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## **The Influence of Strategic Planning and Forecasting on Humanitarian Aid Delivery in Somalia**

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### ***Abstract:***

*The objective of this study was to determine the influence of strategic planning and forecasting on humanitarian aid delivery effectiveness in humanitarian organizations in Somalia. With regard to research methodology, this study used positivism approach and correlational design. A sample of 394 senior management teams (SMTs) of international and national NGOs delivering aid in Somalia through census were selected. Findings from this study showed that there was a significant and positive relationship between three independent variables (strategic planning, contingency planning and strategic forecasting) and humanitarian aid delivery effectiveness. Based on the findings of this study, it is recommended that humanitarian leaders to have clear vision, strategic, operational, contingency plans that mitigate external environmental and drive immediate humanitarian response.*

**Keywords:** *Strategic Planning, Contingency Planning, NGOs, Forecasting, Humanitarian Aid Delivery Effectiveness*

### **1. Introduction**

Achieving value-driven goals and planning in a complex and uncertain environment is one of the biggest challenges of an organisational leader while delivering humanitarian aid (Humanitarian Futures Programme [HFP], 2013). Research has shown that the humanitarian aid delivery is perceived by many leaders to be a less strategic (Oloruntoba & Gray, 2006). There are several reasons that explain the minimal attention to strategic planning in the humanitarian sector. For instance, to focus on urgent response to emergencies, most of the humanitarian organizations tend to focus less on future-oriented analyses that are strategic (Humphries, 2013; HFP, 2013; Smith & Scriven, 2011). Further, unlike their corporate counterparts, humanitarian sector leaders have not appreciated the systematic long-term engagement in humanitarian service delivery and may focus on responding to emergencies as they occur (Binder & Witte, 2007). Besides, organizations resist ambiguity and tend to be risk-averse and thus not conducive for strategic planning, despite working in unpredictable and risky environment (Collinson & Elhawary, 2012; HFP, 2013). Other researchers argued that the concept of envisioning and long term planning and forecasting of humanitarian leaders has been a difficult concept since humanitarian organizations work in uncertainty and complexity (Binder, & Witte, 2007; Egeland, Harmer & Stoddard, 2011).

Humanitarian aid delivery is taking place in more complex environments than ever before. This is due to the fact that humanitarian aid agencies are increasingly delivering and operating in highly volatile, fragile and risky contexts (Collinson, Duffield, Berger, Costa & Sandstrum, 2013; Carle & Chkam, 2006). These contexts have made the service delivery structure of humanitarian relief extremely complex. Various actors including UN agencies, governments, international and local nongovernmental organizations are involved in a single disaster response effort (Stephenson & Schnitzler, 2009). The principle interventions and activities of humanitarian aid agencies differ from those of development agencies in some important respects. The primary goals of humanitarian aid are to respond to emergencies and disasters in order to protect life and to reduce excessive human suffering through immediate action or response (Twigg, 2004). However, the pressure to improve the delivery of humanitarian aid in recent years was focused on increased coordination and more specifically planning (Khan & Eekelen, 2009).

While humanitarian aid agencies have served communities from all corners of the world, Africa has been one of the biggest hosts and beneficiaries of humanitarian aid assistance for the last three decades (Active Learning Network for Accountability and Performance in Humanitarian Action [ALNAP], 2009). Humanitarian assistance provided in recent years by humanitarian organizations in Africa has saved hundreds of thousands of lives (Smock, 1996). Somalia has been one of the top beneficiaries of humanitarian aid in Africa (Global Humanitarian Assistance [GHA], 2013). The humanitarian organizations deliver relief aid comprising of food and non-food items including medicine, shelter, cash, livestock's and firms inputs across Somalia (GHA, 2013).

Over the past two decades, Somalia has become one of the world's worst and most enduring humanitarian crises. It is one of the most insecure places in the world, costliest and extremely difficult in delivering humanitarian aid (Bradbury 2010). According to Bradbury (2010), Somalia is the most enduring example of modern state collapse in the world and one of the longest-running humanitarian crises. It is also one of the most restrictive and insecure environments for humanitarian actors and one of the most insecure environments for humanitarian personnel. In the past decade, Somalia has been among the top ten recipients of humanitarian aid (Bradbury, 2010; GHA, 2013) and receives one of the highest proportion of its Official Development Assistance (ODA) as humanitarian aid, consistent with the prevailing situation where insecurity severely limits access and opportunities for development programming (Global Humanitarian Assistance [GHA], 2012). It was not until 2013 that the world learned the true human impact of the severe food insecurity and famine in Somalia where an estimated 257,500 people died between October, 2010 and March, 2012. It is widely acknowledged that the international aid delivery was too slow which depended largely on the effectiveness of the top and or executive leaders of the humanitarian organization to act accordingly (Hammond & Lee, 2012).

While Somalia has been dependent on humanitarian aid for the last two decades, donors were also criticized for not providing longer-term funding and support for activities that focus on building resilience, prevention and preparedness (Bachelet, Mountain, & Amos, 2011). Such activities can only be put in place by embracing planning mechanisms like strategic planning, contingency planning and strategic forecasting. It may be that the lack of emphasis and/or practice of strategic planning for envisioning by humanitarian organizations could have contributed to humanitarian challenges such as coordination and ineffectiveness (Smith & Scriven, 2011). Researchers also argue that forecasting is beneficial to the relief organizations to enable them to foresee before-hand the demand pattern for the forthcoming years and make emergency logistics plans in advance to handle any possible emergencies (Kumar, et al., 2012). It is not clear how this factor influences humanitarian aid delivery effectiveness in Somalia.

### *1.1. General Objective*

The general objective of this study was to determine the influence of strategic planning and forecasting on humanitarian aid delivery effectiveness in humanitarian organizations in Somalia.

### *1.2. Specific Objectives*

This study was guided by the following specific objectives:

- i. To determine the relationship between strategic planning and humanitarian aid delivery effectiveness in Somalia
- ii. To examine the relationship between contingency planning and humanitarian aid delivery effectiveness in Somalia
- iii. To determine the influence of strategic forecasting on humanitarian aid delivery effectiveness in Somalia.

### *1.3. Justification of the Study*

This study is useful in understanding the relationship between strategic planning and forecasting and humanitarian aid delivery effectiveness. It is useful to different stakeholders including humanitarian organisations leaders, policy makers, researchers and academicians.

## **2. Literature Review**

### *2.1. Humanitarian Aid Delivery Effectiveness*

Humanitarian organizations either deliver relief, or development or both areas. Humanitarian organizations involved in humanitarian relief confront a complex working environment (Stephenson & Schnitzer, 2009). Humanitarian aid is interchangeably used with humanitarian assistance which as defined as humanitarian assistance and action designed to save lives, alleviates suffering and maintains and protect human dignity during and in the aftermath of emergencies (ALNAP, 2009). Humanitarian aid is different from other forms of foreign assistance and development Aid. For instance, humanitarian aid is intended to be governed by the principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality and independence. It is also intended to be short-term in nature and provide for activities in the immediate aftermath of a disaster (GHA, 2013). Humanitarian service delivery is crucial function of the humanitarian agencies. Further, the effectiveness of the aid delivery is key parameter in assessing the success of the humanitarian agencies in delivery of their mandates.

Discussion on aid effectiveness, either in development or humanitarian aid has been going for many decades and became a big concern as more and more actors get involved in delivery of aid in fragile economies and states. Many development and humanitarian assistance were subjected to criticism (Maxwell et al., 2008). The effectiveness of humanitarian aid continues to be a critical challenge. Aid volume is still increasing, but, there is frequent change in incentives, donor structure and fragmentation of aid. In fact, according to GHA (2013), humanitarian global funding has doubled from 2000 to 2013 with United States dominating the top 30 governments in terms of its contribution to humanitarian assistance over the past 10 years, giving one third of all humanitarian assistance over this period. While development aid is aimed for sustainable developmental projects, most of the humanitarian aid is aimed to respond to emergencies and crisis which have of huge social and economic negative impact on the victims. In this sense, humanitarian aid is aimed to safe live and restores the livelihoods of the affected victims (Roberts, 2010).

Walden, et al. (2010) indicated that major organizations including Oxfam and United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) have adapted four benchmarks used in responding to humanitarian emergencies in delivering aid. These include: the speed and timelines and of the response in delivery of humanitarian aid, coordination of aid and finally the appropriateness of relief (aid)

provided by the humanitarian aid delivery organizations. These three measures were used to measure humanitarian aid delivery effectiveness in this study as discussed in the subsequent sections.

The need for speed in aid operations is paramount (Steets, Hamilton, Binder, Johnson, Koddenbrock, & Marret, 2009). The speed of the humanitarian aid response determines how many lives can be saved during emergencies to achieve humanitarian goals (Benini, et al., 2009). However, research by Walton, Mays and Haselkorn (2011) indicated that perception of the speed of the response by the stakeholders plays critical roles in delivery of humanitarian aid.

Researchers also argued that speed in delivery of humanitarian aid is based on the premise that the victims cannot wait and urgency is of essence to effectively respond to emergencies that create humanitarian aid (Murray & Clarke, 2008; Benini, & Conley, 2007). According to Walton et al. (2011), organizations should be able to measure average response speed to reaching beneficiaries during humanitarian aid delivery. However, some scholars claim that achieving speed in disaster response requires trade-offs between speed and other factors such as quality, cost and coverage (Benini & Conley, 2007). The ability of the humanitarian agency to procure, transport, and receive humanitarian aid supplies at the site of humanitarian relief effort in critical factor in the speed of humanitarian aid after a disaster (Kovacs & Spens, 2007).

Studies of humanitarian aid delivery have indicated that complex humanitarian crises provide challenging setting for coordination (Stephenson & Schnitzer, 2006). Coordination of disaster assistance is critical for effective humanitarian aid operations (Moore, Eng & Daniel, 2003). However, the coordination of relief in international humanitarian crises has long been viewed as troubled with problems of inadequate inter-agency coordination (Stephenson & Schnitzer, 2009). Research by Stephenson (2005) noted that, progress of the flow of resources among agencies and increases the accountability, effectiveness and impact of aid operations critically depend on the improvement of the level of coordination among humanitarian aid organizations. The coordination of aid delivery is demanding as it involves requirements typical of an emergency situation that include for example, high uncertainty and necessity for rapid decision making and response under resource constraints (Walden, et al., 2010).

There is lack of consistencies in the quantity; quality and appropriateness of relief distributed to the beneficiaries in humanitarian organization (Hofmann, et al., 2004). The major task that any humanitarian organization cannot deny is which humanitarian aid interventions are actually appropriate and which are justified as humanitarian responses in any situation (Levine, et al., 2011). There are various ways of helping affected populations. Cash grants can be provided, supplies can be donated, technical assistance given, food provided. The quality and appropriateness of the assistance are more important than its size, its monetary value or the rapidity with which it arrives (Cozzolino, 2012). One major challenge of aid effectiveness worth mentioning is the drop in aid which often occurs in the transition phase between the end of a humanitarian crisis and the beginning of development financing. According to Dodd, Schieber, Cassel, Fleisher and Gottret (2007), fragile states also present opportunities for donors, on average each US\$ 1 spent on conflict prevention generates over US\$ 4 in savings to the international community.

## 2.2. Strategic Planning

Smith and Scriven (2011) identified planning and forecasting as important factors in humanitarian aid organizations. Researchers also identified planning and forecasting (Featherstone, 2008; Clark; 2012; Dimitrios, et al., 2013) as essential determinant of organisational effectiveness. Strategic forecasting is a technique of prediction that is based on the organizations capability to adapt to new situations. Forecasting is an explicit procedure for translating information about the environment and the organization's proposed strategy into statements about future results (Kash & Darling, 1998). Somalia has been one of the largest recipients of international humanitarian assistance over last decade (GHA, 2013). However, the response of the humanitarian organizations to the crisis in Somalia has been multifaceted and often incoherent with mixed results of success and failures in relation to humanitarian aid delivery due to long-term and strategic humanitarian decisions (Bradbury, 2010).

Moreover, humanitarian aid delivery is the main function of humanitarian organizations in Somalia. The influence and direction of strategic planning on humanitarian aid delivery effectiveness is critical for management and policy makers (Smith, & Scriven, 2011). Therefore, a policy gaps exist that need to be addressed in linking the influence the strategic planning has on effectiveness of the humanitarian aid delivery in Somalia. This research will contribute to the current efforts of institutions and researchers to fill the gap in understanding how strategic planning and forecasting influences humanitarian aid delivery effectiveness in Somalia which is one of the most complex humanitarian environments in the world.

Humanitarian leaders act as torch bearers and with a role of giving guidance of the vision while constantly scanning the environment for the information needed by the stakeholders. Intrinsic creativity is needed from individuals and thus organisation leaders in complex environment teach their followers the knowledge and skills they need to become self-managed, productive co-creators (Keene, 2000). In addition, leaders create rounded vision, effective strategies and plans to guide their organisations and respond to organisational context (Clarke, 2013). Every organisational leader should have clear vision and plans to implement it and the able to forecast the effect of the external environment will have on the organization. Researchers have also indicated that, while facing these challenges, still organizational leaders are focused on the internal processes of the organization rather the strategic activities (Draft, 2011).

It is through planning and forecasting that organizations better document current challenges, forecast future threats, inform their decisions on how best to intervene in and mitigate crises, and more strategically implement risk-reducing recovery efforts in the aftermath of humanitarian crises (International Alert, 2009). Strategic planning is a mechanism for driving performance by establishing long-term targets and by inspiring organizational members through creating a vision and a sense of mission (Mufudza, Jengeta & Hove, 2013). Leaders define a shared vision and plan for their efforts in the medium and long term (Choularton, 2007).

Research by Dimitrios, et al. (2013) and Phipps and Burbach (2010) indicated that strategic planning can be difficult to implement in non-profit organization due to environmental complexity of the organization and their work which are based on volunteerism compared to corporate counterparts. Findings also show that the scope of the humanitarian interventions and programming is short term while donor funding and many international humanitarian staff encourage a short-term planning and programming perspective that often inhibits the development of a longer-term vision and the ability to sustain such a vision with any consistency (Smith & Scriven, 2011; Keene, 2000). Hailey (2006) pointed out that one of the hallmarks of many successful leaders of humanitarian organizations as the capacity to play different roles as well as develop strategies that enables them to cope with the exigencies of complex and difficult external environments.

Several researchers have used different components to measure strategic planning in different studies and contexts (Analoui, & Samou, 2012; Baltar, 2013; Taiwo & Idunnu, 2010; Khan & Khalique, 2014). For instance, Owolabi and Makinde (2012) studied the effects of strategic planning and used variables such leaders' influences in planning, coordination and control environmental influence as major factor influencing the relationship between strategic planning and organisational performance. Further, Arasa and K'Obonyo (2012) used factors such as defining firm's corporate purpose, scanning of business environment, identification of firm's strategic issues, strategy choice and setting up of implementation, evaluation and control systems to, measure strategic planning in relation with organisational performance.

Meanwhile, a study by Taiwo and Idunnu (2010) indicated that strategic planning intensity is determined by managerial, environmental and organizational factors. The authors also revealed that indicators such as documented vision and mission statement of the organization, established core values set of realistic goals, long term objectives and the development of action plans are very critical in every organisation that envisages to have an effective strategic plan. Analoui and Samou (2012) studied the impact of strategic management and planning on NGOs while using several factors in assessing and measuring strategic management and planning in NGOs. These factors included assessment of internal and external environment, the vision of NGO leaders, strategy formation, developing mission statement, identifying of strategic issues and organizational structure, leadership, culture affects strategy implementation, control and development. Moreover, leader's awareness on the importance of strategic planning plays an important part in the formulation and implementation of strategy in NGOs (Analoui & Samour, 2012).

It has been argued that strategic planning and management is not only important of corporate organisations but also non-governmental organisations. This is further supported by research study on 127 NGOs in Palestine by Analoui and Samou (2012) who argued that most NGOs perceive strategic management as an important tool for increasing the quality of service delivery and increasing overall organizational effectiveness and performance. Furthermore, Ramadan and Pilo (2014) investigated the impact of strategic planning on non-governmental organization access to funding performance. The study used 50 NGOs operating in morocco. Using Pearson correlation coefficient and multiple-regression analysis, the authors found there is a significant relationship between that strategic planning and its components and NGOs' access to funding performance. In addition, Ramalingam (2006) indicated that visioning and regular use strategic planning in humanitarian organizations will allow and guide leaders to effectively delivery aid. Therefore, this study hypothesized that;

- H<sub>1</sub>: There is significant positive relationship between strategic planning (STP) and humanitarian aid delivery effectiveness (HADE) in Somalia.

### 2.3. Contingency Planning

One of the biggest challenges related to humanitarian emergencies is the failure to intervene before a situation leads into an emergency or crisis (Nickerson, 2013). Given the chaotic nature of the environment that humanitarian aid assistance is delivered, it is impossible to anticipate a natural disaster in terms of timing, magnitude, and consequences (Svensson, 2004). Contingency planning is a method of risk management that promotes effective crisis management (Hall, Skipper, Hazen & Hanna, 2012). It is also a method of thinking about potential situations and their prospective impact for the purpose of preventing the situation from occurring and creating an action plan that will serve as a guideline should the contingency actually arise (Svensson, 2004).

Contingency plans must be flexible and adaptable to unexpected and perhaps improbable events which call for contingency planning (Fawcett & Fawcett, 2013). Fawcett and Fawcett, (2013) argued that contingency planning in humanitarian aid is combinations of traditional planning and forecasting. Humanitarian organizations use three main types or methods of contingency planning; scenario planning, preparedness is planning and all-hazards emergency planning. Scenario planning is the most common type of planning that involves the development of specific scenarios, which are then used as a basis for developing a response plan. Besides, preparedness planning sometimes called response planning or response preparedness planning is becoming more widely used which involves identifying gaps and challenges to effective emergency response, and then planning and implementing a series of actions to increase response capacity and reduce potential gaps. Finally, all-hazards emergency planning, which establishes clear roles, responsibilities and chains of command, and uses standard procedures most often formalized in checklists to guide emergency response (Choularton, 2007).

Research by Hall, et al. (2012), found that there has been link between effective contingency planning, flexibility and effectiveness. Threats to long-term viability are avoidable with the right form of contingency planning done at the right time. Contingency planning might actually be the most critical aspect of organizations overall strategic plan (Simpkins, 2009). According to Choularton (2007), an active contingency planning process enables individuals, teams, organizations and communities to establish working relationships that can make a critical difference before or during a crisis. Contingency planning is a means to identify vulnerabilities and plan appropriate reactions, particularly in response to distance and how effectively to respond to effected constituents (Hall, et al., 2012; Simpkins, 2009). Therefore, this study hypothesized that;

- H<sub>2</sub>: There is significant positive relationship between contingency planning (CPL) and humanitarian aid delivery effectiveness (HADE) in Somalia.

#### 2.4. Strategic Forecasting

Strategic forecasting is a technique of prediction that is based on the organizations capability to adapt to new situations (Kash & Darling, 1998). Forecasting is a clear procedure for translating information about the environment and the organization's projected strategy into accounts about future results (International Alert, 2009). Forecasting relates to what will happen if a humanitarian organization tries to implement a given strategy in a possible environment and helps to determine the likelihood of the possible environments (Kash & Darling, 1998).

Many humanitarian organizations are concerned of how to strategically manage humanitarian emergencies in order to prevent it or reduce its impact on the targeted beneficiaries (Kumar, et al., 2012). The environmental uncertainty and stability influences the complexity of leaders' task and their capability to process information related to organizational forecasting (Qiong, Wen, & Yun, 2012). Therefore, forecasting plays a key role in shaping the choices and decisions of the leaders. Forecasting enables the organisation leaders to pursue and anticipate how potential future events would affect the organisation (Dane & George, 2014). In addition, forecasting, will also aid organizations in making informed decisions to minimize delay in the arrival of relief commodities from aid centers and distribution and rescue effort (Kumar, et al., 2012). Moreover, Qiong, et al. (2012) also indicated that forecasting related to disasters is difficult due to lack of historical data and in uncertain environments which makes the top managers' decision-making more difficult as they need more information to adapt to the environmental uncertainty.

There has been little scholarly attention mainly on the predictions of future in showcasing the importance of forecasting in the context of programme implementation (Dane & George, 2014). According to Dane and George (2014), effective forecasting is not concerned with the likelihood that a given event will occur but, rather, with how one would manage it if that event again if it did occur. Forecasting is used by the various international and national humanitarian organizations in emergency logistics planning. This leads to better coordination of search and rescue activities and efficient evacuation of injured people (Kumar, et al., 2012). Besides, strategic forecasting can mitigate can provide a way to effectively pursue an organizational mission by solving issues related to the difficulty of measuring performance, resources mobilization, forecasting and converging differences among stakeholder's ideas of how to accomplish the mission (McHatton, Bradshaw, Gallagher & Reeve, 2011). Therefore, this study hypothesized that;

- H<sub>3</sub>: There is significant positive relationship between strategic forecasting (STF) and humanitarian aid delivery effectiveness (HADE) in Somalia

### 3. Research Methodology

This study used positivist approach as the data was collected objectively through a survey method and quantitative data analysed through statistical analysis to test research hypothesis with minimal interference of the researcher (Creswell, 2003). Sekaran (2000) suggested six guidelines in developing research strategy or design. These are mainly; purpose of the study, researcher extent within study, and type of the study, the time horizon, unit of analysis of the study and location or setting of the study. The author argued that any research study must be able to point out research the six guidelines in the design process. Therefore, the purpose of this study was hypothesis testing. Furthermore, a correlational research design was used to determine to what degree two variables are related, however, correlational research does not prove cause and effect relationship; rather, it indicated an association between two or more variables (Creswell, 2008).

The population was composed of 494 senior management members of international and national NGOs working in Somalia that were registered with Somalia NGO Consortium (Somalia NGO Consortium, 2014). This study adopted census for the quantitative components of this study (Onwuegbuzie & Collins, 2007). Self-administered questionnaires were used as data collection technique where the respondents read and record the responses without the presence of the interviewer or the researcher (Zikmund, 2003). A total of 31 scale items were used to measure the constructs in this study. Constructs have been operationalized using 7-point Likert scales, ranging from (1=strongly disagree) to (7=strongly agree). 7-Point Likert scale is more capable than 5-point Likert scale as it allows greater discrimination and finer differences between people (Colman, Norris & Preston, 1997).

### 4. Results and Findings

#### 4.1. Demographics

The response rate was 78% (n=383) of the total population of 494 managers of which 35% were female and 65% male. 76% (n=290) of the respondents worked with international NGOs while 24% (n=93) worked with national NGOs.

#### 4.2. Descriptive Statistics

##### 4.2.1. Humanitarian Aid Delivery Effectiveness

The score for humanitarian aid delivery effectiveness (HADE) was computed as the simple average of the scores of the sub-constructs; timeliness, speed, coordination and appropriateness of humanitarian aid response. Results indicated that the four sub constructs had an average score of more than 5 in the likert scale (7-point scale ranging from 1 referring to strongly disagree to 7 referring to strongly agree). Besides, timeliness of the aid response (THAR) has the lowest average score of 5.12 with standard deviation of  $\pm 1.25$ .

Furthermore, coordination of humanitarian aid response (CHAR) had the highest average score of 5.45 with standard deviation of  $\pm 1.13$ . The other variables; speed of humanitarian aid response (SHAR) and appropriateness of humanitarian aid response (AHA) had mean score of 5.33 (standard deviation of  $\pm 1.17$ ) and 5.17 (standard deviation of  $\pm 1.30$ ) respectively. The average mean score of HADE latent variable was 5.27 reflecting that respondents were agreeable to statement of each of the variables (Table 1). The average standard deviation of  $\pm 1.06$  showed that the respondents were not too much dispersed from their mean score. Furthermore, result of the reliability of the total observed variables used to measure the dependent constructs (HADE) using the Cronbach alpha was 0.895 which is higher than each of the stand-alone sub constructs.

Variables	Descriptive Statistics				
	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	Skewness	Kurtosis
Speed of Humanitarian aid response (SHAR)	383	5.33	1.17	-0.54	-0.31
Timeliness of humanitarian aid responses (THAR)	383	5.12	1.25	-0.49	-0.39
Coordination of humanitarian aid response (CHAR)	383	5.45	1.13	-0.71	-0.03
Appropriateness of humanitarian aid response (AHAR)	383	5.17	1.30	-0.60	-0.33
Humanitarian aid delivery effectiveness (HADE)	383	5.27	1.06	-0.50	-0.17

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics of Humanitarian Aid Delivery Effectiveness

#### 4.2.2. Strategic Planning

Strategic planning was measured using three observed variables on a 7-point scale ranging from 1 referring to strongly disagree to 7 referring to strongly agree. The mean scores and the standard deviations were computed from the respondent on the 7-point Likert scale. Further, the reliability of the observed variables used to measure strategic planning (STP) was examined by calculating the Cronbach alpha (0.793). The average score of the three variables are 5.62 ( $\pm 1.42$ ) for STP1, 5.74 ( $\pm 1.38$ ) for STP2 and 5.50 ( $\pm 1.33$ ) for STP3. This indicated that on average the respondents agreed with the statement with more than 5 point of the 7 point likert scale. The respondents were not diverse on their opinion on the rating as the standard deviation ranged from  $\pm 1.42$  and  $\pm 1.33$  for the two variables (Table 2).

Variables	Descriptive statistics				
	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	Skewness	Kurtosis
1. The vision and the mission of my organization directly influence how we deliver aid in Somalia (STP1)	383	5.62	1.42	-.98	.19
2. My organization has strategic plan that guides the organization (STP2)	383	5.74	1.38	-.99	.05
3. My organization leaders execute the implementation of the strategic plan (STP3)	383	5.50	1.33	-.76	-.03
<b>Strategic planning (STP)</b>	<b>383</b>	<b>5.62</b>	<b>1.15</b>	<b>-0.73</b>	<b>-0.10</b>

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics of Strategic Planning

#### 4.2.3. Contingency Planning

Three observed variables were used in turn used to measure contingency planning (CPL) on a 7-point scale ranging from 1 referring to strongly disagree to 7 referring to strongly agree. The results indicated that the overall mean score for contingency planning (CP) was 5.28 (standard deviation  $\pm 1.17$ ). Meanwhile, the three observed variables had a Cronbach Alpha of 0.840 thus greater than minimum threshold of 0.7. Besides, if any of the observed items were deleted in the equation, the Cronbach alpha decreases (Table 3). This is an indication of precision and accuracy of the observed items in explaining the sub-construct contingency planning (CPL).

Variables	Descriptive statistics				
	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	Skewness	Kurtosis
1. My organization leaders execute the implementation of the strategic plan	383	5.19	1.33	-0.53	-0.42
2. My organization leaders are able to develop specific humanitarian emergency scenario plans	383	5.27	1.34	-0.58	-0.35
3. My organization leaders identify gaps and challenges of emergency response	383	5.37	1.38	-0.67	-0.33
<b>contingency Planning (CPL)</b>	<b>383</b>	<b>5.28</b>	<b>1.17</b>	<b>-0.50</b>	<b>-0.36</b>

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics of Contingency Planning

#### 4.2.4. Strategic Forecasting

Strategic forecasting was measured using three observed variables. Results indicated that the average score of the of the sub-construct, strategic forecasting (STF) was 5.21 on a 7-point scale ranging from 1 referring to strongly disagree to 7 referring to strongly agree. This indicated that the average score tends towards 7 point likert scale of strongly agreed. On average, the respondents agreed with the

statement measuring strategic forecasting (SF) as the mean score the three observed variables ranged 5.16 to 5.28 on a 7-point scale ranging from 1 referring to strongly disagree to 7 referring to strongly agree (Table 4). The internal consistency or reliability test using Cronbach alpha indicated 0.844 for the three observed items.

Variables	Descriptive statistics				
	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	Skewness	Kurtosis
1. My organization is capable of anticipating potential future humanitarian emergency events	383	5.20	1.39	-0.65	-0.28
2. My Organization leaders are proactive to adopt to new humanitarian emergency situations	383	5.28	1.42	-0.79	-0.14
3. My organization is capable of predicting regular and irregular patterns of humanitarian emergencies	383	5.16	1.34	-0.56	-0.32
<b>Strategic forecasting(STF)</b>	<b>383</b>	<b>5.21</b>	<b>1.21</b>	<b>-0.69</b>	<b>0.00</b>

Table 4: Descriptive Statistics of Strategic Forecasting

4.3. Hypothesis Testing

Multiple regression analysis was conducted on the relationship between the predictor and the outcome variables. Result from multiple regression summary model showed that forty-three percent (76.4%) of the observed variance in humanitarian aid delivery effectiveness was explained by three predictor variables ( $R^2=0.764$ , Adjusted  $R^2=0.581$ ) as shown in table 5.

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.764 <sup>a</sup>	.584	.581	.68397

a. Predictors: (Constant), STF= strategic Forecasting; STP= strategic planning; CPL= contingency planning.

Table 5: The Goodness-Of-Fit of the Relationship between the independent variables (STF, STP and CPL) and Humanitarian Aid Delivery Effectiveness (HADE)

Result on the overall significance of the model showed that the value of the F ratio = 177.6 ( $p<0.01$ ). This indicated that that there was significant linear relationship between three independent variables and the dependent variable (Table 6).

ANOVA <sup>a</sup>						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	249.2	3.0	83.1	177.6	.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	177.3	379.0	0.5		
	Total	426.5	382.0			

a. Dependent Variable: HADE  
b. Predictors: (Constant), STF= strategic Forecasting; STP= strategic planning; CPL= contingency planning.

Table 6: The Overall Significance of the Relationship between the Independent Variables and the Dependent Variable

Results indicated that that there was a statistically significant positive relationship between strategic planning (STP) and humanitarian aid delivery effectiveness (HADE) ( $\beta_1=0.170$ ,  $t=6.912$ ,  $p<0.01$ ). Further, results on the relationship between contingency planning (CPL) and humanitarian aid delivery effectiveness (HADE) showed significant positive relationship ( $\beta_1=0.359$ ,  $t=6.733$ ,  $p<0.01$ ). Finally, there was significant positive relationship between strategic forecasting (STF) and humanitarian aid delivery effectiveness (HADE) ( $\beta_1=0.221$ ,  $t=4.899$ ,  $p<0.01$ )

Coefficients <sup>a</sup>				
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients (B)	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)	1.261	6.912	.000
	STP	.170	3.591	.000
	CPL	.359	6.733	.000
	STF	.221	4.899	.000

a. Dependent Variable: HADE  
b. Predictors: (Constant), STF= strategic Forecasting; STP= strategic planning; CPL= contingency planning.

Table 7: The Coefficients Significance of the Relationship between the Independent Variables and Dependent Variable

In summary, this study supported the three hypotheses that there was a statistically significant positive relationship between the three independent variables (strategic planning, contingency planning and strategic forecasting) and humanitarian aid delivery effectiveness (HADE) (Table 7).

## 5. Discussion, Conclusions and Recommendations

### 5.1. Discussion

This study examined the relationship between strategic forecasting and planning and that of humanitarian aid delivery effectiveness. This study showed that visioning and planning, contingency planning and strategic forecasting were important elements of strategic planning for humanitarian organisations working in Somalia. The convergence of these variables into one factor (strategic forecasting and planning) during explanatory factor analysis showed that these elements were essential in driving strategic planning and forecasting in humanitarian aid organisations in Somalia. This study finding was supported by previous studies which used visioning and strategic planning, contingency planning and strategic forecasting to measure strategic forecasting and planning elements of leadership (Smith & Scriven, 2011; Fawcett & Fawcett, 2013; Choularton, 2007; Kumar, et al., 2012).

This study also found that vision and the mission statements of the humanitarian organisations directly influence how they deliver humanitarian aid in Somalia. In fact, results from this study indicated that on average, the respondents agreed on the importance of having clear organisational and leadership vision to drive humanitarian aid delivery. This is supported by Taiwo and Idunnu (2010) argued that vision and mission statement of organizations, established core values set of realistic goals, long term objectives and the development of action plans are very critical in every organisation that envisages to have an effective strategic plan.

In this study, findings indicated that the type of aid and the areas of their work are dictated by their organization's vision and mission. Further, the leaders indicated that their organisations usually have 3-5 years' humanitarian response strategic plan in each country they operate that contribute to their global and regional organizational plans. Previous research findings revealed that strategic planning can act as a mechanism for driving performance by establishing long-term targets and by inspiring organizational members through creating a vision and a sense of mission (Mufudza, et al., 2013).

This study found that humanitarian aid organisations in Somalia frequently use contingency planning to mitigate risks associated with turbulent environment in which they operate. For instance, respondents indicated that their organisations regularly develop specific humanitarian emergency scenario plans and are able to identify gaps and challenges of emergency response on time. This has helped organisations to respond to humanitarian emergencies and disasters on time. Meanwhile, studies have also revealed that addressing the growing and increasingly complex humanitarian emergencies and crises will not only require improved tactical responses, but contingency plans based on a comprehensive risk-management framework (International Alert, 2009; Simpkins, 2009; Choularton, 2007).

Overall, results from this study showed humanitarian organizations use contingency planning to effectively adapt to the unexpected and improbable humanitarian emergencies and disasters in Somalia. This is supported by Hall, et al. (2012) who found that there is a link between effective contingency planning, flexibility and effectiveness. Further, the results of this study showed that organizations inform their stakeholders about their contingency planning procedures to guide them during emergency response. For instance, Fawcett (2013) indicated that humanitarian organizations engage several stakeholders in contingency planning process and use scenario planning, preparedness-planning and all-hazards emergency planning on different contexts. Therefore, contingency planning is a critical aspect of an organization's overall strategic plan (Simpkins, 2009).

This study also found that humanitarian aid organizations use forecasting in anticipating potential future humanitarian emergency events. Dane and George (2014) argued that forecasting enables the organizations leaders to pursue and anticipate how potential future events will affect the organization. Further, the findings of this study also indicated that leaders of the humanitarian organizations use proactive strategies to adapt to new humanitarian emergency situations that often occur. Besides, this is coherent with the findings by Choularton (2007) who argued that active forecasting process enables individuals, teams, organizations and communities to establish working relationships that can make a critical difference before or during a crisis.

Results from this study indicate that international NGOs practice strategic forecasting more than their national counterparts. Contingency planning and forecasting is a more complex planning pecked on predicting and forecasting humanitarian emergencies that may occur irrespective of the normal operational plans. This is supported by Levine, et al. (2011) that contingency planning was becoming a burden as too much time was being spent on training for contingency planning in workshops and in writing lengthy plans every year. Result of study indicated that there is some collaboration between NGOs on contingency planning and forecasting as the international NGOs work with their national counterparts in monitoring and forecasting of events that could contribute to humanitarian emergencies.

Moreover, this study indicated that organisations use predictions strategies in responding to regular and irregular patterns of humanitarian emergencies. However, respondents from this study indicated that predicting the pattern of humanitarian emergencies is challenging and need capacity and historical data of events. Equally, researchers also argued that forecasting related to disasters is difficult due to lack of historical data and in uncertain environments which makes the top managers' decision-making more difficult as they need more information to adapt to the environmental uncertainty (Qiong, et al., 2012). Moreover, the importance of planning and forecasting has been emphasized by different scholars who have suggested that the failure to intervene through planning and forecasting before a situation evolves into an emergency or crisis is critical in most humanitarian emergencies (Nickerson, 2013; Holloway, 2012; Smith & Scriven, 2011).

There was insufficient evidence of literature linking strategic forecasting and planning (STFP) on humanitarian aid delivery effectiveness. This was supported by Phipps and Burbach (2010) who argued that there is little or lack of evidence to show quantitatively that strategic forecasting and planning can influence effectiveness humanitarian aid delivery. Besides, the findings of this study showed statistically that there is significant positive relationship between strategic forecasting and planning (STFP) and humanitarian aid delivery effectiveness (HADE). Delivery of Humanitarian aid services is the main function of the humanitarian



organizations, thus, effective delivery of humanitarian aid means effective organizations. In reference to the above findings of this study, several studies have emphasized the relationship between strategic planning and organizational performance and effectiveness. Research by Taiwo and Idunnu (2010) found out that strategic planning enhances better organizational performance and its survival in the long run. This was confirmed by other studies such as Arasa and K'Obonyo (2012); Aldehayyat and AlKhattab (2013); Owolabi and Makinde (2012), which showed a positive correlation between strategic planning and organizational performance. In addition, other scholars have revealed that strategic planning can contribute to organizational effectiveness (Analoui, & Samou, 2012; Baltar, 2013; Taiwo & Idunnu, 2010; Khan & Khaliq, 2014).

### 5.2. Conclusions

This study examined the relationship between strategic forecasting and planning and that of humanitarian aid delivery effectiveness. This study concluded that visioning and planning, contingency planning and forecasting as important elements of strategic planning for humanitarian organisations working in Somalia. This study also concluded that that vision and the mission statements of the humanitarian organisations directly influence how organisations delivered humanitarian aid in Somalia. Furthermore, the leader's involvement in implementation of the strategic plan of their organisations was critical. This study concluded that frequent use contingency planning by humanitarian aid organisations strengthen risk mitigation strategies in turbulent environment to effectively adapt to the unexpected and improbable humanitarian emergencies and disasters in Somalia.

Besides, the use of forecasting by humanitarian aid organizations enhances the anticipation of potential future humanitarian emergency events. While some scholars have argued that humanitarian agencies do not practice strategic planning and forecasting, this study concluded that they highly practice strategic forecasting and planning even in complex and volatile environment and the humanitarian organization's vision and mission statement influence the delivery of humanitarian aid. This study concluded that strategic planning and forecasting positively influence humanitarian aid effectiveness. In summary having vision, strategic, operational, contingency plans that drive immediate humanitarian response and ability to forecast external environmental are critical factors in effective delivery of humanitarian aid.

### 5.3. Recommendations

In reference to the findings and conclusions on the influence of strategic planning and forecasting on humanitarian aid delivery effectiveness, it is recommended that organization leaders adopt strategic and contingency planning, and forecasting to foster effective delivery of humanitarian aid. It is also recommended that leaders not only get involved in the formulation of strategic plans but also in the execution or implementation of the strategic plans of their organizations. Further, frequent use of contingency planning by humanitarian aid organizations is recommended to effectively adapt and mitigate risks associated with the unexpected humanitarian emergencies and disasters in Somalia. In summary, it is recommended that humanitarian leaders to have clear vision, strategic, operational, contingency plans that mitigate external environmental and drive immediate humanitarian response.

Although the findings of this study were useful, it had limitations based on the methodology, scope and gaps left in the discussion. Based on these limitations, several suggestions for further research were recommended. The data collected for this study was cross-sectional; longitudinal data will be needed in the future to investigate how strategic planning and forecasting would influence effective delivery of humanitarian aid. Meanwhile, this study focused only on top management of the humanitarian organizations and therefore future research is recommended on lower level staff or both top management and staffs to compare if the results would differ significantly.

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