

**ADAPTIVE PROJECT MANAGEMENT MODEL  
FOR THE INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND  
AID PROJECTS**

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FOR THE INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND  
AID PROJECTS**

**by**

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

3RP	Regional Refugee Response Plan
CHS	Core Humanitarian Standards
IDAPs	International Development and Aid Projects
INGOs	International Non-Governmental Organisations
JIF	Jordan INGOs Forum
KA	Knowledge Areas
PG	Process Group
PM	Project Management
PMI	Project Management Institute
PMP	Project Management Professional
QM	Quality Management
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
TQM	Total Quality Management
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

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Appendix A Round-1 Questionnaire Email

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# **MODEL PENGURUSAN PROJEK ADAPTIF UNTUK PROJEK PEMBANGUNAN DAN BANTUAN ANTARABANGSA**

## **ABSTRAK**

Dengan peningkatan bencana alam dan krisis buatan manusia dan meningkatnya tahap kemiskinan dan ketidaksamaan di peringkat global, sektor Organisasi Bukan Kerajaan Antarabangsa (INGOs) berkembang pesat dalam tindak balasnya terhadap keadaan darurat kemanusiaan dan pemberian bantuan untuk menyokong pembangunan sosial dan ekonomi di seluruh dunia. INGOs merealisasikan tujuan kemanusiaan mereka melalui melintasi sempadan ke pelbagai komuniti dan konteks yang tidak berdaya untuk melaksanakan Projek Pembangunan dan Bantuan Antarabangsa (IDAPs). Walau bagaimanapun, kepelbagaian dan sifat khusus projek-projek ini telah mencipta pelbagai kerumitan yang mengurangkan kejayaan dan kesinambungannya. Oleh itu, industri ini memerlukan Model Pengurusan Projek (PM-Model) yang disesuaikan untuk memenuhi aspek organisasi IDAP dan spesifik industri yang lebih luas untuk meningkatkan tahap kejayaan projek. Kajian ini bertujuan untuk menyediakan Model PM adaptif untuk IDAP berdasarkan Panduan PMBOK® standard yang mengintegrasikan TQM sebagai pendekatan organisasi yang relevan dan Standard Kemanusiaan Teras (CHS) sebagai spesifik industri yang relevan. Oleh itu, untuk memenuhi aspek organisasi dan sosial yang lebih luas dan jangka panjang. Untuk itu, proses penyelidikan Delphi tiga pusingan telah dilakukan untuk melibatkan sekumpulan pakar untuk mengembangkan penyesuaian yang diperlukan pada Panduan PMBOK® dan kemudian mengesahkan Model PM yang muncul



oleh sekumpulan praktisi lain melalui tetapan bengkel pengesahan (FGD). Melalui penyesuaian yang muncul yang membentuk Model PM Adaptif, PM-Model adaptif memajukan Panduan PMBOK®, dan seterusnya, memajukan Teori PM dengan menutup jurang pengetahuan kekurangan Model PM untuk industri ini, kerana ia menghubungkan dan mengintegrasikan TQM dan CHS ke dalam Teori PM. Oleh itu, masalah praktikal kekurangan prestasi, kesinambungan, kepuasan, relevansi, inklusi, koordinasi, penyetempatan, pemantauan dan penilaian, kualiti, dan kebertanggungjawaban IDAPs semuanya telah diatasi dengan Model PM adaptif. Kajian ini adalah usaha awal untuk menjawab apa yang boleh kita pelajari apabila PM bertemu IDAPs.. Namun, ini membuka laluan untuk prospek PM masa depan dan holistik dalam industri ini untuk kepentingan orang yang terdedah di seluruh dunia.

# **ADAPTIVE PROJECT MANAGEMENT MODEL FOR THE INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND AID PROJECTS**

## **ABSTRACT**

With the increase of natural disasters and man-made crises and the rising levels of poverty and inequality globally, the International Non-Governmental Organisations (INGOs) sector has rapidly grown in response to humanitarian emergencies and the provision of aid to support social and economic development worldwide. INGOs realise their human goals through crossing the borders to diverse, vulnerable communities and contexts to implement International Development and Aid Projects (IDAPs). However, this diversity and the specific nature of these projects have created various complexities that diminished their success and sustainability. Therefore, this industry needs an adaptive Project Management Model (PM-Model) to suit the broader organisational aspects of IDAPs and industry-specificities to increase the success levels of projects. This study aims to provide an adaptive PM-Model for IDAPs based on the standard PMBOK® Guide integrating TQM as a relevant organisational approach and Core Humanitarian Standard (CHS) as a relevant industry-specificities. Therefore, to meet the broader and longer-term organisational and social aspects. To that end, a three-round Delphi research process has been conducted to engage a group of experts to develop the required adaptations on the PMBOK® Guide and then validate the emerged PM-Model by another group of practitioners through Focus Group Discussion (FGD) validation workshop setting. Through the emerged adaptations that formed the Adaptive PM-Model, the adaptive PM-Model advanced the PMBOK® Guide, and in turn, advanced the PM Theory by covering

the knowledge gap of the lack of PM-Model for this industry, as it linked and integrated the TQM and CHS into the PM Theory. Therefore, the practical problems of lack of IDAPs' performance, sustainability, satisfaction, relevancy, inclusion, coordination, localisation, monitoring and evaluation, quality, and accountability have all been overcome by the adaptive PM-Model. This study is an early endeavour to answer what we can learn when PM meets IDAPs. However, it opens the door for the future and holistic outlook of PM in this industry for the interest of vulnerable people around the globe.

# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Introduction

With the increase of natural disasters and man-made crises, as well as the rising levels of poverty and inequality in the world, the International Non-Governmental Organisations (INGO) sector has rapidly grown in its response to humanitarian emergencies and the provision of aid to support social and economic development worldwide. Along with the private and governmental sectors, scholars perceive INGOs as a legitimising might in the global domain, particularly due to their aim to positively change the affected people.

INGOs are project-based organisations whose strategic plan achievement is measured by implementing and managing International Development and Aid Projects (IDAPs), their intended outcomes, and deliverables. The Project Management (PM) tools help systematically organise their work to optimise the maximum value and efficiency of IDAPS. As the body of evidence suggests, the utility of PM ensures the viability of projects, prompting INGOs to continuously seek to improve their PM practices by which to enhance both their impact and their competitiveness over funds. However, the adoption of standard PM-Models is highly contextual, necessitating specific amendments per unique sector.

The motivation of this research has been sparked by the tragedy of the Syrian refugee crisis in the Middle East. This crisis has profoundly affected all countries and people of the region in a way that impacted their access to and quality of basic needs,

their daily life, and even the future of their children alike. Due to the complexity of the crisis and its protracted nature, the crisis-affected people have become highly dependent on the assistance and services provided by INGOs through their IDAPs. While the global efforts have enacted one of the largest humanitarian responses to date, the donor funding is shifting away from the emergency response. Almost a decade into the crisis, however, the severity and complexity of humanitarian needs remain extensive for Syrian refugees in the region. In Jordan specifically, the needs of Syrian refugees have increased, thereby prompting the need to modify current PM practices that would more specifically address the varying needs of those affected by the crisis.

Therefore, this research seeks to provide an adaptive PM-Model for IDAPs by exploring current PM-Models' applications to identify ways and tools for better management of this specific type of projects and for the interest of crises-affected people. The emerged Adaptive PM-Model is in the form of guidance on how to adopt the standard PM-Model and proposals on how to adapt it for IDAPs using the perspectives of Field-Specificities (CHS) and Total Quality Management (TQM).

This Chapter provides contextual background on the study, problem statement, research objectives and questions, significance of the study, definition of key terms, and structure of the thesis.

## **1.2 Background of Study**

The region of the Middle East has been one of the most turbulent areas around the globe, with crises that have not subsided in the recent decades; the lack of resources, geopolitical nature, and man-made crises are the prominent characteristics that have

branded the region, and are the main reasons for an array of socio-economic challenges that inhabitants of this part of the world continue to face.

Unfortunately, one of the key causes and the most harmful implication of these socio-economic challenges took the form of vast and successive waves of refugees in the region. For instance, Jordan has received the first and biggest bulk of Palestinian refugees among the neighbouring countries in 1948 after the Arab–Israeli war, followed by the second wave during the Arab–Israeli War in 1967, reaching 2,206,736 registered Palestinian refugees in Jordan (UNRWA, 2018), resulting in the biggest protracted displacement status in the world (Lilly, 2018). Jordan has welcomed several subsequent waves of refugees during the Lebanese Civil War (1975-1990) and a Hama’s massacre in Syria (1982). Jordan was also the key destination for Iraqi refugees after the first Gulf war in 1991 and the second Gulf war in 2003, both of which prompted an influx of 1.2 million Iraqis to Jordan and Syria to wait for stabilisation in their country or to be resettled into a third country. Out of those, more than 75,000 Iraqi refugees are still hosted by Jordan, along with over 20,000 from Sudan, Somalia, and Yemen, registered with UNHCR.

At present, out of 5.7 million Syrians who have fled conflict in their country to find refuge in the region, Turkey has received over 3.6 million Syrian refugees, Lebanon hosts around one million, and Jordan has the second-highest share of refugee population compared to its population in the world. Moreover, there are 6.2 million people who are displaced within Syria, representing the biggest internally displaced situation in the World (UNHCR, 2019b). Since the onset of the Syria crisis in 2011, some 1.3 million Syrians have settled in Jordan, including 671,551 refugees formally

registered with UNHCR (UNHCR, 2019a). In a country with a struggling economy and limited resources, the scale of refugee influx has further exacerbated the existing socio-economic challenges, making Jordan one of the countries most affected by the Syria crisis. Table 1.1 summarises the number of registered Syrian refugees in host countries:

Table 1. 1      Number of Registered Refugees, Source: United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)

<b>Country of Asylum</b>	<b>Number of Registered Refugees</b>	<b>Date</b>
Turkey	3,564,919	September 21 <sup>st</sup> 2018
Lebanon	976,002	July 31 <sup>st</sup> 2018
Jordan	671,428	September 24 <sup>th</sup> 2018
Iraq	248,696	August 31 <sup>st</sup> 2018
Egypt	131,019	August 31 <sup>st</sup> 2018

Recently, scholars and practitioners have begun to describe the Syrian refugee crisis as a protracted displacement situation. This sensitive description entails long and country-specific political debates, which this research was not aimed to discuss. However, it was deeply discussed from the managerial point of view, which is related to the quality and performance of refugee response projects and concerning the academic scope of this study.

Figure 1.1 features Palestinian Refugees internally displaced in Yarmouk Camp, Syria. This population initially came to Syria fleeing the Arab-Israeli War in 1948 and again became refugees and internally displaced people during the Syria crisis, which illustrates the vulnerability and complexity of the context and subsequent refugee crises in the Middle East (See Table 1.2).



Figure 1. 1 The Crisis in Yarmouk Camp. Source: <https://www.unrwa.org/crisis-in-yarmouk>

The protracted conflict in Syria, which began in 2011, forcing more than half of the Syrians to become either refugees or internally displaced persons, has brought the attention of the whole world, as described by Kraft & Smith (2019), to provide the humanitarian and relief support to the affected populations. In addition to the local communities on the borders of neighbouring countries who opened their homes to the vanguard of refugees, the local and national humanitarian actors and charities were the first respondents to the crisis. Afterwards, a limited number of international organisations that already operated in Jordan before 2011, such as CARE International, Save the Children, Danish Refugee Council, and Caritas, were quickly summoned to provide aid through their respective interventions.

As the crisis evolved, the nature of the humanitarian response became more complex and project implementation more sophisticated. The actors involved in the response started to focus more on the quality of response, efficiency, intended and



unintended outcomes that might affect the social and economic stability, and the future of hosting countries. During the early years of crisis, the provided assistance mostly focused on the relief items, including emergency cash assistances, food items, non-food items, and winterisation assistances to face the harsh weather. However, the emergency-focused nature of response programs, as well as the continued mass influx of refugees, caused what can be considered as an omission of attention that should have been paid to the PM best practices, including quality and accountability practices, or some Industry-Specificities such as coordination, sustainability, value for money, conflict sensitivity, recognising the needs of host communities, meeting the expectations of hosting governments and communities and maintaining the local capacities.

In December 2014, UN Agencies, INGOs, and hosting governments have agreed on the need for a comprehensive and coordinated response plan that would address the needs of 5.6 million refugees, 6.2 million internally displaced persons, and 3.9 vulnerable members of host communities in the five hosting countries under one coordinated and agreed-upon framework, the Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan (3RP). The plan has been at the forefront of responding to the impact of the crisis, engaging over 270 humanitarian and development actors who, in 2019, channelled a 5.5 billion budget (3RP, 2019) to implement projects addressing the needs of both refugee and host community members, in alignment with Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Since then, response projects have become more sophisticated and comprehensively planned strategically and more coordinated among donors, hosting

governments, UN Agencies, and INGOs. The projects of the response plan have also started to be measurable, controlled, monitored, and feeding into specific and agreed-upon objectives and indicators. Also, 3RP began to explicitly ask for specific resilience, development, and sustainability-focused outcomes side by side with the projects that aim to meet the humanitarian needs of refugees. Due to the protracted nature of the crisis, 3RP (2019) most recently started to consider the aspect of durable refugee solutions, which are promoted by UNHCR to ensure protection and to seek solutions to refugee problems, and include voluntary repatriation, local integration, or resettlement to a third country.

Hence, the complexity of projects has evolved from ad-hoc, unplanned, and uncoordinated humanitarian response–focused projects to highly complex projects that need to be carefully managed towards meeting the needs and expectations of 12 million vulnerable people in the region, and to preserve the future of their children who are struggling in the heart of the tragedy of this era.

Despite the billions of dollars that have been invested in the Syrian refugee response projects, the needs of people have not decreased but increased. As sustainability was not achieved, the performance of IDAPs came under criticism, just like the rest of IDAPs around the world (Golini et al., 2015). The World Bank, for instance, noted that projects still suffer from high levels of failure, in addition to the ongoing decline of aid and the inability to satisfy the needs of affected people. Table 1.2 shows some of the current needs, situations, and living conditions of Syrian refugees in Jordan as an example.

Table 1. 2 Current needs, situation, and living conditions of Syrian refugees in Jordan. Source: Developed by the researcher for this research

<b>Current Needs, Situation, and Living Conditions</b>	<b>Reference</b>
An increase of 3% of the population was recorded as being highly or severely vulnerable, from 70% in 2017 to 73% in 2018.	UNHCR (2019d)
<b>Basic Needs</b>	
Over 90% of Syrian refugees report they cannot find the assistance they need.	CARE International (2018)
95.2% report the need for cash to meet their basic and urgent needs.	CARE International (2018)
<b>Livelihoods</b>	
Most population are unable to independently maintain the financial and nonfinancial standards necessary for a dignified life.	UNHCR (2019d)
To cover the expenditure gap, the most frequently adopted negative coping strategies are buying food on credit, accepting socially degrading, exploitative, high risk or illegal temporary jobs and reducing essential non-food expenditures.	UNHCR (2019d)
The unemployment rate for Syrian refugee men is 23%, but it is double that for women.	Age et al. (2019) – Study of FAFO and Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation
68.5% of Syrian refugees report working informally, which places them at high risk for exploitation and unsafe working conditions.	CARE International (2018)
43% of the Syrian refugee households reported their total income had fallen over the past two years	Age et al. (2019) – Study of FAFO and Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation
Two-thirds of all Syrian refugee households have debt.	Age et al. (2019) – Study of FAFO and Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation
<b>Health</b>	
49% of the population are identified as highly or severely vulnerable in regards to health.	(UNHCR (2019d)
5% of Syrian refugees report receiving medical assistance for example, though almost half report needing it, while 70% of Syrian refugees had ever received financial support to meet their health needs.	CARE International (2018)

Table 1. 2 Continued

74% of Syrian refugees report they cannot afford medication, and 45.6% skip or save medication to avoid high costs.	CARE International (2018)
16% of the Syrian refugee population in Jordan report chronic health failure	Age et al. (2019) – Study of FAFO and Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation
23% of Syrian refugees rely on INGOs concerning health care	Age et al. (2019) – Study of FAFO and Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation
Two-thirds of Syrian refugees reported that there is a woman of childbearing age in their family. However, only a third of those women have access to family planning or reproductive healthcare.	CARE International (2018)
21% of the population report having at least one disability, according to the Washington Group (WG) Questions	UNHCR (2019d)
<b>Humanitarian Assistance</b>	
Almost two-thirds of Syrian and non-Syrian refugees reported their ability to access assistance has deteriorated over the past year, suggesting a decline in essential humanitarian assistance.	CARE International (2018)
<b>Shelter</b>	
78% of the Syrian population are highly vulnerable, primarily due to insecurity of tenure and inadequate shelter conditions.	UNHCR (2019e)
43% of cases report not having a formal agreement with their landlord, increasing from 25% in 2017, further eroding the overall sense of security and protection among community members.	UNHCR (2019e)
<b>Education and child protection</b>	
Only 53.9% of Syrian children below the age of 18 are attending school.	CARE International (2018)
One-third of Syrian refugee children in Jordan are still not enrolled in either formal or informal educational systems due to the family’s inability to afford the associated costs. Instead, children are sent to earn income for the family.	CARE International (2018)
11.2% of Syrian children are currently working occasionally or every day (12% of Syrian boys and 1% of Syrian girls), increasing over the 7.9% who were last year.	CARE International (2018)
87% of children aged 6-14 years and 77% of children aged 15-17 years have deprivations in child protection.	UNICEF (2018)

Table 1. 2 Continued

45% of working children are involved in hazardous labour. More than 9 in 10 employed children work out of economic need.	UNICEF (2018)
7% of Syrian girls are currently married. When asked why their child married, 13.6% reported decreasing financial pressure on the household.	CARE International (2018)

### 1.3 The Scenario of Study Phenomenon

Today, the 3RP (2019) recognised that the protracted nature of the Syria crisis requires intensifying the efforts to:

*“restore the development momentum of hosting countries have responded generously since the start of the crisis.”* 3RP (2019).

In this context, both the humanitarian and development infrastructures have grown rapidly and remarkably with a significant increase in the number of INGOs who are aiming at responding to massive needs of refugees, building the nexus between humanitarian response and the sustainable development programs of the hosting countries (Opdyke et al., 2018; Kraft & Smith, 2019), and developing capacities of local communities, despite the increasing skepticism about INGOs efficiency and resource management (Voluntas, 2018).

Despite the high international attention from all stakeholders, 3RP has struggled to get the required financial support from its donors. According to 3RP’s 2017 Annual Report, only 2.48 billion have been received out of 4.63 billion appealed to finance the projects of response (i.e., 54% of the requested value). This amount has been competed on by more than 270 partners, primarily including INGOs and United Nations Agencies

who brought big investments and established their offices and long-term presence in the region.

In this context, and through its Second Annual Report of “*State of the Syria crisis response: Assessing Humanitarian and Development Challenges,*” *Voluntas* indicated that the partial improvement in the situation of targeted populations was not attributed to the performance of response’s projects, but to the resilience of communities and support provided from non-traditional actors. Concerning the performance of NGOs, they are perceived as deficient in key PM aspects, including lack of refugee inclusion in the decision making, relevance of provided services to the actual needs, and the perception of inefficiency (Voluntas, 2018).

The essence of humanitarian and development work is collaboration and coordination, but not competition. However, this region's current-crowded relief and development market created real competition among INGOs for positioning themselves, fundraising to get the already scarce and shrinking funds, and attracting their donors. Donors have started to be more demanding in comparison with the early years of the crisis (Egger, 2018). Nowadays, it is not uncommon among most of the international donors of the Syrian refugee crisis in the hosting countries to explicitly ask their partners INGOs for high-quality designs, planning, implementation, and end-line evaluations of their funded projects. Which in turn, means shifting from project-based towards performance-based funding where the quality of project’s outcomes and successful completion of projects are both key considerations to continue receiving funds (Shafiq & Soratana, 2019); these could not be achieved or will be at high risk of failure without having robust and relevant PM practices in place.

Within the INGOs sector, quality has generally been defined by the satisfaction of both donors, and beneficiaries, in which effectiveness and efficiency of projects are both met throughout the projects' life cycles (Al-Tabbaa et al., 2013), and in which all aspects of 1) reaching planned targets, 2) bringing the desired change on the life of target people 3) satisfying targeted populations 4) attaining sustainability, 5) retaining donors, 6) and using the resources efficiently, are all addressed towards excellence in managing the quality and enhancing the performance of the IDAPs (Saleh et al., 2017). In addition to the quality as an abstract definition which was provided by several scholars such as (Al-Tabbaa et al., 2013) and the project performance measures which were proposed by other scholars such as (Saleh et al., 2017), IDAPs that are implemented overseas by the INGOs have their own complexities as agreed by both, scholars and practitioners. Therefore, Industry-Specific Quality and Accountability (Q&A) aspects (CHS, 2016) and the broader organisational management aspects that are surrounding projects (Sweis et al., 2016; McEvoy et al., 2016; Steinfort, 2017) are all imposing themselves as integral aspects to be considered into the PM theory for the sector. Furthermore, these projects have their own complexity dimensions, particularly when operating in turbulent contexts (Oliver-Smith, 2019) or man-made crises such as the Syrian refugee crisis in the Middle East.

In March 2019, the researcher conducted an initial consultations with 10 project managers and INGOs leaders who have been selected purposively and working in the Syrian refugee response projects. After reaching saturation, in which no new insights have emerged after the fifth interviewee, the research concluded that none of the standard PM-Models is used to manage these projects. All project managers reported

the inability of standard PM-Models to deal with the specific requirements of projects as the main reason for not using them.

PMBOK® Guide is a guidebook that has been recognised as the PM theory and the good practice, which describes the knowledge within the profession of PM (PMI, 2017). This standard is, and in turn, the PMBOK® Guide is constantly updated and published by the Project Management Institute. This, therefore, the consulted projects managers have indicated the PMI methodology and its PMBOK® Guide as the most potential methodology that might be used to satisfy the broader organisational aspects of INGOs management and the longer social programs they are working within. This has been widely confirmed by the initially reviewed literature as well.

Therefore, the standard PM theory has been criticised in terms of its ability to deal with the complexity realities of IDAPs (i.e., the refugee response projects in the case of this study). To that end, it has been advised to advance the standard PM theory for the sector by considering the specific requirements of this particular type of projects (Golini et al., 2015; Arcuri et al., 2018), as well as to be linked with broader organisational structures and longer business programs (McEvoy et al., 2016; Steinfors, 2017; Ika & Donnelly, 2017). In that sense, Project Management Institute (PMI) has established the standard guide of PM for the constructions, software development, and governmental sectors (PMI, 2000; PMI, 2006; PMI, 2013; PMI, 2016; PMI, 2017). However, it does not fairly answer how the standard PM theory and available PM-Models are contextually relevant for IDAPs implemented by INGOs in man-made crises. Moreover, how they can be advanced to improve the performance of these



projects towards the achievement of the ultimate announced and agreed-upon goal of all INGOs and their stakeholders after ten years into the crisis.

#### **1.4 Problem Statement**

The aim IDAPs is to benefit people and communities, satisfy their needs, and bring a sustainable impact on their lives. However, IDAPs are unable to satisfy these needs due to the shortcoming of current PM-Models that can consider the bigger organisational, social aspects, and field-specificities. Therefore, experts' judgment can help to adapt the standard PM-Models (PMBOK® Guide) using TQM (as an organisational framework) and CHS (as an industry-specific tool) to improve the performance of IDAPs.

Under the overall umbrella of Human Rights, IDAPs that are mainly funded by international donors and implemented by INGOs should always have high superior humanitarian and SDGs towards people and developing countries (Ayoyo, 2019). Through undertaking these projects, INGOs are aiming to protect at-risk people and save their lives, to satisfy their needs, to enhance their resilience and empower them, to develop their communities on the social and economic levels towards sustainability, peace building and improving quality of their lives, and lives of future generations alike (Walton, 2018).

Due to their position as liaisons between the international donors and domestic stakeholders, INGOs are always in a position that requires them to be the most accountable to all stakeholders (Latif & Williams, 2017). Therefore, they are obligated

to, and expected, maintain all directions of accountability when implementing their projects (Berghmans et al., 2017). These include, but are not limited to, upward accountability towards those who “Give,” downward accountability towards those who “Receive”, and horizontal accountability toward governments, partners, and communities (Aldashev & Navarra, 2018; Smith, 2018). Likewise, they are required to maintain efficiency, which donors seek, and effectiveness, which recipients of services also seek, and in turn, are meant to satisfy the expectations of all stakeholders of their projects (Kraft & Smith, 2019) that are vital to lives of vulnerable people.

Despite the importance of INGOs for crisis-affected communities, the IDAPs implemented by INGOs operating in the Middle East still suffer from high failure levels (Latif & Williams, 2017), as reported by the World Bank (Yamin & Sim, 2016), and were not able to attain their goals, satisfy the needs of people, or ensure bring the sustainable impact on their lives, they also not supported enough by donors as expected by these communities (3RP, 2019). Additionally, the efficiency of response projects still to be questioned, and the role of these projects in achieving sustainability and lasting impact on the lives of vulnerable and crisis-affected people has not been significantly proved. For instance, 97% of Syrian refugees in Jordan who need assistance could not find required assistance, 46.1% of Syrian children below the age of 18 are not attending schools, and 74% cannot afford medication (CARE International, 2018). Likewise, sustainability and the lasting impact of early recovery projects inside Syria were not achieved yet (Hemsley & Achilles, 2019). This was aligned with the empirical findings of Saleh et al. (2017) on response projects outside Syria, where respondents have ranked “*Our Interventions Provide Sustainability for*

*the Beneficiaries*” as the lowest performance indicator for their projects. Besides that, these projects are still lacking inclusion of beneficiaries, providing relevant services, and being efficient (Voluntas, 2018; Hemsley & Achilles, 2019), while donors’ requirements are increasing, and the competition among INGOs to obtain the decreasing funds has become a crucial source to finance their projects (Nanthagopan et al., 2019).

The absence of an adaptive PM-Model for this specific type of projects has been acknowledged. Therefore, the gap between intended superior goals of IDAPs and the lack of achieving these goals has been widely discussed in the literature and frequently attributed to either lack of adoption of good performance PM-Models for the sector (Keleckaite & Meiliene, 2015; Mishra, 2016; and Frimpong & Oluwoye, 2018), or the inability of standard PM-Models in its original formats to respond to the specific requirements of IDAPs and to deal with the complex realities of these projects (Steinfort, 2010; Ika & Hodgson (2014); Golini et al., 2015; Golini et al., 2017, Matos et al., 2019). Hence, it has been recommended to advance PM theory as IDAPs need an effective PM-Model for better performance of IDAPs (Landoni & Corti, 2011; Golini et al., 2016; Steinfort, 2017; Beekharry, 2017; and Matos et al., 2019), which increases the probability of success, smaximise the social impact of projects (Golini & Landoni, 2014), and in turn, strengthening the position of INGOs in competition with other INGOs over available donors’ funds (Lacruz & Cunha, 2018), and builds robust credibility with all stakeholders to support this vital type of projects (Arhin et al., 2018).

Therefore, the need for adaptive PM-Models emerged within INGOs literature (Vahanvati & Mulligan, 2017), and within the other industries alike (Hällgren et al.,

2012), to include specific extensions to PM theory, such as PMIs for the construction sector (PMI, 2000; PMI, 2016), governmental sector (PMI, 2006), and for software development sector (PMI, 2013). In this context, Golini & Landoni (2014) have compared several standard PM-Models (including PMBOK® Guide, PM4NGOs, PM4DEV, and IPMA) and showed that PMBOK® Guide could be adopted along with the complementary Industry-Specificities to increase the probability of success for these projects. Likewise, PMI (2017) has encouraged the PM practitioners to tailor PMBOK® Guide in responding to the specific needs and uniqueness of their projects and to adopt the modern management trends and approaches as well as the improvement initiatives such as TQM to respond to project complexity, and to the surrounded organisational aspects alike (Steinfort, 2017; Anderson & Lannon, 2018).

The TQM theory has been recognised as a holistic organisational framework for improving performance and ensuring sustainability within INGOs (Sweis et al., 2016; Saleh et al., 2017; Anderson & Lannon, 2018; De Waal & Olale, 2019; Mahmoud et al. 2019a). Likewise, Core Humanitarian Standards (CHS, 2014) has been agreed upon by almost all INGOs around the world as a people-centred approach (Robehmed, 2019), and industry-specific criteria that must be adhered to, committed to, and have to be adopted and operationalised to ensure the ultimate quality and accountability of humanitarian interventions (Dejene 2017; Hemsley & Achilles, 2019), and to directly address the complex realities of humanitarian and development interventions (Hilhorst, 2015). Therefore, this research uses the TQM theory and CHS quality criteria to advance the PM theory, and more specifically, the standard PM-Model (PMBOK®

Guide) for the interest of INGOs and vulnerable people who were affected during and after the man-made crises.

Despite the lack of theoretical foundation of PM, the literature dealt with the PMBOK® Guide as the theory of PM and recognised it as the most completed standard for PM. However, it does not consider the Industry-Specificities of IDAPs and their broader social aspects. Therefore, this study will identify the ASKs of IDAPs from the secondary data and then determine its deficiencies to meet these ASKs through the primary data collection towards the development of Adaptive PM-Model for IDAPs.

Delphi method has been acknowledged as a suitable method for PM doctoral research and development of PM-Models (Skulmoski et al., 2007; Avella, 2016). By exploring the opinions of experts and distilling their knowledge through the Delphi method, this study aims, in its essence, to propose an adaptive PM-Model that can enhance performance and maintain the sustainability of IDAPs that are implemented by INGOs in turbulent contexts and man-made crises such as Syrian refugee crisis. The adaptive PM-Model extends the standard PMBOK® Guide by adding further processes, amending the current processes, or providing sector-specific guidance on adopting the current processes whenever possible to manage refugee response IDAPs better.

## **1.5 Research Objectives**

Guided by PM theory, TQM theory, and the agreed-upon industry-specific quality criteria of CHS, this research aims to advance the PM theory for the IDAPs by empowering PM-Model's emergence for IDAPs INGOs implement. Therefore, TQM dimensions of the sector (Sweis et al., 2016) and CHS Quality Criteria (CHS, 2014)

were synthesised and utilised to assess the standard PM Model (PMBOK® Guide) concerning its ability to fulfil the requirements of this sector. Ultimately, this research is expected to provide an adaptive PM-Model for these specific type of projects based on the standard PMBOK® Guide. Accordingly, the following are research objectives:

**[RO1]:** To understand the current utilisation of PM in IDAPs that INGOs implement.

**[RO2]:** To identify the organisational and field-specific requirements of IDAPs from the PM-Model.

**[RO3]:** To identify the deficiencies of the standard PM-Model (PMBOK® Guide) for meeting the organisational and field-specific requirements of IDAPs.

**[RO4]:** To develop an adaptive PM-Model for IDAPs integrating TQM and CHS.

**[RO5]:** To validate the adaptive PM-Model for IDAPs.

## 1.6 Research Questions

Based on the reviewed literature and identified gaps of the knowledge, the following key questions are intended to be answered by this research:

**[RQ1]:** What is the current utilisation of PM in IDAPs that are implemented by INGOs?

**[RQ2]:** What are the organisational and field-specific requirements of IDAPs from the PM-Model?

**[RQ3]:** What are the deficiencies of the standard PM Model (PMBOK® Guide) for meeting the organisational and field-specific requirements of IDAPs?

**[RQ4]:** How to adapt the standard PM-Model for IDAPs integrating TQM and CHS?

**[RQ5]:** Is the developed adaptive PM-Model valid for IDAPs?

RQ1 was answered through the initial consultations with IDAPs project managers and INGOs leaders as well as the critical review of theories and relevant literature, and in turn, RO1 was achieved. The output of this objective was in the form of a description of the current utilisation of PM-Models within the sector. Then, the key research concepts, including PMBOK® Guide, TQM, and CHS, were synthesised to formulate the organisational and field-specific requirements (ASKs) of IDAPs from the PM-Model, in turn, to answer RQ2 and achieve RO2. However, RQ3 and RQ4 were answered through the field phase of study and primary data collection, as the Delphi method (Round-1 and Round-2) has been utilised to solicit judgment of experts on identifying the deficiencies of the standard PM-Model (PMBOK® Guide), and then to propose the adaptations needed for the development of adaptive PM-Model based on the standard PMBOK® Guide. Therefore, the output of RO3 was in the form of a list of deficiencies, while RO4's output was in the form of an adaptive PM-Model for IDAPs, including eight adaptations. Last, RQ5 was answered through Round-3 of Delphi, which consisted of an FGD workshop to validate the adaptive PM-Model, which were developed in Round-1 and Round-2, and in turn, to achieve RO5.

## **1.7 Significance of Study**

The ultimate social aim of this research is to benefit the vulnerable and crisis-affected people in the turbulent contexts around the globe, such as the Syrian refugee crisis in the Middle East, specifically those who are the recipients of humanitarian assistance and development services provided by INGOs through IDAPs. Therefore, the final deliverable of this study is in the form of an adaptive and validated PM-Model for which IDAPs managers and INGOs leaders can use to improve this specific type of projects.

***IDAPs application of standard PM-Model:*** The study contributes to knowledge and evidence of a provision of a better understanding of the reality of the application of standard PM-Models in the context of IDAPs of refugee response programs as kind of the responses to the man-made crises. This knowledge will be used to rationalise and justify the current research as well as future research within the PM research arena. Moreover, this understanding is based on the triangulation of relevant literature and field consultations with the practitioners in the field to ensure the validity of this expected contribution to the knowledge.

***IDAPs requirements of standard PM-Model.*** The requirements of IDAPs from the PM-Models identifies the best criteria for the wider social and organisational aspects of the management of IDAPs. These requirements will be used by the current research and future research alike to advance the PM theory by providing evidence on the holistic view of PM, in which both organisational aspects and INGOs industry specificities are appreciated. To that end, a synthesis analysis of the most relevant theories (TQM and CHS) will be used to generate the intended knowledge.



*Deficiencies of the standard PMBOK® Guide.* The study provides empirical evidence on the deficiencies of the standard PMBOK® Guide. The form of an agreed-upon list of deficiencies of standard PMBOK® Guide emerges and are triangulated from the literature and a group decision of experts. The identification of deficiencies did not only paved the way for this study to adapt the standard PMBOK® Guide for the INGOs to better manage IDAPs, but also contributed to the knowledge by informing the future research on where to focus when adapting the standard PMBOK® Guide or any other standards for the interest of this vital sector, and for satisfying the needs of vulnerable people around the world.

*Integrated a new framework of the PM-Model.* The study formulates the holistic view of IDAPs management by integrating both organisational aspects (TQM) and INGOs industry specificities (CHS) into the PM-Model. TQM factors are significant for ensuring the linkage of IDAPs with the broader organisational aspects and longer-term social aims. Further, for ensuring continuous improvement culture, HR-Focus, quality-based partnerships, evidence-based approaches, and satisfaction of all stakeholders. However, industry specificities (CHS) are significant for ensuring people-centred approaches, learning, and empowerment of local communities, and overall accountability and protection of IDAPs. Therefore, this research contributes to literature and study on the development of PM-Model in IDAPs context, and TQM and CHS approach utilising the Delphi method, a panel of industry and PMP certified experts to adapt the standard PMBOK® Guide collectively. Therefore, advances TQM theory and CHS into the PM theory for INGO sector.

*The viable adaptive PM-Model.* The study's novel contribution is the Adaptive PM-Model in enhancing the performance of IDAPs projects (a specific type of projects) and increasing the opportunities for success and sustainability. This viable model validated and refined by the industry and PMP certified and/or trained experts is a ready-to-use PM-Model for INGOs managers.

### **1.7.1 Theoretical Contribution**

Since IDAPs are the key vehicles of INGOs to deliver the planned outputs and bring the intended sustainability and lasting impact on the targeted people, this study has been inspired to look at the PM theory in this sector because of its acknowledged role in the performance of projects (IDAPs). Therefore, the study contributes to the theoretical debates on how to advance PM theory within the sector in order to be able to deal with complex realities in this sector. Further, to contribute to the theoretical discussions on how TQM and CHS as relevant theories can be an integral part of PM theory to manage IDAPs better.

Therefore, this research contributes to the PM theory by suggesting a new PM-Model and providing guidance on how to adapt the standard guide to making it fit into the sector. To that end, this study has been undertaken to address the lack of application of PM theory (standard PM-Models such as PMBOK® Guide) within the IDAPs implemented by INGOs, to adapt the standard PMBOK® Guide for this sector, and to contribute to the body of knowledge by fulfilling the gap of absence of adaptive PM model for this context and similar contexts as recommended by literature.

The findings of the present study are unique in terms of the conceptual framework, as it prompted a hybrid approach, synthesising the theories of PM, TQM, and CHS, and considering PMBOK® Guide, TQM dimensions of the sector, and Industry-Specificities (CHS quality criteria) towards the emerged PM-model for IDAPs. Furthermore, this study has identified the current deficiencies of the standard PMBOK® Guide towards its final deliverable, the adaptive PM-Model for IDAPs.

### **1.7.2 Practical Contribution**

In addition to the theoretical contribution of the study, and through its research process (Delphi process), the learning from experts was applied to address specific and contextual challenges faced by practitioners in managing the IDAPs, and confronted by INGOs. Likewise, the research findings will contribute to the internal performance of the projects by enhancing the likelihood of success and overall quality and sustainability of projects. Therefore, the projects managers and INGOs leaders can use the emerged findings on the ground and in their daily practical life and improve the performance of IDAPs.

Improving the performance of these projects is highly tied to the needs of and lives of vulnerable people and refugees. Therefore, the direct and indirect beneficiaries of IDAPs will be directly impacted by the findings of this research, as they are the key stakeholders of these projects and whose lives will be affected by the success or failure of the projects. Accordingly, the adaptive PM-Model provided by this study to IDAPs project managers and INGOs leaders will contribute externally to projects aiming to