



## PROJECT SUMMARY

### Background and objective

“Government” is by far the most mentioned word in humanitarian logistics research (Kunz and Reiner, 2012). Although host government (HG) influence on the delivery performance of international humanitarian organizations (IHOs) assisting victims of major disasters is widely noted, how and under what circumstances they exert this influence is not well understood.

Developing this understanding is all the more urgent in complex emergencies as they constitute the majority of disasters in the world (Albala-Bertrand, 2000) and lead to significantly more fatalities than natural disasters. The World Health Organisation defines a complex emergency as a “situation with complex social, political and economic origins which involves the breakdown of state structures, the disputed legitimacy of host authorities, the abuse of human rights and possibly armed conflict, that creates humanitarian needs”.

This research seeks explanations for the heterogeneous behaviour of HGs towards IHOs in complex emergency settings and to establish what implications their behaviour subsequently has for IHOs’ delivery performance.

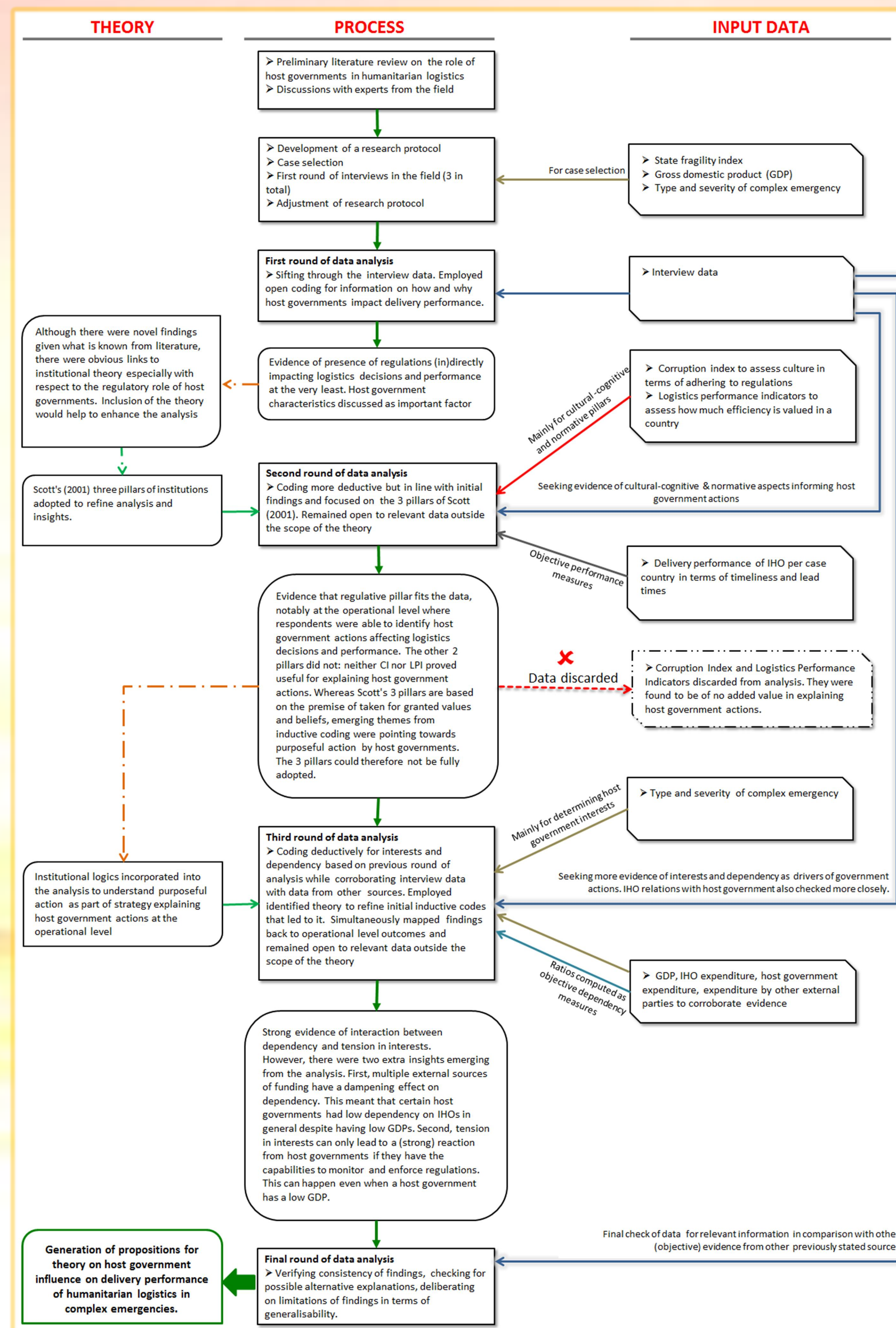
## A MULTIPLE CASE STUDY APPROACH

- In-depth multiple case study of 6 countries undergoing complex emergencies of varying intensity, duration, and types.
- Complex emergency types include: civil war, post-war, (post-)insurgency, and political-economic crisis
- All countries drawn from a major medical IHO with a presence of at least 10 years in each country. Most data collected from the IHO.

## RESEARCH PROCESS

### Procedure

- Iterative research process starting research design, interview data collection, several rounds of analysis in which more data sources and existing theory were incorporated to refine insights (see figure directly below).



## MAIN FINDINGS

### Host government stances and determinants of behavior

- Results show that HGs adopt one of four pre-dominant stances in regulating/ controlling IHO logistics activities (see figure directly below)
- The adopted stances depend on the level s of: tension in interests between a HG and an IHO; the regulatory and enforcement capabilities of the HG; and HG dependency on external assistance in general.
- As one country demonstrates, regulation and enforcement capabilities are not necessarily dependent on the economic state of a HG!
- Whereas tension in interests has long been assumed to be political, results suggest a growing trend towards genuine reform where some governments are doing more about the problem of counterfeit medicines brought into their territory for instance.
- In the presence of high dependency and low regulation and enforcement capabilities, tension in interests can be latent making a HG non-restrictive but not necessarily supportive.
- Surprisingly, corruption – another often cited problem- was not found to be a widespread problem/ issue

### HOST GOVERNMENT STANCE TOWARDS HUMANITARIAN LOGISTICS AND IMPLICATIONS

TENSION IN INTERESTS & REGULATION AND ENFORCEMENT CAPABILITIES*	High	UNCOMPROMISING - most challenging Representative case countries: W, X, and Z	SELECTIVELY ACCOMMODATING Representative case country: Y
		- In general, host government highly limits IHNGO decision space through regulations and acts of sovereignty with little to no room for compromise. Acts of sovereignty are enacted infrequently under exceptional circumstances. - Tight control on inventory management related aspects, notably imports. Although these tend to increase lead times, they generally have a high level of predictability - Especially in the case of insurgency, both regulations and sovereign considerations limit routing and scheduling options and can lead to unpredictable outcomes, especially with respect to timing of movements (scheduling).	- In general, host governments impose some limitations on IHNGO decisions through regulations and acts of sovereignty albeit much more rarely compared to uncompromising host governments. However, they can be accommodating/ facilitative of certain outcomes. - Moderate control on inventory management related aspects which tend to increase lead times. The overall lead time is not always predictable due to the nature of certain processes. - When applicable, control on transport affects scheduling decisions largely due to regulations and much less frequently due to acts of sovereignty.
		INDIFFERENT Representative case country: U	NON-RESTRICTIVE - least challenging Representative case country: V
	Low	- In general, host governments do not actively seek to reduce IHNGO decision space. However, on occasion delivery performance is negatively impacted through random acts largely attributable to corruption. - Absence of regulations or acts of sovereignty with a major impact on inventory management and transport decisions/outcomes.	- In general, host government does not control or regulate the bulk of IHNGO activities. There is much room for compromise and IHNGO has a large decision space and wider span of control. - Absence of regulations or acts of sovereignty with a major impact on inventory management and transport decisions/outcomes.

\* Low if either tension in interests is low/ latent OR regulation and enforcement capabilities are low. High if both tension in interests AND regulation and enforcement capabilities are high.

## CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS

- HG behavior in relation to humanitarian logistics is systematic and predictable. The stark contrasts in HG stances imply that IHOs need to adopt various approaches in different contexts to enhance their delivery performance outcomes.
- All things being equal, practitioners can : prioritize efficiency when HGs are non-restrictive; form alliances to reduce uncertainty and minimize desperation that can lead to bribery when dealing with indifferent HGs; base logistics decisions on available options while lobbying for better conditions when HGs are partially compromising; prioritize partnership with and capacity building of local NGOs early on to enhance performance when working on uncompromising HG soil.