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COURSE: POST GRADUATE DIPLOMA IN PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY CHAIN MANAGEMENT

CODE: PGD008

DURATION: 12 MONTHS

**MODULE 8**

**1) Describe five major challenges faced by humanitarian logistics system and what are some of the ways on overcoming them.**

NGOs can and do play a key role in logistics management, particularly at the field level. Much of this is done very well. But systems and approaches are often antiquated. For example, documentation relating to transportation is often produced electronically at point of origin and is often only available on-line. Unfortunately, even though the commercial world is well advanced in full-electronic handling processes, the majority of NGOs typically do not have the electronic infrastructure investments in place. Therefore, access to this information is not necessarily possible along the whole supply chain and often moves quite early on in the handling process from electronic systems to paper. This typically means increasing the time required to handle information and process a shipment and can lead to reduced efficiencies, duplication of functions, increased inaccuracies in reporting and increased costs.

In today's world of modern technology, greatly improved approaches to logistics and supply chain management and greater access to know-how and information, it is critical for NGOs to learn from the corporate and for-profit sector and incorporate emerging best practice. Their ability to do this, however, has been hindered by a number of factors.

**i. Lack of depth in knowledge**

Most humanitarian NGOs are rooted in emergency response of one form or another. Many NGO leaders began their careers with a background in the social sciences, development studies or law. NGO leaders tend to be value-led 'activists' and few have corporate experience of logistics management.

Humanitarian logistics involves organisational components such as procurement, transportation, warehousing, inventory management, trace and tracking, bidding and reverse bidding, reporting and accountability. In the corporate sector, these components are supported by expert staffing, know-how, IT systems, MIS systems, framework agreements, corporate relationships, infrastructure, standardisation and collaborative initiatives. In the humanitarian world, these key support mechanisms are rare.

Much of the essential logistics work undertaken by humanitarian agencies is not industry standard and NGOs could learn a lot from the corporate community.

Furthermore, the humanitarian environment is becoming increasingly complex, requiring a deeper understanding of conflict, security and local, national and international politics.

Each year about one in three field staff quits because of burnout. As a consequence, the NGO community and multilateral and international organisations such as the UN agencies and the Red Cross need to focus much more on capacity building.

**ii. Funding biased towards short-term responses**

NGOs tend to be highly dependent upon grants which are generally geared towards paying for direct project and programme inputs in the field. Projects and programmes are time-bound, often short and under-funded.

NGOs live from grant to grant and project to project. This does not allow for a healthy corporate strategic process to develop as both planning cycles and funding cycles are generally unpredictable. And it does not encourage investment in improved systems.

**iii. Lack of investment in technology and communication**

Very little capital (from any source) has been invested in the development and implementation of modern management information systems (MIS), information technology (IT) or logistics systems. Most NGOs lack modern 'systems capacity' in just about any category.

Most NGOs have indeed also greatly undervalued the role of logistics, supply chain management and integrated systems support. This is an area that, if better valued by senior management, could have a significant financial return on investment.

Millions of dollars could be saved each year by simply being able to work more 'smartly' - more efficiently.

For example Procurement is part of the overall logistics process. An NGO with an organisation-wide capacity to use a common procurement management software programme would be able to see what their top 100 high-frequency or high-cost items were at any given time during the year.

Regardless of programme or project location, a common software technology application would enable each user to function independently, making local procurement decisions, while creating and contributing to a global purchasing-power mechanism benefitting the whole organisation.

Management would have the information-power to be able to negotiate high-volume purchasing agreements with global suppliers, global vendors, manufacturers or distributors. Better still, NGOs could group together as consortia to gain even higher purchasing-power discounts and framework agreements.

Communication systems are not core strength for the humanitarian community yet are a critical part of humanitarian operations. In crisis situations, communication with donors, other parts of the organisation and the outside world is vital.

**2) Do you support aid organization improving on performance management rather than developing only reports to their donors? How can it be achieved?**

If you think that all is well with your current **performance management** system, think again: more than half of managers (58%) dislike their own organization’s performance review system and would give it a grade of “C” or less (source: [Sibson Consulting](https://www.worldatwork.org/waw/adimLink?id=44473)).

Employees are clearly dissatisfied as well: only 13% of employees are engaged at work, and 24% are actively disengaged (source: [Gallup](https://www.atiim.com/blog/the-alarming-workplace-stats-all-ceos-must-see/)). All of this data points to a significant issue in the way most companies are managing performance.

Specifically, the problem is that instead of focusing on the improvement and development of employees and their performance, the old ways of performance management have emphasized ineffective motivators, such as salary-based incentives and other unproductive practices.

The solution is to develop that focuses primarily on improving and developing employees. Here’s h[continuous performance management system](https://www.atiim.com/blog/top-tips-for-ongoing-performance-management/)ow you can achieve that in six steps:

**1. Oust Ineffective, Traditional Performance Reviews**

There are multiple issues with traditional, yearly performance review models. For one thing, assessing performance once per year is ineffective and doesn’t provide ample opportunities for employees to improve.

There is little actionable feedback provided, and moreover, it’s not given in real time, so the underperformance or bad behaviour has already gone on unnoticed for far too long. That’s bad for both your company and your employees’ performance.

Secondly, traditional reviews are often measured against the Normal Distribution, a.k.a. “The Bell Curve.

” This is problematic, because the majority of employees (those who are just getting by and falling within the average of the Bell Curve) aren’t inclined to change when their performance is judged against this curve.

Worse yet, two in three performance appraisals done this way either result in no change at all, or a decrease in performance (source: [Forbes](https://www.forbes.com/sites/joshbersin/2014/02/19/the-myth-of-the-bell-curve-look-for-the-hyper-performers/#2018174813fc)).

**2. Identify and Praise A-Players**

As indicated above, appraising performance against the Bell Curve is problematic. But when it comes to identifying star performers, the Bell Curve can be helpful. In most cases, 10% of employees make up the lowest rankings, and 10% make up the highest. It’s in your best interest to take notice of those outlying employees – those who aren’t buried in the middle of the Bell Curve, but are forging their own paths to success as standout, dedicated contributors.

Once you’ve identified them, you must do all that you can to retain these devoted high performers, because as Mark Zuckerberg says, **“**Someone who is exceptional in their role is not just a little better than someone who is pretty good.

They are 100 times better**”** (source: [NY Times](https://www.nytimes.com/2011/05/18/technology/18talent.html?_r=0)). Ensure proper resource allocation to provide continuous opportunities for you’re A-Players to grow and develop, and keep communication open via an on-going feedback loop (see #4 for more info on this).

**3. Use OKRs to Effectively Align Individual Objectives with Corporate Goals**

One of the most efficient ways to improve performance and make it easier to manage is by linking individual’s contributions to the highest company priorities.

[OKRs (Objectives and Key Results)](https://www.atiim.com/okr-goals-objectives-and-key-results/) promote cascading alignment by ensuring that CEO-level goals are being accomplished because each employee’s efforts are supporting those goals.

With OKRs, employees see for themselves how their efforts are making an impact on goal execution. That helps boost performance organically, and with a measured way of tracking goal progress, managers can assess performance on an on-going basis and in real-time

**4. Use an Automated System to Develop a Continuous Feedback Loop**

To exchange [feedback](https://www.atiim.com/blog/why-giving-feedback-is-the-best-way-to-increase-profits/) on performance regularly, you must be communicating with your people on a weekly basis. Part of this exchange can be a [weekly one-on-one meeting](https://www.atiim.com/blog/number-one-management-practice/), but automated [weekly employee progress reports](https://www.atiim.com/products/agile-weekly-report/) are also a great way to keep the lines of communication open.

With an employee progress report, you can ask questions about weekly wins, potential roadblocks, and any pressing concerns your employees may be facing. That allows you to get a snapshot of performance every single week, and you can provide your own comments to their reports to give actionable feedback in real time.

**5. Turn Your Managers into Coaches**

All managers should be focused on [improving their employees’ strengths](https://www.atiim.com/blog/strength-based-performance-management/) through coaching. Unfortunately, almost half of managers spend less than 10% of their time coaching their team. It’s no surprise, then, that only 28% of employees feel that their managers hold effective discussions about performance (source: [Forbes](https://www.forbes.com/2010/04/28/coaching-talent-development-leadership-managing-ccl.html)).

To be good coaches, managers should keep performance feedback focused on the future as much as possible. Punishing for past mistakes or underperformance doesn’t facilitate future development. Effective coaches give frequent, specific feedback about what employees can do to start improving *right now*.

To ensure that your managers are coaching their teams, encourage them to ask: “What are you going to get done this week?” And, “What do you need from me?”

**6. Develop an Effective Way to Measure Success**

Once you’ve replaced the annual review with a continuous approach to performance management, you’ll still need a way to answer these two questions: Is performance management happening, and is it working effectively?

If you’ve chosen to implement tools such as a weekly progress report, it should be easy to identify whether or not performance management is happening regularly. If reports are being completed and there is an on-going exchange about performance among managers and their direct reports, then it is indeed happening.

But is it working? To answer that question, you must first have a set of standards in place against which performance is measured. Remember, the goal is not to gauge all performers against a blanket set of criteria (i.e., the Bell Curve), but instead, you must clarify what is expected of each employee in his or her own specific role.

Then, you can assess performance against those pre-established expectations. Consider having more frequent appraisals not just yearly – to formally discuss how employees are performing against your expectations, and if needed, develop strategic, individualized plans for improving performance.

Do you manage a company or teams (either as a CEO, a senior executive, a middle manager or even a front-line manager)?

Do you set and track objectives? Does aligning employee performance to business goals matter, and are you responsible for driving results? If so, please check out a live demo of [Atiim OKR & Goals Management Software](https://www.atiim.com/product-overview/okr-goals-management-software/) and we’d love to hear what you think about it.

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**3) Describe the scope and importance of humanitarian logistics**

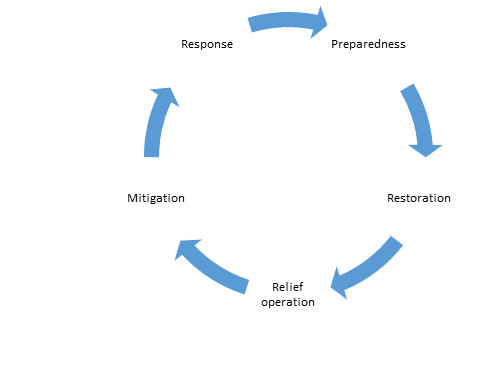
Humanitarian logistics has become one of the most challenging and important in today’s uncertain times by both natural and manmade disasters.

The global warming is also causing adverse effects on us in the form of unseasonal rains, extreme weather conditions, earth quakes etc...

Humanitarian logistics is the part of logistics which is specialized in delivering the food, supplies, relief material during the time of crisis or emergencies to the victims, people affected by the natural calamity.

We often hear about the supply chain, logistics from the commercial world of transportation, and shipping, receiving, sending goods to different parts of the globe which is done by the global giants like UPS, FedEx and DHL.

However during the natural calamities occur the main aim is to minimize the loss to human life, response, provide relief operation and restore the normal life is the prime motto.



**Relief Operations:**

During the natural calamities like floods, hurricanes, earlier we had great disaster in the form of Tsunami and recent ones in USA i.e. IRMA, Harvey or floods in Europe.

The relief operations play a key role in providing the supplies such as food, water, medicines, evacuation plan to make people stay safe etc.

Providing with pure drinking water, food, emergency response vehicles to send people who are injured and stuck in water logging areas, debris etc

**Communication and Coordination:**

Communication during the disaster will be really crucial since the material should be reached at right place by the right people in right time.

This can only happen with effective logistics network and coordination among different teams who support relief operations.

Coordinating with the government agencies like defence, healthcare, fire safety, humanitarian agencies like Red Cross, UNICEF etc.

**Preparedness**:

Preparedness is one more preventive measure that can be taken in order to reduce damage to human life and worldly possessions.

Also there can be some remote places where there is no sea route, bigger vehicles may not be possible to driven inside such places, and there we would be need the helicopters, parachutes, drones etc. to airlift people are drop food supplies to the flood victims.

**Response:**

The information or response can be very scattered and not vividly available from the sender. Information plays a critical role in the supply chain and logistics operations. Seamless information can flow can people to get the supplies at the right time and can reduce the hunger deaths. The communication channels like mobile towers, antennas can be damaged.

**Mitigation:**

The mitigation of loss be it human or assets can be minimized by actively responding to the sudden shocks that were caused during crisis.

Mostly we find people dislocated from their homes and especially children, pets are the vulnerable victims of these times. By helping each other or may be taking assistance from the Disaster Relief teams can help to a great extent to save and restore lives.

**Efficiency Vs Responsiveness:**

Here the efficiency mean how well we lend our support to the victims who are suffering from the calamity. And Responsiveness refers to instant support and quick help that people can get from the relief teams, humanitarian agencies.

Which can indeed help more people to stay alive and get relief from the sufferings? Both of these include high operational planning and efficiency and unfortunately we find lag in striking the balance while executing the operations.

In the country like India we still have many hindrances to respond quickly though we have Military, National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) but the operations become standstill when the incidents occur in massive scale given the geography and remotely spread locations in the country.

There is a high need of skilled and trained people who can render there valuable services during the tough times that we face.

Also the agencies, NGO’s who work in such areas should analyze their abilities and gain expertise in self-assessing their responsiveness.

The role of citizens is also highly commendable and they should be given or educated with the basic skills to be performed during such times.

Modern day world is tackling with various such issues with the increasing population in the countries like China, India etc.

Even in the developed nations like United States we often see some sort of trouble in mitigating the loss.

**Humanitarian Logistics** refers to the processes and systems involved in mobilizing people, resources, skills and knowledge to help vulnerable people affected by natural disasters and complex emergencies.

Humanitarian supply chain management (HLSCM) is intimately tied to the broader context of disaster management which itself is a subject of much contemporary popularity.

For example, recent works such as Yang et al. ([2014](https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s10479-017-2536-x#CR102)), have used Data Envelopment Analysis to build an emergency response network for earthquakes, An parasan and Lejeune ([2017](https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s10479-017-2536-x#CR5)) have proposed a model of emergency responses to epidemics that can be used in countries that have limited resources, and Sushil ([2017](https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s10479-017-2536-x#CR85)) has proposed the use of a qualitative and interpretative framework called SAP–LAP in the context of disaster management.

Two subjects in HLSCM can be considered very important as they have been widely studied, namely: humanitarian supply chains (HSC) and humanitarian logistics (HL). During the past decade, HSC has received greater attention among academics and practitioners (Kovacs and Spens [2010](https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s10479-017-2536-x#CR53)), and many HSC works are trying to better explore this subject.

Examples include: coordination of HSC (Balcik et al. [2010](https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s10479-017-2536-x#CR8); Akhtar et al. [2012](https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s10479-017-2536-x#CR4)), specifically studying the drivers and barriers of the coordination of HSCs (Kabra and Ramesh [2015b](https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s10479-017-2536-x#CR48); Kabra et al. [2015](https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s10479-017-2536-x#CR49)), and developing frameworks to improve HSC implementation (John et al. [2012](https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s10479-017-2536-x#CR46)).

However, it has been observed from the literature, that most HSCs are unstable, unpredictable, and slow to respond to the needs of affected people (Yadav and Barve [2015](https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s10479-017-2536-x#CR100)), especially when related to those disasters.

Such disasters not only disturb the normal functioning of society, but can also leave huge and negative impacts on the people directly or indirectly impacted by them.

It is not possible to predict natural disasters, but actions can be taken to deal with such complex crises and reduce the impact of natural disasters on people and society (Kovács and Spens [2007](https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s10479-017-2536-x#CR52); Kabra and Ramesh [2015b](https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s10479-017-2536-x#CR48); Kabra et al. [2015](https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s10479-017-2536-x#CR49))

Humanitarian Logistics is a specialized area of logistics, which gives emphasis particularly on arranging the delivery and warehousing of supplies during natural calamities or sudden emergencies to the affected areas, communities and people, who actually need the help.

But, whenever we talk about logistics, people always have this thought in their minds that logistics is for the commercial purposes, how it can help the mankind. And, seriously, this thought process here has to be broken. Of course, logistics can prove out to be one of the most vital tools in relief and disaster management.

**Keep Logistics Tools Prepared Beforehand**

Whenever we hear the news of any natural calamity, whether its earthquake, landslide, flood or tsunami, we sigh, wondering how those affected are coping with this.

The truth is we can’t avoid natural calamities or  control the nature, but we can keep the tools of logistics ready beforehand to cope with any untoward situation or help people across the globe.

**Sector’s Key Players**

Humanitarian logistics or relief operation management involves people from diverse backgrounds in terms of culture, purposes, interests, mandates, capacity, and logistics expertise. In this sector, key players can be categorized as follows: governments, the military, aid agencies, donors, NGOs, and private sector companies.

**Rising Need for Humanitarian Logistics**

Nowadays the need for humanitarian logistics is increasing rapidly also because of climate change, natural disasters, population growth, conflicts etc. To cope with this, many humanitarian organizations are coming up with the idea of expanding their work and collaborating with the private sector. It will give a new dimension to this logistics sector.

**Promoting Corporate Social Responsibility**

With the advent of globalization, the growth of global supply chains, international customer and employee bases and greater significance on the negative global externalities of business activities.

Many big organizations are also realizing the substantial benefits of engaging in humanitarian work. Media highlights the significance of humanitarian activities, which includes risk management, civil protection and conducting relief operations, which, in turn, not only promotes Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) but also can be a worthwhile investment for the company.

**New CSR Act**

Every company has to take some responsibility of the society, too, and address social and environmental issues, besides just working to make profits.

The Ministry of Corporate Affairs (MCA) has notified Section 135 and Schedule VII of the Companies Act, 2013, related to CSR that will be effective from April 1, as part of the new Companies Act.

The norms will be applicable for companies with at least INR 5 core net profit or INR 1,000 core turnovers or INR 500 core net worth. From now on these companies will have to spend 2 per cent of their three-year average annual net profit on CSR activities in each financial year.

**Companies Will Now Focus on Hiring Logistics Professionals**

This will, in turn, increase the company’s focus on new emerging Humanitarian Logistics, as it requires high levels of professionalism and skills in the whole humanitarian logistics employment and career development.

Meanwhile, the managers of different logistic companies are interested in recruiting logistics professionals with skills that translate into high employee performance and logistics excellence.

Future employees often appear to be unaware of the requirements of their jobs and this explains why warehouse managers do basic activities such as order-picking, other than posting job advertisements, testing candidates and reflecting on functional and contextual job requirements.

**Skills Required**

Different types of soft skills of management with functional logistics skills are required in humanitarian logistics. Within these two major skills, four groups of skills can be distinguished: general management skills, problem-solving skills, interpersonal (people management) skills and functional logistics skills.

General Management skills include finance and accounting, information technology, change management, marketing project management, strategic management, customer relationship management, supplier relationship management and risk management.

Problem Solving Skills include problem identification, information gathering, problem analysis, information sharing and problem-solving.

Interpersonal skills include listening, oral communication, written communication, people management, meeting facilitation, negotiation, stress management, human resources management, and leadership.

Functional logistics skills include legal, customs, import, and export, transportation management, inventory management, warehousing, purchasing and procurement, forecasting, reverse logistics, port/airport management, and logistics information systems.

**Required Qualification**

A candidate should have BTS (2-year higher education course) in procurement/logistics / transport, good knowledge of telecommunications, information technology, electricity, and mechanics in order to fulfil the criteria for a job in humanitarian logistics.

**Duties and Responsibilities**

A professional is responsible for equipping the base and the programs. Together with the logistics team who are hired locally, he/she is in charge of purchasing, warehousing, transport, management of vehicles, computer systems, and telecommunications, as well as security. Logistician has a large team to manage, including drivers, security guards, assistants, a warehouse manager and even a radio-operator. Previous experience of team management is preferable.

**E-logistics Will Save a Lot of Problems**

With the emerging competition for funding among major relief organizations, the heads of logistics tend to each fight their own battles with little collaboration.

In order to overcome this situation, e-logisticians are required for getting the job done under the most adverse and extreme circumstances.

Common training and the use of tools like e-learning would open up the possibility of creating a cadre of logisticians in the field, and so promote standardized logistics practices and in-country logistics capacity.

**Way Forward**

We can see a great opportunity for advancement of the field and of the humanitarian mission if the institutional knowledge is disseminated in an organized way.

So, the time has come to strengthen the infrastructure of humanitarian logistics and expertise in technology and resources with the help of corporate and academic communities as this sector requires extreme requirements in terms of timeliness, affordability, and oversight.

**4) According to you what do you think are the way forward of improving the Humanitarian logistics which seems to have been left behind by the for profit organizations**.

Humanitarian supply logistics systems must be effectively coordinated to help people in disasters or emergency situations, a group of experts has concluded.

Over 50 logistics experts from international organizations, which make up a roll call of those most frequently in the forefront in disaster response, came together last week for the first time at the World Health Organization (WHO) in Geneva to discuss logistics management systems for humanitarian assistance in disaster situations.

Chief among their conclusions are that logistics systems must be better coordinated and clearly transparent if humanitarian supplies are to bring the most effective help to people in crisis.

"There is an urgent need for better coordination of humanitarian supply logistics in disasters such as earthquakes and hurricanes.

To do this, a common approach to exchange logistical information and an internationally standardized classification of supplies is vital," said the participants.

The workshop, a joint initiative of the World Health Organization, the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), World Food Program (WFP) and the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), was held to improve coordination between the agencies, governmental and non-governmental organizations (NGOÂ’s) and donors with respect to the logistics of international relief assistance in disaster situations.

The participants agreed to use the experience and philosophy of SUMA, a system developed by PAHO and the Foundation for the Development of a Supply Management System (FUNDESUMA), as the base for development of this common platform. SUMA software has been used successfully in the last ten years mainly in the Americas, during and after large disasters such as Hurricane Mitch in 1998 and the El Salvador earthquakes in January 2001.

Experts advise that a common system should be useful not only for the United Nations agencies and humanitarian assistance organizations, but also for national authorities in disaster-prone countries, who often lack logistics software to manage incoming supplies in an emergency situation, said Dr Claude de Ville de Go yet, chief of PAHO's Emergency Preparedness and Disaster Relief Program.

"From experience, we know that the availability of a logistics information system in a disaster situation helped countries like El Salvador and Honduras quite a lot in efficient management of international assistance. It also improved transparency and accountability for the management of donations, which is very important," Dr de Ville added.

Frequently, countries that experience a disaster are flooded with tons of supplies, putting a great burden on already stretched relief staff that then must categorize and dispose of the material.

Systems like SUMA use simple software on laptop computers to track and sort incoming donations and their destinations, allowing disaster managers to see what they have and send it where it is needed.

According to Dr Alessandro Loretti, of WHO Headquarters Emergency and Humanitarian Action department, a key objective of the meeting is to put crucial "substance into coordination for emergencies".

"By providing people with a common logistic system, you decrease the difference between the beneficiaries Â– both national authorities and local communities and authorities Â– and the providers, and offer empowerment which is the only true form of capacity building" Dr Loretti said.

Other agencies have similar systems but they have not all been integrated into a common framework. Common categorizations of items are necessary, as well as a central data warehouse to keep track of supplies and communicate among tracking systems.

"We are offering the countries and relief agencies, large and small, the use of SUMA as a basic tracking system," said Dr de Ville.

"The ability to share information on what relief items are arriving into a disaster zone will not only facilitate improve planning by Agencies for the receipt and despatch of these items at key entry points of airports and ports, but also help identify and address logistics bottlenecks, which commonly arise in emergency operations" said Mr David Kaatrud, Chief of WFP's Logistics Service.

In addition to representatives from United Nations agencies like UNICEF, UNHCR, WFP, WHO, PAHO, OCHA, also present at the Geneva workshop were representatives from International Committee of the Red Cross, International Federation of the Red Cross and Red

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