations for transparency to prevent misappropriation as far as possible. In this regard, it is an alarm calls for the donors, to review the potential factors linked to the risk of misappropriation of aid resources regardless of intended or unintended likely to be committed by the INGOs. On the other hand, the donors should explore the effective aid disbursements mechanism to minimize the risk of mismanagement of funds to improve the accountability relations both to upwards and downwards.

What is Effective Contextualization in Humanitarian Operation?

During the power of the military regime, most of the aid agencies have reported that they attempt to be politically aware. However, they remain neutrally align with the approach of "do no harm" (Anderson, 1999) that ensures the assistance not to worsen the situation inadvertently and they have the responsibility to achieve their sustainable outcomes. The agencies are also very conscious when generating reports not to unnecessarily upset the junta with the understanding of challenging against the government will be negative results for themselves

(Inwood, 2008), including restrictions on their operations and the refusal of immigration visas renewal (Fuller, 2007). Moreover, Inwood's finding shows that effective humanitarian assistance can make it possible in the context of historical and political. Additionally, Ware (2011)'s fieldwork has demonstrated how the socio-political context in Myanmar has had a significant positive impact on the implementation of international development principles and approaches by INGOs.

The studies of those two scholars underlined that INGOs in Myanmar emphasized to achieve positive outcomes by using equity and more humanitarian approach than excessive rights-based principles in the context of political, socio-political, historical and cultural as well as non-confrontational to the military government in the era of the military regime. Concurrently, the INGOs worked with donor governments under the ideas of partnerships, capacity building, advocacy, a rights-based approach and accountability to balance between the upward (external) accountability to donors and downward (internal) accountability to beneficiaries.

My study debunks the different behaviours of INGOs in post-2012 (compared to previous studies during the power of the military regime), especially in the armed conflict area. The participants were asked two questions- in which context/s INGOs conduct, and any context is being ignored when providing humanitarian assistance in a post-democracy period of Myanmar-concerning INGOs' contextualization of delivering humanitarian aid in the conflict area of Myanmar. All interview participants agree on the first question that the INGOs are currently conducting the humanitarian operation under multiple contexts of cultural, economic, socio-cultural, and political. However, some participants underline the excessive interference of INGOs in ethnic conflict, and the problem of the wrong attribution of the word "genocide" in ethnic conflict area as a new agenda. Moreover, the participants criticize the INGOs' action as

inappropriate while democratically elected, and the young government is struggling to get power

back entirely from the military regime, as well as attempting to amend the 2008 constitution,

deliberately created by the State army.

> *"Democratically elected government is in its infant and needs help………*
> *Along with it, the civilian government of Burma has been working hard along with civil society organizations to find ways for national reconciliation, ending the civil wars, laying down democratic foundation and building democratic norms. The INGOs which focus on political issue in Burma are actually not helping the situation but problematic….."(#009)*

> *"Recent November 2018 action of the Amnesty International revoking of Myanmar leader Aung San Suu Kyi's award coincide with ASEAN summit and voting of the UN resolution sponsored by OIC and EU is a good example. INGOs and the international groups' ignorance of reality of today's political landscape of Myanmar (such as the defense and security related 3 ministerial posts are appointed by the military chief not by the elected President, their related functions are separately from the elected NLD government) will not help solving the cycle of humanitarian crisis and building a genuine democratic country" (#010.)*

Another participant voices concerns for the people of Myanmar in the transaction period

from the military regime to democratic government, as well as addresses the State army' doubts

about INGOs' actions in his answer:

> *"The people of Myanmar have gone through a very harsh dictatorship and there is more uncertainty now than ever. The present government is under the siege of the military since according to the 2008 Constitution; the National Security Council can unilaterally dissolve Parliament when the General think that things are getting out of hand. As there is insurgency all over Burma, the Army does not believe any INGOs who are actually helping either displaced people in the country or Myanmar refugees abroad. It is hard to rule out this claim as most groups come with ulterior motives" (#004).*

The findings from the interview have further witnessed the INGO's ignorance of

complexed (internal) political tension and fragile relations between ASSK and Senior General, as

well as a trap of the 2008 constitution. For the question- if any context is ignored when providing

humanitarian assistance in a post-democracy period of Myanmar-, all respondents perceive that

historical context is ignored. That is consistent with Leider (2018)'s discussion on INGOs' wrong identification with the ignorance of historical background on the multifaceted ethnic crisis in Rakhine State, tending to be a threat to the locals and enhance the tension and antipathy between the conflict ethnic groups. In addition, some participants, especially those who are actively involved in humanitarian activities in conflict area address the dividing behaviours of INGOs between the indigenous people and migrants (Muslim community), resulting from the lack of cultural knowledge and ignorance of country's (internal) political complexity in ethnic conflict area (Rakhine State). One respondent remarks that:

> *Although INGO may have claimed to involve in the context of cultural and political, they often ignored genuine cultural & history of natives, political reality especially in Rakhine State and Muslim communities in Myanmar (e.g INGOs ignoring the view points and feelings of majority Myanmar citizens and native non-Muslim indigenous people such as Rakhine, Khame, Mro, Thet) (#010).*

The above findings support that INGOs do not remain as neutral when distributing humanitarian assistance in the ethnic conflict area of Myanmar. In other words, behaviours of humanitarian aid INGOs in a post-democracy period of Myanmar contrast their past non-confrontational behaviour to the (military) government in the era of the military regime (Inwood, 2008; Ware, 2011). Such a significant turn has, unfortunately, worsen the situation in the conflict area. As Hilhorst (2002) has discussed, what is good humanitarian assistance and what constitutes the humanitarian actions in the sense of preventing and alleviating human suffering relate to how INGOs contextualize their work in the recipient country. In the case of Myanmar, effective contextualization links to understanding the internal political context and adapting western development approach with appropriate modification based on the root causes of the conflicts (historical context) and then maintaining a neutral role.

In summary, for Myanmar, a good humanitarian assistance in the sense of preventing and alleviating human suffering in armed conflict area is possible only if the humanitarian aid INGOs attempt to be internal-political aware, understand social and cultural factors of the host community, and remain neutrally between the conflict groups by applying impartial based humanitarian approach. Also, the INGOs should work with recipient country's government under the ideas of partnership and advocacy, concurrently with local society under the notions of capacity building and accountability to provide excellent humanitarian assistance in the sense of preventing and alleviating human suffering in the armed conflict area.

The Challenges of Humanitarian Operations in Myanmar

The challenges of humanitarian aid INGOs during the power of the military regime almost merely rooted in the negative attitude of military junta towards foreign aid organizations. The junta looked INGOs with high suspicion and perceived them as the transmitters of potentially damaging information out of the country (May-Kyawt, 2006). However, there has been evidence that INGOs, in the era of military regime emphasize more to achieve positive outcomes in delivering humanitarian assistance to needed people of the conflict area, rather than being confrontational to the military government (Inwood, 2008; Ware, 2010). As Stromquist (1998) discussed, INGOs well positioned themselves in understanding the specific needs of Myanmar people and provided effective voices to people when the military regime ignored the needs (Korten, 1990).

In contrast, as I have discussed in Chapter 3, post-2012 has remarked as the local people expose a backlash against the behaviours of INGOs in the conflict area, as well as, a loss of trust between the civilian government, indigenous people, and the INGOs. Especially in 2017, the aid

operations were badly disrupted in conflict area, including refusing travel visa to most INGOs and some UN agencies, unwillingness to do any business with aid agencies by the locals, and furious public's accused of INGOs backing the terrorists and making a war in northern part of the Myanmar, Rakhine State (Humanitarian Bulleting Myanmar, 2017; Arkin, 2017). I intend to investigate the critical issues to effective humanitarian assistance by INGOs in ethnic conflicts in Myanmar from the viewpoints of Myanmar people, and then relate the findings to contemporary challenges of humanitarian aid INGOs in developing countries, explored in Chapter 3.

In this regard, the participants were allowed to address the issue/s that may be under-reported or only specifically challenging to aid workers in Myanmar's conflict area. Out of the ten interview respondents, it has appeared that eight respondents perceive a "lack of cultural knowledge" as a most challenging issue followed by "misappropriation and mismanagement of funds" (7/10), "accountability" (6/10), and "disruption of humanitarian operations" (6/10). Regarding an open question "if they would like to add any other issues as obstacles to effective humanitarian aid assistance by INGOs in the conflict area of Myanmar", the summary of the answers from four respondents are as follows:

Respondents (by code number)	Answers
#004	Security of aid workers and transportation
#002	Lack of cooperation with local victim communities and feedback, follow up evaluation process
#010	Lack of historical knowledge and understanding of Myanmar people and their struggle in journey towards genuine full democracy
#005	Providing aid assistance with biased opinion/decision to one ethnic group only. The organization should stay un-biased to help conflict ethnic group in Myanmar

The respondents' additional comments are related to loss of trust on aid workers, exclusion of local communities in the decision-making process, ignorance of historical context and internal political complications, mismanagement of aid resources, and un-neutral behaviours of aid workers. Additionally, one interview participant pointed out INGO's incorrect identification to multifaceted ethnic conflict with the ignorance of historical and cultural contexts as well as the exclusion of local's input (beneficiary participation). That consequently leads to a wrong approach (naming and shaming) to the problem rather than trust-building approach to effectively balance the external versus internal for project efficacy.

> *"Trust building with local communities- both sides of the conflict- should not be overlooked and need a careful approach. International NGOs should also learn about the complex history and the root cause of the conflicts and should avoid siding with one community. They should also learn about cultural sensitivity and conflicting forces in play. The existence of strong nationalism should be observed and naming and shaming avoided."* (#007)

It is reasonable to conclude that the challenges of humanitarian aid INGOs in a post-democracy period of Myanmar has been rooted in ineffective contextualization and inappropriate approach of aid INGOs in the decision-making process. These challenges also stemmed from INGOs' failure to collaborate with the young democratic government and its civil society under the ideas of partnerships, advocacy and capacity building.

Ware (2011) suggests that expatriate INGO managers should remain in the country longer in order to facilitate deeper understanding of the context and culture when empowering all INGO staff with sensitivity to the cultural context in Myanmar. INGO managers should aim to maximize development effectiveness, despite the warning that the international community, particularly the West, is seen as a political actor rather than as an impartial mediator. In contrast, Ware's suggestion will not work in present day of Myanmar, because the INGOs tend to

emphasize the "insider strategy" (Peterson, 1992) that excludes the local community's opinion in the decision-making process in the post-2012 era. They position themselves as "know-all" under the Western's ideologies without considering the host community's culture, particularly in a sensitive political context such as Myanmar. As discussed above, INGOs' dividing behavior between the conflict groups will challenge the existence of expatriate aid workers. How the "loss of trust", especially between the INGOs and local community, will be remade, seems to be an ongoing question.

Why Knowing "Culture" Matter?

The findings from the interviews have highlighted the "lack of cultural knowledge" as the most challenging issue compared to other factors. Out of the two NGOs' advocacy strategies described by Peterson (1992), the "insider strategy" approach that influences decision makers directly seems to be unsuited for delivering humanitarian assistance in Myanmar. The "outsider strategy" that intends to appeal the public opinion is more appropriate due to the fact that involvement of heterogeneous ethnic and different religious people in CBOs and local NGOs signal the complexity of inter and intra community issues rooted historically. Therefore, inclusion of respective community's opinion through the local leaders in decision making process rather than making decision within the powerful institution (INGO) frameworks (Deslauriers & Kotschwar, 2003), not only lessen the challenges of INGOs' existence and its viability in the country but also it can enhance the collective impact of humanitarian assistance positively even in the challenging environment.

I argue that, in post-2012, humanitarian aids INGOs fail to apply the "outside-in thinking" in the decision-making process when implementing aid projects in a developing country with multi-rooted conflicts, Myanmar. They should observe what's best for the clients/

beneficiaries by listening to the locals and understand their culture in terms of socioeconomic and religious/social belief. If the INGOs decide like they know what is best for the targeted communities (clients) without taking consideration on the clients' perspectives and culture, particularly in a sensitive political context, the effectiveness and accountability of the humanitarian aid projects would be leaving unanswered questions. Does the existence of INGOs cause more harm than good or foment the level of issues in the conflict area? Are the humanitarian operations the right answers to the recipient country?

For example, analysis of case studies related to natural disaster (cyclone) in Ayeyarwaddy Delta by Boutry (2008) and ethnic conflict (Rakhine vs. Muslim Bengalis) in Rakhine State by Leider (2018) have delineated the negative impact of humanitarian action such as weakening the resilience capacity of delta's economic sector, ineffectiveness of providing long-term solutions, flaming harmful relations between the two conflict communities because of excluding locals in the decision-making process, and failure to understand their culture in terms of socioeconomic and religious beliefs.

Moreover, transferring empowerment and knowledge to the local community to sustain the long term development and improvement of the aid projects are possible only if the INGOs can build the trust and healthy relationship with local citizens that interrelate to the well understanding of local cultural context. A culturally appropriate framework can complement the "contingency approach strategy" discussed by Hilhorst (2002), which stipulates the humanitarian assistance to be adjusted according to the account of the contingencies and vicissitudes caused by various disaster, countries, cultures, and diversity among aid recipients. For example, one of the learning points from Boutry (2008)'s Nargis Cyclone case study is the difference in perception of "indebtedness" between the Western (conveys negative under the notion of very human flaw)

and the local community in Myanmar's Delta region (mostly positive in the Buddhist religious context).

This unfitness between the Western's ideology-based aid agencies and the disaster-affected population seems a key factor of the failure to foster the economic recovery of the region in the long term. This is due to the fact that all the recovery-related aid is excluded from the patrons despite the cyclone that hit all residents in the entire delta region regardless of income. Similarly, South et al. (2011) have also underlined that inclusion of landowners when providing aids could benefit local economies by restarting and providing employment to landless and poor people. On the other hand, the lack of a communication strategy and failure to include all the affected ethnic groups are the critical factors of the resulting increasingly toxic relationship between the INGOs and the host community of the conflict region. This has been proven when the frustration of the indigenous people burst to an explosion in Rakhine State in March 2014. Additionally, how the information will exchange is the essential characteristic of effective communication, and that can happen if the aid agencies have sufficient cultural knowledge and build the decision-making process around the information. Otherwise, wrongly attributed generalization and fallacy can lead to the "upstream actors" (donors, trustees and regulators) as well as inability to alleviate the suffering and efficacy of humanitarian aid project. Consequently, that will negatively impact the "downstream actors" (beneficiaries, local community, and victims).

CHAPTER SIX

Conclusion

In this concluding section, I critically examine the behaviors and challenges of humanitarian aid INGOs in Myanmar's post-democracy period by connecting the findings and discussions of chapter five to the issues explored via the approach of the three disciplines (Colonialism, Multiculturalism and Human Rights, and Criminology within humanitarian perspective) in Chapter 4, thereby integrating these three disciplines in order to construct a more comprehensive understanding of the problems so that I can contribute to my overall conclusion.

In my conclusion, I will address the existing power structures and neglected areas of the problems associated with distributing humanitarian assistance in the conflict areas via the aid agencies. My conclusion will also hopefully encourage scholarly debate on understanding ethnic conflicts in developing countries not just as a "minority vs. majority" issue or via humanitarian perspectives that focus on victimhood narratives that side with one group, but will instead view them as past-oriented (historically structured) problems. In the end, I will also highlight the importance of academia, scholars, and further research in order to help us employ differing perspectives in relation to seeing ahead to the uncertain viability of humanitarian aid INGOs in developing countries.

Contextualization of Humanitarian Operation in Myanmar

The first objective of my thesis is to investigate how humanitarian INGOs contextualize their work in Myanmar and how they link the challenges of their projects in relation to the ethnic conflict area. My observations support the need for developing an in-depth knowledge of the multifaceted conflicts that have existed between the groups for many decades. I seek to provide

useful contextualization, which will interweave in balancing accountability between upwards (donors) and downwards (beneficiaries) entities. The findings from my interviews have revealed that the INGOs tend to conduct humanitarian operations within overlapping cultural, economic, socio-cultural, and political contexts, though the excessive interference in multifaceted ethnic conflicts result in divisive behaviors between the indigenous people and migrants (Muslim community), thereby resulting in ignorance of historical contexts that can override the other contexts.

It appears that there is a significant contrast between the operations of INGOs in a post-democracy period (current) and their operations during the era of the military regime. In the past, the INGOs embraced a non-confrontational approach in relation to the military junta in order to achieve positive outcomes in delivering humanitarian assistance to needy people in the conflict areas (Inwood, 2008; Ware, 2010). However, in the present era of a struggling democratically elected (ASSK) government that is pursuing a precarious and fragile relationship with the State military via a political and legislative strategy entrapped by the 2008 constitution, the INGOs are functioning as a like-minded collective group that is tainted by the ignorance of historically complicated internal-political issues.

The 2008 constitution, deliberately prepared by the military junta, not only reserves the military 25% of parliamentary seats and allows the Senior General to control three critical ministries (Defense, Home Affairs, and Border Affairs), but also provides the military the constitutional rights to declare a state of emergency and seize power when deemed necessary. Nevertheless, in regard to the latest ethnic conflict between self-identified Rohingyas (Muslim Bengalis) and Indigenous peoples, ASSK has faced criticism from the international community

-- including the INGOs -- for failing to condemn the army's alleged brutality against the Rohingya, even though she has no power to control the military. On the other hand, the UN, INGOs, and human rights agencies downplay the role of ARSA, which propagated the claims of ethnic and religious minority legitimacy in Myanmar (Neelakantan, 2018) and promoted the Rohingya victimhood narrative (Leider, 2018) at the expense of the Bengalis and the Rakhine indigenous people.

Based on my findings in relation to the post-democracy period of Myanmar, I conclude that INGOs do not remain neutral when distributing humanitarian assistance in ethnic conflict areas. They contextualize their work by framing problems through a humanitarian lens, but fail to develop an impartially based humanitarian approach within the contexts of internal political, historical, and sociocultural awareness. Overall, I would like to emphasize that proper humanitarian assistance in regard to preventing and alleviating human suffering in armed conflict areas is possible only if the INGOs work with the recipient country's government via partnership and advocacy, while also working concurrently with local society via capacity building and accountability.

Interdisciplinary Perspective: Aid Operational Challenges

As noted in previous sections, the actions of INGOs in implementing humanitarian projects in developing countries function quite differently in the 21st century, with contemporary challenges interweaving with one another and further challenging the viability of INGOs. Moreover, the rise of criticism in the international community that has been directed towards the agenda of humanitarianism appears to have been shaped by the INGOs, which have misused and misguided the humanitarian crisis itself. In the particular case of Myanmar, "lack of cultural knowledge" is perceived as the most challenging issue, followed by "misappropriation and mismanagement of

funds", "accountability", and "disruption of humanitarian operations". Moreover, a lack of transparency between the aid workers and the local community and the unethical behavior of foreign staff (embracing a materialistic lifestyle in the midst of the poor, polarizing the conflict groups, and generating wrongly attributed reports to "upwards" entities) have been observed as the root causes of the disruption of the humanitarian operation within the conflict zone.

It is inarguable that in Myanmar the backlash against INGOs has risen in the post-2012 years, most notably after the INGOs jumped into the crisis involving the Rakhine vs the self-identified Rohingyas. I have critically examined the findings from primary and secondary data sources within the framework of these three aforementioned disciplines, thereby integrating three different perspectives in order to construct a more comprehensive understanding of the following contemporary challenges faced by humanitarian aid INGOs:

Colonialism: The legacy of colonialism dominantly shaped the constructions of identity, nation and belonging in Myanmar, specifically in the Rakhine State (Pugh, 2013). As detailed in Chapter 3, the past victims of colonialism are not only the self-identified Rohingyas, but also the native people of Rakhine, who have been fighting for their rights and land against the migrants (Bengalis), in addition to concurrently fighting for their autonomy against the military for many decades. The INGOs and like-minded groups have presented the Rohingyas as the "most persecuted Muslim minority" in Myanmar via victimhood narratives promoted on the international stage, though the minority Muslim community in Myanmar is also diverse. For example, Muslims in Myanmar can be roughly categorized into five groups: (i) Self-identified Rohingyas (Bengalis); (ii) Kamans from Rakhine State who are officially recognized as one of its 135 indigenous groups; (iii) Panthays who came from China; (iv) Pashu who are descended

from Malaysian Muslims; (v) and the "other" (Bamar Muslims belong to this group), many of whom are descended from Indians with mixed heritage and live throughout the country (Ayako, 2014).

On the other hand, a controversial citizenship issue related to the Muslim Bengali movement is occurring not only in Myanmar, but also in Assam-India as result of the demarcation of boundaries and the post-partition of India and the creation of Bangladesh in 1971, which has plunged the state into various phases of violent social agitation against Bengali Muslims since the 1960s and the 1970s (Das, 2018). In Assam, the application process for NRC (National Register of Citizens) started in 2015 with 32.9 million applicants, and more than 4 million were found inadmissible for inclusion in the approved draft list of Indian citizenship in July 2018 as referred to via the "cut-off date" of March 24, 1971, which marks the day before Bangladesh declared independence (Khan, 2018). Nevertheless, any aggressive identification of Muslim Bengalis via the invented name of "Rohingya" is unlikely to occur in Assam-India even though their origin is from the same country of Bangladesh. In this regard, the conflict between the indigenous people and migrant groups cannot be oversimplified via the frame of victimhood narratives, as Leider (2018) describes "Rohingya as an identity of primordial victimhood" that is grounded by upholding an anti-Muslim scenario.

Multiculturalism and Human Rights: As Sernau (2012) describes, one aspect of the ethnic resurgence is of a "group reclaiming their original name", because they wish to be named not by the names given them by externals but rather by what they wish to claim for themselves in their native language. Muslim Bengalis – who have claimed themselves as Rohingya, speak Bengali, and have never assimilated into the Rakhine population – are viewed as illegal immigrants by the

host community regardless of how long they have been living in the region. For the government, regardless of whether it be military or democratic, the word Rohingya is perceived as one that has been invented within a historical context. In this regard, recognizing the Muslim Bengalis as Rohingya (meaning "native of Rakhine") tends to be more problematic than recognizing them as citizens as compared to other self-identified Muslims (Panthays, Pashu, Indian Muslims), who live throughout the country of Myanmar with their identities designating where they come from. In fact, the military's counterattack against the ARSA, who deliberately triggered a mass exodus of Rohingya fleeing from Rakhine State, signifies a strong connection between the ARSA terrorist group and the Rohingyas.

In this broader context, I compliment the defining multiculturalism of the era as being worthy of being perceived as how to understand and respond to the challenges associated with ethnic, cultural, and religious diversity (Jacobs & Ouedraogo, 2017), as well as to the past-oriented migration ideologies of the different groups. Although the technocratic military regime has committed human rights and humanitarian violations that have been regularly directed at ethnic minorities for many decades, we cannot ignore the military's concerns that the Rakhine State not become a staging area for (external) terrorist groups like ARSA. On the other hand, for the sake of ASSK's people (voters) and sovereignty, we should respect her prioritization of notions of common humanity, universal (human) rights and equal citizenship (Tatchell, 2009).

Humanitarian Work and Criminal Actors: Forced displacement is often a deliberate strategy of the parties to a given conflict that operates with the intention of exemplifying the legal definitions of war crimes and crimes against humanity (Canefe, 2018). Canefe's discussion mirrors the max exodus of Bengali Muslims and Hindus fleeing Myanmar to Bangladesh, which

resulted from the massive counterinsurgency in the Rakhine State in 2017 that was created by the ARSA terrorist group with the aim of capturing the world's attention via the agenda of humanitarian violations. Moreover, as discussed in previous sections, many thousands of pregnant women and girls who have undergone mass exodus have claimed sexual assault by members of Myanmar's army (Tatmadaw), and these claims have been accepted without doubt by Human Rights Groups, NGOs, and the UN despite said accusations having been denied by the Tatmadaw. By contrast, there was a controversy over the rising number of pregnancies in the camps, with uncertainty as to how many babies had been born and would be born as a result of the sexual violence claimed by the refugees given that the estimated population of the camps had passed 1 million (from over 70000) over the span of a year.

Many observers have witnessed the practices of polygamy and bigamy, as well as forced under-aged marriage arrangements and alleged abduction, human trafficking, and sexual exploitation in the camps (Nay Lin, 2018; Guardian News, 2017; Ukhiya-based NGO, 2018, UK-based Plan International Report, 2018). Also, there is evidence of a Rohingya man with three wives evincing a disingenuous narrative to an international charity by way of a false report. In this report, he claimed that he had three nieces whose parents had been killed in Myanmar when the actual truth was that the girls were his daughters from his youngest wife in Myanmar (Beech, 2018). Nevertheless, the INGOs and Human Rights actors have failed to logically analyze and verify the extent to which evidence can reasonably prove that the Tatmadaw committed sexual violence against self-identified Rohingya women. This overgeneralization in regard to the military junta's past criminal behavior tends to obscure the potential sexual abusers and the domestic violence in the camps, which are likely to be perpetrated by non-military individuals.

In Chapter 4, I have discussed and demonstrated how sexual crimes against children and women are often perpetrated by aid workers (of INGOs and the UN), who thus effectively position themselves as criminals who act under the guise of performing humanitarian work in developing countries while actually exploiting the needy and vulnerable. In the case of Myanmar, INGOs appear as the advocates, who indict Tatmadaw members as the criminals responsible for all the sexual violence against Rohingya women without appropriate verification. In this regard, I argue that the debate surrounding the Rohingya narrative of victimhood or statelessness involves INGOs collectively allying as 'pro-victim' by excessively focusing on humanitarian violations. On the other hand, any false narratives, criminal behavior, and domestic violence perpetrated against Rohingya women by Rohingya men at the camps have been undermined on the pretext of cultural difference, thereby tending to limit in finding the short and long-term solutions of the precarious lives of the refugees.

Accountability in the Conflict Area

My thesis's second objective is to address the accountability of humanitarian aid INGOs to advocacy groups while examining if there are any questions of improper behavior pertaining to acquiring support for their projects in the conflict area. The findings reveal the manifestation of INGOs' transforming their roles in the ethnic conflict area, which eroded the efficacy of humanitarian assistance and, as consequence, complicated the reality of the post-conflict situation. Moreover, in order to reduce the accountability problems, my thesis engages with political and economic perspectives in stressing the apparent need for donor countries to extend the concerned points on INGOs and implementing agencies in a specific national context when channeling aid from the global north to the global south.

A "New Policy Agenda" (Robinson, 1993; Whitehead, 1993) has guided the donor countries in channeling increased official aid via INGOs, with the expectation of delivering social welfare services to the poor at lower costs and higher standards of quality than via a governmental economic perspective (Fowler, 1998; Meyer, 1992), thereby fulfilling the desire of Western donors to promote 'democratization' amongst the recipient LNGOs and GROs via a political perspective in developing countries (Moore, 1993). However, the West (donors) fails to understand three key interrelated points, which constitute the critical factors associated with creating problems in accountability when introducing a new policy agenda to developing countries via INGOs and implementing agencies.

First, "more aid" does not mean "more money", and promoting "democratization through excessive humanitarian lens" may not be the best way to solve all the problems of every developing country, especially in a democratic transition period. That misguides the aid workers towards attempts at extending the aid projects under the pretext of human rights and humanitarian violations as opposed to towards collaborating with various actors and groups in order to collectively achieve positive outcomes. A good example is the opposition of the UN's refugee agencies and aid groups to the Myanmar-Bangladesh repatriation plan via the misinterpretation of the "dignified and protected repatriation of the refugees" as a discouragement to the Rohingya refugees (Rashid, 2018). It is suggested that the refugees not return to Myanmar until a guarantee of citizenship is given (Naing Zaw, 2018), which is not something easily done without the appropriate verification process under the current 1982 Citizenship Law.

Second, the complexities of multiculturalism in developing countries are often negatively interrelated with Western human rights ideologies via social, economic, and political perspectives. This is one of the inputs in the wrong identification of the problems, especially in the multifaceted ethnic conflicts in the developing countries. In the case of Myanmar, ethnicity tends to be perceived as what Barth (1969) has termed a "boundary" that divides between "us and them", based on some presumed common ancestry. The complexity of highly diverse ethnic groups perpetuates the inter and intra community issues, and each group historically has had leading roles and sought to reimagine a heterogeneous ethnic group via a stylized image of cultural and linguistic practice (South & Lall, 2018). Moreover, the ethnic conflicts in Myanmar can be divided in two categories. One category is the vertical conflict between the State army (central government) and various ethnically defined groups like the Kachin, Kayin, Shan, and Rakhine etc., who have been conducting armed struggles against the ethnocratic military regime for their autonomy over many decades. In other words, the armed conflict between various ethnic groups and the State's army is not a horizontal conflict, because ethnic groups will not fight each other as in former Yugoslavia (Win, 2018). The other category is prolonged conflict between the indigenous people of the Rakhine State and the unfettered migrants, the Bengalis (also known as Chittagonian Muslims), whom the British administration allowed into the Rakhine State (formerly known as Arakan) from the border so that they could be employed as cheap laborers during the British colonial era (Saw, 2016).

There are no contentious views on the identification amongst diversified ethnic groups (particular or mixed) in Myanmar because of social orientation, and their manners shade into each other depending on local socio-economic factors (South & Lall, 2018) as well as on how each majority ethnic nationality has existed as an independent entity (Win, 2018). Therefore

multiculturalism does not pose problems in Myanmar, where it has not been aggressively promoted and where equality and participation have not been negatively impacted given the wide range of development under its multicultural framework. However, the tensions between the two communities – indigenous Rakhine and Bengalis (migrants) who share the migrant dream and its attendant "hanger for land" (Aye Chan, 2005) – have existed for decades, with their shared fear of losing out in a competition over their hopes and differing ways of life essentially confirming that multiculturalism will not work in this specific context. My observations suggest that the INGOs' attempt in promoting human rights amongst oppressed groups fails to re-conceptualize human rights as multicultural (Sousa Santos, 2002) in colonized countries via an excessive focus on victimhood narratives (Leider, 2018) and the politics of citizenship (Naing Zaw, 2018). In other words, the INGOs fail to understand which group fights for what in the two types of conflicts. Whereas the indigenous population of the Rakhine State fights for their native land, the Muslim Bengalis fight for legal status, rights, and freedom.

Third, the donors fail to address the risks of misappropriation and mismanagement of funds, which can also potentially be committed by the aid agencies or staff, whether intentionally or non-intentionally. In this regard doubt should not solely best cast on the recipient's government. Findings from my interviews support the scholarly debate about the existence of foreign aid and who it serves (the needy community or the careerist survival tactics of Western-oriented aid workers?), in addition to highlighting how the misappropriation and mismanagement of funds and aid resources negatively impact accountability. Furthermore, the exclusion of the local community in implementing humanitarian projects attests to how the aid agencies have neglected "empowerment" as one of the goals for sustainable development, as positive changes

are impossible without building a trusting relationship with local citizens via the ideology of humanitarian assistance, which is supposed to be a short-term response to immediate needs.

For accountability, particularly in the case of Myanmar during its post-democracy period, I conclude that INGOs tend more to emphasize their self-interests and their survival at the expense of donors (fund givers) and the poor by interfering in the conflicts via an inappropriate approach when identifying problems and unjust behavior when managing funds and aid resources. On the other hand, they position themselves not only as change agents bent on fulfilling the desire of Western donors in promoting 'democratization,' but also as pro-victims intent on achieving their agenda via a humanitarian lens. In other words, for the sake of their long-term survival, INGOs underdevelop the downward and internal accountability mechanism, in addition to ignoring the importance of working with local society via notions of empowerment. When INGOS intervene in conflicts and are ignorant of internal political, sociocultural, and historical contexts while maintaining an excessive focus on human rights and humanitarian violations via a "pro-victim" attitude, they tend to exacerbate the tensions between the conflict communities, thereby leaving the future of mass refugees in limbo.

Introducing a Culturally Appropriate Framework

The third objective of my thesis is to develop a culturally appropriate framework for the efficacy of humanitarian aid INGOs in Myanmar. This is because only a culturally appropriate framework can complement the "contingency approach strategy" (Hilhorst, 2002) in adjusting the contingencies and vicissitudes caused by the various humanitarian crises, while also stressing the importance of understanding culture in terms of delivering humanitarian assistance to the needy communities that were discussed in chapter five.

Based on the notion of humanitarian aid which supports vulnerable host communities that are in need of sudden emergency assistance and require ongoing assistance to improve their quality of life, Kopinak (2013) has explained the three ideal stages that involved in the implementation process. The first stage is "Emergency/Relief (E/R)", which is a response to a serious and unexpected natural or man-made emergency, demanding an immediate reaction to alleviate suffering and loss of life in the short term. The second stage is the "transaction", which is carried out by the aid agencies and the host country between the first stage and the third stage "Rehabilitation/Development" (R/D). R/D represents a multi-dimensional and proactive approach with complex parameters. Besides, R/D focuses on the rehabilitation and development of an affected community through bio-psycho-socio-economic factors within the cultural milieu in the long term.

Ware (2011)'s findings on best practice implementation of international development projects by INGOs in Myanmar will link to Kopinak's work done when structuring this culturally appropriate framework, which is for the local community to act as primary decision-makers at the micro-levels (E/R), local NGOs at meso-levels (Transition), and INGOs at more macro-levels (R/D). Since E/R acts as a fast-paced, reactive and short-term on immediate basic needs (Kopinak, 2013), categorizing, prioritizing, and allocating aid resources to the affected communities, cannot be reasonably possible without the inclusion of the local leaders in the decision-making process, especially in the culturally-complex societies of Myanmar. Moreover, the ideologies of some particular categories remain a Western symbol and may not be a reality in Myanmar. For example, "orphans" resulting from the natural disaster always find relatives or may be sent to the monastery to take care of them in the villages of Myanmar. On the other hand, widows and widowers, the victims of natural disaster, whose spouses were killed during the

cyclone, remarried each other a couple of months following the cyclone to create new alliances (Boutry, 2008). Boutry observed that some widows were reluctant to remarry with the worry of their names' removal from the aid's distribution lists.

The inclusion of local leaders in categorizing beneficiaries of the aid assistance as primary-decision makers strengthens the idea of E/R as well as can build the effective coordination between the aid agencies who have been trained on a set of Western-based humanitarian guidelines and locals whose life coping mechanism may conflict with the Western-based methodologies. Transaction stage is supposed to be flexible in changing situations with the notion of requiring different mechanism, knowledge and resources (Kopinak, 2013) in the cultural context. Moreover, according to Kopinak, a successful transition is a seamless merging of all information from the outgoing to the incoming aid agencies, and it is compounded with diverse definitions, concepts, institutions, politics, cultures, policies, and practices of donors that make it possible to constrain the recipients and challenge a smooth transition.

Therefore, striking assumptions of the rehabilitation and development of a vulnerable community should involve the local NGOs (LNGOs) which encompass different ethnic, youth, women and human rights groups with a distinct interest in contributing the society to focus on the long-term positive outcomes. Also, as Kopinak suggests, merging information about *why* (we are here), *for what* (mandate and goals), and *how* (to monitor progress), and *in what time frame* in the transition stage is vital to building a transparent and effective communication mechanism before shifting to R/D. With respect to humanitarian assistance operation, failing to acknowledge the inherited disparities in the social structure (Jaganath, 1981) in a natural disaster-affected region, as well as oversimplification based on generalized assumption between the conflicted

communities (Myo Oo, 2017) are the critical challenges in the R/D stage to sustain long term outcomes and positive impact.

I intend to construct a framework that is deeply immersed in the cultural context of the project environment to prohibit the conflict behaviors and polarization that often exist not only between the aid agencies and the beneficiaries, but also between the communities. Boutry (2008) has delineated the misconception of Western humanitarian guideline-based aid agencies in prioritizing the beneficiaries in the E/R stage under the ideologies of the most vulnerable or the poorest rather than seeking knowledge about socioeconomic actors in the delta region and the positive relationships between these actors. Boutry suggested the solution that could carried out in the R/D stage despite it missed in the E/R stage. The suggestion was that the aid agencies could help the poor to regain employment by providing their ex-employers (landowner/patron/master of work) with the means of production or tools that were lost during the cyclone, thereby effective helping a few 'rich people' who would then help dozens of 'poor'. In other words, proper humanitarian assistance cannot be possible without reviewing the midterm results and missed opportunities of the aid agencies via the inclusion of LNGOs during the transition period.
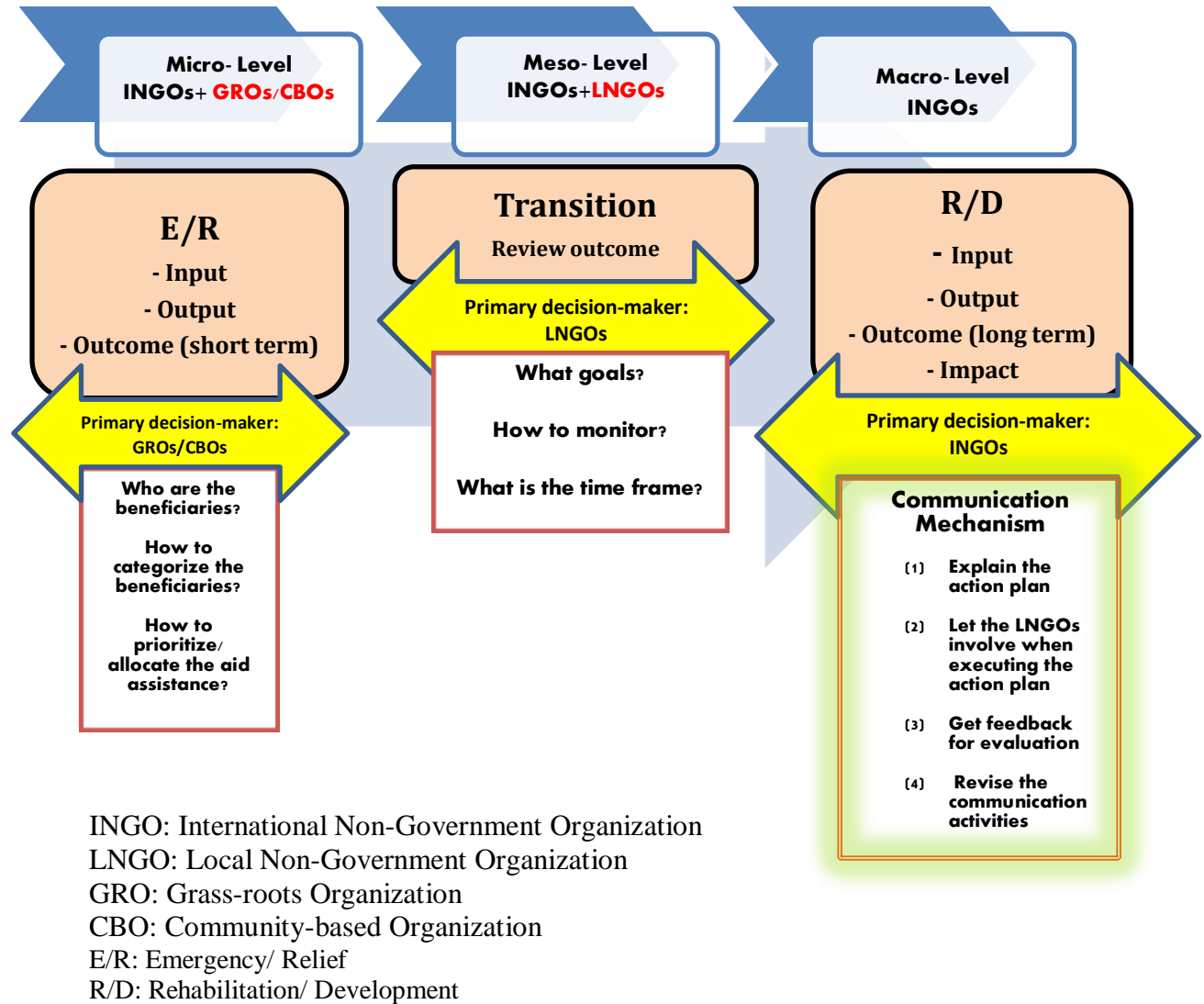
Moreover, in the case of the "Rakhine vs. Bengali Muslim" conflict, INGOs exclude locals from aid benefits, with the reason being that the locals are economically better off than the Muslim communities despite the fact that the Rakhine suffer from deprivation and rank as Myanmar's poorest state (UNDP Myanmar, 2015). This reveals how the aid agencies lack relevant knowledge of the conflict region, in addition to demonstrating how they fail to collaborate with the local leaders and government officials even when faced with vulnerable conditions. While the INGOs may deny accusing the aid agencies of providing imbalanced

resource allocation between the conflict communities, they should nonetheless attempt to portray themselves as neutral and impartial agencies by employing effective communication mechanisms with the LNGOs rather than leaving the locals with a pessimistic view of the aid agencies and exacerbated tensions between the conflict communities.

The elements of the communication mechanism should be structured in a four-step approach during the R/D stage. First, the aid agencies (INGOs) should clearly explain the action (aid operation) plan by including expected long-term outcomes and impacts of the work in the targeted (conflict) region. Second, the INGOs should let the LNGOs get involved when executing the action plan. Third, the INGOs should get feedback to evaluate the effectiveness of communication activities (exchange of opinions by official meeting/writing). Fourth, the INGOs should revise the communication activities to enhance effectiveness whenever needed. Moreover, the ideology of humanitarian assistance in conflict areas should avoid generalized assumptions between groups in favor of including all the vulnerable groups that are in need of sudden emergency and ongoing support in order to improve their quality of life.

The following figure depicts the framework that I have discussed in this section:

Proposed framework for the INGOs working in Myanmar

Micro- Level	Meso- Level	Macro- Level
INGOs+ GROs/CBOs	INGOs+LNGOs	INGOs

E/R
- Input
- Output
- Outcome (short term)

Transition
Review outcome

R/D
- Input
- Output
- Outcome (long term)
- Impact

Primary decision-maker:
GROs/CBOs

Primary decision-maker:
LNGOs

Primary decision-maker:
INGOs

Who are the beneficiaries?

How to categorize the beneficiaries?

How to prioritize/ allocate the aid assistance?

What goals?

How to monitor?

What is the time frame?

Communication Mechanism

(1) Explain the action plan

(2) Let the LNGOs involve when executing the action plan

(3) Get feedback for evaluation

(4) Revise the communication activities

INGO: International Non-Government Organization
LNGO: Local Non-Government Organization
GRO: Grass-roots Organization
CBO: Community-based Organization
E/R: Emergency/ Relief
R/D: Rehabilitation/ Development

A culturally appropriate framework proposed in this thesis will not be feasible without the donor accountability in ensuring not only the legitimacy and competency but also the adequacy of the implementing agencies (INGOs) in the context of recipient country's culture and religious philosophies. As Katoch (2006) has suggested, implementing agency accountability in honest-reporting attitudes can only be possible with the donor's support in acceptance of ongoing challenges and partially-met objectives. This is because donors expect positive reports about

progress once funding is disbursed (Kopinak, 2013). However, this expectation stimulates that aid workers create a disincentive when tackling intractable problems, as well as often encourages them to focus more on situations with marketable outcomes to secure the future funding (Walker & Maxwell, 2008; McInnis-Ray, 2011). I can assure that there is a need for push strategy from the donors' perspectives. This happens in order to make the implementing agencies deliver aid effectively without further creating issues amongst the targeted beneficiaries via the inclusion of locals in the respective decision-making processes that I have discussed above.

Moreover, as Hilhorst (2002) suggests, the implementing agencies should also be aware that "beneficiary participation" in every stage is not a panacea for all problems, as it can also create new challenges. For example, many villagers have reported how NGOs have formed numerous committees in the name of a participatory approach when engaging their communities, thereby directing externally motivated initiatives to the upwards entities (donors). However, the villagers regard being a member of these committees as an onerous duty, even though the committees are functional and instrumental in distributing aid given that they are neither involved in setting priorities for distribution nor in designing project intervention (South et al., 2011). In this instance, from my point of view, the villagers may be reluctant to join the committee, or there may be tension and misunderstanding between the committee members and the villagers if the outcome of aid delivery is not in accordance. Nevertheless, it is the responsibility of the INGOs to conduct an evaluation, to continue learning from past mistakes, and to handle feedback in the beneficiary participation process in order to overcome the issue of local complexities.

Overall Conclusion and Recommendations

The INGOs' excessive focusing on victimization narratives and Western-oriented human rights approaches undermine their positions as peace-facilitators and humanitarian defenders. Instead, they tend to be regarded as pro-victim and victim-profiteers by the host civilians (another side). This is because victimhood is a complex term that can be claimed by more than one party, especially in Myanmar given its complicated historical and political contexts. My study has shown that while Myanmar needs humanitarian assistance, all the needy communities do not get sufficient recognition, especially in Rakhine State. By contrast, INGOs' validation of the invented identity of "Rohingya" has obscured historical tracks relating to illegal Bengali migrants, in addition to dividing the behavior amongst the conflict groups by encouraging the local (host) community to perceive the INGOs as Rohingya lobbying organizations that are potential threats to the region.

The United Nations institutionalizes the roles of INGOs, though the UN has been misused by the INGOs to justify their hegemonic roles and their long-term survival, thereby adding further complications to the realities of Myanmar's post-conflict situation and its post-democracy period. On the other hand, as discussed in Chapter 2, the unequal views and treatment of rights for Muslims in different countries (for example, Myanmar and Yemen) by the UN and its allies results from the corrupt power machinations of the USA and the OIC, which play crucial roles in the UN and tend to be dysfunctional in regard to the INGO operatory mechanism. Also, the West ignores how they may criticize the weaknesses of the state's citizenship law, but cannot intervene in the government's absolute rights of power when it comes to identifying who can be regarded as a citizen.

Overall, the discussions I have presented in my separate but interrelated chapters have involved investigating a set of overarching issues that exist between humanitarian advocacy groups and their agendas and prioritizations. It is a time for humanitarian INGOs to better understand and adapt to the appropriate operational contexts, while developing balanced accountabilities between upwards and downwards entities. Moreover, "empowerment" should be set as one of the goals for sustainable development to localize the long-term projects, because it is important to note that humanitarian assistance is supposed to be a short-term response to immediate needs. Otherwise, the existence of INGOs in developing countries tends to do more harm than good to vulnerable groups, with the worst scenario being that the INGOs may effectively become the criminal actors or pro-criminal actors who act under the shadow of humanitarian aid development.

Effectiveness or "doing the right thing" is related to the philosophical/developmental worthiness or appropriateness of the project's goal, while efficiency or "doing the things right" is related to cost and process management. A project can be perceived as efficient if it is implemented within its given budget and scheduled time, but, the project may be ineffective if it is not grounded in reality or the project's goals do not reflect the targeted community's needs (Crawford & Bryce, 2003). In this regard, I would like to end my thesis with some recommendations for humanitarian actors that are based on findings that will entail a more significant impact on the growing participation of advocacy groups in humanitarian intervention via effective actorness and roles.

Reintegration and resettlement in the wake of forced displacement is a long-term complex process within the broader contexts of the socio-economic and political, especially in Rakhine State which is considered the most deficient of all States and regions in the country with

a poverty rate of 78% against a national rate of 38% according to the UNDP Myanmar 2015 report. Occasional clashes between government forces and the Arakan Army (Rakhine insurgent group) have been ongoing. For example, fighting in the Rakhine State throughout December 2018 has resulted in the displacement of about 2000 people (RFA News, 27-12-2018), and the March-April 2016 period producing about 1900 displaced people (ICG, 2016a). Moreover, for many decades various ethnic groups (civilians) have been politically marginalized by a series of ethnocratic regimes. On the other hand, civilians have historically viewed the Bengali Muslims as essential problems related to past colonialism given how they were subjects of the British. If the international community wants to do something constructive about the "Rakhine vs. (self-identified) Rohingya" crisis, it is important to realize that citizenship, on its own, will not be the remedy for all Rohingya-related problems.

The UN and the Western nations should view these issues with "Outside-in thinking" and look at the conflict from a long-term perspective, which will allow them to make advice based on what is best for the two communities and their needs rather than framing the problems within a narrative of Muslim victimhood. The repatriation agreement between the Bangladesh and Myanmar governments suggests timing is unlimited and that the verification process is a big challenge for illegal movements in each country. It is reasonable to conclude that the Rohingya and Rakhine communities are hoping for a real future with zero fear while simultaneously not wishing to live together as before. The ARSA's organized attacks in 2016 and 2017 have destroyed the trust between two communities, which have resulted in them both determining that they are no longer safe to live side by side. Therefore, for those Rohingya refugees who do not have the verification identity to repatriate to Rakhine nor to refuse to repatriate, the UN and the Western nations are to consider their resettlement in the Muslim majority developed countries

where they can have a real future. Those who have the verification card and the desire to continue living inside Myanmar should also be allowed. ASSK and her government have been focusing on the implementation of the recommendation within the Kofi Annan commission report. Thus, they can progressively have a real future, even though it cannot be a quick fix.

It is important to note that stripping awards and shaming a "democracy icon" such as ASSK and preparing targeted sanctions against Myanmar via Western countries such as the US and the UK will not help the future of Rohingyas due to two main reasons. First, avoiding risk factors that can facilitate the military's constitutional rights to assume power on the pretext of "a State of emergency" and put ASSK back under house arrest is more imperative than maintaining her awards and status as an icon of democracy in the eyes of the Western group. This is because she is the only hope for the sake of Myanmar's democratization. Second, the Western group's sanctions tend to boost the power of China and Russia who are the longtime partners of Myanmar, and a sanction may discourage the confidence of investors in Myanmar's market economy, which will result in the poor and vulnerable peoples in the least developed region of Rakhine suffering from economic travails.

In the context of the "humanitarian," which is used for a person who is involved in or connected with improving people's lives and reducing suffering that emanates from multifaceted ethnic conflicts, internal wars, and natural disaster, I agree with the suggestion of Evans and Newnham (1998) that humanitarian assistance be viewed as the voluntary non-political provision of relief assistance. In this context, the intervention of donor governments and their implementing agencies (INGOs) who act under the agenda of humanitarian assistance in developing countries like Myanmar should not be seen as prioritizing a dynamical and pressured approach to fulfilling the desire of gaining political advantage for the Western nations (donors)

over the prevention and alleviation of human suffering. A final stipulation is that democracy may not provide the best answers to all the problems of a nation (Sernau, 2012), though as Zakaria (2003) suggests, in order to make the world safe for democracy, the task of the twenty-first century is to first make democracy safe for each developing country, especially during the transition period.

Importance of Academia, Scholars and Further Research

Without the efforts of the opposition groups who bring the internal conditions of the country to international attention during the rule of the military junta, Myanmar would be significantly less well known as the donors and policy makers would not be able to maintain focused attention on the country's plight (Inwood, 2008). By contrast, some scholars were placed on a black list for supporting some forms of engagement (Burma Compatriots, 2006) by the junta, which positioned policy institutes such as the ICG and HRW as important assets in generating reports of Myanmar. Unfortunately, Myanmar's complicated ethnic politics tend to be overshadowed by the invented "Rohingya" identity via a complete absence of reliable anthropological or social field research (Smith, 1991), as well as by those media professionals who corroborated supposed facts of "Rohingya history" based on the historiography of Mohammed Yunus (founder of Rohingya Solidarity Organization) -- which was produced during the 1980 and early 1990s (Leider, 2018) -- and the humanitarian INGOs who positioned themselves as pro-victims or Rohingya lobbies during the recent Rakhine crisis.

Long suppression via the military regime has led the "informal" civil society to become stronger in Myanmar, though most communities are unregistered and this has weakened the effective partnership with many INGOs (Ware, 2011). In this regard, it is not reasonable to generalize that all the aid agencies have been underperforming in delivering humanitarian

assistance. A number of questions are left with regard to enhancing the efficacy of advocacy groups when providing humanitarian assistance in context-sensitive ethnic conflict areas that relate to redefining humanitarian principals, reviewing the funding mechanism of donors, and studying stateless refugees via different perspectives. These questions invite researchers and humanitarian scholars to debate humanitarian problems not just as socio-legal-political problems, but also as a product of both past colonialism and current post colonialism with politics of multiculturalism flavor.

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APPENDIX A

Semi-Structured Interview Questionnaire

Please check the box which best describes how you feel about the statements below. Some questions can have more than one answer.

Personal Details

(i)		How long have you been in Canada?
	☐	0-5 years
	☐	6-10 years
	☐	11-15 years
	☐	16-20 years
	☐	21 or more
(ii)		Are you older than 25?
	☐	Yes
	☐	No
(iii)		What is the nature and extent of your involvement with Myanmar?
	☐	Myanmar diaspora member in Canada
	☐	Paid INGO / NGO staff (past): from_____ to_____; Organization Name:_____
	☐	Paid INGO / NGO staff (current)☐ Organization Name:_____
	☐	Others (Please mention)_____ _____

A. Humanitarian Aid NGO/INGOs experience/knowledge background

(iv)		**Do you have any specific background which gives you up to date news about the current Humanitarian issues/crisis in Myanmar?**
	☐	Work
	☐	Volunteering
	☐	News & Articles
	☐	Others (Please mention)_____
(v)		**How often do you in touch with up to date news about humanitarian issues in Myanmar?**
	☐	Never

	☐	Occasionally
	☐	Regularly

B. Contextualization of Aid NGOs implementation in Myanmar's conflict area

(vi)		In which context the humanitarian aid INGOs currently conduct in post-Democracy period of Myanmar? **(Your answer can be more than one)**
	☐	Cultural
	☐	Economic
	☐	Historical
	☐	Political
	☐	Socio-Cultural
	☐	Other (Please mention)_____
(vii)		Do you believe any one of the following context is **ignored** when implementing the humanitarian aid INGOs in Myanmar **(Your answer can be more than one)**
	☐	Cultural
	☐	Economic
	☐	Historical
	☐	Political
	☐	Socio-Cultural
	☐	Other (Please mention)_____

C. Challenges

(viii)		In your experience/ opinion, what are the key issues/obstacles to effective humanitarian aid assistance by INGOs among the conflict ethnic groups in Myanmar? **(Your answer can be more than one)**
	☐	Accountability
	☐	Lack of cultural knowledge
	☐	Misappropriation and Mismanagement of funds
	☐	Disruption of Humanitarian Operations
	☐	Others (Please mention)_____ _____
	☐	

D. Aid Disbursement

(ix)		To be effective aid disbursement and prevent misappropriation, donor should channel the funds directly to: **(Your answer can be more than one)**
	☐	Government Organizations
	☐	Implementing agencies (INGOs)
	☐	Registered Charity /Foundation groups
	☐	Registered Local NGOs
	☐	Others (Please mention)_____

***Whatever answer/s you have chosen in question (ix), please provide your opinion below.