HØGSKOLEN I BERGEN

MASTER THESIS IN COMMUNITY WORK

Challenging environments: professional perspectives on engaging with displaced people in collective centres

Title

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Submission date: 12. august 2013

Number of pages: 105

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

For Daisy Maude Kitty Hawes

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF ACRONYMS

CCCM	Camp Coordination and Camp Management
DFID	Department for International Development, UK Government
IASC	Inter-Agency Standing Committees
IDMC	Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre
IDP(s)	internally displaced person(s)
IFRC	International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
IOM	International Organization for Migration
IPS	Institute for Policy Studies, Georgia
JHSPH	Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health
LSE	London School of Economics
NGO	non-governmental organisation
NRC	Norwegian Refugee Council
NSD	Norwegian Social Science Data Services
skat	Swiss Resource Centre and Consultancies for Development
UN-HABITAT	United Nations Human Settlements Programme
UN/OCHA	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

LIST OF APPENDICES

ABSTRACT

Master's thesis in Community Work

Bergen University College

Summer 2013

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Collective centres are buildings used for shelter by groups of displaced people, which formerly had another purpose (e.g. schools, factories). Humanitarian agencies often provide assistance to people in these centres, and there have been recent efforts to learn more about approaches to working with them. The objective of the study was to add more detail to knowledge about the nature of dilemmas, challenges and issues that professionals face when engaging with people accommodated in collective centres. The main research question was, "What is the meaning of engagement with displaced people for humanitarian workers in collective centre settings?" Qualitative, semi-structured interviews were conducted with eight professionals with experience of working with people in collective centres, borrowing from the technique of convergent interviewing. A phenomenological approach placed the experience of the professionals at the centre of the study. The interviews were transcribed and analysed as text, with the analysis consisting of reading the transcripts, identifying recurrent themes in the data, and making comparisons to findings in humanitarian and community work theory and practice. The main findings were that: the buildings do not provide spaces for humanitarian workers to operate in, nor for residents to be social; the success of management processes was affected by the trust and connections present in context, and the control professionals had over them; and that financial constraints create dilemmas in terms of what work to undertake. Future research could explore the relevance of sectoral guidelines, and the challenges that are present within specific organisations or emergency responses.

Keywords: humanitarian work, space and place, social cohesion, group processes

1.0   INTRODUCTION

This chapter will introduce the topic of the study, present the research question, and explain its relevance for study within a master programme in community work.

1.1   Introduction to topic

Around the world people are,

> "...forced or obliged to flee or to leave their homes or places of habitual residence, in particular as a result of or in order to avoid the effects of armed conflict, situations of generalised violence, violations of human rights or natural or human-made disasters..." (UN/OCHA 2004:1).

In fleeing, some cross internationally recognised state borders in search of safety and are commonly referred to as 'refugees'. However, many flee the same risks but do not cross such a border and remain within their own country. They are formally referred to as 'internally displaced persons' or 'IDPs' (UN/OCHA 2004:1).

As such, people displaced from their homes seek temporary shelter in many different ways in their new locations (UN/OCHA *et al.* 2010:104-6). One of the emergency settlement options that may be available to displaced people is 'collective centres', which are commonly thought of as :

> "pre-existing buildings and structures used for the collective and communal settlement of the displaced population in the event of conflict or natural disaster. This definition includes buildings of all types, sizes, and forms of occupancy." (CCCM Cluster 2010:5-6)

Settlement is considered to be collective when more than one family unit is accommodated in a building. Examples include displaced people finding shelter in abandoned buildings, such as factories, warehouses and workers barracks, as well as buildings still functioning as intended, such as schools, hotels and sports facilities. In some cases, displaced people settle spontaneously and informally in these buildings, 'squatting' them to some degree. In other cases, national and local authorities, as well as humanitarian organisations of various types, may arrange for people to be settled in such buildings. In either case, the buildings

in question have rarely been designed for such habitation. People may live in collective centres for as little time as a few weeks, to as long as a few decades, depending on the context.

The focus of this research project is to gain an understanding of the experiences of humanitarian workers that engage with people in collective centres, including the dilemmas, challenges and issues that they perceive while meeting displaced people's needs.

1.2 Research question

In 2010 the Inter-Agency Standing Committee's (IASC's) Global Camp Coordination and Camp Management (CCCM) Cluster (a mechanism for humanitarian agencies and other actors to coordinate their actions more effectively) published the *Collective Centre Guidelines* (CCCM Cluster 2010). Collective centres are deemed by humanitarian organisations and national authorities to be "camp-like settings" (CCCM Cluster 2010:iii). However, unlike camps, there had been a lack of consolidated 'best practice' information for agencies to draw upon when undertaking operations with collective centres. The *Guidelines* were based on a set of previous guidelines for camp situations, the *Camp Management Toolkit* (NRC and The Camp Management Project 2008), but adapted for the specific experience of collective centres.

The *Collective Centre Guidelines* acted as the point of entry for this topic, and were the inspiration for seeking further knowledge about the buildings and the people engaging with and living in them. The *Guidelines* represent a normative approach to describing collective centres, from the point of view of humanitarian organisations, and contain much valuable information about how to meet the major concerns and needs of displaced people in that environment. However, the *Guidelines* have a specific purpose for a specific audience, and so cannot be expected to provide a detailed account of the dilemmas and challenges that humanitarian professionals identify as being significant to them in their operational contexts. Further reading revealed that there were not many accounts of everyday practice and engagement between humanitarian organisations and collective centre residents, so this became the focus of the research project.

<u>Objective</u>

The objective of this study is to add more detail to the existing knowledge about the nature of dilemmas, challenges and issues that humanitarian professionals may face when engaging with displaced people accommodated in collective centres.

<u>Research question</u>

What is the meaning of engagement with displaced people for humanitarian workers in collective centre settings?

<u>Sub-questions</u>

What do humanitarian workers interpret as the main dilemmas, challenges, restrictions and issues of working with people in collective centres?

How do humanitarian workers approach engagement with groups of collective centre residents?

How is their practice affected by the prevailing social and spatial environment within collective centres?

1.3 Relevance for community work

This topic is of particular particular interest because it provides the opportunity to apply community work theory to a specific area of humanitarian response. Collective centres are a unique socio-spatial setting, and how people use and conduct their practice in those places is an interesting area of study. They are often considered to be sub-standard living environments, so how various humanitarian actors work to assist people in meeting and maintaining their needs (such as their safety, livelihoods and health) is of significance.

UNHCR (2012:242) highlights that "nearly 330,000 people remain displaced" in South-Eastern Europe alone from conflicts in the 1990's that displaced up to three million people. This research project is politically topical because it is relevant work being conducted with potentially hundreds of thousands of people within Europe alone, and many more in collective centres worldwide, such as in Syria and neighbouring countries.

There has been an increased interest in recent years to seek lessons from the experiences with collective centres to date, including creating the *Guidelines* and adapting them to local contexts (e.g. IOM Thailand 2012; CCCM Cluster 2012:4). Therefore it is an opportune time to add to the body of knowledge, especially considering the increasing pressure that climate change and competition for resources will place on populations and governments this century. The world's population is increasingly urban (UN-HABITAT 2010:14), a trend that is likely to continue given the aforementioned pressures. Other recent guidelines for humanitarian work have tried to address the particular challenges of working in an urban environment (see NRC and Shelter Centre 2010; IFRC and skat 2012; UNHCR 2009b). As a shelter option mostly utilised in urban and semi-urban areas, collective centres are an important area of study in terms of providing more detail about those challenges.

It is thought that vulnerable and marginalised people affected by emergencies can be empowered by participating in disaster management processes; defining their problems, needs and priorities, and gaining ownership of projects, leading to empowerment, and increased capacity and agency (Méheux *et al.* 2010:1102). Studying humanitarian actors' attempts to engage with displaced people and foster community processes is relevant for study because, "[i]n the absence of community, virtually anything can be done to people, and very little accomplished by them" (Day 2006:117).

Collective centre residents can be considered a 'community of need' as they face difficulties in getting access to livelihoods, basic rights and services, adequate housing, and care of older, disabled and sick people (Twelvetrees 2008:176; UNHCR 2012:244). There are suggestions they suffer from more depression, isolation, marginalisation and poverty than displaced people utilising other settlement options, making them a key group of interest for community work (IDMC 2006:67; Holtzman and Nezam 2004:25). It is also common that displaced people settle in collective centres because they cannot afford other types of accommodation, meaning that they may also be among the most marginalised groups.

The *Collective Centre Guidelines* contain a chapter on 'participation' in which they strongly recommend the participation of collective centre residents (including marginalised and vulnerable people) in decision-making processes and governance structures, as it can lead to greater empowerment (CCCM Cluster 2010:v). Different types of community control

and management of the collective centres are described, such as the creation of committees. It is worth investigating the implementation of these approaches in practice, as it may affect the power displaced people have over their environment and processes that concern them.

Humanitarian organisations working with displaced populations in collective centres may undertake their work in a variety of ways, and have different approaches to engaging with the residents. Some of this work could be classified as 'specialist' community work, in the sense that a more nuanced understanding of the specific population is important (Twelvetrees 2008:175-6). However, there is great variation in the use of community participation (Davidson *et al.* 2007), so it is relevant to examine how their approaches apply community work principles in empowering those groups (Purcell 2012:270).

1.4   Structure of the thesis

Chapter 2 provides an overview of the existing knowledge relevant to this study, including humanitarian experience of collective centres, previous research on collective centres, and significant social and community work theory. Chapter 3 explains how the research project was designed and conducted, specifically how data was gathered via interviews with eight humanitarian professionals with experience working with collective centres. Chapter 4 discusses the challenges posed by collective centres as specific spaces, and how their particular configurations enable and constrain the activities of humanitarian workers and displaced people. Chapter 5 considers how the social relationships among collective centre residents, and between them and their hosts and humanitarian actors, makes a difference to the kind challenges faced and approaches employed by professionals. Chapter 6 discusses the different modes of organisation and engagement that humanitarian workers employ in collective centres and the challenges posed by playing various roles in assisting groups of residents. Chapter 7 draws conclusions from the research project and makes some suggestions for further enquiry.

2.0   BACKGROUND

This chapter will explore the existing knowledge on collective centres, and some of the key theoretical terms used in this study. It will consider how people are displaced by conflicts and disasters, how they act in response to displacement, and how humanitarian organisations are normally involved with collective centres.

2.1   Collective centres

2.1.1   *Implications for displaced people*

Collective centres may be attractive shelter options for displaced people, and particularly for those who are vulnerable or unaccompanied, because they offer not only protection from hazards but are one single place where they can more easily access a full range of services (Lilly 2009:62; Corsellis and Vitale 2005:106; UN/OCHA *et al.* 2010:256). However, they are also places lacking in living space and privacy, where social tensions and psychological concerns are increased, and prolonged residency coincides with decreased self-confidence and increased dependency on service providers (Lilly 2009:63; Corsellis and Vitale 2005:105; UNHCR 2008). The lack of livelihood and recreation opportunities also puts pressure on individuals, and social and psychological problems are more common (UN/OCHA *et al.* 2010:256-7). Indeed, collective centres have been described as "overcrowded, congested, dilapidated, deplorable, degraded, and even extremely sub- standard" (adapted from Mooney 2009:64). Poor conditions in collective centres may also contribute negatively to the health of their inhabitants, especially as cramped conditions may increase the risk of communicable disease (Holtzman and Nezam 2004:88; UN/OCHA *et al.* 2010:256-7).

A wide range of different structures can be utilised as collective centres, but one commonality is that they were rarely intended to be used as accommodation. This has an affect on their durability:

> "The deterioration of these facilities due to lack of maintenance and overcrowding represents a factor in [displaced person] living situations that increases in severity over time." (Holtzman and Nezam 2004:xiv)

Some studies have shown that collective centre residents find it very difficult to deal with living quarters that are cramped, sharing with many family members, and how utilities and facilities could be lacking (JHSPH and IPS 2012:26). One study of internally displaced people in Nairobi described some of the problems that can arise when families have no option but to share already inadequate accommodation space, which is equally relevant in collective centres.

> "Overcrowded accommodation inevitably presents protection risks relating to the lack of privacy, and there are frequent tensions between families. Sharing accommodation is a strategy used by the most destitute families, by some IDPs and by single male or female migrants newly arrived in an area." (Metcalfe *et al.* 2011:23)

Protection risks in crowded collective centres with little privacy can include domestic, gender-based and sexual violence, drug abuse, and the domination of some groups over those more vulnerable. In larger collective centres with more people, the social networks, self-regulation and solidarity of residents can break down, allowing exclusion and violence to thrive (CCCM Cluster 2010:73). In terms of protection of vulnerable and exposed people, "the objective is for the community to provide safety and protection to these individuals rather than pose a threat to them" (CCCM Cluster 2010:76). This implies that close social networks are positive if they encompass vulnerable members, and that society and the community can be the source of both danger and safety.

Social support networks are much weaker in collective centres than might be expected in an urban environment, due to the disruption caused by displacement (Singh and Robinson 2010:24). The social structures of displaced groups may not always be compatible with communal living (UN/OCHA *et al.* 2010:256-7). It is thought that weak networks reduce the ability of residents to be self-reliant (UNHCR 2009a:17).

2.1.2 *Implications for humanitarian actors*

The *Collective Centre Guidelines* (CCCM Cluster 2010:v, 7, ch3) note that national governments are the main responsible party in setting up and managing collective centres and assisting their residents. Humanitarian actors take the role of assisting governments in this regard, as well as advocating for displaced people and monitoring activities. However, when the government lacks capacity in certain areas or is completely unable to function,

humanitarian actors fill the gaps to meet immediate needs.

In recent years humanitarian organisations have been involved with some short-term collective centres, such as in the Philippines and Thailand, responding to displacement and evacuation due to storm-related flooding (IOM Philippines 2012; International Organization for Migration 2012:1). There are also cases of work conducted with collective centre residents who have lived in protracted displacement, sometimes for decades, such as in Serbia and Georgia. In these cases, activities have more commonly focused on supporting participatory processes and assisting with finding 'durable solutions' for displaced people (Brookings-LSE and IDMC 2011:9; IASC 2010:37; Amnesty International 2010). According to the IASC (2010:5):

> "A durable solution is achieved when IDPs no longer have specific assistance and protection needs that are linked to their displacement and such persons can enjoy their human rights without discrimination resulting from their displacement."

At the time of writing, the Syria crisis is dominating current affairs, and has led to the displacement of over a million people into neighbouring countries (UNHCR 2013:1). Collective centres are being utilised as options in response to this crisis, and humanitarian organisations are involved in a number of ways, including training others in collective centre management (UNHCR Lebanon 2013).

Humanitarian agencies may find collective centres to be a positive settlement option in many ways, as they provide particular opportunities to assist displaced people. The grouped nature of the settlement, compared to more dispersed settlement, makes it easier for them to identify, assess, provide information and opportunities to, and distribute food and non-food items to the residents (UN/OCHA *et al.* 2010:256-7). It is also thought that it allows them to more effectively engage people in participatory processes concerning their future (UN/OCHA *et al.* 2010:256-7).

The Sphere Handbook (The Sphere Project 2011:259-60) highlights the importance of creating privacy in collective centre settings, noting that there are many psychosocial benefits in ensuring that spaces are not overcrowded and that personal space can be kept private. Recommendations are made by various guidelines about the minimum amount of

living space that should be provided per person, which can vary (CCCM Cluster 2010:91-2; The Sphere Project 2011:258-61). However, the buildings in question may not always have an abundance of individual rooms in which families can find privacy.

The primary challenge for humanitarians in working with collective centres seems to be that they require a lot of financial input. It is worth noting that so much of humanitarian action is dictated by the raising and use of funds, from the macro-scale of governmental and inter-governmental funding, to the micro-scale of material procurement in the field (UN/OCHA *et al.* 2010:21, 81-2). Although they are meant to be short-term solutions, it is common for collective centres to become long-term, especially as they can host particularly vulnerable people who are less able to move on to other solutions (UN/OCHA *et al.* 2010:256-7). For this reason, humanitarian organisations may not have the funds to support collective centres for very long; they have high running costs, require much rehabilitation and maintenance, and various owners and users of the buildings may have to be compensated for its use (UN/OCHA *et al.* 2010:256-7).

2.2 Collective action by displaced people

2.2.1 Main issues for displaced people

People who have been displaced by any of a variety of threats will respond to the challenges they face via a number of strategies. Vincent and Sorensen, in their book *Caught Between Borders* ((Eds.) 2001), compiled case studies of internal displacement and used a framework adapted from the *Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement* (UN/OCHA 2004) to identify and analyse people's response strategies. Displaced people employ strategies to: protect their rights to life, security, liberty and freedom of movement; gain access to livelihood opportunities, goods and services; gain access to education; and to protect their property (Vincent 2001:11-2). Perhaps of most interest to this study are the "civic strategies", which include strategies that, "improve access to or public participation in community, governmental and public affairs" and that "protect or maintain family unity, social identity and culture" (Vincent 2001:12).

Similarly, Holtzman and Nezam's (2004) study of displacement in Europe and Central Asia focuses on people's prospects in maintaining material well-being, employment, settlement and shelter, as well as human and social capital. Humanitarian agencies also regularly

consider what the different needs and issues are for displaced people, which is reflected in the many guidelines for practice (e.g. IASC 2010; IASC 2007; IASC 2006; IASC 2005), and the 'Cluster' system of humanitarian coordination that is divided into sectors such as health, nutrition and protection.

2.2.2   Collective action

Displaced people may often find themselves in positions of little power, so their ability to act together can be seen as a way of improving their situation (Day 2006:117). Both refugees and internally displaced people engage in collective action as a way of coping with the difficulties of displacement and working towards return, integration, or other durable solutions. Humanitarian agencies also attempt to engage displaced people in collective action in order to meet various pressing needs and rights.

Acting collectively and organising can be an effective way for displaced people to meet their needs and uphold their rights (Kharashvili 2001:247-8). With reference to displaced people in Georgia, Kharashvili (2001:248) notes that their self-help initiatives, often in the form of organisations, has led to greater empowerment on their part and greater international recognition of their struggle.

In many cases, displaced people form groups in order to achieve what may not be possible as individuals. As an example, displaced women in Afghanistan under a strict, Taliban-enforced, *sharia* law formed informal groups based on accepted traditions in order to increase their mobility and capacity:

> "Displaced women in desperate situations form similar bonds. In these groups of unrelated women, food and other resources are shared and labour is divided: some women look after children while other women search, or beg, for food. Since women beyond their childbearing years are somewhat freer to move around in public, they represent the group in society. (Farr 2001:134-5)

Such collective action seeks to work around oppressive cultural and political structures in order to increase the chance of coping with the difficulties of displacement. However, as with much collective action that is empowering in nature, it has many risks. In this context, unattached women were assumed to be sinful, or prostitutes, and they were not allowed to appear in public unless accompanied by a man (Farr 2001:134-5).

Displaced people can work together to increase their capacity and develop their human capital, thus increasing the chances of generating income. In Georgia, even very highly educated displaced women struggled to find work, so they started "adaptation schools" to help people to gain new relevant skills and knowledge. These programmes were then adopted by some larger women's associations in the country (Kharashvili 2001:237-8). Analysing this approach, it focuses on getting people into work, and helps people to 'play the game' of displacement better, by following various rules (as in Hollis 2002:153). However, there is no emphasis on being critical of their rejection, so there is less possibility for them to fight for anti- discrimination measures. Humanitarian agencies may also resent the way that people interact with their displaced status, adapting their behaviour to 'play the game' and receive assistance (Clark 2007:293).

Collective action may also take quite simple forms, such as socialising. Communal support in the form of dialogue, sharing of problems, and everyday social interaction can act as a collective coping mechanism (e.g. JHSPH and IPS 2012:29). These patterns of everyday life may be important to try and maintain, especially in terms of individuals' roles in their family or social unit. Establishing and maintaining social networks in displacement or exile can also help people to remain supported and informed (Jacobsen *et al.* 2001:78-80).

2.2.3   *Global practice*

Sorensen and Vincent ((Eds.) 2001:273) point to the ability of displaced communities to be critical of the broader situation for displaced people regionally and internationally, showing that local action is based on issues that are present globally:

> "...while it is common to see internally displaced populations as highly localised groups, their response strategies revealed that they think and act locally, regionally, nationally and sometimes even internationally."

In this sense, it can be argued that assistance to displaced people that focuses only on the local situation will ignore structures of oppression that are perpetuated on a global scale (Ledwith 2011:108). Considering this approach, if the results of collective action by displaced people do not attempt to reach beyond their local situation, then their struggle will become depoliticised and will not work to critically change globally oppressive

structures (Ledwith 2011:109; Tesoriero 2010:525-3). In order to achieve this reach, displaced people may have to form organisations to give them better access to funding and more opportunities for developing 'linking' social capital, creating ties with relevant institutions on a larger scale (as in Holtzman and Nezam 2004:ch7; World Bank 2002). Ledwith and Springett (2010:215) note that, "Collective connections increase when local practice keys into organisations that have a more global reach". This may be achieved with assistance from international organisations and forums (e.g. Kharashvili 2001:247).

2.2.4   *Participation in decision making*

Participation is a key concept in community work, both as a means of achieving various goals, and as an end in itself, and is strongly linked to the development and preservation of human rights. It is also commonly linked to the concept of empowerment, allowing people to gain more control over their lives by participating in group processes (Tesoriero 2010:144-5; Day 2006:117).

Among the suggested benefits of participation of collective centre residents in decision-making processes are the contribution to needs identification, finding improvements and solutions to problems, preventing human rights abuses and supporting psychological well-being (CCCM Cluster 2010:ch4). The *Collective Centre Guidelines* suggest decentralised models of collective centre management, in which the residents assume the role of collective centre managers, such as 'displaced population associations'. This can increase ownership and sustainability of operations and management structures. However, resident-run processes may suffer from a lack of capacity and limited means for advocacy activities (CCCM Cluster 2010:15).

2.3   **Displaced 'communities'**

The approach of humanitarian workers in assisting collective centre residents to achieve their goals can be dependent on the strength of 'community' that is present. There are strong suggestions that individual well-being is inherently connected to the well-being of the group (Ledwith and Springett 2010:69; JHSPH and IPS 2012:32). Different groups of people can form types of community based on social and physical boundaries that are erected between them (Bauman 2001, cited in Shaw 2008:29), and this may be the case with displaced populations and their hosts, or with non-displaced populations. This may be

a community based on exclusion, as they are not included in state programmes or wider society. This status as the 'other' can lead them to create a community in order to gain recognition for special attention (Shaw 2008:29).

Displaced people may have a lot in common in terms of their emerging needs and requirements. This acts to create a 'community of need' or 'of interest', that receives the label of 'refugees', or 'IDPs'. Displaced people may form these new identities, which in turn affects the way that they are categorised and treated, and the way that they choose to see themselves.

> "On a localized level, those displaced from different communities in their places of origin are frequently pushed together into collective centers, camps, or neighborhoods and develop into what might be called a community of interest." (Holtzman and Nezam 2004:111)

This shows that newly created 'communities of interest', can be formed around their current situation, rather than their pre-displacement communities (World Bank 2002:11). This then provides more of a basis for mobilisation and the formation of organisations consisting of displaced people. This is very useful for conceptualising how displaced people can be seen as a community.

A displaced population's ability to maintain a sense of collective identity and community may also affect their potential to act collectively in their interests (Kharashvili 2001:247-8). In Georgia, the exiled Abkhazian media and communications group would broadcast a few times a month, providing all kinds of information. This helped displaced people to maintain a sense of community and a connection to their land, and shows that collective action can be directed towards maintaining a sense of connection and belonging (Kharashvili 2001:235; Malkki 1997:67-8).

Bauman and May (2001:93-5) describe wider and narrower circles of familiarity in which one can reasonably expect certain behaviours and norms, and can feel safe within. However, when something occurs to disrupt these circles, such as conflict and displacement, it leads to distrust, fear and confusion.

> "The world that was meant to be familiar and secure appears no more. The speed of change now appears to govern the conditions in which we live with people moving around quickly; those who were once intimately known disappear from view and new people enter, of whom little is known." (Bauman and May 2001:95)

In this sense, the formation of communities in displacement is a way of maintaining safety and security.

2.4 Social capital of displaced people

Social capital, like other forms of capital, is productive, meaning that it is a resource people can draw upon to help them achieve various goals (Coleman 1988:S98). It can be described as "the glue that holds society together" (Tesoriero 2010:15), and is useful in that it describes key aspects of social structure, such as "obligations, expectations, and trust-worthiness; information; and norms and sanctions" (Torche and Valenzuela 2011:183), by the functions that they play in enabling action (which can equally be constructive or harmful) (Coleman 1988:S101). Social capital is a relevant and useful concept for understanding the action of displaced populations because they may rely more on social networks and other coping mechanisms when other forms of capital become disrupted or unavailable (Holtzman and Nezam 2004:103). However, social capital has not been widely used as a way of understanding the action of displaced people, as the concept is more associated with the field of development, including community development (Holtzman and Nezam 2004:105).

There are suggestions that displaced people living within close proximity to one another may develop and draw upon high amounts of 'bonding' social capital (intra-group cohesion, Burnett 2006:284) due to their recognition of common problems:

> "there were a whole lot of these people that I did not even know, but we got to know each other because our life problems united us. We grew close and as they say, we breathed as if with one soul, and still today that is the way we are, a compact, strong community that nobody can split." (president of the MZ [Neighbourhood Committee] board in Klanac, Brcko, Serbia, quoted in World Bank 2002:11)

Just as other forms of capital can be disrupted and destroyed by displacement, social capital can also have its foundations removed, as Holtzman and Nezam (2004:110) eloquently describe:

> "The socioeconomic dislocation emerging out of displacement separates [displaced persons] from their ecosystem, workplaces, cultural and religious centers, and other foundations that anchor their daily lives. It threatens their sense of belonging and cohesion with members of their communities. Even when preexisting social networks can maintain close physical proximity in settlement patterns, many of the underpinnings of social networks, the "rhythms" of everyday predisplacement life, may be weakened or made redundant."

In this way, considering people's pre-displacement lifestyles and connections - how, when and why they interacted - is important in considering the maintenance of social capital. Certain practices in their daily lives may become irrelevant if they are based upon social institutions that are no longer present.

Social networks, as a key component of social capital, may prove an important resource for people to draw upon in managing their daily tasks and organising for the future. Hamdi (2010:143) identifies that people draw upon social connections in completing a wide array of everyday tasks and interactions, and that they become experienced at negotiating the challenges of displacement:

> "We have seen in time how people build their social networks and a substantial amount of knowledge, skills and experience about how best to build, to profit or dodge the authorities, despite all constraints."

It is suggested that strong social networks can reduce protection risks for vulnerable people, including gender-based violence, and that "raising awareness and fostering close social networks among Collective Centre residents are especially effective preventative measures" (CCCM Cluster 2010:71, 75). Mitchneck *et al*. (2009:1022-3), in their study of integration prospects of IDPs, consider the composition, size, density, and socio-spatial aspects of social networks. They identify gaps in research concerning IDPs, stating that isolation, integration and governance have not been adequately linked to the residents' daily lives, practices and social networks.

They found that,

> "the location of the collective center or the conditionality of displacement are less determinative of social isolation than the nature of the social network and social interactions" (Mitchneck *et al.* 2009:1027-8).

2.5   Space and place

The study of 'spaces' and 'places' may seem deceptively simple, as there are many common-sense values about what places are, but in reality it is a complex issue (Cresswell 2004:1). People's everyday lives may be primarily concerned with their immediate environment and the specific spaces, places, and localities in which they live (Massey 1984, Dickens 1988, both cited in Day 2006:146-7). Cresswell (2004:7) provides and idea of what 'place' might mean:

> "One answer is that they are all spaces which people have made meaningful. They are all spaces people are attached to in one way or another. This is the most straightforward and common definition of place – a meaningful location."

It's worth noting, however, that not everyone uses the same terminology regarding space and place. Some use the idea of "socially produced space" to mean the same as places with meaning (Cresswell 2004:10), while others reverse the use of space and place entirely (e.g. de Certeau 1984).

> "Space is what place becomes when the unique gathering of things, meanings, and values are sucked out (de Certeau 1984, Harvey 1996; for contrasting definitions: Lefebvre 1991)" (Gieryn 2000:465)

For the purposes of this thesis, the term 'space' has been used most commonly in describing the areas within collective centres. This choice was made primarily because this was the language used by informants when describing areas, regardless of the different meanings and values that may have been present there. It is not reasonable to expect informants to speak in terms of theories of 'space' and 'place'. 'Space' in this thesis refers to geographical and physical areas in and around collective centres. Any meanings and values that are present in those spaces will be described, rather than implied via the use of a particular term.

In Purcell's (2012:273) discussion of everyday life, he notes that government bodies and institutions may control the use of spaces and the ideas associated with them as a way of controlling the population and maintaining their own dominance. With reference to collective centres, this may deny residents the ability to creatively adapt their spaces, and can lead to dependence on assistance from authorities or humanitarian groups (Hamdi 2010:144).

Displaced people's interactions with and adaptations of collective centre spaces reveal how they may be reclaiming that power, or resisting against it. By adapting their spaces and refusing to conform to the rules of the building, they may subvert the values that exist there and may empower themselves in some ways (de Certeau 1984:xiv). Such actions may allow residents to resist the expectations made of them (Cresswell 2004:27). These actions can be referred to as 'tactics', and are commonly undertaken by displaced and marginalised people as a way of countering systems of power that are not in their favour in meeting their needs (Purcell 2012:274). Tactics may form an important part of displaced people's coping or response mechanisms, especially in more highly controlled settings like collective centres, and can at times be identified based on a sense of collective identity (Polletta and Jasper 2001:292). However, the effectiveness of these tactics will be limited if they are acted out only on an individual level, and without an analysis of the wider situation. Purcell (2012:273) notes that such actions lack critical consciousness and are responsive in nature.

2.6   Conclusion

The experience with collective centres to date is that they are buildings often unfit for habitation, and that the quality and configuration of spaces can negatively contribute to the overall well-being of displaced people living there. In response to this, displaced people may act to improve these spaces, sometimes with assistance from humanitarian organisations, but usually on their own initiative. The sense of 'community' and the extent of social networks and sources of social capital among displaced people affect the style and success of different humanitarian activities, as well as people's own collective action, that aim to meet their needs.

3.0   RESEARCH METHOD

This chapter establishes the methods chosen to answer the research question, and discusses the reasoning behind the choices made. A phenomenological, qualitative approach was chosen, and topical, semi-structured interviews were conducted with professionals about their experiences of working with collective centres. 'Skype' teleconferencing software was utilised for a series of one-off interviews with eight different informants, and the method and analysis borrowed from the convergent style of interviewing.

3.1   Choice of method and worldview

The research was approached with a 'constructivist' or 'interpretivist' worldview, assuming that people understand their world via subjective meanings that are socially constructed, and that to understand them one must interpret them in context (Creswell 2009:6-8). Methodologically, an approach of 'understanding', or 'humanism', was preferred as it is concerned with interpreting and understanding meanings and realities (Schatzman and Strauss 1973:5; Creswell 2007:36-7). Qualitative research suits this approach better than quantitative methods, so data was gathered and analysed in the form of text (Carter and Little 2007:1316). Qualitative methods are also thought to be more consistent with the principles of community work. Creswell (2007:40) presents a strong case for why qualitative methods are chosen:

> "We conduct qualitative research when we want to empower individuals to share their stories, hear their voices, and minimize the power relationships that often exist between a researcher and the participants in a study."

Ledwith (2011:34-5) also advocates for research that moves away from traditional positivism and instead focuses on conducting research "with" people, rather than "on" them, paying attention to their feelings and stories. While she recommends "emancipatory action research", it is clear that research within community work should try to adhere to its own principles in theory and practice (Ledwith 2011:77-8). While there are quantitative and mixed methods approaches that have value in community work (such as desk studies of prevailing discourses, or social network mapping exercises), a qualitative approach places the phenomenon at the centre of the research and better allows for a discussion of

how many individuals perceive and construct ideas around it (Silverman 2006:43-4).

Qualitative interviews were chosen because they allow a researcher to gain access to past experiences and present understandings of people, despite differences that may exist between them and the researcher, and to "reconstruct events in which [he/she] did not participate" (Rubin and Rubin 1995:1).

3.2   Qualitative approach

An emergent, inductive qualitative approach was preferred, in order to allow for the data to speak for itself, rather than working to a specific hypothesis or set of theories (Creswell 2007:38). The intention was to use open questions during interviews and to remain flexible to the emerging data (Carter and Little 2007:1316). For this purpose, a 'thematic interview guide' was created (see Appendix B). However, these themes acted as a guide only. It was important to remain open in order to include the wide variety of implications of the data (Carter and Little 2007:1317; Newbold and Roberts 2007:326-8).

A phenomenological style of research was preferred, which can be described as,

> "...a strategy of inquiry in which the researcher identifies the essence of human experiences about a phenomenon as described by participants" (Creswell 2009:13).

According to this strategy of research, the intention was to use broad questions without reference to specific theories or literature, and to ask about multiple persons' experiences of one phenomenon; in this case, engaging with collective centres across an international field of practice (Creswell 2009:130). While phenomenological approaches can be accused of over-complicating research, in this case it has been used in order to keep people's experiences and constructions of a phenomenon at the centre of the research (Silverman 2006:7, 44).

The philosophical basis for phenomenology is also consistent with a constructivist or interpretivist worldview, in that it favours subjective accounts of phenomena over more rigid objective, statements. In this worldview, reality is created by the meanings we attach to objects; "intentionality of consciousness" (Creswell 2009:58-9). This does not mean,

however, that following a constructionist worldview will render all points of view as equally relevant. The aim is not to dispute how 'real' or 'constructed' the particular phenomenon and its descriptions are, but to see what can be learned about the topic by applying a social constructionist 'lens' (Lupton 1999:33). The aim of local social constructionist claims may be to "raise awareness" about issues surrounding a certain topic; in this case the experiences and conceptions of working with collective centres (Hacking 1999:6, 21-2).

In this style of research it is the researcher's own interpretations of the data that are presented, and in this case, the experiences and perspectives of the researcher cannot be fully set aside (Creswell 2007:59).

3.3   Interviews

In selecting interview tools, the intention was to be pragmatic and choose what seemed best suited to the situation, rather than testing the value of any particular method (Carter and Little 2007:1318; Schatzman and Strauss 1973:7). Questions were designed to discover experiences about certain themes, which was informed by background research.

Conducting interviews effectively not only requires knowledge about techniques, but also the experience and skills to be able to guide conversations (Schatzman and Strauss 1973:73-4; Rubin and Rubin 1995:7). In the absence of this experience and skill it was necessary to try and learn from one interview to the next, honing the interview skills. Techniques borrowed from convergent interviewing assisted this process. Time did not allow for any practice interviews. It would also have been difficult to accurately simulate the situation with somebody outside of the target group.

A semi-structured or 'focused' interview style was adopted (Rubin and Rubin 1995:5), as the experiences of interest were relatively specific, i.e. experiences of humanitarian work in collective centres. The interview style can also be considered as 'topical' because the interviewer is more active and is asking about certain processes (Rubin and Rubin 1995:6, 29).

Interviews have their own unique weaknesses (Schatzman and Strauss 1973:6). Interviewees may not be able or willing to express themselves fully and accurately. Also, the information gathered is second-hand, as it is a recollection of past actions and feelings. Importantly, interviews constitute "referential situations", meaning that they themselves influence the results they produce. Some steps were taken in order to reduce some of these effects, such the guarantee of anonymity and the privacy of information and the focus on relatively recent experiences. However, these weaknesses were still taken into account when analysing data (Schatzman and Strauss 1973:6).

3.4   Convergent interviewing technique

3.4.1   Why use convergent interviewing

The interviewing technique borrowed to some extent from the technique known as 'convergent interviewing', which can be described as an, "in-depth interviewing technique with a structured data analysis process" (Rao and Perry 2003:237). The convergent interviewing technique fits well with the general approach employed, in the sense that it is emergent, allowing a theory to progress over time (Rao and Perry 2003:238-9). It is built into the process that the interviewer will adapt their approach depending on the data that is emerging, asking more directed questions or reacting to what is said (Williams and Lewis 2005:221). The research employed part of the "reductionist iterative process" of convergent interviewing, in which the methods (in particular the interview questions) are redesigned following each stage of data collection and interpretation (Williams and Lewis 2005:221)

Adopting elements of the convergent style also had some methodological benefits that dovetailed well with the phenomenological qualitative approach. Firstly, it has been suggested that the method is particularly useful when the data is related to how people interpret policies and approaches to work:

> "For example, where it is identified that there has been inconsistency in views about elements in the strategic decision-making processes in an organization, interviewers can focus their questioning to explore areas of discrepancy. Continuing this example, different individuals or groups in organizations may have diverse perspectives on sources of strategic direction in an organization." (Williams and Lewis 2005:222).

Second, it has been cited as a way of legitimising qualitative interviewing as an approach. Qualitative methods have their problems in the sense that they are often criticised for being unreliable or difficult to validate. However, by following this procedure, a researcher can claim to have collected more than just anecdotal evidence:

> "Convergent interviewing allows researchers to identify theory through inductive, rather than deductive logic. The process explicit in convergent interviewing assists the researcher in finding their way through the mass of data produced by the process to identify the key issues pertinent to the subject being studied." (Williams and Lewis 2005:223).

This approach fits with the other approaches already cited for this research; it's inductive, emergent, and focuses on key issues that arise.

3.4.2 How it was applied

The elements borrowed consisted mainly of reviewing the line of questioning and its relative success after each interview, with a view to refining the method in time for the next interview. At the time of the first few interviews, the process of transcription and review revealed problems related to the technique, specifically, how the questions were being posed. This was a problem of delivery, which was improved upon in successive interviews as experience of this technique increased.

During the interview process, very few changes were made to the set of questions. Not all questions were posed during each interview, and there was also some variation in which questions were posed. This variation was based largely on instinctive decisions during each interview, depending on a question's particular relevance to the interviewee and the topic, as well as the general direction of the conversation and the responsiveness of and rapport with the interviewee. Time constraints also had an affect, as it was agreed that interviews would last no longer than an hour. Straining to fit in all of the relevant questions would have been too restrictive, putting pressure on the interviewees. It would also have partly negated the point of semi-structured interviews; that both parties can be flexible and pay more or less attention to certain topics.

In the time between each interview, attempts were made to interpret the data and the success of certain questions. However, due to time constraints, the interpretation was mostly on the surface level, considering whether some questions were proving themselves to be consistently irrelevant or unproductive. This was rarely the case, and most questions were receiving responses that were of interest. For this reason, no real changes were made to the set of questions. There was also a degree of caution employed in terms of cutting or changing questions, as not all informants can be expected to interpret a single question similarly.

The 'thematic interview guide' created for use during interviews followed Dick's (1998) advice for convergent interviewing, in the sense that the initial questions were general, allowing the interviewee to say what they wish to, and that more specific questions followed after. If more time had been given to the iterative process, it may have been possible to focus more specifically on certain emerging themes.

3.5   Data collection

A 'thematic interview guide' was created, which provided a standard procedure for conducting interviews. It contained some fixed opening and closing questions, and the remaining interview questions were organised into four main thematic areas, which were: 'professional approach', 'community', 'space and place', and 'vulnerability and protection'. The benefit of this style was that as interviews proceeded, it was possible to check-off questions and topics that had been covered, making it easier to direct further questioning. This guide was intended to make the interview process easier and standardised, and would make analysis simpler. Inspiration came from Creswell's (2009:183) advice on interview guides.

A standardised 'interview notes page' was also created for use during interviews. The page contained a heading that allowed space for recording the date of the interview and the anonymised pseudonym of the interviewee. Space on the page was divided into the four main thematic areas. Notes were taken during the interviews in order to record initial thoughts and interpretations, but also as a backup in case the audio recording failed or did not accurately record some statements.

3.6   'Skype'

The choice was made to conduct interviews via the teleconferencing software 'Skype' for a number of practical reasons. Firstly, lack of funds meant that it would not be possible to travel to interview people in person. In addition to this, many of the interviewees would be located in remote or sensitive geographical locations, so travel would not be suitable. It would also be unreasonable to expect interviewees to travel to be interviewed. Second, the software can be installed and used without charge, so is potentially more attractive a method than via telephone. It is also relatively simple to use and is widely used, particularly in professional circles. Third, an additional piece of software could be installed which would allow voice communications to be recorded as audio files. This is not possible via telephone, and allows for more accurate and comprehensive transcription of conversations.

The video-conferencing function of the software was not used, only the voice aspect. This choice was made primarily on a technical level in order to reduce the amount of internet bandwidth required to conduct the interview, especially as the interviewees may have limited connections in remote locations. This meant that visual elements of the interviews did not form part of the data.

This last point has its advantages, as it makes the data somewhat simpler to interpret, focusing on the stories rather than how they were told in relation to body language, etc. However, it can also be considered a disadvantage, as it may be more difficult to interpret more nuanced elements of responses, such as the degree to which they found it difficult to answer, or how seriously they took certain elements of practice.

The choice to use Skype affected the degree to which potential interviewees were willing or able to be interviewed. After some initial correspondence, some individuals chose not to participate because they were not familiar or comfortable with the software, or did not have reliable access to either the software or an internet connection due to their remote or sensitive location.

3.7   Selection of interviewees

3.7.1 Experience

Interviewees were selected based on their experience of working with the topic of collective centres. The main requirement was that they had direct experience of working with collective centres as a professional of some kind, engaging with or providing services to displaced people housed there. The sample consisted of people working under a variety of different roles and organisations, and with different levels of direct contact with collective centres.

It was also required that their experience be recent. In practice, this meant experience since the start of 2010, as an unofficial and flexible guideline. In initial communication, however, this was described as "within the last few years" in order to prevent potential interviewees from being intimidated by such specific requirements.

This time period, while seemingly arbitrary, was deliberately chosen for a number of specific reasons. Firstly, by focusing on more recent, up-to-date experience, the research would be more likely to create knowledge that is new, both in the community work and humanitarian communities of practice. In 2010 the *Collective Centre Guidelines* were published, marking a point at which the international humanitarian community recognised the need for normative guidelines that;

> "...seek to assist in the planning, implementation, monitoring, maintaining and overall management of Collective Centres to ensure protection and assistance to those in need." (CCCM Cluster 2010:v)

These guidelines were based on years of experience collected from humanitarian professionals up to that point. Therefore, by selecting a time period of 2010 to the present, the research ensures that the experiences queried can be considered as 'new' knowledge not previously tapped.

Second, by focusing on more recent experience, the interviewees would be able to more reliably recount what they have done and witnessed, due to the short period of time that had passed. Third, a large part of the professional knowledge about collective centres to

date has come from experiences related to the conflicts of the 1990's in Eastern Europe and Central Asia, due to which refugees and IDPs have remained displaced into the 2000's.

This research project did not intend to completely discount this experience, but it should be noted that there is a large amount of literature related to collective centres from that time period already in the public domain. So, to include experiences from previous decades would put the research project in danger of covering old ground, which could dilute newer experiences.

3.7.2 Demographic

No demographic restrictions were placed on the selection of interviewees. They could be of any gender, ethnicity, or nationality. No limitations were placed on age, although it was assumed that informants would be above 18 years old due to the nature of the work.

Most of this demographic information was not considered to be relevant to the study, and as such was not collected. While it would have been possible to remove gender as a factor, the choice was made to faithfully attribute each informant's gender to their pseudonym as a matter of accuracy and reference, and to allow for the possibility that gender would become a relevant issue. Three informants were female and five were male.

Some limitations were however put in place. Due to the nature of communication via email and Skype, a reasonable level of written and spoken English language was required. This ultimately placed restrictions on the type of people that could be contacted or interviewed. In particular, it may have ruled out professionals of international NGOs that do not use English as their main operating language. It may also have limited the number of professionals from national or community-based organisations. This can be considered a major limitation of the method, as they are the individuals that are much more likely to have everyday, close contact experience in collective centres (CCCM Cluster 2010:7).

3.7.3 Identifying and selecting a sample

At the time of the research's conception, there were no specific individuals in mind to be invited for interviews. In many ways the pool of potential interviewees was an unknown factor, particularly in quantity. It was assumed, however, that by exploring social and professional networks, and by initiating unsolicited contact with individuals and

organisations, suitable interviewees could be found. The following channels were used in identifying and selecting interviewees.

Searching operational documentation and information available online:

Looking through the documented experiences with collective centres, it was possible to identify certain conflicts or disasters that had precluded the use of the centres. This documentation and research would at times identify particular organisations or individuals involved, who could then be contacted directly.

Professional network:

By contacting former colleagues and professional acquaintances, informing them of the project and asking for assistance, it was possible to make new contacts who had the relevant experience. At times, interviewees were identified at the end of a long chain of correspondence with other contacts. At other times, existing contacts were already suitable interviewees.

Professional bodies:

As a member of some professional bodies it was possible to send out general calls for participation in the project via their website forums and groups on professional networking websites, which generated some interest.

Due to the nature of this research, it was not immediately clear what a suitable sample size should be. During the planning phase it was determined that there must be more than 2 informants for the research to have any legitimacy, and to ensure that there was enough data to compare. An ideal 'goal' number of informants was estimated as 10, as this would ensure that the data was varied and represented people from a spread of contexts and backgrounds.

As interviewees were increasingly being identified, it became relevant to consider when to stop collecting data. The first concern was about timing, as the available time for data collection was quite limited. The second concern was about running out of interviewees, or the resources and will to find more, with the first concern in mind. The third concern related to the convergent interviewing technique being applied. As outlined by Reige and Nair (2004:75, cited in Williams and Lewis 2005:222), once the data forms clear patterns

that are not being contradicted by each new interview, the data collection can end. Thus, data was gathered from one-off interviews with eight different informants.

3.7.4 Information about informants

The eight informants had a range of experiences, roles and professional settings. The data mostly represents experiences from four main countries within three global regions (e.g. Africa, North America), with additional references to work in many others. The informants were working with a research institution, an intergovernmental organisation, a national NGO, and two different international NGOs.

The majority of the informants were working with people displaced by conflicts. Only one referred to natural hazards as a cause, namely storm-related flooding. Stating the precise number of conflicts or emergency situations is difficult, as there are commonly many waves of displacement and generations of displaced people. Their experiences mostly represent work with internally displaced people, but half had also worked with refugees.

The informants were involved in some different areas of work: shelter assistance, legal assistance, and research, as well as more general roles. Role titles included the terms 'coordinator', 'manager', 'advisor', 'specialist', 'analyst', and 'researcher'. While it is possible to assume certain levels of seniority, speciality and experience based on these titles, it is worth noting that they are not universally understood in the same way, especially in different organisational contexts.

3.8 Analysis

The approach to analysis was also consistent with constructivism and phenomenology. Interview transcripts were analysed in order to find "significant statements", identify common themes, develop "clusters of meaning" and find "key issues" (Creswell 2007:61; Williams and Lewis 2005:223). The intention was to make use of key ideas about participation, collective action, and theory and practice from community work and humanitarian work, and to put the data in this context. In order to complement and build upon existing research on collective centres and work with displaced people, data would be compared to findings in recent humanitarian research. Normative approaches would also be represented, particularly in the form of the *Collective Centre Guidelines* (CCCM Cluster

2010), which were the original departure point for the research project. Studies of space and place were also used in the analysis, considering collective centres as a socio-spatial construct.

The analytic process consisted of first reading the interview transcripts in a naïve fashion in order to get an impression of the common themes that were emerging from the data. Following this, a second reading was conducted considering the themes that were already identified as being possibly relevant, as per the 'thematic interview guide'. These themes were present to varying degrees, with some appearing to be of less significance than originally thought.

Notes were taken on each interview during these readings, highlighting key points and particularly indicative statements, noting areas of convergence and divergence, and identifying which themes seemed to be most prominent. The themes that were most common amongst all of the data were selected as the main focus of analysis and discussion.

The analysis of the emerging themes necessarily involved recognising the differences that existed between the various contexts in which the informants were working, in terms of their operations, the cause of displacement, and the historical, political and cultural situation in those areas. The data in each theme was analysed in terms of similarities and differences, and how it fitted on a continuum of situations or opinions. Some themes contained data that were closely related, suggesting trends, whereas others revealed a wider range of difference.

3.9   Ethical considerations and data handling

3.9.1   Informed consent
In order to meet a range of ethical obligations and protect the privacy of participants in the research, informed consent was sought and gained from interviewees prior to their participation. This was primarily achieved via the production and use of a dual information sheet and consent form (see Appendix A). The production of the information and consent form took some guidance from the recommended methods of some academic institutions (National Center for Postsecondary Improvement 2003; Oxford Brookes University 2013).

This form ensured that the interviewees were not deceived about the purposes of the research, that no harm would be done to them as a result of the research and that they comprehended it's implications. Moreover, they were not coerced, manipulated or controlled and that they voluntarily agreed to be interviewed on record (Rubin and Rubin 1995:93-5; Israel and Hay 2006:61, 64). It also provided the information upon which consent would be based, such as a description of the researcher's background, the purpose of the research, the risks they may face as interviewees, that the interview would be recorded but deleted after transcription, and how the data and their privacy would be handled (Rubin and Rubin 1995:95).

Formal, written, signed consent is not always appropriate, particularly in situations where security is sensitive (Israel and Hay 2006:61. 69), so interviewees were also given the choice to record their consent verbally at the beginning of each interview. Their consent was based on their understanding of the information sheet, and the participants were free to discuss the implications in an ongoing process before agreeing to give consent (Israel and Hay 2006:61. 69).

3.9.2   Privacy and confidentiality

The information and consent form provided to potential interviewees stated the following terms of privacy and confidentiality:

> "Personal information will be kept confidential and will not be shared with any other parties. The interview will be recorded as an audio file and will be stored until it is transcribed, after which it will be deleted. Names of people and places will be anonymised in transcripts. The interview data will be analysed according to themes in humanitarian and community work. The project will be completed by June 2013. Names, phone numbers and/or email addresses will be kept as a list of contacts, but not linked to other information." (Appendix A:1)

These choices were made in order to protect the privacy of interviewees, but also to give them the confidence to respond as openly as they could, without fearing potential sanctions from the organisations for whom they were working.

The choice to anonymise the names of interviewees and people and places referenced in interviews was not a simple one. There are different approaches to this issue within

humanitarian literature. In some evaluative projects, organisations give full disclosure and are comfortable having their activities openly scrutinised (e.g. Clermont *et al.* 2011; Scheper and Patel 2006). Academic research sometimes criticises a professional approach, but without naming specific groups (e.g. Davidson *et al.* 2007). There are also some initiatives, such as 'Shelter Projects' (IFRC *et al.* 2012; IFRC and UN-HABITAT 2010), in which organisations submit case study information, but only agree to be acknowledged in the introduction of the document, making the case studies themselves anonymous. This approach may make it easier to secure the participation of organisations, and allow the researcher to collect detailed project information and present it in its geographical and historical context.

While it may have been desirable to adopt an approach similar to that of 'Shelter Projects', the time required for negotiating with organisations and building up relationships to that end made it prohibitive. The choice was made to anonymise individuals and their organisations so that the activities and opinions described in the data cannot be traced back to them. In practical terms, this also meant anonymising, to an extent, information about the context in which they are working, i.e. the country, the crisis in question, the ethnicity of target groups. Discretion was used in the analysis and discussion of the data when referring to this information. At times, in order for particular data or issues to be properly understood, it was necessary to present some degree of context without revealing the situation in too much detail.

3.9.3   *Informing the Norwegian Social Science Data Services*

As this research was conducted in Norway and in a Norwegian institution, it was necessary to consider whether the Norwegian Social Science Data Services (NSD) would have to be notified about the proposed methods of the research. As some personal data from interviewees would be stored, it was necessary to submit a notification form (NSD 2012). Notification consisted of submitting general information about the methodology, how information would be stored and shared, and how informed consent would be arrived at and secured (see Appendix C). For these purposes, the information and consent form was submitted, along with the thematic interview guide and interview notes page.

NSD replied positively, making one request for a change to the method (see Appendix D). This change was undertaken. At the end of each interview, instead of asking interviewees

to pass on personal details of other parties who might be able to add to the research, it is requested that they pass on information of the project to those parties so that they may act on it themselves.

4.0   SPACE AND PLACE IN COLLECTIVE CENTRES

The chapter will deal with a number of challenges faced by humanitarian workers that were posed by the particular configurations of the buildings utilised as collective centres. It discusses how they perceived the adaptation practices of displaced people, and the kinds of needs they are trying to meet.

4.1   Challenges of collective centre buildings

One of the major challenges for humanitarian professionals working with collective centres is that the quality and abundance of space within those buildings varies widely. They inherit the characteristics of those structures, and have to work within certain constraints in meeting the shelter needs of displaced people.

The informants spoke of different types of buildings that were used, some of which contained many larger rooms that were integral to the building's original purpose. Schools, for example, would have common areas, meeting rooms, sports halls and communal cooking and sanitation facilities. Humanitarian organisations may face the challenge of having to make decisions about how to use or adapt those spaces. One informant described how some building types, such as former hotels, had larger areas that were impractical to partition into smaller living units. This presents the dilemma of whether to maximise the number of families that can be sheltered, or to reserve some spaces for other purposes. In this one case, the residents used such areas for important social gatherings, mirroring the space's original intended use. This suggests that it can at times be beneficial to allow aspects of the building's original character to remain in place.

Humanitarian workers also have to consider that displaced people themselves are the primary actors in responding to their situation. In practice, this can mean that while humanitarians may have preferences about preserving certain larger and smaller spaces for particular purposes, residents may undertake their own adaptation efforts contrary to this.

"In certain collective centres I've seen them put a wire grid 10 feet up in the air and then string tarpaulins along the wire grid and giving everybody their own little room in the grid and so on."

- Edward, specialist, intergovernmental organisation

"And so people then took curtains, they somehow hung curtains to separate their room, or their space, from other people's space. Or sometimes you had a family who had one whole big space, like classroom and they used the curtains to separate kind of different areas, like the bedroom area, maybe a space for where they sat and ate..."

- Faye, field researcher, research institution

It is worth noting clearly that buildings used as collective centres, by their very definition, were never designed as places to accommodate displaced families (CCCM Cluster 2010:6; Holtzman and Nezam 2004:xiv). However, out of need, displaced people may move into buildings that are unsuitable. The pre-exiting values imprinted on buildings (Cresswell 2004:2), which displaced people inherit when they take up residence, may not always suit their needs. For example, workers' barracks tend not to have any larger indoor areas. This is a challenging environment for humanitarian organisations, as they may have to make decisions about how to make that space habitable, or even whether to relocate the inhabitants. There may be restrictions posed by the buildings that limit what they can achieve in rehabilitating and adapting them to meet people's needs.

Humanitarian organisations can have a role in formally selecting and improving buildings to be used as collective centres. It is a challenge for them to be able to select buildings with enough space to allow for both private and common areas. The informants found that it was rare to find such ideal conditions. The informant Benjamin was working to accommodate refugees displaced by conflict in a neighbouring country and described the difficulty of finding enough buildings of sufficient space and quality to utilise.

In such a situation there may have to be a trade-off between the intention to find buildings with enough suitable spaces of a certain nature, and the cost of rehabilitating structures. This may be a difficult balance to strike. One informant described the assessment process as purely economical, based on the cost-effectiveness of rehabilitation, without much consideration of social or cultural factors.

"Yeah, it's all a cost estimate, so when the building is just a simple structure that has floors and columns, it starts getting too expensive to rehabilitate the building, because of course you need to have kind of a figure of what you want to spend per family."

- Iris, shelter coordinator, international NGO

Efforts made to adapt the buildings were commonly limited by the type of building. This suggests that it was difficult for humanitarian workers to escape the fact that the buildings were originally designed for other purposes.

This challenge was not universally recognised by all of the informants however, and some were of the opinion that there were other challenges of greater significance. One informant working with refugees displaced by conflict found that their primary concern for the future was finding sufficient livelihood opportunities in an unfamiliar country. This view is also present in some other studies. Killing (2011:31) places more emphasis on the wider local community and the economic environment than the quality of shelter. Mitchneck *et al.* (2009:1031), in their study of the social networks and integration prospects of displaced people, found that the particular dwelling type (i.e. private renting, host families, collective centres, etc.) did not make a significant difference to social interaction and the strength and size of social networks. Rather, they placed emphasis on improving the existing spaces to make them more suitable for social interaction.

The way in which humanitarian actors interpret the social problems between collective centre residents can be affected by the physically condensed nature of habitation. Informants working in quite different situations to each other were of the opinion that from one collective centre to another the same social issues, problems and vulnerabilities would be present, and that they were no different from those present in the rest of society but were more visible in such a pressured microcosm.

One of the responsibilities that humanitarian workers take on is to try and manage and lower the protection risks for people living in collective centres. The *Collective Centre Guidelines* (CCCM Cluster 2010:73) note that in densely populated or unsuitable buildings, "domestic violence, drug abuse and sexual violence may occur regularly, and

some groups may dominate over others." Humanitarians may face a challenge in helping people adapt to unfamiliar and potentially less private and more risk-laden living environments.

> *"They didn't get used to live with 21 families. And each family had a space of one classroom, which is around 24 square meters. This was a very big challenge at the beginning."*
>
> *- Charles, shelter coordinator, international NGO*

In group settings, privacy may have to be maintained more fiercely and protection risks may be higher (JHSPH and IPS 2012:26; Metcalfe *et al.* 2011:23). Some informants strongly suggested that the challenge of managing protection risks was indeed exacerbated by the configurations of the collective centre buildings. Cresswell (2004:27) asserts that differences in society such as race, class and gender are all acted out within spaces and places, and not in a vacuum. The same is true of vulnerabilities and risks in collective centre spaces.

It is a challenge for humanitarian organisations to find adequate and appropriate spaces to operate in within collective centres. The organisations would use whatever communal spaces were available to conduct their practices, such as group meetings or training. These organisations also tried to ensure that such spaces would be available, and advocated that the residents themselves choose them and make use of them.

> *"Sometimes it may happen within an individual area, like a private area of the particular household who has the most large or the most appropriate space. Or often it happens in such a common space ... or it might happen in the garden or it might be in the basement, you know ... But it so much depends on the structure, you know, if the building used to have such a place, it's there. If not, there is very little you can do about it."*
>
> *- Gerard, programme manager, international NGO*

Again, the configurations of the collective centre buildings play a part, and can both enable and restrict the actions of those coming in to provide assistance. One informant described how his organisation would sometimes be able to hold meetings in established areas of

communal facilities, but at other times would conduct them in whatever spaces residents had, such as in hallways or outside of the building entirely. Humanitarian workers also had to show sensitivity to privacy when considering spaces to work in. Some professionals were conducting discussions and interviews with residents who had been internally displaced for many years, around issues of daily life, health and mental health, and legal situations. Such personal discussions took place in individual rooms, sometimes by request of the residents, and sometimes as suggested by the organisations.

4.2   Issues of choosing, controlling and allocating space

4.2.1   Management of space

One of the priorities highlighted by the informants who were adapting buildings was to work to ensure that there were spaces available for residents, beyond their private living spaces. This was seen as being vital for particular gender or age groups, whose movements and actions may be quite spatially restricted within certain social and cultural settings. One informant was working with Muslim refugees, and was faced with the challenge of the cultural norm of gender segregation:

> *"...we were working together with the refugees in order to provide, for example, a female common space and a male common space, because the female will end up spending 90% of her time inside of the room, and then with that time spent in one room it's like having a life in prison."*
>
> *- Charles, shelter coordinator, international NGO*

The *Collective Centre Guidelines* (CCCM Cluster 2010:77) and other humanitarian literature (e.g. International Rescue Committee 2012:8) have recommended the creation of special safe and private spaces within buildings for particular groups that may be more vulnerable to certain risks, such as forms of violence or abuse.

It is also clear that humanitarian agencies have to make certain choices between different priorities in terms of how they allocate the use of space in setting up collective centres, which according to one informant is quite a challenge considering the unplanned nature of the settlement. In particular, this forms a dilemma between allocating spaces for more families or individuals to live in, or instead reserving those spaces for use as communal

spaces or facilities. This shows that there are complex sets of needs that have to be met; not just providing shelter space to the maximum number of displaced people, but ensuring that the living environment does not put them at any further risk and can be conductive to daily tasks and interactions. As an example, some spaces would be reserved by humanitarian actors and transformed by them into communal kitchens.

The set-up and use of communal facilities (i.e. washing and cooking areas) forms another potential challenge for humanitarian workers. While they may provide an opportunity for fruitful social interaction, one informant highlighted that if displaced groups do not have a culture of using communal facilities, there can be increased exposure to threats such as rape. They may also be areas of increased social tension (CCCM Cluster 2010:73). *The Sphere Handbook* (The Sphere Project 2011:257) recommends the self-management of these facilitates by residents, to try and make them as culturally suitable as possible. Communal facilities may also put extra pressures on women, who tend to be already overburdened in traditional roles as managers of their household (Holtzman and Nezam 2004:97).

In situations where humanitarian organisations are managing the overall settlement of displaced people in a country, they face a dilemma about who to accommodate in collective centres, choosing between different priorities. Specifically, this meant that they would refer particularly vulnerable people into collective centres in order to ensure they were accommodated in a safe and private environment and exposed to fewer risks. This involved maintaining a certain level of control over the living spaces in collective centres, keeping areas empty and reserved so that those groups could be referred there.

4.2.2   Controlling spaces

One of the ways that humanitarian organisations work with collective centres is to rehabilitate buildings, improving them so they are secure and suitable for habitation. In doing so, they may greatly affect the values imprinted on those buildings, and can be said to have some power over how that environment is constructed. Those who improve, maintain and contest those spaces will have some power to imprint their own ideas and values on the place (Cresswell 2004:5). The informants, most of whom were employed by humanitarian agencies, described actions undertaken by a variety of different actors, including the displaced people themselves. However, they mostly referred to their own

work. Vincent (2001:1-4) notes that it is a common trait for practitioners to over-emphasise their own roles compared to the actions of displaced people.

A central dilemma for humanitarian organisations when shaping collective centres is whether to control the processes of rehabilitation and improvement themselves, or to place more emphasis on allowing or enabling the residents or other actors to have more control. Some informants described how their organisation would completely control the physical elements of setting up a new collective centre, and that displaced people would not be involved in the process of managing the building until after all of the physical and security requirements had been met. One informant working to set up new collective centres for refugees suggested that the basic needs of families are extremely similar regardless of global location, and that it might be more efficient to take decisions about the basic physical conditions out of residents' hands:

> *"...in order to avoid having this group of families asking to paint the school, and this group of families asking for a colour TV, and neglecting the part of having a proper toilet and a proper kitchen ... So we agreed that if you want to upgrade the level of this building, let's not involve the beneficiaries at the first phase. Let's provide what is usually provided in every house ... which is a toilet, kitchen, and a living room."*
>
> *- Charles, shelter coordinator, international NGO*

This suggests that humanitarian organisations see themselves as the primary actors in these situations. Another informant found that humanitarian actors were more concerned about their own ability to meet the basic shelter and settlement needs, and far less concerned about the residents' own ideas and perceptions of those needs. While it is possible to criticise this approach, it also shows that humanitarian actors are reflexive in their practice and are aware of the different challenges in their work. By focusing on their own practice they could be showing some pragmatism in choosing how to direct their activities.

The choice to take more control over collective centre spaces has a number of implications. Firstly, it may be understandable for humanitarian actors to take this upon themselves because they perceive that the displaced population may have neither the power or resources to adequately undertake the work. Also, a new collective centre established by an organisation 'belongs' to them in many ways; they are held responsible for the shelter

conditions they provide there for displaced people, and so may wish to control the process more rigidly, such as in social planning (Twelvetrees 2008:3-4). There appears to be a desire on behalf of such organisations to achieve this first step to their satisfaction because the physical environment is so important for managing the risks posed to displaced people and for meeting their basic needs. Second, however, is the implication by informants that they did not trust the displaced people to make the right decisions about priorities within the buildings, and so did not involve them in the process. The theme of trust will be further discussed in chapter 5.

4.2.3 Responding to requests

Beyond the initial set-up of a collective centre, humanitarian organisations were more responsive to the preferences of the residents in terms of how spaces were organised, improved and used. An issue arises for humanitarian workers in judging which requests to act upon, especially as some may have oppressive consequences. One example raised by a few informants working in the same country was that refugees would consistently voice the cultural concern that men and women should live separately during daytime hours. In this situation, the organisation in question implemented certain physical measures in strategic places, such as barriers in hallways, so that men and women could move independently. Perhaps as a way of counteracting the potentially oppressive practice of ceding to 'culture' (see Wikan 1999), organisations would also work to create spaces specifically for certain groups, as noted in the quote from Charles.

Humanitarian organisations may receive requests from residents about improving the aesthetics of their living environment. These concerns may not necessarily be a priority for humanitarians, and they may face a dilemma about how to allocate monetary resources. In some cases they agreed to undertake improvements to the appearance of the building, recognising its importance in context:

"Or they found painting very important, and they wanted to paint a large area ... There was also a discussion between [our funding organisation] and [my organisation] about what areas needed to be painted. But at the end most of the centres were painted. Paint is very expensive! (laughs) ... So there was a lot of discussion, if this was cosmetic or if this was really important for the well-being of the people living in it."

- Iris, shelter coordinator, international NGO

4.2.4 Gaining access without doing harm

For humanitarian organisations to provide assistance to displaced people residing in collective centres, they have to be able to gain access to them. There is a challenge here in terms of gaining permission, investing time into such processes, and the assumptions made about which courses of action would not cause residents some form of harm. Overall, the informants as practitioners could enter into collective centre spaces, including living spaces, relatively easily and without much of an introduction or formal process.

"So what you find with these places ... you really can enter quite easily. I mean there are no people per se *that you have to check in with, certainly no kind of official government representative. But sometimes there might be an informal kind of collective centre representative that's appointed by the committee..."*

- Faye, field researcher, research institution

This raises an ethical question, of which some informants were aware, about privacy, security, and transgressing on residents' living spaces. One informant spoke of an assumption on behalf of practitioners that entering collective centres unannounced was acceptable. In some locations the informants spoke of, particularly where displacement had been quite recent, this assumption may stem from a sense of ownership that humanitarian organisations have over certain collective centres, especially if they were responsible for their set-up.

In situations of protracted displacement, where the organisation in question may not have been working with a collective centre from the beginning, they may try to find a sensitive way of gaining access to the people there. Some sought help from local, more established organisations in gaining trust and permission. One informant working in a situation of protracted displacement had the impression that residents were very used to intrusions into

their spaces, as will be discussed further in chapter 5.

4.3   Assisting adaptation efforts by residents

4.3.1   Arranging for social spaces

One of the challenges for humanitarian workers is to try and arrange for adequate social and communal space, and to try and assist with the residents' own efforts to adapt their space. Cresswell (2004:39) notes that places can be "embedded with particular interests in the context of unequal power relations", and that the way people interact with and use them helps us to understand those places. Some informants found that despite people's best efforts, the spaces available as gathering areas were not of a high standard:

> *"...maybe here and there people were interacting in the hallways. But it was just, the hallways were, they were dark, they were not very pleasant for the most part. I mean there was nowhere to sit for the most part, so you didn't really want to spend time there anyway."*
>
> *- Faye, field researcher, research institution*

Humanitarian groups may have the strategic goal to maintain residents' general well-being, and some studies have highlighted the importance of specific social spaces in achieving this. One study of older displaced people in Georgia recommended that future services for older adults should focus on restoring a sense of place, particularly by creating spaces that are conductive to social interaction (JHSPH and IPS 2012:6). The study found that the buildings did not promote social interaction and that people were increasingly isolated both by the building's layout and the distance separating different collective centres (Singh and Robinson 2010:24).

Humanitarian workers may identify a lack of common, social spaces as a problem to be solved in some way, perhaps based on established ideas about social and cultural needs.

"...I often noticed that one of the problems was that there was no social, there was no physical space for people to socialise in ... But it seemed to be quite common that people would drop by each others space and there was actually interaction in each others rooms, or individual units. But I didn't see any kind of communal spaces where I saw people hanging out or spending time, and I sometimes asked about that and there just wasn't space."

- Faye, field researcher, research institution

Whether or not this is a 'problem' is open to interpretation, as norms about privacy and social activity can be culturally specific. In some cases, socialising in private areas can be interpreted as a response or coping mechanism, whereas in other cases it could be the normal pattern for those people.

4.3.2   Dealing with varying capacities and priorities

With regard to adaptations, one challenge for humanitarian workers to consider is that residents may not have the necessary means or capacity to undertake such work themselves. One informant described collective centres that had not received improvements for 20 years. This has implications for practice, meaning that some organisations may choose to undertake capacity building actions, or may take on a more active role in shaping the buildings.

As well as varying means and capacities, humanitarian workers may also encounter varying priorities and attitudes amongst displaced groups. This creates a more complex situation for organisations, and it may be more difficult for them to act in everyone's interest within a collective centre. One informant described a situation of protracted displacement where groups from different places of origin had very different priorities; some worked hard to create pleasant spaces, while others had different concerns.

"People from [first country] did that. They were planting little gardens, planting their own vegetables, their premises were tidy. From [second country], so-so, but people from [third country] (laughs) their main occupation was holding political meetings! (laughs) There were no meetings of that at all, they didn't care if the toilet is not working. In one case [indistinct] one girl was killed because of bad electric system in boiler. They didn't care. I assume that came with the mentality."

- Arthur, project coordinator, national NGO

Some of the activities of humanitarian professionals reveal something about the expectations they may have about residents' priorities. One informant's organisation had conducted a 'Photovoice'-style[1] initiative, providing residents with cameras and inviting them to discuss the representations of their daily lives. The results seemed to reveal that people were primarily concerned with the state of their building and physical surroundings:

> *"...all of the photos that the IDPs took were very much focused on housing, on the collective centre itself. You know, I was expecting different photos about their life during the day, outside of the collective centre, but also inside, but it was very much only photos showing problems with the collective centres. So I interpreted that as ... that that's what they focused on, that that is the main preoccupation in their day, is housing, is the collective centre itself and the problems that are there, that have been there for so long. So it was kind of surprising."*
>
> *- Denise, senior country analyst, international NGO*

The organisation in question discussed the possibility that the residents had misunderstood the 'Photovoice'-style assignment, leading them to focus on the building, but concluded that this was not the case, as the residents confirmed that those were their most pressing issues.

This case suggests that relationships between humanitarian workers and residents may not always be clear. It can be a challenge for humanitarian workers to effectively communicate the intentions of their work to the residents, especially when there are sets of preconceived expectations about what certain projects should achieve, or about what displaced people's needs and priorities usually are. Also, as the organisation in this case was involved in advocacy on behalf of displaced people, the residents' responses may have been coloured by the desire to influence any potential future assistance.

4.4   Acts of resistance

The way the informants described displaced people's efforts to adapt their spaces suggested that they interpreted them as ways of re-shaping and resisting against the potentially

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1   "a process by which people can identify, represent, and enhance their community through a specific photographic technique " (Wang and Burris 1997: 369, cited in Green and Kloos 2009:462).

restrictive values present in collective centre buildings. These buildings may be under the ownership or control of other groups, such as government bodies, institutions, businesses, and local people. In this sense, the buildings are embedded with and reflect the power that those groups have over them, such as the physical layout of the structures, the rules of their use and the agreements made to allow their habitation (e.g. CCCM Cluster 2010:68-9, ch 17). This can be a challenge for both humanitarian workers and displaced people.

According to one informant, some residents had used their spaces as financial assets, and he described these actions as being outside of the usual system. Collective centre space would be illegally bought and sold, which might be a problem for the managing authorities, but can be interpreted as resilience on the part of displaced people:

> *"...illegal market of sell and purchase of the living units and among IDPs themselves first of all. Somebody wants to move from the one town to another ... so the people are exchanging and selling and buying, even though I believe most of them know that it's illegal and has almost zero legal value, such deals ... But people still do it, you know? And I mean in principle that's fine."*
>
> *- Gerard, programme manager, international NGO*

Other potentially illegal (yet creative and innovative) behaviour included acquiring illicit access to electricity and utilities. These are examples of adaptation and resistance in the form of extra-legal behaviour (as in Elmore 1979, cited in Hamdi 2010:144).

Adaptation is one of the ways in which people can subvert the forms of power that pervade everyday life.

> "These "ways of operating" constitute the innumerable practices by means of which users reappropriate the space organized by techniques of sociocultural production." (de Certeau 1984:xiv)

When structures are rigorously planned or configured, it denies displaced people the chance to exercise creative forces of adaptation, and leads to a stronger element of dependence on assistance from authorities (Elmore 1979, cited in Hamdi 2010:144). The informants described how residents would use places in unorthodox ways, working against the elements of order embedded in them that may not be in their best interests (Cresswell

2004:27), and resisting expectations that humanitarian or government actors may have about them. Particular acts of adaptation and resistance can be described as 'tactics' (de Certeau 1984:xiv-xv).

> "Tactics can be seen, according to Conquergood (1992:82), as a performance repertoire of displaced, disenfranchised and dominated people deploying improvisational savvy" (Purcell 2012:274).

The informants described the residents' use and adaptation of space in similar terms, suggesting that they thought of them as actions of resilience.

It could be seen as a challenge for humanitarian organisations that residents engage in other forms of subversive behaviour, acting in ways that are outside of what is expected of them. Some residents would find other shelter options and reside there, but keep their rooms in collective centres locked, using them for storage or leaving them empty. Although it is possible to think of this action as a creative response strategy, it could be identified as a 'problem' or inconvenience for managing authorities trying to allocate space or keep track of the movements of displaced people. Residents in some cases would use the spaces for political ends. Some would hold political meetings in collective centres, while others would use those spaces to harbour combatants known to them, providing them with a safe place to rest and recuperate.

Considering these forms of adaptation and tactics, the majority of actions taken were done so individually, or by individual family units, rather than as a wider group. These actions may be taken opportunistically, rather than as a conscious collective effort (de Certeau 1984). For this reason, humanitarian workers may find it more difficult to encourage and assist such action. According to Purcell (2012:274), individual action may be less likely to challenge the hegemonic values that constrain people's everyday lives.

4.5   Conclusion

This chapter shows that humanitarian workers face many difficult decision in terms of how they create, adapt and manage spaces within collective centres. They have to work with spaces that are unsuitable for their new purpose, and balance the priority to accommodate

significant numbers of displaced people in a pressured environment with the need to adequately interpret and meet their complex social and protection needs via the use of space.

The physical configurations of collective centres may make many aspects of practice difficult to arrange and achieve, but they are also positive spaces in a number of ways, as explored in chapter 2. Compared to more dispersed types of settlement, collective centres may provide a low standard of accommodation, but they may also provide greater opportunities for engaging with and designing projects for groups of displaced people, as will be discussed further in chapter 6.

The configurations of the different buildings mean that humanitarian workers may struggle to find space to operate in, which has implications for what they can achieve in certain areas, such as with group processes. However, one lesson from this chapter is that humanitarian workers often have to make the most of the resources and spaces they have available, and to be flexible in how they assist displaced people.

There are also issues raised in this chapter about control over collective centre space and the processes concerning it. Humanitarian workers seemed to be the main actors in terms of rehabilitation and management, at least in the initial stages, controlling who is accommodated there and how the spaces are shaped. While this may be the most effective and pragmatic way of meeting needs, it does raise questions about whether professionals trust affected populations to adequately control some of these processes themselves.

Due to the varied nature of different collective centre buildings, there are no obvious rules in terms of providing specific communal and social spaces. The kind of work undertaken to create these spaces will depend on how humanitarian actors interpret residents' social needs, as well as their priorities and actions, which at times can be in direct opposition to the professionals' priorities. The communication between these different sets of actors therefore plays a significant role.

Some of these issues are further explored in chapter 5, particularly in terms of how humanitarian workers understand the social needs and relationships of residents. Trust also plays a large part in the discussion; the trust that displaced people afford to professionals,

and the trust humanitarian workers have in residents to control some of the most important elements of collective centre management.

The findings of this chapter are also relevant to the discussion in chapter 6 about humanitarian approaches to engaging with people in group processes. The difficulty in finding adequate space to operate has implications for some community work approaches, especially if it is difficult to gather residents into groups. Without good social spaces, residents may be less inclined or able to engage with one another. The challenges relating to control over the buildings, their management, and other similar processes is also relevant to the later discussion. It may be difficult for humanitarian actors to give up that control and allow residents to meaningfully participate, handing over power and responsibility. The group processes discussed can provide greater opportunities for humanitarian workers to assess the needs and priorities of residents, and communicate information about projects. Handing over control of some of these processes can help to lessen the financial burden of operating in collective centres, and to make their management more sustainable.

5.0   SOCIAL COHESION AND TRUST

This chapter discusses how the informants understood the social relationships and connections among collective centre residents, and between them and other groups, including humanitarian actors. This discussion is relevant because the cohesion and 'sense of community' that is present will make a difference to the kinds of challenges that will be present for professionals engaging with them, and to the kinds of activities that they will undertake. Trust also plays a large part in the discussion, as the working environment will become more difficult if various parties do not trust the intentions of one another.

5.1   Working with 'communities'

It is an issue for humanitarian workers to consider the strength of connections between people living in collective centres. The kinds of connections existing between residents will make a difference to the nature of actions humanitarian organisations undertake, and their relative importance. Working with groups that have a stronger sense of connection and 'community' may be easier for humanitarians than in situations of greater social fragmentation and conflict.

The informants described their experiences working with displaced people in collective centres in ways that lend themselves to the discussion of concepts such as social cohesion and community. Many informants seemed to think of the residents as a community in a basic, geographic sense, as they live together and share a location and locale. They also referred to some friendly relationships between residents, and perceived that people had similar shared experiences and origins. However, community can be a very elusive concept to define and examine (Hogget *et al.* 1997, cited in Twelvetrees 2008:1; Tesoriero 2010:95). A sense of community between people may be dependent on more than geographical connections or physical proximity to one another. Tesoriero (2010:97-8) notes the differences between descriptions of 'geographical' communities (based around a connection to a specific area) and 'functional' communities (based around shared interests, also called 'communities of interest'). Functional communities may be more difficult for professionals to engage with, as they may be less visible, less tied to particular spaces, and more marginalised (Tesoriero 2010:98).

It is not inevitable that 'community' will exist in collective centres, and it may be naïve to expect harmonious relationships between residents. One informant working in a situation of conflict-induced protracted displacement described the difficulty of thinking about the residents of any one collective centre as a community. In some of the larger centres he visited, residents from one floor to the next seemed estranged from one another due to the large number of people accommodated there.

> *"I think that the sense of solidarity refers to the places or the centres with not really a huge population ... Because if you are living in, let's say, the 10 story former apartment or dormitory building, I mean I've been told that like every second floor [had] their own IDP committee or they have their own condominium."*
>
> *- Gerard, programme manager, international organisation*

Similarly, some informants perceived that social cohesion between residents could vary dramatically, even within quite small distances. While some residents seemed to have close social and emotional support networks consisting of their neighbours, others seemed far more isolated from those around them.

> *"So there seemed to be a kind if dis-juncture between that physical proximity and a kind of a sense of closeness."*
>
> *- Faye, field researcher, research institution*

This suggests that humanitarian workers may not be able to rely on people's physical closeness as a guarantee of a sense of community.

One of the challenges that humanitarian workers face is that communities are not just sites of social cohesion and agreement, but also conflict. Some informants working in the same situation referred to arguments, disputes and differing interests among families in the collective centres. Their response to this was to establish management committees in order to try and manage the disagreements and conflicts. This is a useful reminder that 'community' should not be essentialised as a harmonious body, but rather should be recognised as heterogeneous and an environment of difference and conflict (Day 2006:209).

5.2   Challenges posed by stronger communities

It is common that collective centres will accommodate people displaced from the same original locations, even on a village per village basis. Humanitarian agencies and other authorities may arrange for this to be the case, preferring for people who are known to one another to be settled together. This may be based on professionals' perception that if whole neighbourhood groups are able to remain together, then social groups and support mechanisms can also remain intact.

> *"Again, these people hang out with each other most of the time anyway, these are friends, these are neighbours, they already have these established mechanisms, and so it's just to help them to make sure they understand that they can still count on these mechanisms, and encourage them to fall back on these mechanisms during times of displacement."*
>
> *- Edward, specialist, intergovernmental organisation*

Humanitarian organisations may wish to preserve the pre-existing connection between people, preserving a sense of community; something people can reply upon when in difficult circumstances, such as being displaced or denied their rights (Cooke 1989, cited in Day 2006:149). Family, community and other networks can be central to people's coping and response mechanisms in disasters and conflicts; they look to rely on people they can trust (Vincent and Sorensen (Eds.) 2001:269-73). For this reason, it may be a priority for humanitarian agencies to keep extended families together through relocations and rehabilitation works. In Georgia, collective centres would house many generations of the same family, which constituted a significant support network.

> "Some displaced people expressed concern that it was not made clear to them whether the family members would be given spaces in the immediate vicinity of the rest of the family, after the renovation work was completed, creating obstacles to accessing their support network and family care." (Amnesty International 2010:28)

Strong connections among collective centre residents, and between them and others, may pose a dilemma for humanitarian workers. The strength of such social connections may prove to be invaluable for displaced people in responding to many challenges (Vincent and Sorensen (Eds.) 2001:269-73), but humanitarian organisations may interpret them as

having certain negative consequences that can put others at risk. In one case, refugees in collective centres became quite organised and had connections to combatants who were still involved in the conflict in their home country, and had begun to harbour them so that they could rest and recuperate before returning to fight.

> *"At some point we faced a very big challenge, which is that the committee was forming, let's say, unwanted alliance with the ... army and with single men who were combating ... and were having, let's say, two or three weeks of rest. And then we realised that we created something that might jeopardise the whole local community, because instead of having 24 families in one shelter, we were having a block of 24 families, and it was creating a lot of tension between the local community and the refugee community."*
>
> *- Charles, shelter coordinator, international organisation*

In this situation, the humanitarian organisation chose to act to reduce the strength of the residents' committees in order to reduce the local tensions. This example shows that stronger social cohesion and power of collective centre residents can be seen as problematic and dangerous, rather than beneficial, depending on the point of view.

Similarly, some groups of collective centre residents with strong familial or community connections were controlling the intake of new displaced people into those buildings, and were reserving spaces for people they knew. This can be interpreted as a negative aspect of a strong sense of community, where people provide assistance and seek to look after those connected to them, instead of those who may need it most. This may fit with descriptions of social and community connections as exclusionary (Day 2006:46-7; Bauman and May 2001:35). In this case, a humanitarian organisation took steps to reduce the amount and type of power residents could exercise through the collective centre management committees. The organisation themselves took control of who would be accommodated in collective centres, in order to ensure that spaces were reserved specifically for particular vulnerable displaced people.

5.3   Working with fragmented groups

In contrast to the challenges posed by strong connections, informants also described what they considered to be low social cohesion, which has its own potential challenges. The

viewpoint of some informants was that while residents may have been friendly with one another, it was difficult to describe them as a unit. It may be unreasonable to expect residents to form a cohesive 'community'. In the particular post-conflict setting, the informants got the impression that people didn't want to burden each other with their problems, and so they would remain guarded in the way they conducted themselves.

> *"And there was [indistinct] that everyone had gone through something kind of similar, they were all in difficult circumstances, so it was better if they would kind of keep their issues to themselves and not open up too much."*
>
> *- Faye, field researcher, research institution*

This has some relation to what Goffman (2010:40) referred to as 'information preserves', in which people attempt to control what information is shared about themselves via their interactions and behaviour. The prospects for collective action may depend on the personal relationships between residents, so humanitarian workers can face a challenge in fostering such action. This may be a more acute challenge if practitioners are attempting to engage in more radical, transformative work, in which the "personal is political" (Ledwith 2011:4).

Many informants found that although residents would support each other socially or emotionally, much of the actions and decisions were taken on an individual basis, rather than as a wider group. One way of interpreting this is that the residents have strong individual 'agency', individually exercising their own free will as they see fit (as in Fuchs 2001:26-7). For example, in situations where humanitarian organisations were providing legal assistance and information to collective centre residents, the workers found that people were seeking out different sources of information and using whatever resources different organisations would offer.

> *"I presume that everybody in the collective centre had his own truth by getting all those informations."*
>
> *- Albert, project coordinator, national organisation*

This can be interpreted as displaced people showing responsibility for themselves and relying on their own strengths and abilities.

Alternatively, such individual action can be interpreted by humanitarian workers as a lack of social cohesion or recognition of common needs and interests. One informant had visited many collective centres in his country and had not perceived any sense of community among the residents. Rather, families seemed to be in competition with each other.

> *"My impression is that there was no, so to say, cohesion. They were more a bunch of individuals, rather to say than one group. I had the feeling that families are hiding informations from other families, but I don't know the reason. Maybe in a sense that they will, by sharing information, they will jeopardise their possibilities to integrate or repatriate or resettle."*
>
> *- Albert, project coordinator, national organisation*

This may be attributable to the increased competition for resources, particularly livelihood opportunities, that can exist in the typically urban areas where displaced people have settled. These issues may inform a choice for humanitarian workers about whether to engage people on a more individual basis (or family by family), or as a group.

5.4   Managing local relationships

The informants highlighted that the relationship between the residents of collective centres and the local host population was an important issue, particularly in terms of managing tensions and for the duration of short and long term displacement. The relationships between the groups were dependent on the specific context of displacement, with humanitarian workers noticing more tensions as displacement became more protracted.

If there are tensions and a lack of trust between collective centre residents and the local population, it can create more problems to deal with from the perspective of humanitarian organisations. The context of the culture, history and origins of the different groups plays a part in this, and many of the informants found that differences in culture made it more difficult for displaced populations to fit in.

"The collective centres in [the capital city] are kind of a different thing because, first of all, the IDPs who are living there ... they're culturally a little bit different, they don't necessarily look different, but they speak ... with a different accent, at least the older generation does. And they don't feel like they really fit in there. They don't feel like it's their community. So they sense a lot more tension with the local population, the non-IDP population."

- Faye, field researcher, research institution

On the other hand, one informant working in a post-conflict setting involving many ethnic and national groups found that the internally displaced people and local populations had a sense of camaraderie due to their shared experiences of conflict. Torche and Valenzuela (2011:188-90) identify shared experiences as a precondition for trust and social capital. Humanitarian workers will therefore have to negotiate a complex set of cultural connections and differences in various contexts.

Differences in culture between these groups can lead to some long-term issues for humanitarians to consider. There are many ways of thinking about culture, such as Durkheim's reading of it as, "functionalist glue making social cohesion possible" (Gupta and Ferguson 1997:4). Common connections and social rules also play a part in the description; "concepts of culture have consistently emphasized the shared, the agreed on, and the orderly" (Gupta and Ferguson 1997:4). When different versions of agreed-on order come into contact, there can be clashes of culture between displaced and local populations, which can lead to long term mistrust and hostility. Some studies have attributed low levels of trust, social capital, and connections between these groups to isolation and desperation on the part of displaced people, as well as a lower chance of successful local integration (Government of Georgia 2007:5).

There may be a dilemma for professionals in terms of balancing local cultural expectations with those of the displaced population in terms of how collective centres are organised and managed. Some informants who were working with Muslim refugees in a neighbouring Islamic state found that the displaced and local populations had differing cultural and religious norms in terms of how men and women were expected to conduct their daily lives and activities. Specifically, some groups preferred for men and women to be separated during the day, with women effectively living 'behind closed doors'. Humanitarian workers received concerns and requests from both parties about being exposed to cultural practices

that were mismatched and were not to their liking. The professionals in question worked on this issue in a couple of ways, by adapting the collective centre buildings to make some practices possible, and by liaising with the different parties to try and ease their concerns. However, one informant working in a different global region expressed the view that humanitarian organisations have to trust people to resolve these problems themselves, as they are best placed to appreciate and manage cultural differences with their neighbours. So there are different approaches to managing the perceived problem of culture clashes.

The humanitarian professionals expressed that it was less problematic for them if the displaced and local populations were similar. One informant dealing primarily with internal displacement caused by natural disasters found that the displaced people and the local hosts tended to have stronger connections, especially as they may be geographically close. Informants also described a situation of conflict-induced refugee-hood in which some people settled in an area in a neighbouring country that was geographically and culturally similar to their place of origin. In this case, the professionals spoke of a sense of connection between the groups, as well as tribal similarities and obligations that played a role in sheltering the refugees. Tribal values dictated that local families were obligated to help other people that are similar to them, and receive them in their homes for up to a certain time period. However, informants found that once the initial obligation had been fulfilled, tensions increased and the hosting situation became unsustainable, perhaps due to unrealistic expectations about the duration of displacement.

> *"Because technically the host family has a tribal background, which they are allowed to host anyone for between 5 to 10 days without asking any questions. And technically, the general thought about the area of the influx was "OK, they will come maximum 20 days and then they will go back to [their country] because everything will be solved then". But we found out after one month that a lot of the families were having problems with their host..."*
>
> *- Charles, shelter coordinator, international organisation*

This is an example of how certain obligations can be placed into a set of cultural rules in a way that does not require any reciprocity, such as the rule of *caritas* (Torche and Valenzuela 2011:192). It is particularly relevant for humanitarian workers to consider such cultural practices, as it can give them an impression of how much of the burden of displacement can be accepted by the host population, and what support they may need.

Situations of mass displacement can also pose particular challenges for humanitarian workers, as the displaced population can begin to significantly alter the demographic of the areas they settle in. While this is not an issue specific to collective centres, humanitarian organisations may have to deal with some of the repercussions, as greater strain is placed on the host population, especially in terms of competition for resources and the cultural identity of an area. Informants spoke of having to deal with confrontations and quarrels with the local community as a symptom of this increased burden.

Humanitarian organisations may find it to be an important priority and challenge to maintain good relationships with the local host population. A few informants working in the same country described how their organisation undertook a number of 'thank you' projects for local communities to this end. Such projects included the set-up or rehabilitation of community infrastructure, such as generators or public buildings. In some situations humanitarian organisations received requests from locals to come into their area and rehabilitate buildings that were being used informally as collective centres by displaced people. While it can be assumed that the locals were expressing a degree of concern and solidarity with the displaced people who were living in sub-standard conditions, humanitarian organisations also have to consider that local groups expect some local regeneration to take place as part of the arrangement. Indeed, some local communities did require some incentives from organisations before agreeing to host displaced people locally.

Working for the local community and gaining their trust is seen by humanitarian organisations as being an effective way of increasing the sustainability of collective centres and similar settlements (Danish Refugee Council 2008:3; CCCM Cluster 2010:22-4). Davies (2012:24) notes that supporting host communities in various ways can be very valuable in building trust between local and displaced populations.

5.5   Gaining trust in collective centres

The way in which humanitarian actors engaged with people in collective centres was affected by the trust that existed between the residents and various different groups who interact with them. The informants found that they were not the only actors visiting the

buildings, and that other actors such as government agencies and private entities would also make visits.

From their interactions with collective centre residents, informants found that in many cases they did not trust outside actors, and were quite cautious when receiving visitors. One of the main reasons given was that they had poor experiences in the past with such actors. This is an issue for humanitarian workers because it can reflect badly on them and make engaging with residents more challenging. For example, government actors may not always be welcomed by residents, though this may vary depending on the status of the collective centre (i.e. formal, informal, state-owned, privatised, etc.). In some cases, government actors would be assessing people's living standard, which for the residents could mean a reduction in the benefits and services they receive from the state, if they are judged to have adequate means.

> *"a lot of people come by to check up on the items that they have, like if they have a TV or computer, that are often gifts that NGOs have, or sometimes over the years they've been able to acquire them on their own, but if they have those things they no longer qualify for one kind of government pension plan. So I think there's questions whenever they think that there is someone showing up that could be a government representative."*
>
> *- Faye, field researcher, research institution*

One way of interpreting mistrust in these circumstances is as a necessary and important mechanism by which displaced people protect themselves from negative consequences. Torche and Valenzuela (2011:189) consider the problem of having to deal with 'strangers' who are not previously known and do not share the same experiences. Without shared experiences, there is no personal relationship, and so trust and reciprocity will be harder to come by.

Some informants reported that they were not initially trusted when they entered into a collective centre environment. Some also discovered that residents had had frustrating or negative experiences with NGOs in the past, and so were far less inclined to engage with them without question. One informant described how it had been difficult to maintain residents' interest and motivation with their projects:

"I mean they said very clearly, "you know, we are not interested in the training you suggest, we are not interested with you coming here and doing kind of counselling or community meetings, because it doesn't really lead anywhere. Because you don't come and you don't do anything but talking.""

- Gerard, programme manager, international NGO

Humanitarian workers may also face mistrust because the residents fear potential forced removal or eviction. A few informants all working in the same situation of protracted, conflict-induced displacement found that representatives of private companies and government bodies would also visit collective centres in order to assess their future potential. They may be assessing whether the building in question can be bought or reclaimed by its original owners and put back into commercial use. This could result in the eviction of the residents, which is another potential justification for mistrust. One informant spoke of laws in place that made evictions illegal, whereas the others spoke of the lack of tenure security and constant risk of eviction that made the residents wary of visitors. This may be a persistent challenge for professionals to consider when entering collective centres.

While different countries enforce different regulations about the legality of forced eviction, collective centre residents are commonly at risk of eviction without adequate notice or compensation (Smit 2012:82). Forced evictions can be attributed to the state, either directly or indirectly (UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights 1996:2), and are also driven by commercial motivations:

"[refugees and displaced people] may be at risk of eviction from collective centres not only when political and financial will to assist wanes, but also when a more profitable use of the housing is envisaged." (Smit 2012:149)

This is not unique to collective centres, but takes place across the world in both informal and formal settlements; the marginalised are forced out in favour of economic investment and development (e.g. Hamdi 2010:58-9; Praxis 2012; Human Rights Watch 2005). There are suggestions that the fear and possibility of eviction has a detrimental affect on residents' ability to build their lives in an area and work together:

> "...forced evictions dismantle what people have built over months, years and sometimes decades, destroying the livelihood, culture, community, families and homes of millions of people throughout the world every year." (UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights 1996:2)

Such insecurity of many types of capital may be another particular challenge that community-minded professionals face when engaging with those groups.

Trust is an issue that may improve over time as humanitarian organisations and collective centre residents know more about each other and build connections. Mistrust of humanitarian actors can stem from a lack of relevant information provided by organisations about their intentions. If residents don't know what an organisation is attempting to achieve, it is likely that they will be wary. In some cases, this problem was reduced over time, and trust grew as the parties became more familiar with each other, with the organisations sharing more information about their activities.

> *"Because those people didn't trust us. I think that only after the third, or the second or third visit they started to comprehend that we are trying to help them. At first they were, I can't say aggressive, but they didn't trust us and we couldn't do much at all."*
>
> *- Arthur, project coordinator, national NGO*

However, professionals might not always be met with mistrust. One informant mentioned that some groups seemed to identify contact with outside actors as a chance to have their voice heard, and so were more open. This is a useful reminder that humanitarian workers have the opportunity to assist potentially marginalised, neglected, under-served and forgotten-about groups. Residents may be more willing to trust such actors based on the relative significance of what they stand to gain from the relationship (as in Torche and Valenzuela 2011:187).

Mistrust and suspicion of organisations was a key theme in some cases where professionals were trying to get access to people to interview. In these cases, different methods were employed by researchers to gain the trust of collective centre residents, such as being introduced by a more established local organisation, or by finding new interviewees via social introduction. The latter method is an example of how social mechanisms can act as a

buffer against unwanted attention, so that trust can be based on recommendations by members of a network.

Engaging with collective centre residents will involve, to varying degrees, entering 'their' territory. This can have an affect on the trust, as if permission to enter is not gained or sought by humanitarian actors, residents may react poorly. Some informants were particularly aware of this issue, and spoke of methods undertaken to announce visits and build trust.

> *"Before the visiting of the collective centres, two or three days, or half days to go we were sending posters that will announce our visits ... Those posters were stating that [our organisation] will visit collective centre that date ... in most cases we were sending those posters [indistinct] the offices and they were putting them on the collective centre."*
>
> *- Arthur, project coordinator, national organisation*

One informant spoke critically of the assumption made by various external actors that it was acceptable to enter collective centres and conduct their activities without seeking any approval or permission. Indeed, three of the informants had worked with the rehabilitation of buildings to be used as collective centres, and did not make any reference to their perceived right to continue working there once they were inhabited. One interpretation is that the organisation saw those collective centres as 'theirs', and felt entitled to work within them. Another is that trust never became an issue in those places because the organisation was established there from the beginning of the process.

It is also relevant to consider what trust humanitarian organisations place in collective centre residents. As an example, one informant spoke about having to heavily supervise any construction or maintenance work conducted in collective centres by the residents, for fear that the quality would be insufficient. There is a suggestion that too often, practitioners working with communities don't fully trust them:

> "...the status and superiority that come with the role can result in an inherent distrust in the capacity of the people to think and act for themselves. A lack of trust leads to acting *for* rather than *with* the people." (Ledwith 2011:107)

Freire (1996:42) notes that this lack of trust makes any real change difficult to achieve. The question of how humanitarian professionals should engage with displaced people is an ongoing one that has to balance the obligation to help those in need with the desire to be self-examining, critical practitioners (Hamdi 2010:144-5, 163; Sanderson 2010). This will form part of the discussion in the next chapter.

5.6   Conclusion

This chapter highlights that humanitarian workers engage with groups of collective centre residents that are very different in terms of their social connections. They commonly face a challenge in working with people who have fewer and weaker connections, and between whom there may be much disagreement and conflict. It appeared that it was difficult for humanitarians to really refer to and engage with the residents as a 'community'; the concept has variable meanings, and the contexts of displacement were also extremely variable. Local contexts, and the contexts of displacement, play a large part in determining the kinds of social issues and relationships that will be present, so it is not appropriate to make a general statement about social cohesion in collective centres.

When resident groups have been powerful and active, it has posed dilemmas for humanitarian workers, both in terms of particular problems it has raised in the context, and in terms of how professionals control the management processes in collective centres. Although they may wish for residents to take a significant role in managing the buildings, according to the experiences of these informants it is usual for organisations to deal with problems by exerting their own power to closely control those processes. This has implications for how well participatory processes can function, as will be discussed in chapter 6. When residents seem not to have strong connections, and act more individually, it is a challenge for humanitarian workers to consider how to foster collective action, and whether to design projects that engage with people on an individual level or as wider groups.

The relationship between the displaced population and the local host population presents many challenges for professionals to consider. They may have to negotiate cultural issues and differences, manage conflicts and engage in mediation to try and maintain positive connections between the groups. At times, this can mean providing special incentives for

host populations. As displacement can often become protracted, these relationships are vital for the future. Humanitarian groups will be able to scale down their activities if the local population has the capacity to assist displaced people in some way.

Some of the approaches that humanitarian actors employed to address the challenges identified in this chapter include organising committees, keeping family and neighbourhood groups accommodated together, controlling management processes, mediating between groups, communicating their intentions for assistance, and accommodating for various cultural needs.

The chapter has also revealed that trust is vital to humanitarian actors in effectively working in collective centres. There are many valid reasons for residents to mistrust incoming actors, so professionals can employ a range of approaches to make themselves known, including regular meetings with local staff, working through local organisations, and providing adequate information.

This builds on part of the discussion in chapter 4, in the sense that the source of mistrust on the part of residents can be related to the character of the building itself. If the building has high economic or social value for the state or for private companies, then the risk and fear of eviction can be higher. The challenge for humanitarian workers is to make their intentions clear in order to gain more trust, and to advocate on behalf of residents to prevent the possibility that they will be evicted without having durable solutions in place to accommodate them.

Chapter 6 will build on many of the issues raised in this chapter. In environments where there is less trust between parties and fewer social connections, promoting collective action, group processes and community work approaches will be more challenging and require more fundamental community development activities to build relationships. The use of committees as methods of solving conflicts between groups, and as a way of controlling some of the processes in collective centres will be further discussed in the next chapter. The findings from chapter 5 suggest that if humanitarian workers and the local population do not trust the displaced population, for various reasons, it may be difficult to encourage self-management processes that give residents full control and that include local people.

6.0   MODES OF ORGANISATION

All of the informants described their experiences with group processes in collective centres; some had initiated them, while others had engaged with residents who had organised themselves or responded to government initiatives. The decision-making processes and types or organisation varied. Informants described government-like committees, cooperatives, and associations, and some collective centres had elected leaders. In other cases, key motivated individual displaced people were responsible for most of the activity. However, informants also noticed that some groups had hardly any mechanism of discussing common needs.

This chapter will discuss the challenges for humanitarian workers in terms of how they approach engaging with residents, what kind of methods and models they employ, and the various roles they can play in assisting group processes. It will also draw some comparisons between the activities described by the informants and the practices and principles of community work, considering humanitarian workers as types of community workers.

6.1   Responsibility for collective centre management

Humanitarian organisations may have to take on different roles with collective centres, particularly in terms of management. As the *Collective Centre Guidelines* state, the national authority has the primary responsibility to meet the needs of displaced people and to manage collective centres (CCCM Cluster 2010:7, ch3). This means that in ideal circumstances, humanitarian organisations are not called upon to directly manage the buildings. However, in situations where the state is lacking capacity, humanitarian agencies can support them to varying degrees, particularly by identifying and filling gaps. One informant worked in many scenarios where it was not necessary for his organisation to take a leading role in managing individual collective centres.

"Well for the most part we don't manage collective centres, I mean collective centres are not usually managed by agencies. Because of their innate nature, they are usually a government or public structure. So they already have a management committee, let us say, but they have some sort of structure that somebody is in charge of that building."

- Edward, specialist, intergovernmental organisation

The main role of humanitarian organisations is to monitor practice and advocate on behalf of collective centre residents. This was reflected by the informants, as many of them referred to an approach of advocacy or information provision.

Working to establish and support group processes within collective centres, particularly for self-management, is encouraged in the *Collective Centre Guidelines* (CCCM Cluster 2010:ch4) and has been discussed as an important action by most of the informants. However, one of the major challenges for humanitarian agencies in this regard is that it may not be clear where the responsibility lies. According to one informant (who was working for the same organisation and in the same country as two other informants) funding plays a big part in dictating what work organisations can undertake, particularly when implementing projects funded by larger organisations.

"...the money for the rehabilitation of collective centres was coming from [the larger international NGO]. In the contract with [the larger international NGO] it stipulated that [my NGO] was responsible for the rehabilitation of the collective centres, and it didn't specify anything about the management of the collective centres, and nor was there anything in the budget."

- Iris, shelter coordinator, international NGO

This presents a dilemma for humanitarians where the need for certain actions seems obvious, but they are not mandated or funded to act. This is also a common conflict within community work, where priorities and accountabilities may be clouded by the need to satisfy funding bodies (Tesoriero 2010:287). Part of the challenge with collective centre management may be due to its relative ambiguity in terms of how it fits with established sectors or 'Clusters' of work (e.g. 'shelter', 'protection', 'camp coordination and camp management').

When describing his organisation's engagement with collective centres in a particular global region, the informant Edward spoke of them in a way that suggested they were a taken-for-granted set of activities. While the semi-expert status of the interviewer may partly account for this, there is still an impression that some professionals are well acquainted with an established set of practices. This also provides an interesting contrast to Iris' experience, which suggested that seemingly obvious measures can be neglected by planners.

6.2   Committees for managing problems

In one described scenario, a humanitarian organisation took it upon themselves to work with committees in collective centres, employing special staff members to engage with residents in many buildings. According to one informant they did this, despite not having a budget for it, because they felt that it was a necessary action regardless of funding. Although the buildings were initially planned to be self-managed by residents, the staff saw problems with how this worked in practice, leading them to establish new committees in many buildings.

> *"There was garbage piling up, I know that [a particular] collective centre, after about one year it needed to go through another rehabilitation because it was really badly maintained."*
>
> *- Iris, shelter coordinator, international NGO*

The organisation saw these problems as significant, and established self-management committees to try and deal with them. The language used by one informant does suggest that the purpose of these committees was fairly instrumental, and that they were established in order to get certain tasks done and make sure there were responsible parties.

> *"At the beginning we started using the refugees themselves, in terms of forming committees, self-management committees."*
>
> *- Charles, shelter coordinator, international organisation*

This may represent a form of participation that is more interested in the products of cooperation, rather than the process; as a means of achieving something, rather than an end

in itself (Twelvetrees 2008:5-6; Tesoriero 2010:144-5).

6.3   Approaching facilitation

It can be a challenge for a humanitarian worker to consider some of the different methods of engagement with collective centre residents, depending on the specific context and what may be most suitable. According to one informant, part of the challenge is to be flexible and responsive to the many different ways that residents make their needs and concerns known. He described how more and less formal approaches to facilitation could be used in parallel.

> *"Because you're going to have people walking up to you all day and telling you certain things that are going on, wanting to discuss with you certain issues, have a banter back and forth on their concerns ... And you need to document those, so we're trying to establish ... humanitarian communication mechanisms, where people can voice either through anonymous text messaging, so on and so forth, the concerns that they're facing in what I would call a less formalised approach. The more formalised approach is sitting down and having a meeting and making decisions."*

> *- Edward, specialist, intergovernmental organisation*

Internal conflicts between collective centre residents may have been a common challenge for humanitarian workers to deal with, just as community workers typically have to manage disagreements between various people. The response of Benjamin, Charles and Iris' organisation in their location was to introduce staff that would be exclusively dedicated to engaging with collective centre residents. The role of this staff is much more comparable to that of community workers, as they would employ a 'softer' approach to collective centre management, visiting with the groups, facilitating their discussions and responding to their concerns. The impression from the informants is that they were trying to avoid managing the collective centres themselves in a 'top-down' fashion. However, as indicated by some previous examples, the organisation also intervened on occasions when residents were making decisions or actions that were problematic in their view. Day (2006:235-6) notes that in community development work this is a common issue, and that practitioners have pre-set ideas about what the 'right' decisions are. This highlights a challenge in terms of how prominent a role to play in the group processes of displaced

people.

> *"At the beginning it worked very well, but due to the different cultural habits between the ... families themselves we were again stuck between two parties in the same collective shelter. ... we have now a shelter management with 3, 4 employees who are regularly checking the shelters. But the final management is done by the ... families themselves. There is no vertical management. The management is done on a diagonal stage, something like that."*
>
> *- Charles, shelter coordinator, international organisation*

The humanitarians working in these collective centres would regularly check up on the progress of these committees. While it is possible to interpret this as an unwillingness to hand responsibility and power over to the residents, keeping a close watch over these processes in their opening stages will allow humanitarians to identify how well they are working and what kind of support they will need for the future.

One informant suggested that one of the challenges for humanitarian workers is to appropriately support collective centre residents in the activities that they undertake and organise themselves. This can be considered as a more facilitating or enabling role, similar to that of many community workers (Twelvetrees 2008:6), preferring smaller inputs rather than more formal, structured and organised systems, such as committees.

> *"So they already have coping mechanisms, existing coping mechanisms, existing groups ... you want to facilitate this, you want to get people together, you want to make sure that they utilise these existing coping mechanisms, and so we just help them to do that. Maybe advocating one existing room, for example in the school, or a meeting room or a conference room, to not only be where people can speak and to meet and to talk, but also be where people can feel safe."*
>
> *- Edward, specialist, intergovernmental organisation*

An issue raised, both by this example and that of the organisation establishing committees, is that it may not be sufficient for humanitarian organisations to employ a 'softer' approach to collective centre management by leaving the task to the residents. This suggests that if organisations prefer a model of self-management, they must plan how to structure, monitor and assist those processes. Considering that displaced people in collective centres may

already be overburdened with other tasks and priorities, it is perhaps unsurprising that some assistance would be necessary in ensuring that management processes are successful. This may account in part for the sense of frustration in the responses from Iris; frustration that working with committees was not initially seen as a priority.

> *"...I think that's the most important thing to learn from collective centres, that it's very important to specify who selects people – it's very simple (laughs). Who selects people to go into the collective centres, and who sets up the committee to manage them, even if they are self managed."*
>
> *- Iris, shelter coordinator, international NGO*

6.4   Influencing representation in participation

Engaging with group processes in collective centres presented a challenge in terms of ensuring that particular types of people were represented. Professionals may find that the residents already have strong ideas about forming structures of self-management. In these cases, they may be able to play more of a guiding role. In one situation, an informant found that the residents wanted to manage a number of the day-to-day issues and concerns in the collective centre, rather than have the organisation do them. The residents wanted to use government-like committees, and elect their own members. However, the gender and power balance was in favour of the men.

> *"They said, "Let's make a committee consisting of six persons". At the beginning they said, "OK, we will have one woman and five men, because we don't trust women that much", and when we elaborated the idea we told them we need to have three women and three men."*
>
> *- Charles, shelter coordinator, international organisation*

The challenge for professionals was that there were pre-existing attitudes towards gender amongst the displaced group, which could lead to the exclusion of women from decision-making processes. The action taken by the organisation suggests that they were in a position to influence specific elements of the management processes, and such organisations may be able to influence the representation of traditionally marginalised and ignored voices in post-emergency group settings. In such settings, those with the most

power, those in the most favourable social positions, or those with the ability to physically dominate may take control of the situation. This is sometimes referred to as "might makes right" (CCCM Cluster 2010:21). An informant working in a number of different countries and scenarios found that humanitarians could play a role ensuring that certain groups have their voices heard in such a group setting, specifically by ensuring they participate in decision-making processes.

> *"Well sure I mean when you get a large group setting, the loudest voices are always heard the most. And by establishment of committees or through ensuring that there are not only gender concerns but disabled concerns, elderly concerns, children's concerns are brought up are very important."*
>
> *- Edward, specialist, intergovernmental organisation*

While Edward and Charles' comments each represent an improvement to a prevailing situation, Cornwall (2008:277-8) warns about the dangers of identifying "stakeholder" individuals to represent the concerns of whole groups in participatory processes. Using particular categories based on such differences as gender, age, ability, or whether they are "poor and marginalised", will not necessarily reflect and address those people's concerns.

Edward's approach mirrors much of what humanitarian guidelines, such as the *Gender Handbook in Humanitarian Action* (IASC 2006:31-40), recommend in terms of ensuring effective participation of different groups in emergencies. The informant also noted that these participation mechanisms can be useful for humanitarian workers in discovering people's needs, concerns, and the risks they face, and so allows them to respond more effectively. The different methods of engagement referenced by the informants, such as information provision, advocacy, assessment, and the formation of committees, are all thought of as entry points for residents to participate in humanitarian activities (IASC 2006:34-5; UN/OCHA *et al.* 2010:52).

Edward also tended to focus on the needs and interests of humanitarian organisations, and how they could best capture the concerns of residents in order to inform their own practice. In this sense, the approach to facilitation was perhaps not aimed at directly enabling the residents' own activities, but at improving the organisation's responsiveness. Ife and Fiske (2006:304-5) in their discussion of community work and human rights work (in some ways

a parallel field to humanitarian work) note that there are many skills that transfer from community work, such as facilitation. However, they note that the 'bottom-up', grassroots values that are central to community work are less commonly found in the work of international organisations that have complex systems and hierarchies. So while these skills and mechanisms will work for the benefit of displaced people, they can also be used in a quite instrumental fashion to strengthen the organisation's ability to operate.

6.5   Encouraging connections between residents

Humanitarian professionals may find that more formalised types of organisation among collective centre residents are not the norm, and that group processes have not been a part of their daily life. One informant working in a situation of protracted displacement had found that most of the action had been undertaken by certain individuals.

> *"...there would be a few active people who just wanted things to change or, you know, wanted to work on things in the centre and they would come together and do what they could, but I don't think it was any formal committee, it was just a group of active people ... it was more just based on people's interests, activities, time available, and perhaps skills that they could offer."*
>
> *- Denise, senior country analyst, international NGO*

This situation may provide a different challenge for humanitarian professionals to consider. They may have to take care not to disrespect those individuals, and to work to encourage them and put their skills and experiences to use, while also providing opportunities for others to be more involved. Gaining an overview of a group's capacities, skills and abilities is one method that professionals can use to help people realise what they can achieve, rather than what their needs may be (McKnight and Kretzmann 2005:100-1).

Collective centres vary in terms of the level of connections between their residents. This can be a challenge for the way that humanitarian professionals engage with people. Natural disasters and conflicts can produce quite different situations of displacement. One informant described a situation of internal displacement caused by natural disaster, in which the residents were able to draw upon many pre-existing relationships.

"...in [country] we have committees there, there'll be women's groups that'll be formed, you'll have a moms' ... they want to have a special area to be able to breastfeed, for example. There will be ... veterans groups. ... one really neat thing about collective centres is that most of those people know each other because they are from the same neighbourhood where the collective centre is located, in many cases."

- Edward, specialist, intergovernmental organisation

This suggests that humanitarian professionals can assist with the creation of community groups within collective centres that are formed around particular pressing needs or issues. The informant is suggesting that this may be an easier task to accomplish if residents are already well known to each other.

In contrast to this, collective centres accommodating large numbers of people can pose their own specific challenges to those working with them. One informant found that with so many people in one building, it was less possible to think of the residents as a single group, or to undertake action aimed at everyone there.

"I think that the sense of solidarity refers to the places or the centres with not really a huge population, and by huge I mean more than a hundred, because there's difficulty talking about, even though everybody may know everybody, it's difficult to share and address the common needs."

- Gerard, programme manager, international organisation

This can be challenging as it will require humanitarian workers to engage with residents on a variety of fronts in order to try and address the different issues. The informant Gerard spoke of how there could be many displaced people's committees within the same multi-story building. This presents a challenge, as while these groups may have entered into formal arrangements based on their similarities and physical proximity (e.g. story by story), there will be many concerns that apply to all people living in a building and affect everyone. Therefore, a challenge for humanitarians might be to work in making greater connections between these groups, strengthening relationships, and encouraging discussion and action around common issues. Some informants found that in smaller-scale collective centres there was a greater sense of community, and action around common interests. It may be worthwhile to try and recreate this kind of mutual support in the larger buildings.

6.6   Conclusion

The kinds of actions that humanitarian organisations can undertake with groups of collective centre residents may be restricted by financial factors. This is the case in most areas of humanitarian work and acts as a dilemma, trying to meet displaced people's needs while balancing funds. In this climate, organisations may prefer to meet the basic needs of more people, rather than invest in developing group processes and more traditional community work activities.

The use of committees in collective centres poses a number of challenges for humanitarian actors and issues around practice. The experiences suggest that they can at times be used and controlled in an instrumental fashion by organisations in order to provide solutions to perceived problems with collective centres. There were also experiences of facilitation, where actors attempted to be flexible, listening to needs and concerns, and supporting residents' own activities. This presents the question of how prominent a role to play in management processes and in supporting group action. An important issue was that even if collective centres are self-managed by residents, humanitarian actors may still have to provide various inputs into the process, such as guidance, facilitation, setting up protocols, developing skills and providing materials.

Humanitarian professionals have the opportunity with group processes to work for the inclusion and representation of people who are traditionally more marginalised and do not have many chances to have their voices heard in emergency settings. There are many different activities, such as needs assessment and information provision, that humanitarian actors can seize as an opportunity to encourage the participation of displaced people. It seems that organisations also see these engagements with residents as a way of learning how to improve their own practice.

In situations where collective centre residents are acting on a more individual basis, and particular individuals are taking the lead, there are different challenges in how professionals engage with them. It may be easier for them to encourage group processes when the residents are already well known to each other, so there is a challenge in terms of building relationships and connections between potentially estranged people. Community

work approaches could be valuable in achieving this. Also, when working with individual leaders, activists and 'gatekeepers', they may have to sensitively encourage them while also helping other people to participate. The discussion from chapter 5 is relevant to chapter 6 because the social cohesion and trust in collective centres can greatly affect the kinds of challenges that humanitarians identify as priorities. Whether there is a strong sense of community in collective centres or not, skills from the field of community development may be relevant for further enabling residents to meet their needs.

7.0   CONCLUDING REMARKS

This chapter will summarise the key findings of the research project and present some ideas for building upon them in further research.

7.1   Key findings

The nature of collective centres as buildings not originally intended for full-time habitation means that humanitarian actors may face difficulties in finding space in which to engage with the residents in groups. It can also be a challenge for them to arrange for adequate communal and social spaces for residents, meaning that the buildings can restrict possibilities for collective action.

One of the main dilemmas of working with collective centres seems to be related to their management, including decisions about who is accommodated there, and the control of their rehabilitation and maintenance. Difficulties arise for humanitarian actors in balancing the desire to have residents take control of and participate in those processes, with the tendency to see themselves as primary actors, controlling those processes themselves from a position of power in order to ensure certain needs are met and tasks are completed. For this reason, it is a challenge for them to be able to follow advice to set up self-management committees, and to establish group processes that allow residents to have power over the decisions that affect them.

Trust and social relationships play a part in the success of the activities initiated by humanitarian organisations. Stronger connections and social networks between collective centre residents, humanitarian professionals, and the local population can make it easier to support collective action and existing response mechanisms. For this reason, it can be valuable for humanitarians to work to forge connections between displaced groups and others. Management processes, such as the use of committees or elected leaders, may be limited in their impact if organisations do not fully trust residents to act in everyone's interest, or to have the ability to undertake certain tasks. The experience suggested that humanitarian organisations have to commit resources to ensuring that self-management processes will be effective, such as capacity building and training, facilitation, information provision, guidance, mediation, and other inputs.

It may also be challenging for humanitarian organisations to invest in these processes if they are not present in the area for a long time, or if their funding or mandates do not allow for it. Collective centres require more financial inputs than some other shelter options, particularly for rehabilitation and maintenance, and they are commonly in use for many years. This poses dilemmas in terms of deciding which actions to focus on; immediate, lifesaving operations may take precedent over fostering collective action.

These kinds of activities may be best undertaken by local organisations that will be present for a long time, so there is a challenge in developing the capacity of local actors. Further exploring the potential of group processes within collective centres could be beneficial in achieving other humanitarian goals, such as improving health, building capacity, providing livelihood opportunities and enabling education in emergencies. There are also potential benefits of the processes themselves. Humanitarian actors have an opportunity to assist vulnerable and marginalised groups with their work, so working for their representation in group processes could help to give them more power to meet their needs and to use their voices.

7.2   Ideas for further research on the topic

If the opportunity arose to conduct further research around the topic of collective centres, it would be interesting to test some other approaches and methods. During the course of the research project, the focus changed from considering the residents' own collective action, to the dilemmas, challenges and issues faced by humanitarian workers in that context. This meant that the interview questions were not designed to specifically gather data around that topic. If a similar research project were undertaken, it could be fruitful to ask questions that allow informants to present a fuller picture of what enables and constrains them.

One option would be to explore more of the potential of the convergent interviewing technique (Williams and Lewis 2005), by interviewing one humanitarian professional after another from the same organisation, or perhaps from different organisations but responding to the same emergency. By allowing adequate time for analysis and revision of questions between each interview, it could be possible to gain a detailed picture of the challenges faced by professionals in a specific organisational context. While this could be explored in

conjunction with collective centres, it would be equally relevant in any area of humanitarian response. Another option would be to try and make use of various professional forums, such as Shelter Centre's biannual 'Shelter Meetings' (Shelter Centre 2013), to engage with groups of humanitarian workers and see what kinds of agreements and disagreements exist with regard to practice around collective centres. Just as in this study, care would have to be taken not to simply reproduce the content of the *Collective Centre Guidelines* (CCCM Cluster 2010).

Another approach could be to focus more specifically on the presence of community work theory and practice within the field of humanitarian work. The method for such a project, with quite a wide-reaching topic, could be potentially difficult to design. There are many overlapping areas of work to be considered, that all have different priorities and levels of urgency. To illustrate: the various sectors or 'Clusters' in humanitarian response involve different kinds of tasks; short- and long-term displacement call for different approaches, as do responses to disasters and conflicts; and there are different phases of response, which over time focus on reconstruction and rehabilitation, as well as 'early recovery' and elements of international development. In some of these areas of work, community work and participatory approaches are far more common. There are also hundreds, if not thousands, of organisations to consider. It would be an interesting challenge to learn more about how national, local and community-based organisations employ these approaches.

The original intention for this research project could be realised if funding and permissions to travel and access certain areas can be obtained. It would be valuable to study how group processes are acted out in collective centres, and how residents engage in various response strategies, via direct observation and other methods. There are also opportunities for those with specialist knowledge and research skills to conduct various social network studies such as mapping, and for geographers to consider collective centres as discrete spaces and places.

There are also opportunities to explore the role that theory and normative guidelines play in the delivery of humanitarian assistance. In considering the next steps for practice around collective centres, one informant questioned how the *Collective Centre Guidelines* and their local adaptations were being used. There were also questions about how well they linked up with other existing documents, and the comparability of 'guidelines', 'toolkits'

(NRC and The Camp Management Project 2008) and other forms representing professional experience. An option for research could be to explore how these documents are being used by engaging in in-depth discussions with humanitarians who have had close contact with them. This could shed some light on the strengths and weaknesses of this kind of guideline, and how well it prepares actors for the challenges and dilemmas they can face. Collaboration with the IASC CCCM Cluster could be beneficial in achieving this, as it may provide access to information about how people are trained to work with collective centres, and what lessons are being learned by national and local organisations and transferred into general guidance.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A - Information and consent form - Professional perspectives on everyday life in collective centres

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INFORMATION SHEET

Research project: Professional perspectives on everyday life in collective centres

Purpose of the study

I would like to invite you to participate in an interview because you have professional experience working with collective centres. I am a British national in Norway conducting a research project for a Master degree in Community Work at Bergen University College (Høgskolen i Bergen), and have a professional interest and experience in humanitarian aid work.

The objective of this study is to add more detail to the existing knowledge about humanitarian practice in 'collective centres' (pre-existing buildings and structures used for communal emergency shelter by displaced people). Of particular interest is people's everyday life in these centres and the support they receive from humanitarian professionals.

Agreeing to participate

Participation will consist of a one-to-one interview lasting no more than one hour, utilising 'Skype' telecommunications software. Participation in this project is voluntary. You will not be paid for your participation. You may withdraw and discontinue participation without giving a reason, at any time during the project, and without penalty The choice to participate or withdraw will not be shared with any other party.

Use of information

Personal information will be kept confidential and will not be shared with any other parties. The interview will be recorded as an audio file and will be stored until it is transcribed, after which it will be deleted. Names of people and places will be anonymised in transcripts. The interview data will be analysed according to themes in humanitarian and community work. The project will be completed by June 2013. Names, phone numbers and/or email addresses will be kept as a list of contacts, but not linked to other information.

The resultant Master thesis will be available for viewing from September 2013 via the Bergen Open Research Archive at Bergen University College [https://bora.hib.no]. Simply search 'by author' for Samuel Collins.

19 February 2013

Researcher:
Samuel Collins, Master student in Community Work
a: Kråkeneslien 3, 5153 Bønes, Norway
e: sam@collins.f2s.com   t: +47 97493897

Supervisor:
Helge Folkestad, Associate Professor
a: Bergen University College, Haugeveien 28, 5005 Bergen, Norway
email: hfo@hib.no   t: +47 55587852

Next steps

To proceed, please email me in order to ask further questions and arrange a time for an interview. You will need to have access to a computer with working audio devices (microphone / speakers), and with Skype installed. To install this program and obtain a user profile, visit [http://www.skype.com].

You will also have to give your consent to be interviewed. You can do so in writing by completing the Informed Consent Form at the foot of this sheet. Alternatively, you can verbally acknowledge that you have read the information and give consent at the start of the interview.

To do this, either complete the Informed Consent Form at the foot of this sheet, or give your consent verbally at the start of the interview.

This project has been reported to the Data Protection Official for Research at the Norwegian Social Science Data Services. If you have any concerns about the way this study is being conducted, please contact the research supervisor.

Thank you for taking the time to read this information sheet.

Informed Consent Form

I confirm that I have received written information about the research project 'Professional perspectives on everyday life in collective centres'. I have read and understood the information provided, and have had all of my questions answered to my satisfaction. I voluntarily agree to participate in this study.

PARTICIPANT

RESEARCHER

Print name:

Print name:

Signature:

Signature:

Date:

Date:

19 February 2013

Appendix B – Thematic Interview Guide

THEMATIC INTERVIEW GUIDE

Opening question: Please tell me about your experience with a collective centre.

Professional approach
How did you get into this?
What are you there to do?
Tell me about a typical day for you.
Tell me about a conversation you have had with a resident.

How are decisions made regarding the centre?
How are residents engaged?
What normally happens in these situations?
Are there written protocols or principles for this?

Tell me about challenges you have faced.
Tell me about your achievements there.
Tell me what you take away from this experience.

Community
Tell me about daily life in the centre.
Tell me about social life in the centre.
What sense of community do you get there?

Tell me about a time when the residents worked together.
Tell me about activities at the centre.
How are decisions made in the centre?

Tell me about their goals.
Tell me about their resources.
What enhances or restricts residents' actions?

Tell me about trust in the centre and the local area.
What groups exist there?
How are people connected to each other?

Space and place
Tell me about the building.
Describe how a particular space is being used.
Describe the living areas.

Tell me about the available spaces.
How do people react to and interact with this place?

What does the future hold for the residents?
What sense of 'home' do you get?

Vulnerability and protection
Tell me what protection issues there are.
How are these issues addressed?
What privacy is there?

Tell me about the kinds of people at the centre.
What risks do they face?
Who is at risk?

Closing questions
Is there anything I should have asked you about?
Who else should I speak to to learn more about this?
Thank you for your time.

Appendix C – NSD Notification Form

Norsk samfunnsvitenskapelig datatjeneste AS
NORWEGIAN SOCIAL SCIENCE DATA SERVICES

NOTIFICATION FORM

Notification form (version 1.4) for student and research projects subject to notification or license
(cf. the Personal Data Act, the Personal Health Data Filing System Act and associated Regulations)

1. Project Title		
Title	Professional perspective on everyday life in collective centres	
2. Responsible Institution		
Institution	Høgskolen i Bergen	Select the institution to which you are affiliated. All administrative levels must be specified. If it is a student project, select the institution to which the student is affiliated. If your institution is not listed, please contact the Data Protection Official for Research.
Section/Faculty	Avdeling for helse- og sosialfag	
Department	Institutt for sosialfag og vernepleie	
3. Project leader (researcher, advisor)		
First name	Helge	Fill in the name of the person who will have the day-to-day responsibility for the project. In a student project, this will usually be the student's advisor. The student and the advisor must be affiliated with the same institution. If the student has an external advisor, the assistant advisor at the student's place of study may be registered as the project leader. Place of work must be affiliated with the responsible institution, e.g. a department, institute or section.
Surname	Folkestad	
Academic degree	Ph.D	
Position	Associate Professor	
Place of work	Bergen University College	
Address (work)	Haugeveien 28	
Postcode/city (work)	5005 Bergen	Please notify us if you change your e-mail address.
Telephone/mobile (work)	55587852 /	
E-mail	hfo@hib.no	
4. Student (master, bachelor)		
Student project	Yes ● No ○	Please notify us if you change your e-mail address.
First name	Samuel	
Last name	Collins	
Academic degree	Higher degree	
Address (home)	Kråkeneslien 3	
Postcode/city (home)	5153 Bønes	
Telephone/mobile	97493897 /	
E-mail	samcollins@f2s.co	
5. Objective		
What is the purpose of the project	People displaced by conflict or disaster may seek shelter and protection in what are known as 'collective centres'; pre-existing buildings and structures used for communal emergency shelter. The objective of this study is to add more detail to the existing knowledge about humanitarian practice in collective centres by investigating the patterns of everyday life for collective centre residents. In particular, it aims to find out how collective centre residents interact and act collectively. The support they receive from humanitarian professionals in this regard is of particular interest.	Briefly describe the purpose or theme of the project and/or the research question. Max. 750 characters
6. Scope		
What is the scope of the project	● Single institution ○ National multicentre ○ International multicentre	In a multicentre study several institutions cooperate on the same project, and personal data is shared

Page 1

Participating institutions		between the participating institutions.
How will the cooperation be organized? Who will have access to personal data and how will the access be regulated?		

7. Sample

Describe the sample	The sample will consist of adults who have had recent experience of working to assist displaced people who are living in collective centres. These adults will be employees or volunteers of an organisation providing humanitarian aid to displaced people.	The sample refers to those who participate in the study or whom you collect information about, e.g. a representative sample of the population, students with learning difficulties, patients, inmates.
Recruitment and sampling	The main requirement for the selection of a sample is that the individual adults have had experience in the specific working environment within the past 3 years. Their professional affiliation or geographical location is not significant. The sample will be recruited via two main methods. Primarily, I will use my own professional and social network to search for individuals with the relevant experience. These may be people known to me, or recommended by intermediary parties. Secondly, unsolicited requests for assistance with the research will be sent to various relevant humanitarian organisations. The request will ask for assistance with identifying suitable individuals for the sample.	Briefly describe how the sample will be recruited/sampled. The sample can be drawn from registries, such as the National Registry or patient registries, or recruited through a company, a school, a sports organization, your social network, etc. Please specify who will recruit/draw the sample.
Initial contact	Contact will be established largely via the use of email correspondence, and possibly the Skype communications program. In some cases, initial contact with the sample will be made directly by the researcher. In other cases, initial contact may be made through an intermediary party (such as a specific contact or organisation), as per the description of the recruitment of a sample.	Who will establish initial contact with the sample, and how will contact be established? Read more about this in: What are your Research topic?
Sample age	□ Children (0-15 years old) □ Adolescents (16-17 years old) ■ Adults (18 years and/or older)	
Number of people included in the sample	Approximately 10.	
Will legal adults with reduced capacity to consent be included in the sample?	Yes ○ No ●	Explain why it will be necessary to include legal adults with reduced capacity to consent.
If yes, elaborate		Read more about the inclusion of people with reduced capacity to consent.

8. Data Collection

Please indicate how the data will be collected	□ Questionnaire ■ Personal interview □ Group interview □ Observation □ Psychological/pedagogical tests □ Medical exams/tests □ Records □ Registries □ Other	Personal data can be obtained directly from the data subject e.g. from a questionnaire, a personal interview, tests, and/or various records (medical records, nursing home, the Labour and Welfare Administration (NAV), etc.) and/or from existing registries (e.g. Statistics Norway).
If other, please specify		
Comments regarding data collection		

9. Data Content

Briefly describe the information that will be collected	Information will be collected about: the interviewee in question (in order to understand their background and roles); their working context; and their observations and descriptions of the daily lives of displaced people in collective centres.	After completing the form, you will be asked to upload relevant documents (questionnaire, interview guide, observation guide, etc.). Please see section 16.

Will directly identifying personal data be collected?	Yes ● No ○	If yes, please see section 11
If yes, please indicate which	□ Social security number ■ Name, date of birth, address, e-mail and/or phone number	See definition of personal data. Even if the information included in the final publication will be anonymous, you will need to check here if directly or indirectly identifying information will be registered during the project period.
Please specify	Name, e-mail.	
Will indirectly identifying personal data be collected?	Yes ● No ○	A person is indirectly identifiable if it is possible to identify him/her through background information such as city of residence or place of work/school, combined with information about age, gender, occupation, diagnosis, etc. Even if the results in the final report will be anonymous, you must answer "yes" here if you will be processing personal data while working on the project.
If yes, please specify	Name, email, Skype username, place of work, occupation, education, voice recording, projects and activities involved in.	
Will sensitive personal data be collected?	Yes ○ No ●	
If yes, please specify	□ Racial or ethnic origin, or political opinions, philosophical or religious beliefs □ The fact that a person has been suspected of, charged with, indicted for or convicted of a criminal act □ Health □ Sex life □ Trade-union membership	
Will information about third persons be collected?	Yes ● No ○	Information about third persons is information which can be traced back to persons not included in the sample, e.g. a colleague, student, client, family member.
If yes, please specify who the third persons are and what type of information that will be registered	Interviewees will be asked if they know anyone who might be able to answer the same questions, and thus be another interviewee. If so, they may provide the following information about third parties: names, e-mail addresses, places of work, occupations, projects and activities involved in.	
In what way will the third persons be informed?	■ Written □ Verbal □ They will not be informed	
If they will not be informed, please explain why		

10. Informed consent

Specify how the sample will be informed about the project	■ Written □ Verbal □ They will not be informed	As a general rule, the sample should be informed about and consent to the processing of personal data.
Specify		If the consent will be given in writing and/or verbally, please attach a copy of the information letter/script for verbal information. Attachments can be uploaded under section 16. Read more about what the information should include.
Specify how the sample will give their consent	■ Written ■ Verbal □ They will not be asked to consent	If the consent is given in writing, we recommend that the consent form is included at the end of the information letter. If applicable, state the reasons for why the sample will not be asked to consent to the processing.
They will not be asked to consent, Specify		

11. Information Security

Is directly identifying information replaced by a reference number which refers to a separate list of names?	Yes ○ No ●	If you have answered "yes" under section 9, then you must check the box for how directly identifying personal data will be registered.

How/where will the list of names be stored, and who will have access to it?		As a general rule directly identifiable personal data
Is directly identifying information registered together with the other data?	Yes ● No ○	
Why is it necessary to register directly identifying information together with the other data?	Audio files of interviews will be stored until transcribed. Names of people and places will be anonymised in transcripts. Audio files will be deleted after transcriptions are done.	
Is directly identifying information registered/stored in other ways?	Yes ● No ○	
If yes, specify how	Names, phone numbers, Skype usernames and/or email addresses will be kept as a list of contacts, but not linked to other information.	
How is the data registered and saved/processed?	□ An isolated computer belonging to the institution □ A computer in a network belonging to the institution ■ A computer in a network with internet access belonging to the institution □ An isolated private computer ■ A private computer with internet access □ Video recordings/photographs ■ Audio recordings ■ Manually/on paper □ Other	Please specify each of the different ways the data will be registered/processed; you may check more than one box if applicable.
Other If other, please specify		
Are audio-/video recordings and/or photographs saved and/or processed on a computer?	Yes ● No ○	Please check the box for "Yes" if audio-/video recordings and/or photographs will be saved and/or processed on a computer? Read more about processing of audio and video recordings
How is the data safeguarded from unauthorised access?	The laptop and external hard drives will be password protected and kept in a locked room, except when being transported between locations. Email and Skype programs will also be password protected. Written notes will also be kept in a locked room. A user profile on an institution computer will also be used to store data. This will be password protected and in a locked room at the institution. Audio recordings will be kept on the above mentioned devices.	For instance, will the computer be password protected, will the computer be kept in a locked room, how will portable units, printouts, recordings etc. be protected from unauthorised access?
If you will use a portable storage device (laptop, external hard drive, CD, etc.), please specify what kind and why a portable storage device will be used.	I will use a laptop and as many as 3 external hard drives. Portable storage devices will be used as a matter of personal preference and convenience.	Please note, portable storage devices should be encrypted.
Will there be others working on the project, in addition to the project leader/student, who will have access to the data?	Yes ○ No ●	
If yes, please specify		
Will personal data be gathered or transferred through e-mail/the internet?	Yes ● No ○	E.g. when using an online questionnaire or transferring data to a data processor.
If yes, please specify which information	Data will be gathered via email correspondence and audio communication via Skype.	
Will personal data be transferred to anyone outside the project team?	Yes ○ No ●	
If yes, please specify		

Will data be gathered/processed by an external processor?	Yes ○ No ●	External processor refers to someone who gathers or in other ways processes personal data on behalf of the person/institution responsible for the project e.g. QuestBack, Synovate MMI, Norfakta, transcription service provider or interpretor. These assignments must be regulated by a contract.
If yes, please specify		
		Read more about data processor contracts here.

12. Assessment/Approval by Other Regulating Bodies

Will your project require a dispensation from the duty of confidentiality in order to gain access to data?	Yes ○ No ●	In order to gain access to information which is subject to duty of confidentiality, e.g. data from hospitals, the Labour and Welfare Administration (NAV), or other public institutions, you must apply for a dispensation from the duty of confidentiality. A dispensation is normally granted by the relevant government department. It is the
Comments		Regional Committees for Ethics
Will your project require assessments/approvals from other regulating bodies?	Yes ● No ○	in Medical Research (Regionale komitéer for medisinsk og helsefaglig forskningsetikk – REK) who grants dispensations for access to health data.
If yes, please specify	Specific humanitarian organisations may have to give approval for the researcher to have personal communication with members of their staff.	

13. Duration of the Project

Prosjektperiode	Start of project:01.03.2013	Start of project The date when the sample will be contacted and/or when the collection of data will begin.
	End of project:30.09.2013	End of project The date when the data will be anonymised, deleted, or filed in order to be included in a follow-up project. Normally, this coincides with the completion or publication of the article/report/thesis.
What will happen to the data when the project is completed?	■ The data will be anonymised ☐ The data will be filed with personal identification	Data which is anonymised can no longer be traced back to individuals. Read more about anonymising data.
Where will the data be filed, and for how long?	Audio recordings of interviews will be deleted once transcribed. Personal information will be anonymised in transcripts so, as will any other data that could identify them.	If data is kept with personal identification after the project is completed, this should be based on consent from the data subject.
Why will the data be filed with personal identification?		Reasons for keeping the data beyond the completion of the project could be to include it in planned follow-up projects, for teaching purposes, etc.
Where will the data be filed, and for how long?		The data could be filed at your institution, a public archive, or elsewhere. Read more about filing data.

14. Finance

How will the project be financed?	The project will be funded personally.	

15. Additional information

Please add any additional relevant information		

16. Attachments

Number of attachments	2	

Appendix D – NSD Response

Norsk samfunnsvitenskapelig datatjeneste AS
NORWEGIAN SOCIAL SCIENCE DATA SERVICES

NSD

Harald Hårfagres gate 29
N-5007 Bergen
Norway
Tel: +47-55 58 21 17
Fax: +47-55 58 96 50
nsd@nsd.uib.no
www.nsd.uib.no
Org.nr. 985 321 884

Helge Folkestad
Institutt for sosialfag og vernepleie
Høgskolen i Bergen
Haugeveien 28
5005 BERGEN

Vår dato: 14.03.2013   Vår ref:33573 / 3 / HIT   Deres dato: Deres ref:

TILBAKEMELDING PÅ MELDING OM BEHANDLING AV PERSONOPPLYSNINGER

Vi viser til melding om behandling av personopplysninger, mottatt 26.02.2013. Meldingen gjelder prosjektet:

33573	*Professional Perspective on Everyday Life in Collective Centres*
Behandlingsansvarlig	*Høgskolen i Bergen, ved institusjonens øverste leder*
Daglig ansvarlig	*Helge Folkestad*
Student	*Samuel Collins*

Personvernombudet har vurdert prosjektet og finner at behandlingen av personopplysninger er meldepliktig i henhold til personopplysningsloven § 31. Behandlingen tilfredsstiller kravene i personopplysningsloven.

Personvernombudets vurdering forutsetter at prosjektet gjennomføres i tråd med opplysningene gitt i meldeskjemaet, korrespondanse med ombudet, eventuelle kommentarer samt personopplysningsloven og helseregisterloven med forskrifter. Behandlingen av personopplysninger kan settes i gang.

Det gjøres oppmerksom på at det skal gis ny melding dersom behandlingen endres i forhold til de opplysninger som ligger til grunn for personvernombudets vurdering. Endringsmeldinger gis via et eget skjema http://www.nsd.uib.no/personvern/meldeplikt/skjema.html. Det skal også gis melding etter tre år dersom prosjektet fortsatt pågår. Meldinger skal skje skriftlig til ombudet.

Personvernombudet har lagt ut opplysninger om prosjektet i en offentlig database, http://pvo.nsd.no/prosjekt.

Personvernombudet vil ved prosjektets avslutning, 30.06.2013, rette en henvendelse angående status for behandlingen av personopplysninger.

Vennlig hilsen

Vigdis Namtvedt Kvalheim

Hildur Thorarensen

Hildur Thorarensen tlf: 55 58 26 54
Vedlegg: Prosjektvurdering
Kopi: Samuel Collins, Kråkeneslien 3, 5153 BØNES

Avdelingskontorer / District Offices
OSLO: NSD. Universitetet i Oslo, Postboks 1055 Blindern, 0316 Oslo. Tel. +47-22 85 52 11. nsd@uio.no
TRONDHEIM: NSD. Norges teknisk-naturvitenskapelige universitet, 7491 Trondheim. Tel. +47-73 59 19 07. kyrre.svarva@svt.ntnu.no
TROMSØ: NSD. SVF, Universitetet i Tromsø, 9037 Tromsø. Tel. +47-77 64 43 36. nsdmaa@sv.uit.no

Personvernombudet for forskning

Prosjektvurdering - Kommentar

It is stated in the notification form that recruitment will partially be done via interviews, in that interviewees are asked to provide contact information for other potential interviewees. The Data Protection Official for Research recommends that the interviewees rather communicate the request on behalf of the researcher/student, and asks interested parties to contact the researcher/student.

According to the notification form there will be obtained verbal and written consent based on written information about the project and the processing of personal data. The Data Protection Official for Research finds the letter of information satisfactory according to the Personal Data Act.

The information will be registered on a private computer. The Data Protection Official for Research presupposes that the use of a private computer is in accordance with the routines for data security for Høgskolen i Bergen.

When the project is completed, by June 30th 2013, the data material will be made anonymous by deleting directly and indirectly identifying variables, and audio-recordings will be deleted. In order for the data to be fully anonymised, all directly identifying data, such as names/referance numbers must be deleted, and indirectly identifying data in the remaining material must be deleted or changed.