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Identifying Climate Change Frames within East African Settings of Displacement

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DECLARATION

I, Mellab Mkeli Soita, declare that this thesis is my original work and has not previously been submitted to another academic institution. Any other sources of information that are not originally mine I have acknowledged and included a reference list.

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Date: 22, July 2022

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I

ABSTRACT

Whether forced or voluntary, mobility related to climate change affects both developing and developed countries with the most vulnerable groups affected more. Humanitarian crises are a concern across the globe significantly when they contribute to rising levels of displacement. Climate change in connection with displacement has been framed in multiple ways across regions. Understanding how the climate change phenomenon is interpreted, perceived, and experienced in different settings is crucial to understanding what information various frames intend to highlight and the purpose therein.

In order to grasp the growing concern of humanitarian crises with respect to climate change, I explore how the climate change phenomenon is framed by humanitarian actors with a focus on displacement settings in East Africa. The objective of this thesis research is to identify climate change frames adopted by humanitarian actors within East African settings of displacement since the East African region houses a large number of displaced persons.

This thesis research follows a constructivist approach, which holds that reality is socially constructed and that there are multiple realities or ways of perceiving and interpreting phenomena depending on the social and natural circumstances. A combination of a systematic literature review and semi-structured interviewing procedures was adopted to explore the perspectives around the framing of climate change within the East African settings of displacement.

Findings indicate that climate change in the East Africa region as framed by humanitarian actors is perceived mainly by how it affects the displaced persons, and the organizations providing aid response, while also highlighting the dependence of the displaced persons on the natural environment. The conclusions are that the framing of climate change in this particular context is highly centered around: livelihood protection, need for physical safety, clean energy needs, environmental protection, local governance, donor requirements, and the implications on future humanitarian response. The frames highlight the context-specific circumstances, the perceived/constructed realities surrounding climate change and aid assistance, and the plight of displaced persons in East Africa and connect to the broader sustainable development goals.

LIST OF ACRONYMS

EU…………………………………………………………………..European Union

IDPs……………………………………………………………Internally Displaced Persons

IPCC…………………………………………………..Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change

NGOs………………………………………………………..Non-governmental Organizations

NRC…………………………………………………...….Norwegian Refugee Council

PA……………………………………………………………...…Practical Action

UK……………………………………………………………………United Kingdom

UNFCCC…………………..…….United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

UNHCR…………………………….……United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

WFP…………………………………………………………...World Food Programme

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CHAPTER 1

1. Introduction

1.0 Global climate change and the question of framing

Year by year, humanitarian challenges stemming from wars, conflicts, and extreme climate increasingly affect millions of people causing displacement and refugee crises (Burkle et al., 2014). Climate change alters weather patterns, increases the frequency of disasters, and migration patterns affect the availability of food, water, livelihoods, and even impact political stability leading to major humanitarian consequences (Nicoson et al., 2019, p. 19). In the recent past, the scale and frequency of climate change and resource scarcity catalyze the scale of crises that call for international humanitarian responses (Burkle et al., 2014, p. 19). In fact, climate change has increasingly become an issue of concern and has not just contributed to a rise in humanitarian crises but has affected the nature of humanitarian crises. Climate change can be defined as a consequence of direct or indirect human activity that alters the constitution of the natural atmosphere in addition to the natural climate variability observed over periods of time (UN, 1992, p. 7). Disasters related to climate change take many forms ranging from earthquakes, floods, droughts, and volcanoes/lakes/dams formations. Many of these disasters occur as slow processes of deforestation, soil salinity, land degradation, waterlogging, desertification, etc., often accelerated by human activities (Lonergan, 1998, p. 9). It, therefore, raises concerns about how to provide a humanitarian response in a way that slows down climate-related hazards in conflict-affected places (Peters & Dupar, 2020, p. 6).

Climate emergency framing has become a global phenomenon adopted widely by scientists, the mainstream media, global figures, and governments among others (Hodder & Martin, 2009; Juhola et al., 2011; McHugh et al., 2021; Payne, 2001). It is argued that the changing climate does not just lead to an increase in humanitarian crises but also affects the people disproportionately especially the developing countries and poor people affected more (Suarez et al., 2008, p. 62). Interestingly, the framing of climate change and the narratives around it do not just take multiple forms but have been changing over time. For example, Zwolski & Kaunert, (2011), maintain that the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) assessment reports pay more attention to the scientific aspects of climate change (p. 33), while Gach, 2019, argues that the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) besides focusing on the scientific aspects of the environment has come to also incorporate social aspects that surround climate change (p. 4).

Many actors, whether humanitarian, governments or even United Nations (UN) agencies contend that risk is the main link between conflict, climate change, and degradation of the environment (Peters & Dupar, 2020, p. 3). While climate activists affirm that depicting climate change as an emergency is the only way to get the required transformation in politics and global energy networks within a limited time (Hodder & Martin, 2009, p. 55), it is important to understand that framing does not involve giving false information but pairing the necessary information so as to give it greater weight for consideration (Nisbet, 2009, p. 16). While literature does highlight the environmental impacts of refugees and IDPs on host landscapes, on host communities, and how climate change continues to fuel rates of displacement (Tafere, 2018; Biswas & Quiroz, 1996; Jaber et al., 2004). NGOs have been identified as key actors in the protection of the environment (Jasanoff, 1997, p. 579), especially with some development NGOs increasingly showing interest in ensuring social and economic sustainable communities and a healthy and sustainable environment (Unerman & O'Dwyer, 2010; Vu et al., 2021). Therefore understanding how climate change is framed by humanitarian actors in the given settings of displacement populations would allow for the integration of the voice, perspectives, and experiences of actors directly involved in the lives of the vulnerable groups who make up a significant percentage of the world's population.

1.1 Aim and relevance:

To identify climate change frames adopted within East African settings of displacement

The goal of this thesis, therefore, is to identify the various frames used by humanitarian actors in refugee settings in relation to climate change. To do this, I explore the perspectives of humanitarian actors involved in the response to humanitarian crises in East African settings of displacement. By focusing on the East African region, I harness the perspectives of actors working within displacement settings that face almost similar climatic conditions. The findings of this thesis research contribute to the academic pool of resources on the various frames adopted on climate change as well as highlight the role that background factors such as identity and geography may have on climate change framing. The findings thereby offer an alternative understanding of the perceptions, interpretation, and understanding of the climate change phenomenon within settings of displacement.

1.2 Research questions

This thesis leans on the premise that climate change frames are constructed, and can be expressed in multiple ways. I will first explore the various ways climate change is framed through literature so as to be able to capture the various dimensions and perspectives of climate change framing by humanitarian actors in the East African region.

1. What global climate change frames are identified through the literature on climate change and displacement?
2. What climate change frames are adopted by humanitarian actors within East African settings of displacement?

CHAPTER 2

Different actors will act differently when faced with the same challenges (Fierke, 2013). Research on climate change frames used by global NGOs on social media established that the frames often took a diagnostic approach seeking to identify problems associated with climate change rather than suggesting solutions (Vu et al., 2021, p. 104). Whereas in the global system, states may use international organizations to pursue policies, and sometimes international organizations may tend to stray from the goals of efficiency, the advantage of NGOs is that they exercise power autonomously and independently from the state often in ways unanticipated by states at their creation (Barnett & Finnemore, 1999). It is also relevant to note that people from different backgrounds will construct issues differently depending on the elements they want to put across (Dewulf, 2013, p. 322). This means that there is a relationship between the identity of actors, their social environment, and how they construct knowledge in relation to a given phenomenon. It is therefore important to understand how certain groups perceive and frame climate change within their own special circumstances.

2. Theoretical approach: constructivist theory

To understand the assumptions this thesis research is leaning toward, I will look into the constructivist theory and its main assumptions.

According to constructivism, people develop knowledge through a process of meaning-making by constructing interpretations of their own experiences (Applefield et al., 2000, p. 37). Meaning is not created or discovered, it is constructed (Summer & Tribe, 2008, p. 61). Thus constructivism holds that the world is socially constructed (Theys, 2017). To construct means to bring a subject or an object that otherwise would not exist into being, with a particular meaning, and use it in a particular context. The key tenets of constructivism are agency and structure (*which are mutually constituted*) and identities and interests, where identities represent the actors' understanding of self, and this understanding guides the actors' actions and interests (Theys, 2017, p. 37). Agency refers to the ability of someone to act, while structure refers to the international system within which both material and ideational elements are entailed (Theys, 2017).

While rationalists emphasize the relevance of material interests, constructivists rather assert that in the social world meaning-making, interests and identity cannot be separated (Fierke, 2013, p. 191). It lays emphasis on the relevance of ideas as being equally powerful as

material interests and also focuses on knowledge creation rather than transmission allowing cognitive exchange through social interactions which allow individuals to form personal knowledge (Applefield et al., 2000, pp. 37-38). At the international level, constructivism illustrates the relevance of rules, language, norms, and values to understanding and explaining change (Fierke, 2013, p. 189). Norms refer to what is seen as standard and appropriate behavior for actors that assume a given identity (Katzenstein, 1996, p. 5). Constructivism also lays more focus on shared perceptions and norms of acceptable behavior; but does not dismiss that the structure and material factors play a crucial role in not just constituting but also in constraining actors (Fierke, 2013, p. 190). Besides that, it also asserts that different actors will choose to act differently when faced with similar challenges. This is because once social norms, assumptions, and values are associated with certain objects or subjects then, it becomes a social construction (Fierke, 2013, pp. 188-189). Norms can either be prescriptive, prohibitive, or permissive (Glanville, 2006, p. 155) and unlike permissive norms which exist largely in the international society, prescriptive norms exist often within local environments out of self-interest (Glanville, 2006, p. 160). From a constructivist's view, a system of shared values, beliefs, and ideas has the power to influence political and social action (Reus-Smit, 2013, p. 224).

Constructivism focuses on identity as the factor behind actors' behavior. It holds that states or individuals are social entities and therefore make meaning through norms that give them an identity in their given contexts (Fierke, 2013, p. 190). It is also argued that norms and ideas that are institutionalized shape what actors view as possible both ethically and in practice (Reus-Smit, 2013, p. 226). The difference in behaviors may depend on factors such as history, languages, values, and cultures which then determine how actors perceive situations, policies, or actions. Therefore constructivism places more focus on social facts and how changes in what people believe have the potential to influence politics, it does not deliberately attempt to make claims about the nature of social structures or predict political outcomes. It only attempts to explain how things are the way they are (Finnemore & Sikkink, 2001, p. 393).

CHAPTER 3.

3. Literature review

This chapter is divided into 4 sections. In the first section, I attempt to highlight the discourses in relation to the crises that surround climate change, displacement, migration, and environmental degradation as portrayed in literature. In the second section, I attempt to define and show the difference between discourse, frames, and narratives. The third section is a summary of some of the major climate change frames highlighted through literature from a global perspective. Finally, in the fourth section, I briefly touch upon humanitarian identity, norms from organization to organization, and how that may influence the framing of climate change.

3.0 Displacement and crises linked to the global climate change

Climate change and its effects such as rising sea levels and changing precipitation are affecting the ecosystem, humans, and biodiversity both in developed, and developing countries. And while it is projected to worsen, the countries that largely rely on the ecosystem are more likely to have also their development and economic stability threatened (Hussein, 2011, p. 590). Environmental disasters such as floods or earthquakes may lead to forced migration or displacement but often environmental-related displacement occurs as a slow process such as desertification and negatively affects populations that rely on the natural environment for livelihoods (Dun & Gemenne, 2008, p. 10). In recent years, the distinction between manmade and natural disasters is becoming less pertinent with disasters causing more strain on the humanitarian response (Burke et al., 2014, p. 21). Extreme climate and weather events such as floods or drought-related food insecurity especially in developing countries contribute to humanitarian crises by increasing displacements (IPCC, 2022, p. 11). A crisis can be defined as "an event or an evolution that is widely perceived by members of relevant communities to constitute urgent threats to core community values and structures" (Boin et al., 2009, p. 89). There is a high emphasis put on human activities such as pollution, and unsustainable land use that escalate degradation and destroy the ecosystems exposing humans to even more vulnerability (IPCC, 2022, p. 12). In itself, environmental degradation whether seen as a "cause" or "effect" has indeed also gained attention in global political discourse besides the traditional causes such as political instability, conflicts, and economic tensions, linked to the increase in refugee populations (Lonergan, 1998, p. 6). Political discourse refers to text or verbal communication of political actors or institutions such as members of parliament, government, or political parties at international, national, or local

levels (Van Dijk, 1997). It is projected that changes in sea level, mean temperature, precipitation, and extreme weather events such as storms, heat waves, floods, etc. will contribute to rising cases of mobility, but due to the high uncertainty around climate change, it is difficult to make clear predictions on how that would affect population and migration patterns (Tacoli, 2009, p. 513).

The links between conflict, natural resource scarcity, and environmental degradation have also dominated peace and conflict discourses (Ide, 2016, p. 69). While increased displacement is likely to be attributed to climate change, the extent of displacement is not just dependent on how much the rising temperatures affect rising sea levels, rainfall, or extreme weather patterns but also on the availability of adaptation measures to deal with environmental challenges (Hartmann, 2010, p. 238). In fact, the international community has increasingly been concerned about the environmental effects of large refugee groups on the local landscape (Jacobsen, 1997, p. 33). To a large extent, environmental agendas raised by the development and humanitarian NGOs have helped create awareness of desertification and deforestation and how this is causing new migration patterns and high numbers of climate refugees (Ollitrault, 2009, p. 9). Though, it is misleading to have the presumption that climate change-related mobility only takes place across borders and from developing to developed states (Tacoli, 2009, p. 515).

Defining migration related to change or degradation of the environment is quite challenging because it is difficult to isolate environmental challenges from other factors that cause migration. Therefore, often environmental change is seen as a contributing factor rather than the only factor in migration or displacement (Dun & Gemenne, 2008, p. 10). "Environmental refugees" can be said to be people who are compelled to seek sustenance elsewhere because they no longer have secure livelihoods in their homelands due to environmental factors such as drought, floods, water shortage, desertification, deforestation, erosion of the soil, and a changing climate (Hartmann, 2010, p. 235). McGregor, argues against the term "environmental refugees" as it portrays that environmental degradation alongside natural disasters and climate change are driving factors for rising cases of refugees or migration as a response strategy, this argument undermines the role of human agency, or bad environmental politics on disasters (McGregor, 1994, p. 120). Migration can also be forced such as in the case of government resettlements or voluntary in search for better livelihoods (Dun & Gemenne, 2008, p. 10).

Discourses that emphasize the relationship between conflict and the environment stress that the state has a primary role to play in climate adaptation to enhance security and

prevent conflict over natural resources (Dewulf, 2013, p. 326). There is a contention that less developed countries may be less equipped to mitigate climate challenges due to a lack of expertise and wealth, therefore, leading to conflict in the receiving areas (Reuveny, 2007, p. 657). Although the relationship between climate change, environmental change, and displacement is often misrepresented, it has gained a lot of recognition, especially pertaining to who should legitimately gain the benefits of international relief (McGregor, 1994, 129). The formation of the UNFCCC in 1992 as an international body with the objective to prevent destructive human-induced climate change, followed by decades of the international community deliberating negotiating rules that would be binding for all members (Falkner, 2016, p. 1107). These range from international negotiations on the reduction of emissions to social negotiations on lowering household energy consumption (Kurz & Prosser, 2021, p. 71). The establishment of the Paris Agreement, for example, does not coerce powers into making drastic changes in their emissions but allows room for international collaboration toward durable solutions (Falkner, 2016, p. 1108).

Livelihoods are placed at the center of the climate-conflict nexus (Baalen & Mobjörk, 2018; Hussein, 2011). In fact, critical research argues that economic growth is the key to reducing the dependence of less developed countries on the environment, though this kind of growth increases the demand for energy and associated technological advancement which may, in turn, accelerate climate change and its effects on the most vulnerable (Reuveny, 2007, p. 669). The Paris Agreement allows room for the shift from the distribution of conflicts surrounding targets that bind, to bottom-up independent voluntary pledges of mitigation measures (Falkner, 2016). The Paris Agreement is a climate change conference where a climate change agreement was adopted with the goal of setting the world on a pathway towards addressing climate challenges (Savaresi, 2016). The discourse of Green governmentality still retains a strong image (Bäckstranda & Lövbrand, 2019). This is a kind of governmentality that follows a science-driven and centralized multilateral order connected to a top-down form of global climate monitoring and implementation of mitigation techniques (Bäckstrand & Lövbrand, 2007). There is still a contention that modern development and environmental perspectives remain disconnected from the real experiences of producers, users, and traders of wood fuel which is unjust (Munro et al., 2017, p. 636). Since the majority of refugees often depend either on the environment or humanitarian aid for survival due to limited livelihood options (Barasa et al., 2022). It, therefore, becomes challenging to standardize humanitarian assistance owing to the varied nature of emergency situations and the short duration of many humanitarian projects (Hilhorst & Schmiemann,

2002, p. 498). Though, discourses around the transition to low-carbon energy have largely led to an increase in energy-saving and emission-reduction policies which have subsequently led to gradual improvement of energy technologies (Falkner, 2016, p. 1113). Still, in some situations what national and international bodies may see as threats to the use of natural resources may be seen by refugees and local communities as sustainable use (Jacobsen, 1997, p. 20). Therefore understanding the varied linkages between climate change and migration or refugee crises in different geographical locations becomes crucial to understanding the frames used within the same contexts.

3.1 Displacement and climate change in the East African region

The nature and magnitude may vary but the region of East Africa faces both internal and external displacement (Juma, 2003, p. 239). The region hosts roughly about 100 refugee settlements and camps (WFP, 2021). Refugees are "people who have fled war, violence, conflict or persecution and have crossed an international border to find safety in another country" (UNHCR, 2021b). While IDPs are "persons or groups of persons who have been forced or obliged to flee or to leave their homes or places of habitual residence, as a result of or in order to avoid the effects of armed conflict, situations of generalized violence, violations of human rights or natural or human-made disasters, but have not crossed an internationally recognized state border" (UNHCR, 1998). Though displaced persons are expected to return to their homes or eventually get resettled, many of them end up staying in camps for years or decades leading to environmental damage over the course of time (Tafere, 2018, p. 191). The current population of persons forcibly displaced worldwide was recorded to have hit 82.4 million, with roughly 26 million being refugees and 48 million persons being Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs), 85 percent of them are hosted in developing countries mostly in neighboring countries to theirs (UNHCR, 2021). The population of East Africa is roughly 445 million (Worldbarometer, 2019) and the region currently hosts about 4.5 million refugees and 8.8 million IDPs a significant increase from the last decade, with Democratic Republic of Congo, Sudan, South Sudan, and Somalia accounting for most refugee numbers (WFP, 2021).

3.1.1 Environmental-related challenges in the region

In East Africa, environmental-related climate change is linked to conflict mainly through; increased migration, worsening livelihoods, changing pastoral and mobility patterns, elite exploitation of local grievances, and increased operations of armed groups tactics from individuals who are unable to sustain themselves through legal means (Baalen & Mobjörk,

2018, p. 558). It is also proven that if too many people live in one area they have the potential to irrevocably degrade the area (Lonergan, 1998, p. 5). The UNFCCC itself pays special attention among others to countries with arid or semi-arid areas and those liable to drought and desertification (UN, 1992, p. 15), and the East African region is particularly prone to these vulnerabilities. Traditionally war has obtained more attention because it threatens the survival of governments directly, but climate change to a large extent seems to impact governments indirectly and particularly those of developing states to a much higher extent than the developed states (Hodder & Martin, 2009, p. 56). Countries that rely more on the natural environment for livelihoods are more likely to suffer in the event of extreme weather, environmental degradation, or declining freshwater resources (Reuveny, 2007, p. 658), although it may be problematic to assume direct causal links between climate change and migration (Tacoli, 2009, p. 516).

There is a strong link between climate change and livelihoods in the region which heavily relies on rain-fed agriculture (Hussein, 2011, p. 598; Baalen & Mobjörk, 2018, p. 558). In fact, in East Africa, food security, human health, water resources, and biodiversity are some of the main areas vulnerable to climate change. Food security particularly is largely affected by changes in the planting seasons and precipitation patterns (Apollo & Mbah, 2021, p. 2; Hussein, 2011, p. 590). A decrease in rainfall may have economic effects on people's livelihoods through a decline in agricultural produce which then may trigger mobility (Tacoli, 2009, p. 517). Indeed there is high confidence that impacts of climate change have led to reduced food and water security which may limit the achievement of sustainable development goals[1] (IPCC, 2022, p. 10). Extreme weather such as droughts, floods, or wildfires destroys crops on a large scale leaving many in need of humanitarian assistance (Apollo & Mbah, 2021, p. 4). It is also likely that there may be increased precipitation leading to storms, erosion, and water management issues (Hussein, 2011, p. 591).

In the region, camp and shelter construction followed by energy consumption was found to be the two leading causes of deforestation in communities hosting refugees and IDPs (Tafere, 2018, p. 198). Subsequently, within refugee communities, deforestation is also linked to increased conflict with local host communities due to over-reliance on unsustainable sources mostly for energy, shelter, and even livelihoods (Grafham & Sandwell, 2019, p. 994; Jacobsen, 1997, p. 19). Given that many refugee camps or humanitarian operations are often set up in areas where there are already limited resources, or infrastructure (Neves et al., 2021,

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[1] Sustainable development goals refers to the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development adopted in 2015 by all United Nations member states (https://sdgs.un.org/goals)

p. 1). Besides firewood collection and charcoal burning for energy or grass for thatching and timber harvesting for shelter purposes, opening up land for farming is also a leading cause of deforestation around refugee settlements necessitating conservation measures and energy efficiency (Barasa et al., 2022; Tafere, 2018, p. 198). In many host communities refugee crisis is consequently associated with increased depletion of natural resources (Biswas & Quiroz, 1996). Particularly, in developing countries, deforestation around IDP and refugee camps is said to increase rapidly since often displaced persons rely on biomass, which is either obtained through humanitarian aid or collected from the surrounding environment (Biswas & Quiroz, 1996, p. 27).

3.1.2 Some adopted mitigation approaches

 It was acknowledged by UNFCCC that global climate change requires collaboration from all countries in participating in an effective international response with respect to their different capabilities and socioeconomic status (UN, 1992, p. 2). Across East Africa, there have been varied climate-related policy changes mainly targeting mitigation, climate risk assessment and management, creating awareness, strengthening climate governance, and green investment (Apollo & Mbah, 2021). The main challenge of humanitarian response is ensuring that constraints on the displaced are removed and chances of future displacements are lessened (McGregor, 1994, p. 130). Different environmental protection approaches have been adopted to address the over-reliance on wood fuel. Uganda and Ethiopia are some of the countries that adopted tree planting to combat deforestation and land degradation, Tanzania established wood fuel plantations while Kenya and Ethiopia have invested more in solar stoves. Although many of these countries incorporated environmental education within their approaches, it was also established that refugees and host communities were not actively involved in designing these measures (Kakonge, 2000).

Climate change information is complex, its causes and effects cannot just be applied from one geographical location or community to another (Apollo & Mbah, 2021, p. 10). It is important to note that, throughout the East African region local communities differ in their vulnerability to climate-related environmental change depending on their reliance on natural resources and adaptation capacity (Baalen & Mobjörk, 2018, p. 559), with the poor and vulnerable often exposed to extra burdens (Hussein, 2011, p. 598). Migration and diversification of income opportunities are seen as a strategy to reduce vulnerability and even evade non-environmental related risks such as economic shocks. Although mobility is often seen as disruptive and necessitating stricter measures (Tacoli, 2009, p. 514). The IPCC report

itself stresses the vulnerability of populations in the face of climate change and how adaptation measures are necessary (IPCC, 2022). But there tends to be unclear guidance on what aspects to focus on to create sufficient climate change awareness (Apollo & Mbah, 2021, p. 9). There are many misconceptions about the causes and effects of climate change especially in the region with displacement-affected persons often blaming bad governance or conflict for climate-related problems (Apollo & Mbah, 2021, p. 10). In the same way, climate change may affect displacement-affected persons differently from the host communities given the restrictions and circumstances surrounding them. Therefore context-specific knowledge plays a very crucial role in the framing and portrayal of climate change.

3.2 Differentiating discourses, frames, and narratives

This section illustrates how the words; discourses, frames, and narratives will be applied in this thesis.

Governments, international organizations, NGOs, and other actors have been at the forefront in alerting the public concerning environmental destruction and issuing climate change warnings (Ollitrault, 2009, p. 9). What is continually said or written about climate change shapes individuals' behaviors and preferences by guiding what is seen as socially acceptable or unacceptable ways of relating to the environment (Kurz & Prosser, 2021, p. 71; Fløttum & Gjerstad, 2017, p. 1). Therefore, understanding framing, narratives, and discourses are key to understanding how the legitimization, justification, and normalization of social actions take place through verbal or written communication. Discursive accounts of global climate politics are not just based on interest but carry power through the expression of language, ideas, and knowledge concerning the environment (Bäckstrand & Lövbrand, 2019, p. 521). Distinguishing discourses, frames, and also narratives can be quite challenging though for the purpose of this thesis I attempt to refer to the meaning of the concepts as applicable, hence the definitions should only be used as general reference depending on the given context as the use of concepts can be very sensitive.

Discourse refers to a combination of ideas, categorizations, or concepts that are produced and re-produced until they are transformed into a set of practices that make meaning in social and physical realities (Hajer, 1995, p. 44). Understanding discourse then explains why actors may conceive certain interests and devise actions to help pursue their interests since identities influence interests and interests subsequently influence actions. Discourse can also structure, facilitate, shape, re-shape, permit or restrict human action (Ide,

2016, p. 72). But, unlike discourses frames tend to offer a single interpretation of a given situation and prescribe a suitable approach to be taken in that context (Payne, 2001, p. 39).

Framing can be described as the selection and application of language strategically for a specific purpose (Fløttum & Gjerstad, 2017, p. 2), or cognitive shortcuts we use to make sense of complex phenomena by putting them into understandable categories (Kaufman et al., 2013; Grear & Dehm, 2020). It is also a process through which different issues or events expressed through perspectives gain different meanings (Dewulf, 2013, p. 321). Through framing an issue and often its causes are defined and a pathway for corrective measures or mitigation is made (Grafham & Greenberg, 2011, p. 324). Discourses are often used in an abstract manner to put forth ideas and produce categories of practices while frames are a more precise way of constructing meaning. Therefore it is challenging to identify frames without looking at the broader discourses (Dewulf, 2013, p. 323). New ideas could potentially be turned into frames that define the issue and suggest a course of action (Finnemore & Sikkink, 2001, p. 409). Similar to constructivism frames also help us make sense of and interpret the world around us but it doesn't stop at construction but involves also the active presentation of our understanding of these constructions to others (Kaufman et al., 2013).

Framing requires strategic communication that will evoke action and that means using communication that is centered around people's beliefs, norms, and values (Vu et al., 2021). Constructivism lays a lot of focus on the role of speech and argumentation, this is because these strategies carry the power to persuade people about what is relevant and what is not in their social life (Finnemore & Sikkink, 2001, p. 402). While framing can take on many directions including creating an understanding of the issue, decision making, and problem management, where understanding involves detecting a problem, gathering information concerning the problem, and then defining the problem. Decision-making involves developing a range of options, assessing them, and then making an appropriate selection. Managing the problem on the other hand involves framing its implementation, monitoring, and evaluation (Dewulf, 2013, p. 322-323). Framing carries different implications depending on if it is presented as a global, local or national problem (Dewulf, 2013, p. 326). Since frames do not just contribute to creating boundaries for political discourse but also compete with other frames, it explains why some highly disputed or contested frames may still be adopted by actors that intend to construct certain norms (Payne, 2001, p. 44).

Narratives on the other hand can be said to be similar to storytelling having characters *(such as the public, institutions, states, etc.)*, portraying different roles *(such as heroes,*

transgressors, victims, etc.), taking place in a particular setting, scenario, and having an ethical lesson (Kurz & Prosser, 2021, p. 73). This then means that through narratives problems are defined, causal factors pointed out and possible solutions established (Fløttum & Gjerstad, 2017, p. 2). Perceptions about the environment can be said to be non-objective since they are dependent on one's personal, cultural, historical, or political background and therefore also on narratives, ideas, or identities (Ide, 2016, p. 70). Hence, understanding how climate change narratives are constructed plays a key role in helping us recognize how they influence us on a personal, societal, and even global scale (Fløttum & Gjerstad, 2017, p. 1). But before looking at the major frames adopted within the East African settings of displacement exploring the existing frames gives an overview of defining factors surrounding the framing of climate change.

3.3 Understanding humanitarian identity, principles, and norms

NGOs can be defined as private voluntary organizations or non-profit organizations, independent from state or political interests, and have an interest in solving problems in society (Lassa, 2022, p. 5). The international community has been at the forefront in making substantial efforts to reduce the impacts of both natural and technologically triggered disasters on people and livelihoods (O`Brien et al., 2006, p. 65). Non-state actors such as businesses and NGOs have made voluntary efforts toward climate action (Falkner, 2016, p. 1125), with some NGOs particularly, recognized within the united system as key players in environmental protection (Jasanoff, 1997, p. 269). Humanitarian NGOs and other non-state actors have actively been mediators between states and displacement-affected persons precisely because they possess characteristics that lack in the state such as access to resources, commitment, professionalism, and willingness to assist and protect the persons affected by displacement (Juma, 2003, p. 236). In socio-environmental conflicts, the mutual standpoint is often neglected to highlight the relevance of discursively constructed interests, situation assessments, and identities (Ide, 2016). Humanitarian work in itself encompasses a set of interactions, permissions, and knowledge that may be complex (Grafham et al., 2018, p. 8). Indeed, humanitarian principles do not just define practice but are also revised and reshaped as a result of experience from practice making the interpretation of principles a social process that involves interaction and sense-making (Hilhorst & Schmiemann, 2002, p. 493). Therefore, strategic framings can become normalized into institutional practices to a point where their rationale is no longer questioned or contested but accepted as the normal way of approaching or solving problems (Juhola et al., 2011, p. 447).

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Identities and roles are a crucial influence on norms and interests (Mitchell & Carpenter, 2019, p. 419). Even though international organizations may be independent in pursuit of their own agendas they also incorporate many other agendas and multiple sources of influence (Barnett & Finnemore, 1999, p. 705). Outside state interests, some NGOs have also taken key responsibilities in climate negotiations using strategic language framing in an attempt to influence outcomes (Gach, 2019, p. 6). International organizations, for example, do not just establish their own rules and norms but part of their mission often involves spreading and enforcing global values and norms (Barnett & Finnemore, 1999, p. 713). While it is highly contentious whether group identities are inherited, imagined, or constructed (Finnemore & Sikkink, 2001, p. 410). Hilhorst & Schmiemann, (2002), argue that humanitarian principles are actually embedded in the organizational culture. Whether responding to natural disasters or conflict, humanitarian action is aimed at alleviating suffering and saving lives (p. 491). International organizations may act purposefully where members pursue policies and use the broader culture of the international community to construct the social world (Barnett & Finnemore, 1999, p. 726). But the challenge is that NGO operations are also directed and shaped within the frameworks of a state, where the latter still pursues its own interests and survival (Juma, 2003, p. 236). Of course, it cannot be assumed that all organizations are rational and would acknowledge and adopt what is seen as an appropriate policy response (Haas, 2004, p. 572), but it is in the process of application and sense-making of humanitarian principles often from teams in the field that an organizational culture emerges (Hilhorst & Schmiemann, 2002, p. 493).

NGOs are increasingly concerned with environmentalism, and the rising need to protect and improve the natural environment (Yekini et al., 2021; Peters & Dupar, 2020; Stroup & Wong, 2018). Though in the past, humanitarian aid assistance would focus on the displaced persons while excluding the surrounding environment (Juma, 2003, p. 237). One factor that challenges humanitarian principles (*or the humanitarian rules of engagement-emphasis*) is the changing nature of situations that require humanitarian assistance (Hilhorst & Schmiemann, 2002, p. 492). Due to the complexity of displacement situations, shrinking resources and the multiple actors pursuing varied interests NGOs find themselves faced with a clash of norms and dilemmas (Juma, 2003, p. 236). The key humanitarian principles of humanity, impartiality, and neutrality as enshrined in humanitarian law and embodied within the Red Cross Movement emerged as a result of experience from war situations and were thought to be universal and static. But the recent developments such proliferation of humanitarian organizations, complexities of humanitarian contexts, and

changes in the nature of crises have influenced debates and negotiations around humanitarian principles (Hilhorst & Schmiemann, 2002, p. 490). Largely, humanitarian actors are often perceived to be protectors, therefore if the quality and standard of the assistance are compromised may go unchallenged (Juma, 2003, p. 237). Actually, arguments of ethics have not been absent from climate politics they have not taken the dominant position either (Mitchell & Carpenter, 2019, p. 416). But besides the debated applicability of classical humanitarian principles, notions of development have brought about a new generation of principles of accountability, appropriateness, and contextuality (Hilhorst & Schmiemann, 2002, p. 492).

Much of the world's environmental politics do take place outside the state, where actors such as civil society come together set agendas and mobilize resources to pursue their agendas or change social understandings (Finnemore & Sikkink, 2001, p. 400). Referencing the norm cycle to explore how climate framing by UNFCCC has changed over time from the Kyoto protocol to the current Paris Agreement, Gach illustrates that how climate change is framed has an impact on how it is adopted majorly by states or civil society (Gach, 2019). Organizations pay attention to and respond to only other actors within their environment but also to norms and cultural patterns that shape their own missions and how others view their organizations or the actors themselves (Barnett & Finnemore, 1999, p. 703). Although intentional strategies can highly influence the transition from knowledge to action and participate in the construction and dissemination of more efficacious information and technologies (Jasanoff, 1997, p. 581). The environment within which an organization exists can also create competitive pressure that may push for responsive behavior (Barnett & Finnemore, 1999, p. 704). NGOs being active brokers of climate change information, how they pass on information has a major influence on how it is understood by the public, and if it will elicit the support of engagement in climate action (Vu et al., 2021).

Humanitarian NGOs often respond to immediate needs of food, water, shelter, and health but if material needs that sustain lives remain unaddressed, displacement-affected persons may still have their human rights as stipulated by the international community unmet (Juma, 2003, p. 237). The increased frequency and intensity of climate-related events, it has necessitated new ways of environmental perception and integration of the rising risks into all areas of humanitarian response (Suarez et al., 2008, p. 65). The complexity between place and climate requires humanitarian organizations to rethink the future of humanitarian response by forging partnerships that not only encourage the reduction of emissions that cause global warming but also encourage the reversal of the social construction of

vulnerability (Suarez et al., 2008, p. 62). It is recommended that beyond sustainable development goals and disaster risk reduction, in order to protect the environment, the impacts of humanitarian and development aid should also be incorporated into humanitarian response (Tafere, 2018, p. 199). Investment in a more comprehensive approach that combines hazards mitigation, adaptation to climate change, and promotes sustainable human development is necessary (O`Brien et al., 2006, p. 69). In fact, awareness of the climate change challenge meant that even donors to humanitarian organizations have to raise funding and recognize the growing need to incorporate development assistance in humanitarian response (Nicoson et al., 2019, p. 7). And since norm entrepreneurs often use persuasion techniques to convince the public or relevant actors to accept a norm against other norms, therefore having an organizational platform becomes very crucial (Zwolski & Kaunert, 2011, p. 25).

3.4 Literature review summary

Global climate change is affecting humans and nature both in developing and developed states and is projected to keep worsening. The growing extreme climate and weather events are contributing to increasing mobility and humanitarian crises which have not just gained attention in the global political discourse but are also motivating international collaborations towards action. Isolating environmental factors from other causes of humanitarian crises is indeed challenging due to the varied range of related compounding factors. East Africa is among the regions housing high numbers of refugees and IDPs globally. The region experiences a wide range of extreme weather and climatic events with the vulnerable displacement-affected populations affected more. To a large extent, climate change in this region is described in terms of degrading environment, deforestation, and dwindling livelihoods options, because a big portion of the population relies on the natural environment for a living. Though some mitigation measures have been adopted around refugee housing communities, the complexity of climate change has necessitated community-specific strategies so as to lessen constraints and vulnerabilities. The relationship between climate change discourses, narratives, and frames is crucial in grasping how the phenomenon is perceived and presented both at global, regional, and national levels and also what is presented as solutions to the same challenge. Nevertheless, understanding how the identity of humanitarian NGOs and the environment in which they operate shapes their behavior, response, and interest also creates ground to grasp the framing of climate change among humanitarian actors in the region.

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CHAPTER 4

4. Methods

The objective of this thesis research is to identify climate change frames adopted by humanitarian actors within the East African settings of displacement. This chapter is organized into 3 main sections: the first section describes the East African context in relation to the region's climatic conditions and displacement in the face of climate change. The second section covers the research design which encompasses the beliefs around the chosen data collection and analysis, the type of research conducted, and the strategy used for sampling, data collection, and analysis. In the third section, I discuss the methodological limitations encountered and issues related to trustworthiness and how that may have an effect pertaining to the applicability and transferability of the research findings.

4.0 The East African context

The region encloses the most eastern countries in the continent and those in the Horn of Africa. The East African region compromises these countries: Burundi, Djibouti, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Rwanda, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan, Tanzania, and Uganda. The climate of the region is mostly tropical though precipitation and average temperatures are affected by elevation levels. The vegetation of East Africa ranges from areas of wet grasslands and woodlands to those with thorny bushes and semi-aridity. The region hosts over 160 ethnic communities (Harold & Anthony, 2021), and heavily relies on agriculture and tourism for its economy, which is highly affected by climate change (Apollo & Mbah, 2021, p. 8). Extreme weather events such as droughts, floods, and wildfires are frequent events across the region (Apollo & Mbah, 2021). In East Africa, food and agricultural security, tourism, human health (*heat stress, air pollution, vector/food or water bone diseases*), coastal development, water resources, and biodiversity are some of the areas that experience extensive negative effects of climate change (Hussein, 2011, p. 590). Biodiversity is greatly affected by climate change, including plant and animal species that cannot survive the shifts in climate decline (Apollo & Mbah, 2021, p. 5), as a result of climate change's effects on the frequency, intensity, and predictability on precipitation (Hussein, 2011, p. 590). Therefore a significant percentage of humanitarian response in East Africa is dedicated to climate change and natural disasters (WFP, 2021).
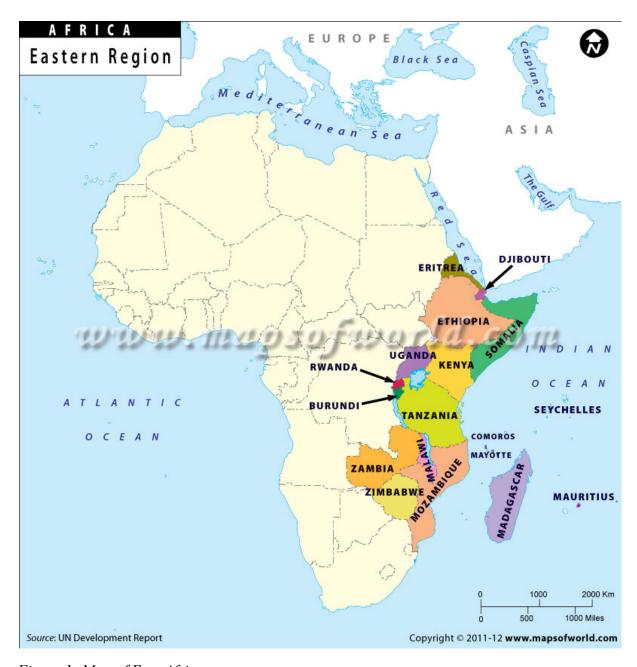
Figure 1: Map of East Africa

4.1 Epistemological and ontological positioning

This thesis research follows the underlying beliefs around interpretivism. Given that all areas of inquiry are shaped and framed by our own assumptions and understanding of knowledge and reality (Summer & Tribe, 2008, p. 54). In science, constructivism is used commonly interchangeably with relativism, or interpretivism (Crotty, 2004). I will not go into detail about these terms but they all hold that reality has many truths. The aim of interpretivism is to give a more informed understanding/construction and the way in which a researcher will interact with the researched is subjective and as an independent unit (Summer & Tribe, 2008,

p. 59). In general, interpretive approaches are based on discourse to construct knowledge through meaning-making (Kanbur & Shaffer, 2005, p. 5). While positivist approaches hold that there is only one objective measurable reality that exists, interpretism/relativism, on the other hand, emphasizes that since meanings are socially constructed then there are multiple intangible realities that are associated with our own experiences (Summer & Tribe, 2008, p. 61). Besides the ontological standpoint that social phenomena are socially constructed, it asserts that our understanding of the social world is always being recreated or revised (Bryman, 2016, p. 29). It is important to note that constructionism can be seen as an ontological standpoint that is in opposition to objectivism (Bryman, 2016, p. 29). As Bryman puts it, constructionism following an interpretivist epistemology allows the researcher to view reality not as external from actors nor a constraint to individuals but as an ongoing exercise of social actors. Therefore, suggesting that people construct meanings to help them understand the world (Bryman, 2016, p. 30). Constructivism itself doesn't follow any single method or research design, what method the researcher chooses depends on the question at hand (Finnemore & Sikkink, 2001, p. 396). But since the data to be collected for this thesis is more perceptual than quantifiable it necessitates a qualitative procedure.

This research follows a qualitative inductive approach. A qualitative strategy is suitable for this purpose because it embodies various approaches to capturing and understanding phenomena in their unique context without strictly having to follow strict sequential steps (O`dwyer & Bernauer, 2013, p. 25). Unlike deductive reasoning where the researcher draws on what is known in a particular domain to formulate a hypothesis that has to be tested for it to be accepted or rejected inductive research emphasizes generating a theory (Bryman, 2016, p. 32). Since qualitative research assumes the existence of multiple realities and perceptions as opposed to objective static truth, it holds that both the researcher and the participant/respondent are co-constructors of knowledge and therefore contribute to an even richer, extensive, and more comprehensive understanding of reality (O`dwyer & Bernauer, 2013, p. 27).

4.2. Sample selection

A purposeful convenient sampling technique is employed. Convenient sampling is a technique that allows the researcher to select elements that are easily accessible to them (O`dwyer & Bernauer, 2013, p. 83), as I was able to access the sample through the organization that I previously worked for during an internship. I was also able to select actors that were working directly within settings of displacement in the East African region. The

strength of non-probability purposeful sampling is that it focuses on elements that possess characteristics that are of interest to the researcher and the units sampled epitomize the area of interest (O`dwyer & Bernauer, 2013, p. 83; Bryman 2016, p. 408). Therefore, I focused on actors working with refugees or internally displaced persons residing in camps or in similar environments. The actors selected specialize in the areas of Livelihood protection, shelter assistance, energy, and environment or head unit that encompass one or more of the following areas.

The sample

The sample consisted of selected humanitarian/development actors working with displacement-affected persons in the East African region. The focus was on 3 organizations: 1 humanitarian, the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC), 1 UN aid agency, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), and 1 developmental charity organization, Practical Action (PA). Some of the interviewees were based in country offices while others were based at the Headquarters. I chose to focus on a sample within the East African region only because the region experienced similar climatic changes therefore their understanding of climate change would be easily relatable even to me as the researcher.

1. **The Norwegian Refugee Council**

NRC is an independent humanitarian organization working in crises across 35 countries providing both emergency and long-term support to those forced to flee. They work to protect and offer support to displaced persons and also help them build their future. NRC specializes in the following areas: Education, food security, shelter provision, management of refugee camps, legal assistance, and providing water, hygiene, and sanitation among others (NRC, 2021).

2. **UNHCR**

UNHCR is a UN refugee agency dedicated to saving lives, protecting human rights, and building a better life for refugees, stateless persons, and forcibly displaced communities. With over 70 years of experience, the UNHCR works to ensure that anyone fleeing war, violence, disaster or persecution has a right to seek asylum and find refuge (UNHCR, 2021b).

3. **Practical Action**

This is an innovative international development group working across Africa, Asia, and Latin America. It is mainly known to be a development-oriented charity organization that has a

long-standing experience working often in rural and marginalized communities. PA works often with humanitarian organizations particularly the UNHCR to merge its developmental approaches with humanitarian aid. Its vision is to find solutions to the world's toughest problems especially those worsened by persistent gender inequality and catastrophic climate change (Practical Action, 2021).

The sample consisted of 8 participants 4 from NRC, 3 from PA, and 1 from UNHCR. The sample consisted of participants from different levels ranging from global, regional, national, and local offices. The sample was representative of 5 East African countries namely: Sudan, Somalia, Kenya, Tanzania, and Rwanda with some of the actors working in more than 1 country. The advantage of a small sample is that the process of data collection, transcription, and analysis becomes relatively easier within a limited time to achieve saturation of data to a point where no new codes are emerging after repeated analyses as compared to having a larger sample.

4.3 Data collection

A combination of systematic literature review and semi-structured interviewing was adopted to collect qualitative data. Qualitative research is considered useful in developing a richer understanding. Combining methods also provide a great opportunity for triangulation and limits the generation of unbiased results. This method is an approach where the research question necessitates an additional perspective (Morse, 2009), as in this case both the literature contribution on the subject area and participant responses from the context is needed to establish reasonable findings. Often mixed methods approaches refer to the combining of qualitative and quantitative methods (Bryman, 2016), but in this case, both strategies are both qualitative and therefore better explained as a multi-method approach as described by (Morse, 2009). Both methods have clear and complete procedures and will be adopted separately and sequentially, nevertheless, the results from these 2 data collection strategies will be synthesized together.

4.3.1 Systematic literature review

The use of secondary data to develop an understanding of the subject area, has the advantage that it allows the researcher to relate the primary data with an already existing wide range of resources (Irwin, 2013, p. 296). Using systematic literature reviewing allows the researcher to exclude materials that fail to meet the established minimum criteria (Bryman, 2016, p. 102).

The review included peer-reviewed and published materials, including articles with varied theories and methods but relevant to the main objective. Since climate change, effects might vary over long periods of time. Adopting a systematic review limits researcher bias and allows for a more thorough analysis and develops a balanced summary of literature (Bryman, 2016, p. 98). Employing a secondary analysis widely involves exploring literature on global climate change and displacement, climate change-displacement nexus in East Africa, context framing around climate change, and NGO and humanitarian organizations` identity. This procedure also contributes to more reliable conclusions through exploration of the topic area in a combined strategy. Combining a systematic literature review with semi-structured qualitative interviewing provides a great opportunity for triangulation of findings, and also establishes the emerging findings specific to the East African context in comparison with the discourse and frames on climate change from differing levels.

4.3.2 Qualitative interviewing

Interviewing is a great tool to understand the experiences of others (Seidman, 2006, p. 9), and qualitative interviewing besides being a flexible method of data collection, could generate rich findings for coding (Bryman, 2016, p. 427). Semi-structured interviews were conducted online through either zoom or Teams, this is because the participants were all located in different countries, so online was the easiest and most convenient way to reach them. Written consent was given verbally before the start of each interview after I re-read the consent form to the participants to get verbal consent. One benefit of recorded data is that it also allows for a thorough analysis, therefore, limiting biased interpretations (Bryman, 2016, p. 479). Recorded Zoom meetings to ensure no relevant information is lost and also to allow for effective transcribing and multiple analyses. Online interviews are not just cost-effective but also allow the respondents to be expansive in their responses (Bryman, 2016, p. 485), because the interviews can be done in a comfortable place as opposed to in-person interviews. Semi-structured interviewing allows for flexibility and is best suited for this research purpose. As Bryman explains, it allows the researcher to ask the intended questions and add in follow-up questions during the interview if necessary while giving the participants flexibility on how to answer the questions (Bryman, 2016, p. 468). With this kind of interview procedure, I am able to review the interview questions in relation to the topic, revise the questions further and have a final guide that elicits suitable responses.

The questions were set in a 3 parts section, first to explore how the subjects view or make sense of environmental/climate challenges within their settings of displacement. The second part is on their perspectives/experiences around response towards climate/environmental concerns or challenges. The third part included questions related to the organization's response to climate and environment-related matters. All interviews were conducted in English and transcribed using MS Word accessible through the institution's network. The data was collected at a single point in time to limit the sample variation in their experiences and observations. This research slightly takes on a comparative logic, as Bryman asserts social phenomenon is understood better if there is a contrast between 2 or more things (Bryman, 2016, p. 65). In this case, the findings will be compared to the already identified (*through literature review*) climate change frames. This should help ascertain if the framing of climate change discourse has a global outlook or if it is influenced by factors such as identity, social environment, and geography among others.

4.4 Analysis and coding procedure

The data were analyzed through a thematic analysis procedure. The advantage of this approach is that it has distinct outlined techniques (Bryman, 2016, p. 584). Analyzing qualitative data requires either looking at the narrative or using some kind of coding or both (O`dwyer & Bernauer, 2013, p. 35). As Bryman (2016) suggests, combining the two approaches enables a detailed and intense examination of a case (p. 61). The analysis was done after all the interviews were conducted, going through each recorded and transcribed data and assigning codes where applicable. I started off with line-by-line coding, just reading through the transcripts and marking the data codes related to the environment or climate change such as "climate impacts" or "drought" and so on as they appeared. Qualitative research allows the researcher to use thematic quotes or words as supporting evidence for differing perspectives (O`dwyer & Bernauer, 2013, p. 28). Themes are categories of important sections or classifications of codes that emerge out of data (Khandkar, 2009).

Coding is a common procedure and a useful part of most qualitative analyses (O`dwyer & Bernauer, 2013, p. 35; Bryman, 2016, p. 581). It basically means that data will be broken down into parts that will be assigned names or categories according to their significance to the research. The advantage of using coding is that besides having an opportunity to use pre-generated theory-related codes it allows for emerging codes to be incorporated into the findings (Bryman, 2016, p. 573). First, I created a table with 2 columns one side with the transcribed data from the semi-structured qualitative interviews, and the

second column was used to add the codes that were extracted out of the data. I used the open line-by-line coding technique of textual analysis. This technique involves labeling concepts and developing categories based on the various properties and dimensions that emerge from the concepts. This means that as one analysis the data notice is taken of relevant or important information or sections which are then marked with a name otherwise known as "code" (Khandkar, 2009). These codes are then used for further analysis. For this process, the codes were not pre-determined or pre-generated. I marked the codes as I went through the transcripts line by line, therefore giving them labels as they appeared such as: *sustainability, livelihoods, deforestation, Agenda 2030,* etc.

Although line-by-line coding may be strenuous and time-consuming, it is very effective in developing a detailed and well-structured model of concepts (Khandkar, 2009). The process of formulating frames involved going through the codes to establish patterns, interpreting the codes, finding significance among the codes, and forging what that could potentially translate into. The emerging frames were either then compared to existing frames established through literature review or used as new frames for discussion. After going through the data multiple types to a point that no new codes were being developed I then created a third column for the frames. Different codes were marked with different colors and these codes were later classified under themes or rather frames as they apply to this thesis question. I went through the codes to identify and classify the codes into frames as they would apply to the research question. Similar codes were put under one theme and marked with the same color for easy identification. The process was repeated for each subsequent interview until saturation of data was achieved, this allowed ease in establishing connections within the codes and linking the response from the various transcripts. I then compared the identified frames to those that were initially identified through the literature review for comparison. The findings will be discussed in the next chapter.

4.3 *Limitations and trustworthiness*

When using secondary data the researcher is not able to interact with the contexts in which the data was extracted, therefore the researcher becomes excluded from certain aspects of the context that may be important and shed more light on the interpretation of the findings (Irwin, 2013, p. 298). Also, managing what is embedded in the different contexts of secondary data sets can also be quite challenging, but this can be tackled by engaging in the creative and critical conceptualization of the data (Irwin, 2013, p. 303). To make this, I analyzed the aim of the study with respect to the relevant findings though there are very limited materials in

line with the objective of this thesis research since most resources either target general climate change frames from global actors like IPCC or mostly European Union (EU) states very limited material is available that cover the contexts of developing countries.

Another common limitation with qualitative interviews is ending up with large portions of transcribed but not useful data (Bryman, 2016, p. 483), this particularly happens when respondents are eager to express particular experiences or narrations that may not necessarily be useful to the area of research and while makes the coding process strenuous the codes may not often be useful. The coding process itself is challenging in that a piece of data can be coded in more than one way and this may end up generating more codes than necessary and make the analysis even more time-consuming (Bryman, 2016, p. 583).

Transferability

The non-probability sampling approach adopted, carries a bias risk and often generates results that may not be generalizable to the population (O`dwyer & Bernauer, 2013, p. 79; Bryman, 2016, p. 408). This limits the level to which the findings can be applicable to another group or setting. This procedure may have its own bias in that it doesn`t give equal opportunity for any potential humanitarian organization or even actors within the selected organizations to be captured within the sample. Transferability refers to the extent to which the findings can be relevant to other settings than the ones they are derived from (Summer & Tribe, 2008, p. 114). I selected the 3 most accessible organizations and also the most accessible sample within the population. This decision affects the transferability of the findings. Transferability refers to the extent to which the findings can be relevant to other settings than the ones they are derived from (Summer & Tribe, 2008, p. 114).

First, the settings of humanitarian crises across the globe differ geographically which affects the nature of crises or disaster experiences and the kind of humanitarian assistance required or provided. Focusing on a small sample can also limit the generalizability of findings (Bryman, 2016, p. 399), outside the scope in which it was carried out since it often lacks a higher level of representability. Therefore, since the selected sample is a very small percentage compared to the variety of humanitarian organizations present in the area. Therefore, the perceptions and opinions surrounding the frames extracted from the sample may not be representative of the larger humanitarian community responding to crises in the region. The findings can best be applicable to settings with similar climatic conditions, and livelihood conditions, and also add to the pool of academic knowledge in the subject area which is already quite limited.

Credibility

This refers to the extent to which findings can be believable (Summer & Tribe, 2008, p. 114). While it is possible that through qualitative research human intentionality and values can have an effect even on the interpretation and discussion of findings, qualitative research allows for transparency and open scrutiny of the researcher themselves (O`dwyer & Bernauer, 2013, p. 27). In reference, the trustworthiness of qualitative interviewing as a method can be very challenging since the meaning derived can to some extent be a result of the interviewer's understanding/re-construction of the content (Seidman, 2006, p. 23). This means that to some extent, I as the researcher may influence the interpretation of findings by my own understanding of the respondents' accounts. While using this method also is not able to determine the participant's level of understanding of the topic of climate change or knowledge of the climatic challenges in the region prior to the selection of the sample. It precisely leans on the personal perceptions of individual actors in line with the nature of their work.

Although semi-structured interviewing allows for replication to a certain degree, one disadvantage of qualitative research is that it can be too subjective or biased based on the researcher`s impressions and become difficult to replicate due to its unstructured nature (Bryman, 2016, p. 398). Therefore, to provide more confidence in my interpretation of the data I have provided excerpts from the respondents to allow the reader to also grasp the contents of the data. To simplify my interpretation of the frames and allow repeatability I used most of the coded words or phrases as frames depending on how they were associated with climate change in the region.

Dependability

This refers to the likelihood of findings being applicable to a different time frame than the one the research was conducted (Summer & Tribe, 2008, p. 114). To allow repeatability, I have attempted to provide a thick description of the setting and circumstances in which this thesis research was conducted. Noting that qualitative research assumes the existence of multiple realities as perceived uniquely by each individual therefore these realities can be affected by factors such as changes in time, experience, learning, and various other circumstances (O`dwyer & Bernauer, 2013, p. 26). The findings to a large extent reflect opinions of the experiences of the respondents themselves and based on the theory of constructivism adopted reality or truth could be interpreted in many different ways depending on one's own experiences. Given that humanitarian workers may keep shifting work locations

on their perceptions or framing of climate change may be affected not just by how long they have been working in the humanitarian sector/with displacement-affected people but also by their general understanding or interest in climate change.

Confirmability

Confirmability is the extent to which a researcher limits personal values from becoming intrusive to the findings (Summer & Tribe, 2008, p. 114). Social constructionist research criteria acknowledge and embrace the subjectivity of the researcher which can be controlled if the researcher also covers perspectives from others as triangulation and exercises reflexivity by understanding how to own background might affect the personal view of the world (Summer & Tribe, 2008, p. 115; Bryman, 2016, p. 35). Since the methodological assumption holds that knowledge is co-constructed qualitative researchers through engaging inductively is able to become more self-aware of their own beliefs and understanding which is useful to bring forth through the discussion and allow the readers more multiple angles of interpretation (O`dwyer & Bernauer, 2013, p. 29). As recommended by Khandkar, (2009), an open coding procedure contributed positively towards the trustworthiness as the codes are extracted directly from raw data unlike having predetermined codes which may be biased. This allows for a higher level of confirmability.

Another limitation is that though an outline of the methodological approach is given, it can be really challenging to ascertain or maintain sufficient transparency when following an interpretivist epistemology (Bryman, 2013). The procedure is highly dependent on individual perceptions, experiences, and understanding. To manage this, besides having transcribed data, I had to re-listen to the recorded interviews during the multiple levels of analysis to ensure that the words were transcribed right. This ensures that my analysis was more refined and that no words were left uncaptured or interpreted out of context. I have included excerpts from the participants to provide more trustworthiness to my own interpretation.

4.6 Methods summary

The thesis leans on constructionist beliefs that truth or reality exists in multiple dimensions. I chose to use an interprevist epistemological approach as it best suits constructionism and qualitative research that allows the use of inductive reasoning to generate a theory of making informed conclusions through the findings. The method employs a small sample through a non-probability combination sampling procedure that utilizes convenience and purposeful

approaches. The sample entails 3 organizations, 1 developmental and 2 humanitarian, all working within settings of displacement. Data is then collected through qualitative semi-structured interviews to allow for more flexibility. The analysis was done through a thematic procedure of line-by-line coding that involved using data extracted codes as opposed to pre-generated codes. I have also discussed issues related to the trustworthiness of the chosen method of data collection and analysis could pose and how that may affect the authenticity and applicability of the findings. In the next chapter, I will present the findings and discussion.

CHAPTER 5

5. Findings

The objective of the research is to identify climate change frames adopted by humanitarian actors within East African settings of displacement. The sample consisted of humanitarian/development actors working with displacement-affected persons in the East African region. The sample was extracted from 3 different organizations working with refugees and internally displaced persons mainly in Kenya, Somalia, Sudan, Tanzania, and Rwanda. In order to grasp the climate change framed within the East African settings of displacement, I will first start by highlighting the global climate change frames identified through literature.

5.0 Climate change frames in literature

What global climate change frames are identified through the literature on climate change and displacement?

The interpretation of climate change largely depends on societal world views and policies (Fløttum & Gjerstad, 2017). Applefield et al., (2000), assert that frames fashion information about phenomena in a manner that it can be adequately relayed and understood. In general terms, the framing of climate change revolves mainly around science, technology, social, politics, and context-specific conceptualizations. Literature related to climate change and the framing of the same from a global scale highlights, but is not limited to the following frames as discussed below.

Framing climate change as an emergency

The framing of climate events can and has been perceived and interpreted in multiple ways (McHugh et al., 2021, p. 10). Often the construction of climate change as an emergency is aimed at emphasizing that there is very little time to effect the required actions (Hodder & Martin, 2009, p. 55; McHugh et al., 2021). A climate emergency is seen as either an opportunity to attack the status quo by pressuring a policy resolution to curb the causes of climate change. Or, as a threat to policy/political preferences and use it to defend the status quo by claiming that policy is the solution and reduce pressure so that actors' preferences can be maintained. Another form is through risk framing to perceive climate change as a problem of the future and not the present times thus calling for risk-based policy change or framing that perceives climate change as not an emergency at all therefore no blame or action is

needed and this, in turn, maintains the status quo (McHugh et al., 2021, p. 10). Emergency framing then becomes a social construction that has the power to influence policy change or maintain the status quo and or an explicit attempt to push for collective action (Boin et al., 2009). As Hodder & Martin, (2009) posit, emergency framing is just but one way of drawing attention to the alarming nature of the climate situation (p. 54).

Research on the politics of emergency framing suggests that using words such as *catastrophic*, *irreversible*, and *out of control* among others while referring to climate change may evoke fear (Hodder & Martin, 2009, p. 54). Although this kind of emergency framing runs a risk of becoming salient if it does not yield the projected results of lowering emissions since it often takes on a very deterministic approach (McHugh et al., 2021, p. 7). Yet, the inclination to ignore the urgency of climate change is linked to the lack of immediate visible effects (Nisbet, 2009, p. 15). The framing of climate change in terms of crises and emergencies can influence policy and governance but also pose the danger that such framing could potentially limit the power of marginalized groups and stakeholder engagement in negotiating solutions if it does not pay attention to how climate change intersects with socio-political dynamics and peoples well-being (McHugh et al., 2021). But how successful emergency framing of climate change is in stirring up the right engagement to bring about positive change remains unknown (Hodder & Martin, 2009, p. 54).

Framing sustainability as a path towards climate action

Frames can be designed to take either a hegemonic position or counter the ones in hegemony depending on the field in which they operate as shapers either encouraging action or inaction (Grear & Dehm, 2020, p. 1). Strongly, climate change and sustainability discourses emerged framing global sustainable objectives and technological advancements as the solution to environmental challenges (Kurz & Prosser, 2021, p. 73). Increasingly also disaster reduction has become a key element of sustainable development where development projects/initiatives are likely to increase or lessen the vulnerability to hazards (O`Brien et al., 2006, p. 70). In fact, the substantial evolution in humanitarian energy response in recent years has been made possible by the international community`s commitment to pushing for a change in the status quo and progress in the agendas of humanity, sustainability, and climate (Thomas et al., 2021, p. 15). Although it is also argued that framing climate change as an emergency as a means of provoking a movement towards sustainability is risky in that, it may only last as long as the media gives it attention, positive long-term results can only be built on commitment but not fear (Hodder & Martin, 2009, p. 59).

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Framing climate change with an emphasis on causal factors and impacts

Although there are assessments through literature to show that climate change has already altered ecosystems there is uncertainty regarding the already observed impacts of climate change (IPCC, 2022, p. 9). Framing climate change as a problem of greenhouse gas emissions makes it an energy problem that calls for the production of more sustainable energy. While framing climate change impacts as the problem turns it into a hydrological issue suggesting that protecting the vulnerable environments e.g. from extreme weather - floods, and droughts, ensuring water management as the solution (Dewulf, 2013, p. 324). Unlike climate change causes, its impacts are often framed as local or regional challenges (Dewulf, 2013, p. 324). Communicating the effects of climate change is seen as crucial for public understanding and NGOs play a crucial role in bridging climate change information from the scientific point of view which is not always expressed in a lay manner into what the public can understand (Vu et al., 2021).

Framing climate action through mitigation and adaptation measures

Dewulf (2013), asserts that mitigation frames stem from highlighting causal factors and that climate change is human-induced through the emission of greenhouse gases (p. 324). Global warming frames particularly pronounce scientific human-induced evidence as valid and tend to focus more on the precautionary rationale (Knight & Greenberg, 2011, p. 326). The assumed strategies for coping are that humans can either adapt, maladapt, transition to reduce risks, or come up with mitigation measures to either restore or preserve the ecosystems (IPCC, 2022, p. 4). Adaptation framing stems from highlighting the impacts of climate change as having negative effects on vulnerable environments and social groups (Dewulf, 2013, p. 324). The framing of climate change adaptation itself is often very challenging because it determines what counts as a reasonable adaptation policy (Dewulf, 2013, p. 321).

Study shows that adaptation is also a kind of framing that shapes problems into policy issues and could take various forms, either adaptation can be adopted by some actors as a response to the vulnerability associated with impacts of climate change such as flooding, planning is one response that puts focus on knowledge through science and developing the relevant techniques to call for an integrated action through planning within a system (Juhola et al., 2011, p. 456). Another form of adaptation is expressed by highlighting the economic risk. This measure recognizes the economic costs and benefits of adaptation and that governments alone cannot handle the cost. Therefore it incorporates private sectors into finding a solution through persuasive narratives. Then there is the characterization of

conscious and existing measures from governments and organizations that are directed toward responding to threats or impacts of climate change (Juhola et al., 2011, p. 456). Therefore, climate mitigation and adaptation are seen as necessary to prevent the unpredictable displacement of persons (Thomas et al., 2021, p. 15). But there is the fear that investing heavily in either mitigation or adaptation may undermine the other, though intergovernmental and civil society groups' discourses have stressed the importance of integrating both mitigation and adaptation measures (Dewulf, 2013, p. 324).

Framing climate action around ethics, morality, and interests

The conception of climate change has evolved both among states and civil society. From what was largely termed as a scientific and environmental problem to one that is also in harmony with issues of human rights, fundamental justice, impacts on populations, social inequality, and compensation to countries with lower capacity to adapt, etc (Gach, 2019). The UNFCCC convention was adopted in an effort to help stabilize the concentration of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere so as to prevent dangerous anthropogenic interference with the climate system within a time frame that allows the ecosystem to naturally adapt to the changes in a climate without threatening sustainability (UN, 1992, p. 9). Interestingly scientific research quite well illustrates the differing variability in expression, and how the UNFCCC went from framing climate change as an environmental issue that impacts all countries and requires a common responsibility to later framing it also as an environmental issue with social causes and that does not just touch upon human rights but also one that has unequal impacts on people and countries requiring those that are historically responsible for it to take key responsibility (Gach, 2019, p. 4). The frame of "justice" has become common, especially among environmental activists. This frame emerges in the dimension of global social inequality in the view that the developed countries owe an environmental debt to the developing countries (Knight & Greenberg, 2011, p. 326). The shift in the conception of climate change as a human rights and justice issue indicates that climate justice has gained acceptance as a norm and the interests of civil society, developed states and developing states align as the frame is relevant to the tri-partie (Gach, 2019). Many policy entrepreneurs have held the notion that logic of appropriateness often takes the center stage as opposed to interests when it comes to issues such as human security or disarmament, but the issue of climate change is often framed as a matter of state interest rather than morality (Mitchell & Carpenter, 2019, p. 414). For example, the use of the term "climate justice" in the Paris Agreement carries discursive power which ceases to portray climate action as just a moral or

selfless action but as a requirement of the member parties (Gach, 2019, p. 8). People will interpret a phenomenon depending on the labels or frames associated with it. But on the other hand, adversarial framing provides not only a normative account of the issue but also attributes blame or responsibility to certain actors (Knight & Greenberg, 2011, p. 326), framing, therefore, becomes a tactic of strategic choice.

In this era of climate politics, climate change is also construed as a challenge to governance by looking at the moral or normative principles used to justify certain forms of political interventions such as justice, sustainability, and economic effectiveness (Bäckstrand & Lövbrand, 2019, p. 521). Human security climate change frames often emphasize economic, food security, health, and personal security (Dewulf, 2013, p. 326). Even though climate action appears to be outside of state interests due to related economic costs, a shift in the discursive patterns to reflect climate in-action as against the existing norms of human rights, indigenous people's rights, etc, creates a framework that legitimizes an alternative ethic based obligation (Mitchell & Carpenter, 2019, p. 422). Language is depicted as a powerful discursive tool in getting the member states and other concerned parties to find the need to act, which is done by framing climate change from just a global environmental issue to a justice issue (Gach, 2019).) Indeed knowledge plays a distinctive role in shaping action but it can only yield tangible results if it is directed to powerful agencies or actors (Haas, 2004, p. 584). The question therefore remains, what climate change frames will be identified by humanitarian actors within East African settings of displacement?

5.1 Climate change frames by humanitarian actors in East Africa
What climate change frames are adopted by humanitarian actors within East African settings of displacement?
The relationship between displacement crises and climate change has been conceptualized in multiple forms often through a combination of related factors. Based on the findings from humanitarian actors from East African settings of displacement, the framing of climate change is expressed through the following perspectives causes for, need for migration, sources of and sustainability of livelihoods, incurred losses, and damages related to climate change, environmental degradation, and increased vulnerability of the displaced persons. Findings also show that climate change in East African settings of displacement is described largely by humanitarian actors based on the impacts it has on the organization itself or the displacement affected persons. To a large extent humanitarian actors interpret climate change and its impacts on the displaced from a livelihoods approach and on the organizations on a

sustainability approach. Although other supposed drivers and impacts were evident in the findings as expressed by the interviewees including climate change as an emergency, concern over physical human security, energy and shelter challenges, concerns over weather/deforestation/drought, a varied range of mitigation and adaptation approaches, and the need for sustainability as presented below.

Framing around livelihoods and food security

From a constructivist point of view the conditions surrounding humanitarian aid in the East African region shapes how the actors view climate change. The frames are put forth largely touching upon the areas the organizations have had to pay attention to within their response. Such as poverty which largely integrates livelihoods-oriented responses and the ability of displacement-affected persons to make a living and reduce their levels of vulnerability. Findings show that the nature of humanitarian assistance in the East African region entails an active effort of attempting to secure the livelihoods of the displaced persons.

Describing the nature of their work one interviewee introduced the issue of livelihoods

"And and we're working with some traditional pastoralist communities in northern Kenya, and looking at how they can adapt their livelihoods and their well-being and to really cope with the changes in the in the drought season" - (UNHCR- Zurich)

Some NGOs have proven to engage constructively towards the dissemination of skills, knowledge, material resources, and technology for environmental action. Whether community-based or on a macro level activities such as educating the public, mobilizing groups against environment destroyers, and providing relief tend to connect to broader global politics and policy (Jasanoff, 1997, p. 590).

Also, we also provide them livelihood with sort of training. Vocational training we gave them training on different vocational skills like Masons, carpenters, plumbers, electricians" - (NRC- Somalia)

As literature posits, environmental factors themselves are often not the only trigger that pushes for migration, the nature of relief assistance though unintentionally has a major role to play in influencing hosts in refugee receiving countries (McGregor, 1994). Describing the benefits of humanitarian assistance to the beneficiaries another interviewee noted that

"It provides some of those opportunities for people to have livelihoods and income generating activities which helps them too…The transition from a dependency model…This

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traditional humanitarian aid model where people kind of get free distribution" (Practical Action- Rwanda)

While in some countries where humanitarian assistance operates national governance is very strict on the protection of trees therefore it becomes crucial for humanitarian actors to also align their work with the local regulations. Though it is perceived challenging to meet refugee needs and at the same time protect or conserve the environment since the latter may not have direct benefits to the displacement affected people.

"because you find that because the biggest issue is a livelihood. So the biggest issue is the.. economical power and progressive ability of refugees? Then planting trees is great and it's good for the environment, but it doesn't really directly affects the refugees. Sort of ability to make a living" - (NRC- Tanzania)

Framing linking climate change to shelter and energy challenge

The nature of the humanitarian response with respect to climate change-related environmental challenges in East Africa is closely linked with the rising need for energy for the displaced. Besides the close link between livelihoods with the need for environmental protection, climate change framing in the region is closely associated with increased deforestation and drought and the need for shelter construction and sources of energy for displaced persons. The nature of climate change in areas of displacement in the region is widely described in terms such as increasing deforestation, need for energy, and livelihoods as driving factors, and prolonged drought as an effect.

When asked if the organization was responding to any environmental-related challenge this interviewee had the following to say

"Environmental degradation and deforestation. We always encourage the beneficiaries. Uh, to comply with these environmental standards, like when we give them shelter, we always encourage them to grow a tree within their plot… - (NRC- Somalia)

Also when asked what was the biggest environmental challenge faced by displacement-affected persons in Kenya and Tanzania, environmental degradation and the energy challenge stood out

"I would say lack of energy is the biggest challenge…It is made worse by the fact that the, by the high rates of deforestation, but I also think the high rates of deforestation are driven by the lack of energy, you know" - (NRC- Kenya/Tanzania)

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When asked if and how displacement affected persons are contributing to the environmental crises and potentially to climate change

"this means they will cut trees…Uh, for energy for construction, there's going to be waste generated from all the consumption and everything…and yes towards the general degradation" - (NRC- Somalia)

Another was of the opinion that the reason why the refugees did not pay a lot of attention to environmental protection was that they did not anticipate any immediate reward

"With refugees knowing that they will most likely be repatriated planting trees or conserving the environment is not an incentive for them." - (NRC- Sudan)

Therefore the lack of incentives toward environmental protection is also a challenge that humanitarian actors link with the aggravation of climate change effects.

It was recommended that refugees` right to work would help meet not just the energy needs as part of durable solutions but also benefit the environment.

*"I think, as we advocate, for maybe refugee identification. The right to work I think p*art….*I think both of them need to go hand in hand, because I do think also the environment really has a big factor…It plays a really huge role in terms of livelihoods and food security"*

(NRC- Tanzania/Kenya)

This perspective confers with literature that suggests that integrating refugees into the hosting community would largely contribute to mitigating environmental degradation in refugee receiving areas (Jacobsen, 1997). Though, without putting the blame on displacement affected persons alone, a study on forced displacement and the environment done in the East Africa region indicates that although displaced persons put pressure on already scarce resources the unclear regulations of refugee protection and local laws created room for deforestation to occur and the local host communities took advantage of the loopholes to intensify deforestation through resource competition (Tafere, 2018, p. 199). This confers with one respondent`s perspectives on local climate governance where Rwanda and Tanzania stressed that the local government was a key player in the protection of forests particularly.

" the National Environmental Management Authority. Is much more stringent in making sure that the environment remains conserved" - (Practical Action- Rwanda)

Framing as an emergency

Literature shows that climate change is often framed as an emergency to show the urgency of the situation and imply that there is limited time for action (Hodder & Martin, 2009; McHugh et al., 2021). In some areas in the East African region, they experience a decline in precipitation followed by prolonged drought which is linked to climate change. The effects of this strain the humanitarian aid response more. For example, findings from Somalia, show that climate change is seen as an emergency as is it causing more displacement crises currently compared to active conflict.

When asked what was the major cause of refugee and IDP crises in the settings they worked one interviewee answered

"It's environmental, so currently it's drought… followed by conflict followed by…The uh, evictions. So it is also somehow at the stage of emergency…OK, four years without rain is a long time, and this trickle completely reshapes the direction of emergency response."
(NRC- Somalia)

This could also be translated into what environmental challenges and changing patterns of precipitation means to the communities in this area. Since most people in the area are pastoralists and rely on rain and the natural environment climate change has direct effects on their livelihoods which could translate into an emergency.

Emergency framing creates room to implicitly prioritize climate change over other issues of vital importance (Hodder & Martin, 2009), although in my opinion, this would only be successful if the necessary actors such as donors or national governance adopt the same framing. But at the same time, it could be emergency framing of climate change may be disempowering as it tends to portray the problem as overwhelming (Hodder & Martin, 2009), and too big to handle especially with limited time and resources.

Another interviewee agreed that

"The response is, for now, emergency focused even from the donor side from the organization size side, it is more emergency focused, more drought or drought response rather than conflict or for any other yeah." - (UNHCR- Zurich)

Literature suggests that emergency framing of climate change is also treated as a means of pushing for anticipated policy changes from the status quo (McHugh et al., 2021). When

asked if they thought climate change should be described as an emergency in their context one response was

"*Definitely, we had that pulse about… before COVID where. More and more governments, municipalities, and even private sector organisations were declaring a climate emergency, but we're not. We're not currently acting like it's a climate emergency. We're still acting like it, so it's one of just many challenges that we face as a species living on this planet. But yeah, we need. You know, if we were to deal with it as an emergency, finance ministries would not have a problem finding the. Money to respond*". - (Practical Action- UK)

This then connotes that as long as the climate is treated as an emergency action is taken such as mobilizing the necessary resources, putting in place policies, and generally getting the necessary actors engaged toward climate change action than when it is not.

Framing around human security

Climate change framing highly takes the form of endangered security either laying the focus on the system at large as an issue of state security or emphasizing human security (Dewulf, 2013). The findings in this thesis do not suggest an emphasis on climate change directly being a threat to national security but for human security particularly the displacement of affected persons. Talking about the environmental challenges experienced in areas housing displacement-affected persons in Rwanda it was noted that areas that were once considered safe for housing big numbers of refugees and IDPs were not suitable anymore as a result of degradation of the environment and extreme weather events, particularly in the form of floods *"The reason the camp closed was because of soil erosion in the camp and it was making these big ravines and making a number of the shelters in the camp had already had been relocated because they were getting close to the edge of these big gullies that were being caused by rainfall…It was unsafe effectively for people to be near that ravine that growing in the camp"* - (Practical Action- Rwanda)

Humanitarian response is becoming more complex day by day, with more aspects to be taken into account as time progresses. For example, taking issues of human safety has become a crucial thing not just in cases of active conflict but also in the anticipation of extreme weather and other climatic changes in the location. The findings indicate that the nature of work within displacement settings also involves ensuring a safe physical environment for the displacement-affected person by carrying out environmental assessments.

"For this project, particularly in terms of what we tried to measure and articulate in our evidence, but also to be able to link that to what UNHCR is trying to achieve in terms of providing that safe and secure and protective environment for refugees" - (Practical Action-Rwanda)

One interviewee from Sudan made it clear that for them (*as an organization*) immediate humanitarian assistance though being a priority was not the only point of concern but also looking at the broader impacts outside saving lives
"Despite the fact that saving lives is the first priority…Uh, we also look at the broader impacts and concerns" - (NRC- Sudan)

The issue of lack of sufficient energy, which can also be traced back to sustainable development goals was linked to being a threat to safety that would push the displaced in what was referred to as "*vulnerable positions*".
"A key component of that is that if there aren't proper energy access solutions, people will put themselves in vulnerable positions to collect firewood or to light their houses or to access." (NRC- Tanzania)

Another added that assessing the risks and environmental implications before any major physical constructions for humanitarian purposes had become a key element of their work
"*We do environmental assessments mainly…Before we do any major…Physical construction works or you know, the activities that have potential environmental implications…We see what is going to be affected. ..What is going to be the Downstream product and is it going to be detrimental to the environment…..It will inform us of what are their environmental risks. And then we will put in place measures to mitigate these risks*"
(NRC- Kenya)

Every day humanitarian field experiences play a key role in shaping perceptions and priorities (Hilhorst & Schmiemann, 2002). And the normative tenet of constructivism holds the view that it is reasonable to accept certain moral principles that actors are more likely to agree to or approve in case they were to engage in a rational deliberation (Bagnoli, 2011). This is quite evident from the findings from Rwanda where humanitarian actors have to engage in active deliberation of the impacts of aid.

"Benefits at the end of it, so we've been very careful to some of these things are quite difficult to measure, right? How does this improve people's well-being? How does it improve their perceptions of safety? But that's really the key focus" - (Practical Action- Rwanda)

It is inevitable to notice the relationship between climate change, environmental degradation from over-reliance on the natural environment, and the issue of clean energy scarcity surrounding displacement affected contexts in the region. This does not just accentuate the issue of environmental protection but also human health. Respondents from all the 3 organizations mentioned having an energy-related response and the need to shift to clean energy as a means of limiting the damaging human-induced effects on the environment.

"energy program is looking at delivering energy to those communities that don't have access to energy. And that used to be a lot about fuel efficiency and, uh. And moving from, say, fuelwood to LPG, it's now much more about renewable sources of energy clean energy because we realize you know the health benefits of clean energy in cooking in enclosed spaces for example."- Practical Action- Rwanda)

Losses and damages

Another perspective on the framing of climate change was described in terms of losses and damages. The evolution of climate change conception has largely accentuated loss and damage and brought about climate justice discourses (Gach, 2019). The view that certain losses and damages can be linked to climate change was held by some interviewees

"Those losses and damages are increasing and they're increasing to the point where. ..Communities coping strategies are becoming extremely erosive" - (UNHCR- Zurich)

One interviewee had the perspective that climate change had a direct impact to refugees and vice versa

"So it is like somehow also directly...It is contributing to deforestation because they are cutting trees and then they are constructing their shelters. So yes, they are also creating this harm" - (NRC- Somalia)

This confers with literature (Tafere, 2018; Barasa et al., 2021) that illustrates that mostly around refugee and IDP settlements wood harvesting for energy construction and selling for livelihood contributed to high rates of deforestation and environmental degradation.

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Another mentioned how the cost of climate change-related crises is significantly increasing even national expenditure

"...even at the national level as well, countries are now beginning to spend a significant portion of their GDP on. Building back from the previous disaster." -(Practical Action- UK)

Framing in line with the global Agenda 2030

Climate change and the global sustainable goals have become major factors that shape how humanitarian aid is approached for example necessitating the need for energy response and sustainability of aid among other pressing factors. The Agenda 2030 was eminent in the portrayal of humanitarian response in relation to climate change.

When asked about why the organization would be inclined to engage in climate-related initiatives one also mentioned that

"*Work for many years. I think the climate agenda is really cross-cutting. Component of now all of the practical actions work."* - (Practical Action- Rwanda)

Another interviewee would link the organization`s ambition with the sustainable development goals

"Our energy ambition is aligned with the SDG goal and making sure that we're leaving nobody behind in terms of energy access and that absolutely includes…Because more people are being displaced I just mean in terms of the number of people" - (NRC- Tanzania)

These then become some of the key issues within the global system that shape how humanitarian actors view and interpret climate change in line with their work and the circumstances surrounding the environment of the displacement affected persons. Glanville, (2006) mentions that norms can either be prescriptive, permissive, or prohibitive this is seen in the humanitarian response around environmental concerns though there are different countries in the region humanitarian response is shaped around the national policies and global norms which eventually shape their framing of climate change.

One interviewee had the view that

"So climate change is now replaced…Maybe you know the sustainable development goals and the UN broader process. Development process climate change is now the thing that we need to be talking about" **-** (UNHCR- Zurich)

Frames based on donor and national governance requirements

Climate change adaptation is highly framed through narratives that integrate vulnerabilities, risks involved, and economic costs, including plans and preparations for the impacts of climate change. All this is an effort to define the climate change problem and design a solution (Juhola et al., 2011). Findings show that there are external factors surrounding humanitarian aid that are not directly linked with climate change but are key influencers on how climate change is perceived, approached, and responded to within the humanitarian organizational environment. Some of these factors include; national and local governance, donor requirements, and global sustainable goals.

One key area of focus for humanitarian actors in the region appears to be alignment with donor and national governance conditions. When asked what would happen if they ignored environmental concerns one interviewee was keen to point out that

"Yeah, I think our work would not be as successful, it would be difficult to align with government priorities and would be difficult to align with all the other" - (NRC- Kenya)

Donor demands and requirements from local governance seem to play a key role in helping humanitarian actors make sense of the environmental/climate issues at hand and how they should fashion humanitarian assistance to suit the requirements of these actors. Donor and national environments to a large extent define the ground on which humanitarian assistance operates. Another linked the environment with the need for infrastructural development and governance

"I think we'd be better served if it was supported by government governmental infrastructure, I think. That would make it easier" - (NRC- Somalia)

Donors and government are also described as key shapers of climate change discourse

"you know, there's a role for the donor governments to play because we shape we shape a lot of the discourse." - (Practical Action- UK)

While emergency climate change frames have been identified to have implications for governance it is crucial to understand how this intersects with individuals' well-being and other socio-political aspects (McHugh et al., 2021).

For example, an interviewee was of the opinion that governance could hinder long-term infrastructural development for refugees in fear that it may encourage long-term refugee stays

"But the biggest problem is that the government is being against the idea of anything that supports…Uh, that implies it's sort of longer term,…that the refugees will be there for a longer time, or anything that sort that makes their lives a bit more comfortable"
(NRC- Tanzania)

Another interviewee had the perspective that local governance and donor restrictions had a role in shaping the course of aid assistance
"…really ensuring that the work on the grounds in the countries, which is very much nationally designed determined. Focused on donor priorities, of course."
(UNHCR, Switzerland)

Another added that these actors were actually considered to be key partners and their conception of climate change would most likely be integrated into the aid assistance
"but also the Ministry of Energy, the Ministry of Infrastructure as well as local governments at district and cell level have been one of the key stakeholders, so we're very closely integrated and refer to them as a partner on the project as well"
(Practical Action- Rwanda)

When asked if there were other factors outside the organization`s control that necessitated them to pay attention to the environment/climate change respondent one mentioned that
"Of course, then there's the government...It's a major player…Because we always operate in the space that humanitarian aid is just part of the solution, but. ..It takes all the resources of a government…To ensure that…The humanitarian aid is provided safely. It could be issues of protection. It could be issues of legal rights…Mainly the government is also the major point"
(NRC- Kenya)

Therefore the findings give the impression that national governance and donor requirements play a big role in how climate change is perceived and also how assistance is provided.

Frames around Sustainability
More than half of the respondents noted that sustainability was a key factor that called for the focus on climate change. These findings connect concerns about the environment to the sustainability of aid and link the risks of a local problem transcending into a global one.

Humanitarian organizations recognize that protecting the environment within displacement settings is crucial for the global benefit and also sustainability of aid response.

When asked what they think would happen if humanitarian organizations ignored environmental concerns all the interviewees projected negative implications to the environment itself, the displaced, and even to the humanitarian

*"the impact (*referring to the impact of humanitarian response*) will not be as great or as felt or go as far as it should just because of this really huge obstacle that's in their way…I think that's what would happen…I think sustainability is at the center of the response"*
(UNHCR- Zurich)

Another respondent from NRC, Kenya, described that it would be chaotic and probably expose not just the refugees and displaced persons or the communities around them but the global community as well to *"detrimental castrations",* and that humanitarian aid would not be sustainable in the long run.

Also, it was imperative to link climate change concerns within all areas of the organizational programs, whether it is education, health, or emergency assistance their relationship with climate change should not be ignored

"The risk is that if we focus purely on educational health or something and don't think about climate change, we could end up with a system that is no longer viable…We need development because we need to tackle the underlying causes. And why climate change is having such a big impact. But we mustn't forget about climate change" - (Practical Action- UK)

Gach, (2019), mentions that the mechanism and language used around climate change have shifted from persuading states and civil societies to socializing the issue of climate justice. This can be seen in the concept of sustainability of humanitarian aid and its impacts on the displaced persons and their physical environment. Sustainability was also linked with donor requirements as presented above under external factors. There is sensitivity in humanitarian operations to the potential of having a global damaging impact on the environment if not made sustainable

"Countries so involved with humanitarian organizations of…like to call it influencing. And if they don't incorporate the environmental factors in their program design, they will destroy the environment and they will also contribute to global warming" -(NRC- Somalia)

Donors have been identified as some of the actors within the international community that is pushing for sustainability in the provision of aid assistance

"Now sustainability is a request from donors. So international donors. They also asked for sustainable programming and environmentally friendly programs" - (NRC- Tanzania)

Frames through multifaceted mitigation and adaptation approaches

Mitigation frames often highlight humans as the main causal actors of climate change and what could be done to limit the effects (Dewulf, 2013; IPCC, 2022). On the other hand, adaptation places more focus on the negative effects of climate change on vulnerable groups or environments (Dewulf, 2013; IPCC, 2022; Juhola, 2011). Often climate change adaptation is often framed in relation to or in opposition to climate change mitigation (Dewulf, 2013). According to Burkle et al., (2014), humanitarian actors are largely focused on strengthening resilience and the need for disaster preparation, which is highly evident in the findings and what influences the frames of climate change in settings of displacement which mostly arise as a result of either conflict, natural or human-induced disasters. Findings show that efforts are very much oriented towards mitigation and building the resilience of the displaced persons.

Explaining the nature of their response in the East African region responses imply that arid areas pose an extra challenge in humanitarian response

"So in those countries, climate resilience and in East Africa, the program is very much focused on the arid and semi-arid lands. So that moves us from. Rapid onset to slow onset of the drought cycle. "The drought-hit communities in Kenya because these things are happening with more frequency" - (Practical Action- UK)

The concern over the impacts of aid assistance beyond the immediate beneficiaries emerged strongly as a focal area

"Important for all of Practical Actions change ambitions for all of their work that we focus on solutions that will that work well for people and the planet together so they shouldn't be to the detriment of either of those things" - (Practical Action- UK)

For example, when speaking about climate change besides touching on the perceived or experienced impacts and drivers of climate change in their respective settings, in fact, one described how the organization is committed to responding to what was termed as irreversible impacts of climate change through adaptation

"..know how those irreversible impacts can be adapted to so you can no longer grow coffee, but maybe there's something else that you could grow in this area instead..." (Practical Action- Rwanda)

Yet, another interviewee expressed that investing in climate mitigation through renewables would help mitigate climate impacts

"We need massive mitigation...We need to get people in countries like mine to vote for people who invest in green and renewable and share that equally around the world because everybody got to adopt" - (UNHCR- Zurich)

As Falkner, (2016) puts it the new climate logic is dependent on the willingness of relevant actors to push for climate policies and invest in green technologies and towards a future economy based on low carbon emissions. The measures to be adopted either focus on the causes of the climate change, the effects of the same, or both. One respondent when talking about their perspectives on the relationship between climate change and displacement mentions that they strongly expressed that climate change was leading to rising cases of displacement and that could be handled by addressing energy challenges

"I think the imperative to provide or transition to renewable solutions. It's both dealing with the root cause of the problem because of many of the increases. The reason why there are more displaced people climate change is one of the contributing factors to that. So by transitioning to renewable energy and transitioning to cleaner energy sources, you're addressing the root cause of that problem, and then also you're helping with the. Symptoms of that, as it were, as when people are also displaced, they then still have this problem with energy access" (NRC- Tanzania)

It is said the emergency framing assumes that solutions should be initiated from the top level such as through governments as opposed to mass movements (Hodder & Martin, 2009). Although focusing as the literature suggests focusing on the issues present at hand drives the course of the measures to be adopted (Vu et al., 2021), this may vary from location to location or from one community to another.

The humanitarian influence

It has become important to understand and integrate everyday humanitarian practice, dilemmas, and learning outcomes into humanitarian programs so as to bridge the gap between

principles and practice (Hilhorst & Schmiemann, 2002). Notably, in East African settings of displacement climate change was not exactly identified as the main challenge humanitarian actors are responding to in the region but it was framed in relation to other response areas the organizations were engaged in such as shelter construction, energy provision, education, advocacy, water, sanitation, and hygiene, etc. climate change was therefore viewed to be a cross-cutting factor in modern-day aid assistance within the region.

When asked if there were other factors outside the organization`s control that necessitated paying attention to the environment/climate change, it was evident that besides donors and national governance the changing strategies of humanitarian operation within the system, the adoption of slogans, and the need to follow humanitarian ethics were crucial to the shaping of aid response to fit the national strategies around development and environmental protection were key influencers. Each of these factors is separately discussed below.

Organizational strategy

Organizational strategy was identified as one of the crucial influencers of climate change framing in humanitarian settings. It is used as a key tool in passing climate-related information and key response areas for focus through a top-down approach, field experiences, organizational culture, and ethics of humanitarianism. International organizations as powerful actors in global politics have the power to use their organizational culture to construct the social world (Barnett & Finnemore, 1999).

Some interviewees when asked about why they thought the organization would be inclined to engage in climate-related initiatives had the following response

"*The strategies we have changed a lot of our strategies during the past ten years in the humanitarian sector, so. And now it's basically a requirement. If you do a program, the program should consider the environmental factors should be less harmful to the environment or non-harmful to the environment*" - (NRC- Tanzania)

A similar response was given from the UNHCR

"*Uhm, well, I think it's like it's embedded in humanity, UNHCR's strategy. Now I think you know it's a key component*"- (UNHCR- Zurich)

The use of "Greening" slogans

Literature suggests that in the past most communities hosting refugees and IDPs were initially not concerned about the environmental consequences but camps were almost

primarily set up only taking issues of safety, and accessibility to aid into consideration (Tafere, 2018, p. 196; Kakonge, 2000, p. 25). Current findings from the East African settings of displacement show that now environmental assessments are described as a way in which humanitarian actors make sense of how they should approach environmental-related matters when it comes to humanitarian aid. To make sure the organizations do not just operate environmentally blind, greening slogans such as "Greening the blue" for the UNHCR which is also adopted by other NGOs in partnership with the UNHCR, and "Greening the Orange" for NRC have also been adopted.

For instance, when asked if climate or environmental-related concerns have had any impact on the organization`s programming or day-to-day activities one agreed
"Yes indeed it has ...In NRC specifically...we have the slogan that "orange is the new green" ....we try to afforestate ...we'd also do a climate proofing... climate proofing is putting in place so that ensure that we have some integrated resource management" (NRC-Kenya/Tanzania)

The use of greening slogans are intentionally constructed to push the climate agenda within the organizations themselves but also as an effort to have a positive impact on the displaced
"You hear lots of people talking about greening the blue in terms of humanitarian operations, and I think from our perspective, that's like a real opportunity. To use the climate change agenda to have impacts on displaced communities as well alongside with greening humanitarian operations" - (UNHCR- Zurich)

Literature posits that, NGOs besides having their own independent ideas, are also influenced by other sources within the environment they operate in (Barnett & Finnemore, 1999). Judging from the findings it can be said that this environment involves donors, national governance, global goals, and norms besides the humanitarian culture. So in these cases, the climate change agenda becomes a tool to push environmental priorities even within the humanitarian field. Having greening slogans has an impact on the humanitarian networks. Greening the Blue slogan extends beyond UNHCR's organizational approaches to its partners and stressed the climate Agenda.
As one interviewee mentioned *"From the solutions that you put in place, there's a real opportunity to use that climate agenda and use that sort of Greening the blue agenda to have*

a greater impact on refugees, refugee livelihoods, other displaced contexts as well…”- (Practical Action- Rwanda)

Referral to humanitarian ethics

Organizational structure and humanitarian norms and ethics to a large extent shape how humanitarian actors perceive and interpret phenomena (Barnett & Finnemore, 1999), including climate change. Besides the existence of global principles of humanitarian operations to organizational strategies and slogans adherence to set humanitarian ethics was a key influencer on how climate change was framed in the displacement context. For example, it was evident that environmental-related choices were linked to their interpretation of certain humanitarian principles mostly the "Do no harm principle" that guides humanitarian workers and agencies and it encompasses both public and environmental health

"OK, generally, we have a do no harm principle. The humanitarian aid workers and agencies. That also encompasses environmental health" - (NRC- Kenya/Tanzania)

Information skepticism

Notably, apart from the requirements of the humanitarian system in which aid actors operate to a large extent their own individual field interactions, experiences and observations shape their perception around climate change and the framing of the same. NGOs also play a crucial role in the active critique of the environmental body of knowledge and have been able to influence international & national agendas and even policy changes (Jasanoff, 1997, p. 588). The selective simplification of framing tends to filter out or discount some aspects that appear irrelevant while giving meaning to others by laying emphasis (Kaufman et al., 2013). Relatively, what we term knowledge could be distorted, for example, public sources of research may reflect the dominant political agenda or bias to suit funders/sponsors' opinions, while scientific knowledge itself is not autonomous but part of a broader discourse that may be subject to bias from researchers own cultural background (Haas, 2004, p. 572). Some interviewees although acknowledging that climate change had a significant impact on displacement-affected persons also didn't hesitate to show skepticism on the nature of climate knowledge and were critical of the basis of climate information.

One respondent when asked about their main sources of information about climate change mentioned that scientific sources were the main gate of information but also didn't hesitate to highlight that information could be biased

"Yeah, I mean at the global level. We've got a pretty good picture of what's going on here, and it's getting better than more science than more efforts in research, and we're getting better....and you look at the dominance of EU, US Australia the UK and you know France, Germany in terms of the research. Then you realize that we've got a basic disconnect between… Where the research is taking place and where the research needs to take place"
(Practical Action- UK)

Another had the opinion that
"The narrative is dominated by certain sectors..So you know…How how can we shift the narrative to focus on the real important priorities at 1.5 degrees?"- (NRC- Kenya)

Interestingly also, while all the other respondents were keen to stress that climate and environmental issues were a key concern in their humanitarian response, one when asked about environmental/climate challenges in the context they were providing assistance had a different opinion

"We`re in… internally displaced people and they are actually escaping the tribal...Wars…I would say mostly it's not natural disasters…I'm not sure how much the climate change affected this country.." - (NRC- Sudan)

Therefore, the phenomenon of climate change is not adequately understood or prioritized to the same extent but in comparison to other challenges they may be facing. Therefore research is challenged to explore more grounds, particularly those that are traditionally marginalized when it comes to climate change information so as to create more awareness and include many more in the course of climate action.

CHAPTER 6

6. Discussion

The aim of this thesis was to identify climate change frames adopted by humanitarian actors within East African settings of displacement. In order to understand the frames that are specific to this context, I first highlighted various other identified frames of climate change from literature. The framing of climate change within East African displacement settings is linked to the nature of humanitarian crises in the particular geographical location. These mainly include challenges around: livelihoods, insufficient clean energy, shelter challenges, issues of local governance, and environmental protection among others. The frames were also integrated with the environment around aid delivery taking into consideration humanitarian ethics, organizational strategies, and donor requirements with respect to aid. The perspectives on climate change still differ from country to country although the East African region faces similar climatic and geopolitical challenges.

The language used in reference to climate or environmental challenges and displacement in the region took the nature of either warning of future impacts if the environment is not protected, prescriptive of mitigation or adaptation approaches, or descriptive of the nature of the displacement situation in the face of climate change. Words such as "loss and damages", "emergency" "detrimental", and "deforestation", were used in reference to what is experienced or to suggest what would happen if attention was not paid to climate action or environmental concerns. On the other hand, prescriptive language such as; the "need for afforestation", "transition to renewable energy", "adaptation", "mitigation", " sustainability", "coping, and resilience", were used mostly to describe what changes need to be adopted in the face of climate change. The perception of climate change appears to be associated with the kind of impacts or influence climate change has on either humanitarian assistance or in the environment of the displacement affected persons using descriptive words such as; "drought", "soil erosion", "migration", "floods", "safety", etc.

Providing a hero character in narratives as a tool of communication has a more persuasive impact, although in climate change discourses there seems to be a limited reference to heroes (Fløttum & Gjerstad, 2017). A lot of focus is placed on what would be described as transgressors and victims with a focus mostly on causal factors and effects. Frames offer a lens of interpretation, communication, and certain scope of quality to information and at the same time, they interact with and/or may even reinforce other frames (Kaufman et al., 2003). The language used in framing climate change through the lens of a

humanitarian or development perspective tends to take the direction of what climate change means for the organizations and the communities they are responding to and how it also impacts/affects both the nature of the humanitarian response to the displacement affected communities. Some literature connotes that, when it comes to climate change, global non-governmental organizations (NGOs) tend to focus more on what is presently happening than the future or past events (Vu et al., 2021, p. 106). This was rather not the perception of the humanitarian actors in East Africa. It was evident that there is concern about what is happening in the present and also in anticipation of the future impacts of aid response. Based on the responses from humanitarian actors in the region the framing of climate change through impacts, for example, was described in terms of either humanitarian cost, need for sustainability of aid, security of food sources and livelihoods, and the frequency of or duration of migrations, displacement, or prolonged drought and also what is being done or should be done to mitigate the impacts of climate change. This correlates with findings from research that was done on how global NGOs frame climate change on social media, which observed that the framing of climate change by global NGOs focused on the impacts of climate change (Vu et al., 2021, p. 105). On the other hand, the frames tend to expose the vulnerability of the displacement-affected persons to climate change. Since climate, vulnerability looks at the exposure of humans and the natural environment to risk, and this differs from region to region and community to community (IPCC, 2022, p. 5).

Climate-induced habitat collapse may or may not be perceived as a crisis depending on how social actors frame and interpret the issue (McHugh et al., 2021, p. 5). A previous study on the environmental consequences of humanitarian action for refugees showed that although the traditionally humanitarian response is primarily focused on saving lives and providing immediate assistance, these activities have repercussions on the displaced persons since often environmental conditions are not taken into account when setting up camps (Kakonge, 2000, p. 23). The framing of climate change within East African settings of displacement is expressed in relation to its impacts either on both the organization itself, the displacement-affected persons, and also the physical environment. Contrary to the crisis and emergency framing discourse and narratives expressed in climate change-related literature (Bäckstrand, & Lövbrand, 2019; Fløttum & Gjerstad, 2017; IPCC, 2022; UN 1992) humanitarian actors do not seem to focus on climate change itself solely as an emergency or a crisis but through the association with other compounding factors within the settings of displacement. While theory suggests that frames tend to offer a specific interpretation for a specific purpose (Fløttum & Gjerstad, 2017; Kaufman et al., 2013), the frames identified in

this research indicate the integration of factors, whether as drivers or impacts of climate change the framing is expressed as a combination of factors surrounding the nature of the displacement context and humanitarian assistance. As put forth by Kaufam et al., (2013), the framing largely adopts an interpretation that uses categories that can be understood and make sense to the context. For humanitarian actors in the East African region, climate change is also well understood through the environmental risks and effects such as occurrences of drought or floods, diminishing or constrained livelihoods, and generally increased desertification/drought which is linked to the need for shelter and energy as a result of increasing displacement. The energy and shelter challenge is also linked to issues of health *(from using unclean energy)*, safety *(in the search of firewood)*, and even livelihoods *(where the displaced would harvest wood from nature to sell)*.

NGOs have helped bridge and integrate communication concerning climate change from various sources including scientific research, policy, or social media and express it in a manner understandable to the general public (Vu et al., 2021, p. 93). Frames are immersed in personal, social, and institutional roles which may change over certain periods of time (Kaufman et al., 2003). Evidence points that climate change frames at the local level are often imported from the global discourse through the links that national and local actors have with the international platform (Dewulf, 2013, p. 325). On the other hand, the need for environmental assessments and protection of the part of humanitarian response is strongly emerging especially in the face of climate change. In comparison, the frames identified from the literature review and from the direct perspectives of actors within the humanitarian actors are quite similar. Especially when observing the focus on causal factors, effects, and suggested mitigation or adaptation approaches. The difference rather comes from the view that the frames from humanitarian actors in East Africa and relatable to the geographic location, the nature of governance in the specific countries when it comes to environmental protection, the economic status of the countries, and the state of displaced persons. While the effects of climate change in the region were similar they varied from country to country ranging from aridity, floods, erosion, drought, etc.

A lot of analyses on the relationship between environmental resource scarcity and violence recommend that development agencies should invest more in climate adaptation and sustainable development alongside peacebuilding (Hartmann, 2010, p. 239). This is expressed through the various frames that highlight mitigation as a necessity in the face of climate change. The focus on mitigation was strong but the approaches adopted varied. This also affected the framing of the phenomenon. Discourses around climate change from micro to

macro levels have the capacity to either maintain the status quo or call for a shift towards a more sustainable future (Kurz & Prosser, 2021). Responses from actors working with organizations that were keen to respond to the energy challenge were very vocal about drought and the need for afforestation and protect the environment. On the other hand, those from organizations that respond more on issues related to poverty and livelihood protection were more vocal about the need for sustainable solutions and even refugee rights to work. This is synonymous with what literature demonstrates (Vu et al., 2021), that framing uses strategic communication to evoke action. The IPCC as a major source of climate change frames acknowledges that recognizing climate change is the way towards strengthening adaptation, reducing the associated risks, and actions for mitigation (IPCC, 2022, p. 4). There is a strong focus on humanitarian ethics, the norms of operations, and requirements from donors and partners that also define how these actors perceive climate change. Both internal and external environments from the organization, national governance, scope of displacement crises, partners, and global agendas shape how the climate change phenomenon is interpreted. National governance and donor requirements were also identified as key players in promoting policies toward climate action. The use of language strategically is evident whether to lay emphasis on the humanitarian norms or ethics or highlight the perspectives around climate change. Though climate change frames originate from various sources; scientists, governments, and global agencies often from a top-down approach, frames from humanitarian actors take more of a bottom-up approach with the latter framing itself as an executor of norms associated with climate action, such as advocating for behavioral change towards environmental protection. Nevertheless, the findings show some level of skepticism on information surrounding climate change and the extent of its applicability which highlights the relevance of specificity and diversity in knowledge in the face of climate change in order for there to be a significant change.

CHAPTER 7

7. Conclusion

The objective of this thesis research was to identify climate change frames adopted by humanitarian actors within East African settings of displacement. This was explored through a combination of semi-structured interviewing of relevant actors working with displaced persons in East Africa and conducting a systematic literature review of the relevant materials on climate change and displacement. Following an interpretivist and a constructionist approach, I was able to explore the assumptions, perceptions, and interpretations of the respondents pertaining to the phenomenon of climate change in the region with respect to displacement settings. The findings from this research answer the question to an extent by highlighting some of the climate change frames adopted by actors in the East African humanitarian context and what they aim to highlight. The findings also attempt to situate why climate change is framed in this region the way it is, often referring to the global climate discourse, partly the global agenda or the direct experiences from the settings of displacement alongside other factors that surround the humanitarian work environment such as donor requirements or governance. The frames also accentuate some of the global goals surrounding Agenda 2030, especially around the need for clean energy and well-being in terms of livelihoods.

The findings indicate multiple but almost similar ways in which humanitarian workers in the region view climate change. The global frames do not necessarily differ from those adopted in the region but those adopted in East Africa broadly highlight perceptions and experiences relating to climate change on the displaced and humanitarian aid in a way that is specific to the plight of the displaced persons. The frames from the literature focus more on highlighting the causes or impacts from a broader or top-down perspective with both IPCC and the UNFCCC attempting to highlight the scientific and social aspects of climate change. Responses from humanitarian actors highlight the vulnerability of the displaced persons and the challenges of providing aid in the face of climate change which has necessitated the incorporation of long-term technological plans such as shelter construction or provision of energy in a manner that is sustainable to the environment. Specific efforts to mitigate and limit environmental-related physical hazards are also more evident in the framing of climate change from humanitarian actors that from the literature on climate change which merely informs of the need for mitigation and adaptation measures.

The constructivist theory holds that knowledge and meaning are constructed through perception and interpretation of experiences. Constructions or interpretations of climate change in the region are to a large extent framed in relation to the vulnerability of the displaced persons and the actors` understanding of their identity and role as humanitarian actors. Factors pertaining to organizational identity, culture, and the broader humanitarian environments such as donor requirements, humanitarian ethics, and national governments are also evident in the framing of climate change in the region. Norms, discourses, and frames highlight the relevance of rules, values, and use of language which is evident in what is considered acceptable, prohibited, or only applicable under certain circumstances. The strong reference to humanitarian ethics and principles that bind the actors to take both the displaced and the physical environment into consideration. The findings from this thesis research are however limited in that the framing process cannot be accounted for, nor the basis behind the respondent's constructions or interpretations of the information surrounding climate change. Findings are largely based on respondent perceptions and experiences in their humanitarian work and observations from the region itself. Future research could focus more on bringing the voice of the displacement-affected persons and their perceptions surrounding climate change and also look more into the process of framing and reframing climate change from a global perspective to local perspectives.

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Appendices

1. Table of findings

The table below presents a summary overview of the different codes or wording used in association with climate change, the emerged themes or frames, the number of respondents who used the codes, and the number of times the various codes were used. Not all the codes are reflected on the table but only those that were found to be relevant to the question. Mostly the themes take on the same names of the codes identified from the data and in some cases, more codes have been categorized under one theme.

Table 1: A list of themes and codes from the findings

Themes/Frames	codes	How many participants used the code	How many times the code was used (all participants included)
Greening Slogans:	Slogans	3	5
Impacts and drivers:	Livelihoods & food security	5	9
	Human security	4	6
	Loss & Damage	2	5
	Deforestation	7	13
	Drought	5	7
External factors:	Governance	7	13
	Donor requirements	6	9
	Agenda 2030	5	19
Emergency:	Emergency	4	6
Mitigation:	Mitigation	5	17

Humanitarian ethics:	Humanitarian principle	2	2
Sustainability:	Sustainability	7	12

2

Interview guide

1. How would you describe your experiences working within the humanitarian field?
2. If any, What kind of environmental challenges are you facing around the camp?
3. How would you describe the relationship between displacement and displacement?
4. What is your view on climate change in relation to displacement?
5. Would you say environmental concerns are an emergency in your context?
6. Why do you think humanitarian organizations would be inclined or feel obliged to intervene in environmental challenges?
7. What other actors outside the organization necessitate the intervention into climate change related concerns
8. How do you/your team become aware of environmental challenges within your context?
9. Would you say climate/environmental-related challenges have any impact on aid assistance?
10. What do you think would happen if Humanitarian NGOs did not respond to these climate/environmental challenges?

3.

Consent form

Are you interested in taking part in the research project?

"Identifying climate change frames within East African settings of displacement"

This is an inquiry about participation in a research project where the main purpose is to understand how the framing of climate and environmental challenges in East Africa with respect to displacement. In this letter, we will give you information about the purpose of the project and what your participation will involve.

Purpose of the project

The aim is to investigate the perspectives around climate and environmental challenges within the displacement settings in the region that contribute to the framing of the phenomenon. The goal is to understand the shared or differing perceptions relating to environmental/climate challenges from the selected humanitarian actors in the region.

2.1 Main Research Question

What are the climate change frames adopted by humanitarian actors in East African settings of displacement?

The data extracted from this research will not be used for other purposes besides the fulfillment of the academic work related to master thesis research.

Who is responsible for the research project?

The Norwegian University of life sciences (NMBU) is the institution responsible for the Master`s thesis. There is no cooperation with other institutions in the course of this research assignment.

Why are you being asked to participate?

This research will employ purposeful non-random sampling. The sample population has been selected from actors working within humanitarian settings.

What does participation involve for you?

- If you choose to take part in the project, this will involve you taking part in online interviews which may be recorded with your consent. The interviews may be recorded in video and audio or in audio-only format. It will take approx. 30-45 minutes. The interview includes questions about (your personal opinions about environmental and climate change within the particular settings of displacement. Your opinions and reflections on how refugees interact and get impacted by their immediate surrounding environment. The questions will also seek to understand your opinions on the humanitarian interest in environmental concerns. Your answers will be recorded electronically on audio or video for transcription and processing purposes.
- I will not ask for information about you from other sources. The information you give will be treated with confidentiality and only analyzed for the purpose of the research.
- Your feedback will be treated as personal reflections and opinions as an independent humanitarian actor and not as the organization's opinions.

Participation is voluntary

Participation in the project is voluntary. If you chose to participate, you can withdraw your consent at any time without giving a reason. All information about you will then be made anonymous. There will be no negative consequences for you if you choose not to participate or later decide to withdraw.

Your personal privacy – how we will store and use your personal data

We will only use your personal data for the purpose(s) specified in this information letter. We will process your personal data confidentially and in accordance with data protection legislation (the General Data Protection Regulation and Personal Data Act).

- The Norwegian University of Life sciences (NMBU) parties responsible for your data will be the student researcher (Mellab Soita) and the research supervisor (Poul Wisborg).

- Names and contact details will not be analyzed with the data. Personal data will only be used to contact you for the purpose of the research and will be stored separately from the rest of the collected data through the interviews.
- No third parties or persons from other institutions will be given access to your data.
- No personal information will be published, respondents will not be recognizable through publications only the feedback from respondents will be analyzed and used. The only recognizable information will be the organization. The information will also not be used to reflect the organization's opinions but will be treated as personal opinions of respondents.

What will happen to your personal data at the end of the research project?

The thesis research is scheduled to end on 31.07.2022. After transcription, the audio or video recording will be destroyed. Only the analyzed data will be kept until the fulfillment of the academic requirement. Personal data stored separately from the collected data will also be deleted.

Your rights

So long as you can be identified in the collected data, you have the right to:

- access the personal data that is being processed about you
- request that your personal data is deleted
- request that incorrect personal data about you is corrected/rectified
- receive a copy of your personal data (data portability), and
- send a complaint to the Data Protection Officer or The Norwegian Data Protection Authority regarding the processing of your personal data

What gives us the right to process your personal data?

We will process your personal data based on your consent.

Based on an agreement with NMBU- The Norwegian University of Life Sciences, NSD – The Norwegian Centre for Research Data AS has assessed that the processing of personal data in this project is in accordance with data protection legislation.

Where can I find out more?

If you have questions about the project or want to exercise your rights, contact:

- NMBU-The Norwegian University of Life Sciences via mellab.soita@*nmbu.no* +4741302848- *(student researcher)* or/and *poul.wisborg@nmbu.no* -*(research supervisor)*
- NSD – The Norwegian Centre for Research Data AS, by email: (personverntjenester@nsd.no) or by telephone: +47 55 58 21 17.

Yours sincerely,

Mellab Mkeli Soita (*student*)

Consent form

I have received and understood information about the master's research on *"Humanitarian Aid and the challenge of Environmental Degradation: A Constructivist Approach"* and have been given the opportunity to ask questions. I give consent:

☐ To participate in an online zoom interview (Video recording is not necessary)

☐ To participate in semi-structured questionnaires sent over email

☐ To be contacted for any clarifications during the period of the research

☐ For the information, I give to be published in a way that I cannot be recognized

☐ For my personal data to be stored until the end of the master thesis research for the purpose of the research only

I give consent for my feedback to be processed until the end date of the project, approx. 31.06.2022

(Signed by participant, date)