LOGISTICAL PRACTICALITIES FOR A NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATION

Case study: Empowerment of African Women Organization ry (EOAW)

Tiina Keskisimonen

Bachelor's thesis
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ABSTRACT

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TIINA KESKISIMONEN:
Logistical practicalities for a non-governmental organization
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This thesis is about discovering the practicalities of exporting used items to Africa. The organization involved in this is the Empowerment of African women Organization ry which wants to send humanitarian aid to Africa. The organization has sent some monetary help to Nigeria and DRC (Democratic Republic of Congo) as well as minor amounts of items by transporting them themselves by travelling to the country. That was becoming too time-consuming and they wanted to know the practicalities it took to send bigger amounts of items at once.

The objective of this thesis was to find the stages of transportation process that they needed to undertake to get the items to Nigeria. Although they also have an office in DRC, Nigeria is the easiest way to enter the African continent and therefore the logical choice. Also the fact that not many companies from Europe transport to DRC due to the instability of the country, made Nigeria an obvious choice. The study was conducted as a basic qualitative study where the aim was to increase the knowledge of this topic and the practicalities. The information was collected through internet sources, literature reviews and interviews. After studying the collected data and information gained, I was able to get a better understanding of the overall process of getting goods from central Finland (Pirkanmaa area) to Nigeria.

Key words: transportation, Nigeria, humanitarian logistics

CONTENTS

1 INTRODUCTION

Go and ask any Nigerian and they will say there is no problems in their magnificent country. They are the most talented and friendliest people you can imagine and westerners are highly welcomed. That can be, and in my own experience is mostly true, but when you show some interest in finding out what happens behind the scene, the story acquires more levels.

Nigeria accounts about one sixth of the population of Africa (1) that means that Nigeria has approximately the population of over 170 million people (2). The 389 ethnic groups (1) residing in Nigeria brings variety in cultures, customs and beliefs. The amount of people also brings restlessness, conflicts, violence and crime.

Humanitarian aid may not be the issue Nigerians want to emphasize in Europe, but it is a fact that there are a growing number of people of all ages and in both genders that need our attention and help.

Children are weak so they can't defend themselves. Therefore they are an easy prey to preachers who make their parents believe that the child is a witch or possessed with bad spirits. If the parents can't afford to pay the preacher, exorcism can't be done and the result is that the child is abandoned (3).

Women are vulnerable to getting raped and rape makes them castaways in the eyes of the society they are living. They are forced to leave the community and sell themselves to keep alive. Or they are promised a good job abroad when the reality is that they are being sold as sex slaves.

In Nigeria, money talks. If you have it you can live freely and happily but if you don't have it…

2 THESIS BACKGROUND

Humanitarian aid to Nigeria is not a very common thing to see, but there are some organizations which help the less fortunate in Nigeria. Particularly when we are talking about an organization based in Tampere, Finland, the obstacles faced when trying to get humanitarian aid to Nigeria are different from organizations based in, let's say for example in central Europe or the United Kingdom.

Some of the obstacles concerning help from this far north are transporting the goods to Nigeria, the practicalities and procedures of it when the organization is an NGO with limited funds and knowledge of transportation. The second one, which was already mentioned, is the monetary issue. Both in paying for the transportation and practicalities and also to acquiring the help (items) needed. The third one is the difference between the climate and need between a Nordic country and Nigeria. It is not a big difference but the it deserves some consideration so that the help provided would be of the most value and would not only sustain the people in need, but also give them means to learn to sustain themselves.

2.1 The research objectives

The aim of this thesis is to examine the logistics processes involved in getting humanitarian aid to Nigeria from Tampere, Finland. This leads to the research object of finding out the best way of giving aid to the people in need since the organization is such a small group of people. This will help Empowerment of African Women Organization in finding the best practices and the most cost effective way to maximize their efforts in helping and educating people in Nigeria. This will make their aid processes more flexible and help them respond quicker to situations that might arise.

2.2 The research methodology

There are 3 types of research, basic research, applied research and the combination of those two. The main objective of basic research is to increase the knowledge of the area

it is concerning (4). This is what my thesis is mostly made of. My aim is to increase the knowledge of exporting process from the humanitarian point of view so that small organizations would find it easier to start helping people with goods. This is due to the fact that people in general are more willing to donate items than money.

In this thesis I am using mainly the qualitative approach to research since I am interviewing persons who export to Africa with the objective of finding out how they are doing it and what are the steps in the process. I try to discover things that when taken into consideration or prepared for, will help the transportation and exporting process and make it less time consuming.

For this thesis, a questionnaire was put together to determine the basis for the data to be analyzed. The same questions were given through e-mail and face to face interviews and the persons answering were given unlimited freedom to add details and things they thought were important to the answers. The people interviewed and/or given the questionnaire were selected based on the pre-existing knowledge that they, at the moment export or have exported at some point in the past so that we could rely on their knowledge to be at least above the basics.

Reliability and validity are an important part of this research. Joppe (2000)(5) defines reliability as "…The extent to which results are consistent over time and an accurate representation of the total population under study is referred to as reliability and if the results of a study can be reproduced under a similar methodology, then the research instrument is considered to be reliable. (p. 1)" My research can be reproduced under similar methodology but the results will vary over time due to the changes in country- and export legislation and practices.

3 THEORETICAL BACKGROUND ON LOGISTICAL CHALLENGES

In this section we'll be going through the process of exporting humanitarian aid. We'll be going through transportation modes, container types, incoterms, the documents required to export to Africa, warehousing, material handling and packaging and a bit of reversed logistics before we take a closer look at the case study of Empowerment of African Women Organization.

3.1 Transportation

Logistics is thought more to belong to the corporate world where goods are shipped from one end of the world to another via various logistical methods. Nevertheless it is also a very vital part of humanitarian aid.

It is almost impossible to predict where the next natural- or man-made disaster, war or conflict is going to take place which will lead to people being in danger and suffering so it is, as well almost impossible to plan the logistic gateways to those areas in advance that have often a very poor infrastructure to begin with. You can only make plans and simulations of various situations to the best of your knowledge and execute them when the time comes.

In humanitarian logistics the time is of the essence. There are people dying and suffering each hour, each minute it takes for the help to reach them. That makes humanitarian logistics so difficult and essential; because it is about saving lives. Because the situation itself is so hectic during the disaster, it is very hard to gather feedback or any other data about how the logistical procedures were handled in the target country/site. Humanitarian work is also very consuming on people so the aid workers change often which means that the know-how each person has, goes away with them. These are few of the essential problems in humanitarian aid and its development.

Humanitarian aid from the logistical point of view can mean transporting either equipment, like tents, medical stuff, blankets, etc., people, like aid workers, victims of the disaster, members of the native government, or food items. Each of these groups has

their own special requirements concerning the mode of transportation and the handling of them. For example, if medical equipment is handled wrong, it might break or otherwise be unusable in the destination. And there is going to be enough of contaminated water at the site so delivering fresh water is a life saver.

In a more general level, there is number of transportation modes. The main ones used are road-, rail-, sea- and air transport. Pipeline is also a transportation method and it is meant for gases and liquids, such as raw oil. The longest pipeline in the world runs from Huoerguosi (located in China – Kazakhstan border in northwest Xinjiang Uygur autonomous region) to Hong Kong and it is a natural gas line (6).

Each transportation method has its own specific technology and demands for the infrastructure. None of the transportation methods can replace the other but using more than one in making a shipment is called inter-modal transportation.

Usually the help to these disaster stricken countries is sent from another country or even a continent and since time is of the essence, the fastest way to get them to the disaster area is to fly them in. Assuming that the still is an airport and even if it doesn't air transport is still the fastest way of getting help from Europe to Africa. In such case the nearest possible airfield is used and the goods are transported from there by land.

Since we are talking about humanitarian aid, we can't forget the conditions of the countries we are taking the help to, and in some of them even road transport doesn't exist, which is thought to be the most accessible mode of them all. In these cases humanitarian aid workers have to go back to basics, so to say and take advantage of human- or animal powered transportation methods, meaning that a human or some kind of animal is pulling the load.

Rail transport a.k.a. trains are not usually used if we are dealing with a natural disaster because it is very likely that the railroads have been damaged during the disaster. Also sea transport is not the number one choice when talking about quick response times to a disaster but of course when the situation is that the demand for supplies is greater than a plane or trucks can deliver, then we have to consider a ship. Several countries and the organizations Red Cross and Red Crescent have hospital ships that can be called to help if needed (7).

3.2 Incoterms

Even though humanitarian aid is far beyond the world of commercialism, it is about transporting goods from one country to another and whenever that is the case, Incoterms are there to ease the communication and understanding between the parties involved since not all can speak the same language or have the same point of view about the importance or classification of certain items.

Incoterms are published by the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC, www.iccwbo.org) and they are used in all international transportation since they define at what point of the transportation process and how the responsibility of transport, of the goods and of the costs between the buyer and the seller are transferred, in other words: the risk of the transportation. Incoterms represent the minimum of obligations between the seller and buyer. If they wish to agree on more obligations, they will have to state it in the contract.

The newest version, Incoterms 2010 came into effect 1.1.2011. Incoterms have nothing to do with the ownership of the goods. That is a separate matter.

Incoterms are divided into 4 groups according to how the responsibility and the costs are divided (8):

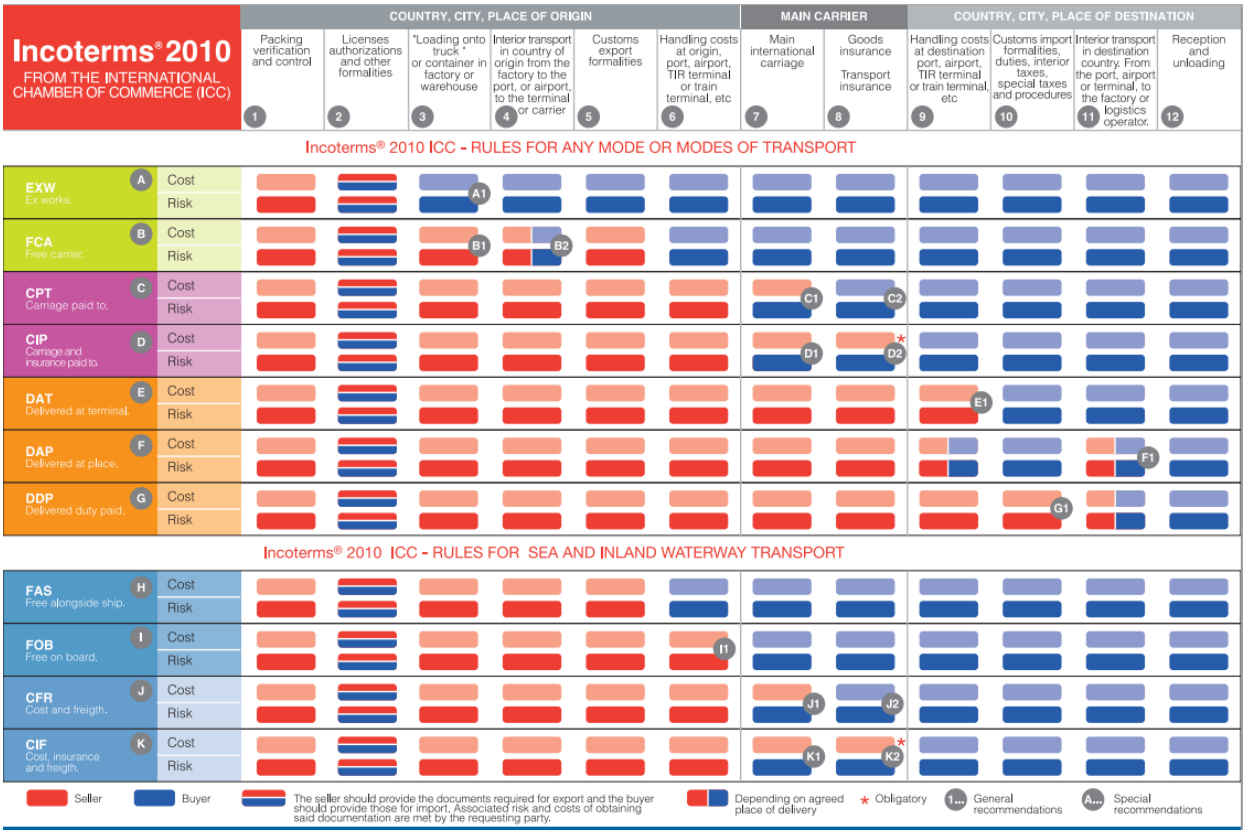
- **Group F** includes the terms that do not include freight, but the seller will deliver the goods to the carrier.
  - FCA – Free Carrier
  - FAS – Free Alongside Ship
  - FOB – Free on Board

- **Group C** entails terms where the seller pays the freight but the buyer has the responsibility.
  - CFR – Cost and Freight
  - CIF – Cost, Insurance and Freight
  - CPT – Carriage Paid To

- CIP – Carriage and Insurance Paid to

❖ **Group D** contains incoterms where the seller has the responsibility and they pay the costs.

- DAT – Delivered At Terminal
- DAP – Delivered At Place
- DDP – Delivered Duty Paid



(9) Chart of Incoterms

When choosing the right incoterm to be used, you have to remember that not all modes of transportation go together with all the incoterms. Make a note that incoterms FAS, FOB, CFR and CIF are suitable only for sea transportation. The rest of the 2010 Incoterms can be used in any mode of transportation.

3.3 Foreign trade documents

Even though we are talking about humanitarian aid, foreign trade documents are a part of the exporting process. When transferring goods from one country to another you

have to have accurate records of what you are transporting and where it is going, as well as the route of shipment so far. This helps the job of the customs to be swifter and doesn't cost your shipment any delays.

3.3.1 Insurance

Insurance protects your financial interest during the transportation of your goods overseas. It is not mandatory to take insurance, but it is highly recommended. "Apart from the protection aspect, cargo insurance also plays a vital role in the financing of overseas trade by making it possible for banks to lend money against cargo in transit" (10).

3.3.2 Shipping documents

"If an exporter has any doubt over the role of, or query over, a particular document the best course to follow is to contact his/her bank or freight forwarder."(11) You can also find information online from the customs web pages and from the pages of other authorities.

Every step of the process can be seen in the shipping documents. Exporter, forwarding agent or a carrier can issue them. They are very important to the clearance through customs for the shipment and there five kinds of documents:

- Forwarding advice indicates that the goods are ready to be shipped.
- Consignment note confirms that the agreed carrier has shipped the goods using the agreed mode of transport.
- Bill of Lading contains all the details of the items in the shipment. It is a legal statement between the carrier and the consignor that entails the type of goods, quantity of the goods and the destination. It has a big part in establishing the agreement between the carrier and the consignor.
- Certificate of arrival establishes the arrival of the goods to the port of destination or to the agreed place of destination.

In international transport the key document is TIR carnet. TIR carnet is the road transportation document that ensures customs on each of the borders the cargo passes (if the country is a part of the TIR carnet –system) that the taxes have been paid for the shipment. When TIR carnet is used, the truck is sealed with a seal (12) when unbroken ensures that the cargo has been inspected by the customs of the origin country and that no one has tampered with it since it left there.

(12) Example of a seal

Customs clearance documents are required by the foreign trade authorities of the both exporting and importing countries. These documents include export permit, import license, certificate of origin and commercial papers. When we are dealing with humanitarian aid, there are no commercial papers to be filed. If you are using air transport, you just write ‘Humanitarian aid’ or ‘donations’, etc. to the air waybill and you don’t necessarily have to pay customs fees. Although this is not an automatic practice to be pardoned from customs fees, it is mandatory to declare what kind of goods you are transporting. If the emergency is great, customs can even open a separate lane through customs for the aid coming in to the country. This, as well as the pardoning of customs fees are pretty much the only differences how humanitarian aid logistics and business logistics differ in practice.

3.4 Warehousing

Warehouses are built to store products until they are transported to the end user, whether it was a customer or a child in poor country. It is a place where the items are stored in

an orderly fashion and transportation in and out of the warehouse is effortless and cost effective. It can also help the company or the organization stock up for an emergency, or in business cases for a higher demand in the market. Warehousing has four main functions:

- Reduce the transportation/production cost. This is mainly a factor in business warehousing. In humanitarian aid you don't produce anything but it does help to reduce the transportation costs.
- Assist in the production process (not a factor in humanitarian aid).
- Help coordinate supply and demand. This is a big thing in humanitarian logistics when natural and man-made disasters are increasing. It is vital for and organization who wants to respond quickly to needs to have a warehouse with basic stock that is ready to be shipped out with a short notice.

Assist in marketing process. This means that the warehouse can be used as a central for value added services such as putting different labels to the packaging, adding user guides or separating bulk into smaller shipments if needed. This is mainly the functions of a business warehouse.

3.4.1 Make up of a warehouse

The three important and indispensable components of a warehouse are space to put the warehouse, equipment to move stuff around and people to operate that equipment. Location is another very important factor in the affect the warehouse has on the operations, but we will concentrate only on warehouse in this chapter.

The space available affects how the warehouse is designed and how the logistics operations inside of it are designed. Like in any space, the aim is to make the most of the available space and this means that you have to think also vertically. It is not just the floor space you have in your disposal. This is the reason why most of the warehouses are also high, as well as wide. The logistics procedures inside the warehouse have to be designed so that they help optimize both the usage of the space as well as the cost of the warehouse.

Some of the things you have to take into consideration when planning the layout of a warehouse are (13)

1. the level of service you want to provide to your customers
2. the size of your market (and the vicinity of it)
3. the amount of distributable products
4. the size of the products
5. then nature and amount of the demand

These factors all affect the size and the layout of the warehouse. When the level of service goes up, the additional services need space to be done in. If the market size grows, it means more products going through the warehouse and more items to store = more optimized space. If the size of the products going through the warehouse vary a lot, each of them require different amount and shape of warehouse. If the demand is high, you need more space to store the goods since more are coming in and going out.

The equipment used in a warehouse varies from forklifts to warehouse information systems. There are different equipment used in various stages of material handling and the equipment also includes the many types of shelves used in a warehouse as well as conveyor equipment. The combination of the equipment used depends on the specifications of the items going through the warehouse and how the processes have been designed.

Maybe the most important part of the warehouse is the people working there. They are the ones operating the equipment, maintaining them and making things happen. They are critical to the service quality and level of the warehouse since most of the services provided in a warehouse require special attention to the requests from the customers.

3.4.2 Types of warehouses

The main types of warehouses are private warehouse, public warehouse and a contract warehouse. Your warehouse can be one of these types of a combination of two.

Private warehouse is usually owned by a company that produces its own goods. Finished goods, half finished goods and materials to produce those two are held in the

warehouse until the goods are ready to be shipped out. If a company produces high volumes of products, it is more economical for the company to own their own warehouse (economies of scale). This way they can also optimize the whole warehouse to suit their type, size and amount of products.

Public warehouse is the kind of warehouse that it rents or leases out space either to companies or to private persons. Usually those two don't mix in the same warehouse. An example of this is Cityvarasto Oy. They have a warehouse that is full of different size containers and they rent the container space to private persons to store their stuff. The price of the warehouse space depends on the size of the space and the location of the warehouse. Public warehouses also offer services that the companies renting the space can purchase. Few examples of those services are labeling, packaging and inventory maintenance.

Contract warehouse is a specialized type of public warehouse. Contract warehouse is held by a third party and it is integrated logistics organization that provides all the services of a warehouse and at a higher level. With the integrated logistics services they provide, the companies using contract warehouse can concentrate on their core business. Empowerment of African Women Organization has a small warm warehouse in Vammala (Sastamala) where they keep the donations they get from people. The warehouse is in the same premises with a butcher shop and at the moment it is free of charge. They transport the donated items there by themselves. All the items kept there are protected by plastic wrapping and the goods are categorized. Clothes are sorted in women's clothes, men's clothes, etc. Other items are sorted in home items, school items, hospital items, etc. This helps to locate the needed articles easily and quickly.

3.5 Material handling

Material handling is the movement of the goods throughout the warehouse. It includes also the packaging and storing of the goods. Products need to be packaged in a way that they will not get damaged during the process, during warehousing or when delivered. This makes the waste handling also an issue in a warehouse. When a proper material handling system is set up in a warehouse, the costs and labor needs reduce. Also the safety of the people increase as well as the productivity of the warehouse. How and how

fast the items move is a very important thing in a commercial warehouse. Parts have to be in the right places in the right time and they have to move according to the optimized procedure. When the timing is right, there is no time wasted waiting for something to arrive, which in turn will delay all the other parts of the process.

The three material handling system types are manual system, mechanical system and automated system. The structure and layout of the warehouse, as well as the amount of equipment required dictates what kind of system is needed in the warehouse. When you are trying to figure out what is the ideal system for your warehouse you have to take three things into consideration. The first is what kind of material is going through the warehouse? You have to know precisely the size, shape, weight and how easy the goods are to pack. They are all factors in the decision. You also have to think about the route the material takes throughout the warehouse so that it doesn't take any unnecessary turns and therefore waste warehouse space and time reaching the destination. The length of the movement should be optimized but you have to keep in mind the limitations the warehouse brings. You have to also make sure that the timing works.

In the warehouse of EOAW the material handling system is manual. All the items are carried and handled by people. The items include clothes, toys, hospital beds, etc. so the strain it causes to the person handling the items varies from item to item.

3.6 Packaging

Goods need packaging right after they come off the manufacturing line to protect their prestige condition. They also have to be moved around the warehouse and to the end destination so the aim of the packaging is to protect the item. If the products are to be transported to the destination by rail, they need more protection than if they are going to be flown there. If the transportation chain includes shipping (e.g. when sold internationally) it has to be taken into consideration that the products might come to contact with water and they need to be protected against the effects of getting wet. Another purpose for the packaging is to make the product more sellable and it is used to market the product. It also can prevent theft of the product. The shape of the packaging doesn't always correspond with the shape of the product but the aim of the packaging is to be optimal when thinking about how many products can fit to a single pallet when considering how

many products can be moved around at once, as well as be sellable to the customers. The shape also effects on how the products have to be handled and therefore what kind of equipment is needed as well as how much space they need in a warehouse and how they have to be stored. Packaging materials cause also a lot of trash that require recycling and today's customers are all for that.

Before EOAW can send any of their items to Africa, they have to package them properly for the long journey. Goods to be exported can be packed in many ways and the chosen method depends on the requirements of the goods itself and the country they are going to be shipped. You have to consider the shape and size of the item and how well you want to protect it during the journey. Some items can be hard to protect, such as for example bicycles that are irregular in shape (if the handle bar is attached) and others might not need any cover or protection at all, such as cars that can be either driven to a container or to the ship directly.

When transporting clothes for example, you have to think how you want them to be during the transport and what the condition you want them in is. If you want all the clothes to be transported hanging, you have to consider the fact that they will take up more space like that and that the same space would take less hanging clothes than for example clothes packed in cardboard boxes. You can also throw the clothes into plastic bags. Those bags would be relatively light to handle and they could be thrown into a container very easily also by hand. The down side of the plastic bags is that even though they are cheap, they are very easy to rip and moisture and other elements can affect the clothes. Cardboard boxes are a bit more expensive, but if you have time (and the space) to gather them, you can get them for free. You can fit a lot of clothes into a box and it will protect the items. I would recommend picking the boxes on a pallet and for extra protection wrap the pallet with plastic. This kind of package is easy to move around with a forklift and the plastic with the boxes will protect the items inside.

You do have to remember that the price of one pallet is around 20eur (14) so the use of them is expensive if you have a lot of items. For more cost efficient transportation boxes wrapped in plastic are fine if you want to take the risk of elements and people handling the goods and how they can harm the boxes.

If the cardboard boxes are not the only kind of items you are planning to transport (and even if they were), it is normal procedure to put them in a container because containers are standardized in size and common in all kind of transportation of goods which means that harbors and airports are equipped in handling them. It is also going to be cheaper to send a lot of goods in a container around the world, than to send them one by one using some postal service. The items have to be placed in the container in such a way, that they will stay secured all the way. The items can't move around or drop. That would damage the other goods in the same container.

3.7 Container types

There are many types of containers you can use to pack your goods to for transporting but the most common sizes are 20ft and 40ft containers (15). They can vary for example in material, structure or construction.

Picture 1 is an example of a dry storage container, which is the most commonly used. This type comes in various dimensions, standardized by ISO (International Organization for Standardization). Like the name suggests, these containers are used for shipping dry materials and the most common sizes are the 20ft and 40ft containers.

Picture 1.

The 20ft container has the capacity of 32,5 m^3 (inside measurements being (L x W x H) 5890mm x 2330mm x 2370mm) and while it weights over 2 000kg (2 250kg) it has the carrying capacity of 20 000kg (16) It can fit 11 euro pallets (120 x 80).

The 40ft container has the capacity of 66,4m^3 ((L x W x H) 12 010mm x 2 330mm x 2 370mm (inside measurements). It weighs 4 000kg and can take 23 euro pallets and 26 000kg of goods.

There is also HC (high cube) versions of both sizes where the height of the container is 2 690mm as well as OT (open top) versions of the containers where the top can be completely removed and therefore high items can be easily transported.

Picture 2 portrays a flat rack container which is designed to transport wide items due to the collapsible sides.

Picture 2.

Picture 3 is a tunnel container, which means that it has doors on both ends of the container allowing easy access from both ends.

Picture 3.

Picture 4 is an example of open side (storage) container. The doors of this type of container are on the side, instead of the ends and the doors can be removed completely, making one side totally open. This provides a wider room for loadings items.

Picture 4.

There are also containers that have doors both on the side and the end of the container. That kind of containers are used widely also for storage.

Thermal ISO containers (picture 5.) are meant to be used when transporting items that demand steady temperature, such as fruits and vegetables, since the temperature inside the container can be regulated. The container demands an electric outlet throughout the journey in order for the temperature regulation to work and the temperature can be either minus or plus degrees. These containers are insulated in such a way that the outside fluctuations of temperature can't affect the items inside. This type of container is very suitable for long distance transportation.

Picture 5.

Bulk containers (picture 6) are used for transporting liquid- and runny items, such as milk, seeds, benzene, etc. They are made most commonly from strong steel or some other anti-corrosive material. They can be reused as long as they are thoroughly washed after every time you offload the bulk. (17)

Picture 6.

3.8 Reversed logistics

Reverse logistics means the logistics system planned for returning the packaging waste and returned products back from your customers to your distribution center or warehouse. It is about how to organize the return traffic in the most effective way so that it doesn't add unnecessary costs to the logistics system and that you can recycle the arriving materials in the most effective way. You don't want your warehouse filling up with packaging waste that no one knows what to do with.

Packaging waste can be anything from pallets to bottles, depending on the product you are producing and you can either dispose and/or reuse it yourself or you can send it to a company that is specialized in the recycling of the material. Also customers can send back products that are maybe damaged or that need repair or that have been sent to them by mistake. You have to have the adequate processes to ensure that the products return to the right place from the customer.

When you are talking about recycling in a supply chain, there are four stages that most products go through: 1st collecting the waste from the end users or customers and delivering them either to a professional recycling company or back to your own factory. 2nd thing is that you process the waste materials you collected into a new batch of raw mate-

rials for your product. 3rd is to use the recycled material to manufacture new products and 4th is to sell the products made from recycled materials to the market.

Some materials and products can be very easy to return into the circulation by sterilizing or cleaning them, like a soda bottle, but broken and unusable bits and parts have to be grinded into raw materials.

When we are talking about humanitarian aid, there is very little talk about reversed logistics and recycling. When humanitarian aid is transported to the corner of the world where it is needed the most, usually the packaging and other materials stay in the country and in some cases can even cause a new problem. Fortunately people are ingenious and come up with new ways of using the products. For example, they can make slippers from a bottle.

Normal oil based plastic bottle practically never decomposes so bringing them to disaster area might just leave the area worse in the long run. That is why thinking green is the way to go also in this field. Humanitarian aid workers should apply some reversed logistics and recycling when they go back home from a disaster area and not use the country as their dumbing ground. No matter how well are their intentions.

3.9 Humanitarian aid

Logistics is a quite underestimated area of humanitarian aid that is not often thought off when talking about humanitarian aid and since it is not a part of the mandate of humanitarian organizations it is very easily neglected. Humanitarian aid is about helping people who have been struck by a disaster and survived it and logistics is an essential part of it for several reasons.

First of all it is the backbone of every relief effort because logistics makes sure that the aid is delivered to the right place at the right time. In disasters (no matter if they are man-made or natural) the type of aid needed varies very quickly.

It is also very important to take into account the fact that when we add procurement and transportation into the humanitarian logistics functions, it probably is the most expen-

sive and therefore also most critical part of the relief effort. If managed and organized badly, logistics uses up funds that could be used in helping people in an operation that is carefully thought out.

Due to the fact that it contains paperwork and correspondence with cooperation partners, it is often the only way to gather data from the relief effort that can be used after the disaster to evaluate the processes and learn from what, and how things were done. Due to the heavy mental impact of relief work, the turnover of employees is massive and when an experienced employee leaves the organization, she or he takes with them all they have learned during the assignments done if nothing is put on paper.

If an organization does not have a well thought infrastructure they might be forced to seek support for their logistic efforts from facets that are more organized and efficient in logistics, like the armed forces or private sector operatives. This is not ideal because usually their support comes with requirements that can hinder the neutrality of the helping organization. This in turn can affect the people on the field as the natives see them to have chosen a side and may turn down the help offered because of that. Neutrality is very important when there are political influences in play.

3.9.1 Types of disasters

There are 2 kinds of disasters in the world; Natural or man-made disasters (hazards) and an event is classified as a disaster if it threatens human life, health, property or environment or seriously disrupts the functioning of society. (18)

Natural disasters are “naturally occurring physical phenomena caused either by rapid or slow onset events that can be geophysical (earthquakes, landslides, tsunamis, volcano abruptions), hydrological (avalanches, floods), climatological (extreme temperatures (both hot and cold), drought, wildfires), meteorological (cyclones, storms) or biological (disease epidemics, insect/animal plagues).” (19)

Man-made disasters are, like the name says, caused by humans and those include “complex emergencies/conflicts (wars), famine, displaced populations, industrial accidents and transport accidents.” (19) All these happen near people and their settlements or

where they move (For example: transport accident; two trains in India collide near the station). As unfortunate it is, we also cannot forget about terrorist attacks (for example 9/11 in New York) as a cause of man-made disasters.

The worst possible situation is when one or more of disaster types are combined. It is a very convoluted and difficult situation to both the victims of the disasters as well as the helpers coming to the country. When there is multiple disasters in affect, it means that there are also more than one organization as well as government(s) in the area and the coordination of everyone as well as remaining neutral to all sides is a very difficult task.

3.9.2 Types of relief operations

There are four kinds of relief operations (20):

- Emergency relief
- Elementary relief
- Rehabilitation relief
- Development relief

Emergency relief is responding to a disaster immediately as it occurs. This demands agility and preparedness from both the organization, in terms of supply and logistics, and the people working in a humanitarian organization (readiness to travel to a disaster area).

Elementary (subsistence) relief means the operations that aim to maintain minimum conditions for people in terms of their survival. The humanitarians are supporting the disaster stricken people at a minimum level, trying to keep them alive.

Rehabilitation relief aims to restore the everyday life of the people in the disaster area and this occurs usually when a bit of time has passed since the disaster and the situation has been otherwise stabilized.

Development relief tries to improve the system in country. It is common that in a developing country, the girls are not allowed or encouraged to go to school. The overall attitude is that girls are needed doing the chores, whereas education and schooling is more

important for boys. For example organizations like Unicef, are trying to gather funds and donations for girls in Sudan so that they can go to school and learn to take care of themselves, as well as learn how to read and write.

3.9.3 Financial issues

"In many organizations the focus is on short-term direct relief rather than investment in systems and processes that will reduce expenses or make relief more efficient in the long run." (21) This is not the case in all relief organizations but there are just a handful of organizations that can say that they have also taken logistics into consideration in the long term.

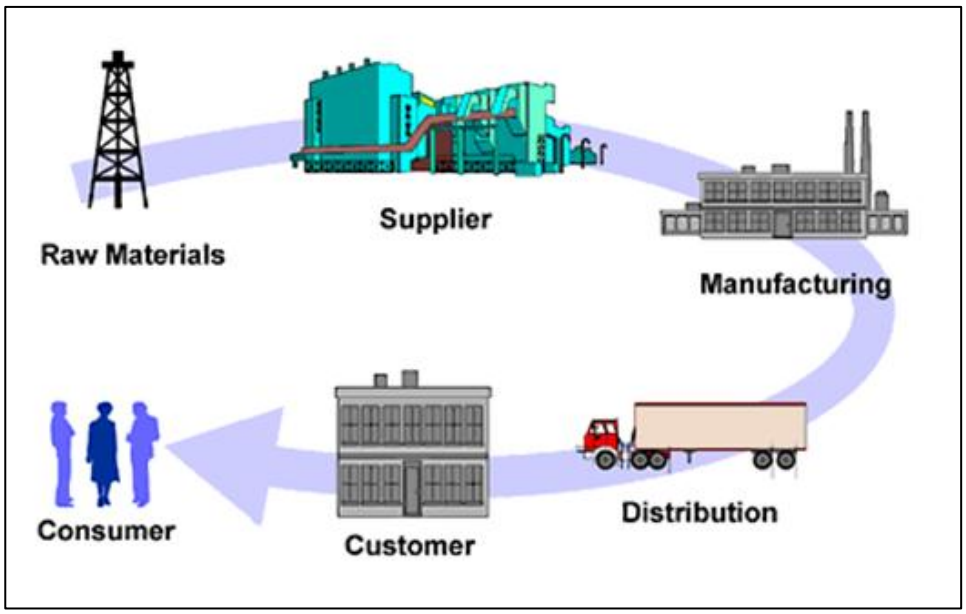
It is difficult to convince donors to give money for systems or 'behind the scenes' activities because everyone wants their money to have a direct impact on the disaster in question. They don't see the value in emergency preparedness or investing in infrastructure because they do not see the impact it makes. If in the commercial side the logistics cost very rarely exceed 15 per cent, in the humanitarian field the logistics cost can be up to 40 per cent of the total costs of the relief program. (21) If the budget of Finland (for year 2013) is 54,1 billion euro (22), in the corporate world it would mean that "only" approximately 8,1 billion euros would go into logistics whereas in the humanitarian efforts the amount spent on logistics would be approximately 15,5 billion euros. That makes the amount of money used for humanitarian aid logistics approximately 191 per cent bigger! If humanitarian aid logistics would be as efficient as corporate logistics, there would be extra 7,4 billion euros more to be used for actual helping of people instead of wasting it on poorly planned operations.

3.9.4 Supply chains

Where corporate logistics have learned long ago that agility and customer information are the keys to successful procurement, humanitarian logistics is far behind.

Supply chain is the route of an item from raw materials to the end user. It can have many stages in between those points or it can be as simple as raw material → manufac-

turer → customer. The fewer steps there are between the origin and the end user, the cheaper the product since every step takes their cut.



(23) Simple (commercial) supply chain

As shown in the above picture, supply chain starts with the procurement of materials by the supplier who then sells the materials (either a bit processed or raw) to the manufacturer who turns the materials into products that they sell on to customers who then sell them to the consumers. In this picture humanitarian organization would replace' the consumer' and there would be one more link in the chain that would be end users e.g. the people that need the help. In supply chain everyone has their role and when one does not have to manage many things but they have their own roles, one can concentrate on the core business. That cuts the expenses for each in the chain, makes the quality of products higher and emphasizes the importance of cooperation and communication between the links to enable the fluent movement of goods.

Humanitarian aid is a part of a relief effort that comes into need very abruptly since there is no way of knowing where or when the next disaster or emergency is going to occur or what is the size of it. This may cause lack of supply concerning the items needed and therefore the importance of preparedness is enhanced. This also means that humanitarian organizations have to build their supply chains very fast.

If you are a big organization like for example the Red Cross and Red Crescent movement, you can prepare for the sudden disaster by building distribution centers across the

world and each distribution center is in charge of supplying items, as well as personnel, to a certain area that it is responsible for (these centers are called zone offices).

They of course help also other distribution centers if there is an urgent need of something the other distribution center is lacking and all this movement of goods and information between national Red Cross and Red Crescent societies is coordinated from the headquarters of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), which is located in Geneva. These distribution centers and offices are for first response and national Red Cross and Red Crescent offices do try to buy the items needed locally because that will help the economics of the disaster stricken area as well and help build the country in the long run.

Smaller organizations do not have the option of centralized distribution centers so they usually work with the locals whenever it is possible. Small organizations also are not among the first respondents to a disaster, but they work in areas where the need for help has prolonged. Example of this kind of work is the efforts to build wells in dry areas where the lack of clean water has been a problem for a longer time or educating people about sicknesses and helping them to go to see a doctor or bring a doctor to see them.

3.9.5 Resources

To operate a humanitarian organization needs 5 things: supply, people, technology, transportation and money. (24) The amount of each needed when a disaster comes, depends on the severity, location, length and the number of people affected.

Supply means supply of things needed to physically help the people facing the disaster. I can be anything from a blanket to a boat, depending on the type.

People are a very important component in a humanitarian organization. The organization needs people to run the organization itself, as well as people that are ready to jump into a plane and fly to the area of disaster right after it occurs to map out the amount and type of need is required. Without them, people working in the distribution centers or headquarters will not have enough and / or the right kind of information to organize the relief effort and that will most certainly lead to wasting of money and resources.

Technology is needed to communicate. Usually after a disaster the infrastructure of communications (phone lines, etc.) are down and there is no way to give information out about survivors or the type of help needed. When traveling around a disaster struck area, technology helps the aid workers to keep track of their position and help them map out towns and villages along the way, if needed. Technology can also save lives in the form of medical equipment. The type of technology depends on the location and the type of disaster in question.

Transportation is very important in an area that has had a disaster. For example if there is a tsunami or an earth quake, it will most certainly destroy the roads and railroads. This means that trucks are needed to transport people and goods in the areas that are difficult to reach or are so far away that walking is not an option. It is also needed to transport people and goods to the area of the disaster from the distribution center or central office of the humanitarian organization so that they can help.

Money makes the world go round. Without it, there is just a will to help but no means to do it. Humanitarian organizations need money to run their day to day operations, acquire the aid (soap, tents, hygiene items, etc.) and pay the workers. Even though there are a lot of people working in humanitarian organizations for free, the organizations need paid workers that are committed to the organization and will run it on day to day basis. The fact is that no one can work for free so the personnel costs of an organization have to be taken into consideration as well when talking about money and funding.

4 CASE STUDY: EMPOWERMENT OF AFRICAN WOMEN RY

Empowerment of African Women ry (EOAW) was founded in 2010 by Deborah Funmi Mupapa and she is the face and the force between the organization. She has talked about her past in Suomen Kuvalehti (25) very openly and she hopes that she can be an inspiration to other women. The aim of the organization is to help empower women and children in Africa, in Nigeria and Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) to be more precise, through education, micro-enterprises, job skill acquisition and many more (26).

They have offices in Benin City, Nigeria and Goma, DRC and the team of volunteers in the organization varies from time to time and from a project to a project. Deborah has few people which are a part of the organization in a more consistent and committed level, but she mainly runs the organization with the help of her husband Isaac from the small office in Tampere.

Right now they are focused on exporting donations they have received from people in Finland to Benin City and Goma, as well as developing micro-enterprises for the women living in those areas to help them support themselves without the need to turn to prostitution.

So far they have transported only small amounts of aid and items to Africa and they have done this by travelling there themselves. Usually the aid is in the shape of money they transfer to their operator(s) in Benin City and Goma depending on the precise need they communicate to them.

They are currently investigating the possibilities of exporting more items at once, as well as they are planning another trip to Africa to take clothes and other needed items.

4.1 Current situation of the logistics efforts of the organization

Empowerment of African Women ry has a small warehouse located in the small town of Sastamala, Finland.

(27) Sastamala in the map of Finland

Since their headquarters are in Tampere, they have to move the donations they receive there to Sastamala from time to time. People come to donate items to their home as well as to their offices in Lielahti, Tampere. Usually the moving of the items from Tampere to Sastamala happens by a large van that Deborah's husband's employer lends them or they rent a van. Getting the items to Sastamala is then a family effort since Isaac and his 2 brothers usually load the van with the stuff and Isaac drives the van to Sastamala with his brothers and unloads the items to the warehouse. Deborah goes along to sort and organize the items in the warehouse.

This makes Sastamala the starting point of the transportation process for the humanitarian aid EOAW wants to give to Africa.

The destinations of humanitarian aid are in two countries. The main one is in Benin City, Nigeria.

(28) Benin City in the map of Nigeria

The city is located inland, about 253km (theoretical air distance) from the biggest harbor city and the capital of Nigeria (29). Benin City has over million residents and it is the capital of Edo State in southern Nigeria.

The second destination is in Goma, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC).

(30) Goma in the map of DRC

Goma is located near the Rwandan border, east of the country. It still suffers the after math of the DRC civil war and is therefore in great need of assistance.

The organization has received donations from other organizations, cities and private persons who want to help them in their task of helping. The donations include simple clothes for women, children and men as well as hospital beds and other equipment required by the school EOAW intends to start there. So far the only way for them to send help to Africa has been to take items and money there by themselves.

5 ANALYSIS

The findings made during the face to face interviews and by analyzing the paper responds I received to my questionnaire (see Appendix 1) are presented here. Subjects for this questionnaire and or interviewed were businessmen who export to Africa and therefore have the knowledge to share about the process transporting there requires.

Approximately 10 people answered the questions and the questionnaire was split into sections to also get some background information about the respondents. 1st section was map out a bit of their background as a business man and what kind of business they do. It also asked about the frequency of their exporting activities and the monetary issues (e.g. average value of the shipment) involved. 2nd part of the questionnaire concentrated on the items exported and where they are procured as well as the packaging. 3rd part was about the starting point of the exporting and through what cities they transport the items and why. 4th part concentrated on things you had to do to prepare for the transportation. What had to be handled before you could start exporting the shipment, what papers you needed, etc. 5th part of the questions targeted the knowledge about what happens during the transportation, how long does it take and how the shipment is followed during transit. In the 6th part I had questions about what happens in the destination; what is the destination country and –city of their items and what is the procedure in the destination harbor as well as how the safety of the items are made sure. The last part was for free answers and contributions the respondents might have had about transporting and they felt was important to share.

5.1 Analysis of part 1 of the questionnaire - Background

The first part of the questionnaire and therefore also of the interviews concerned about the background of the respondents. All of the respondents were mainly into the automobile and spare parts business and most of them did their business from Finland.

Chart 1 demonstrates what the main countries the respondents operate from are and since most of them are residing in Finland, Finland it is the leading country.

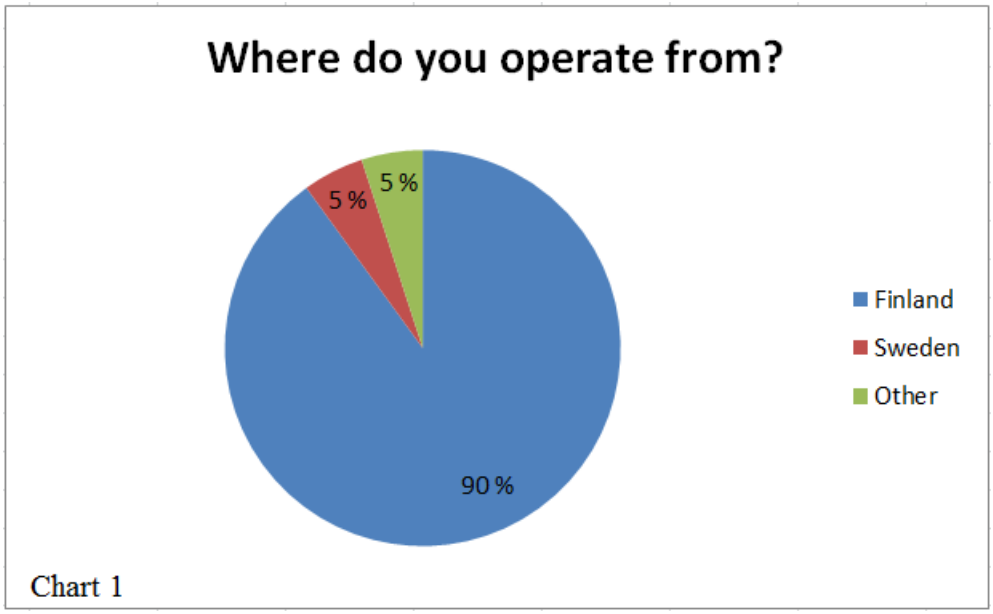


Chart 1

Despite this, most of the respondents replied that their business is not located in Finland but in Africa and the main country of export is Africa and Nigeria.

The research also shows that only few of them have employees, but they do have some kind of partnerships in place. This is vital for the business since they are themselves in Finland and they need someone to take care of the operations in the Nigerian-end.

In chart 2 we can see how the respondents were divided when asked is exporting their main type of business.

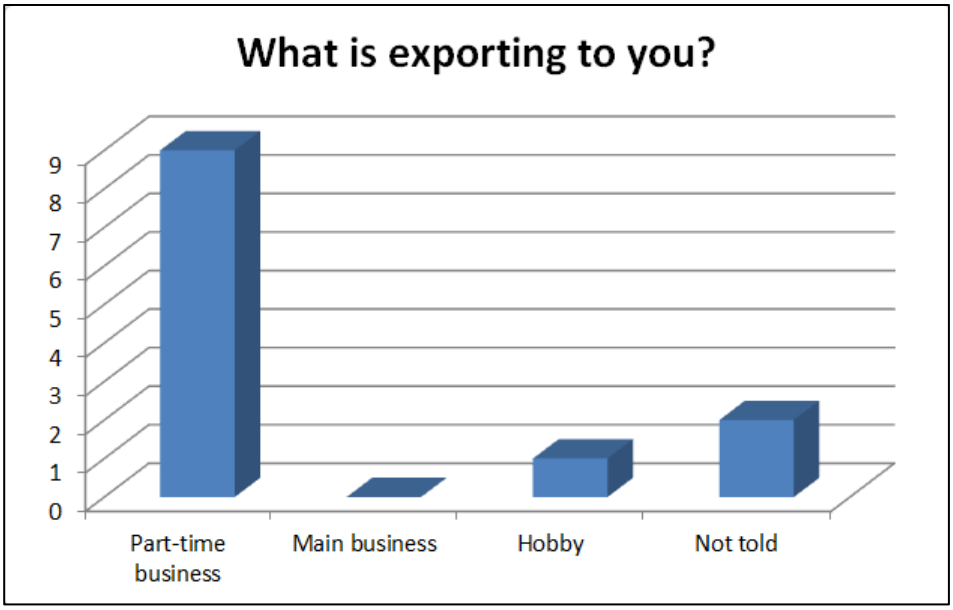


Chart 2

Most of the respondents do exporting as a part time business and they also revealed that the reason behind this is the demand of their clients in Africa. Other factors in this matter are their own financial situation as to how successful their business has been in the past and the availability of the product they are exporting.

The average value of a single shipment varied from few thousand euros to few tens of thousands with the respondents, depending on the shipment and the time of year.

As far as the division of cost in this transporting, that was divided into two sections according to the route. Usually the way to transport was from Finland to Germany with road transport because Germany is closer to Finland and therefore cheaper to transport to, than other main harbours in Europe. The second part of the expenses (these are all excluding the expenses of acquiring the items) are from Germany to Africa and most of the respondents cases the destination country was Nigeria. This is usually done by ship and 100% of the respondents said to have used a forwarding agent/exporting company. Using an agent will also take the burden of securing insurance away from the transporter since the forwarding agent already has one.

5.2 Analysis of the part 2 of the questionnaire - Items

This part of the questionnaire / interview concerned the items exported.

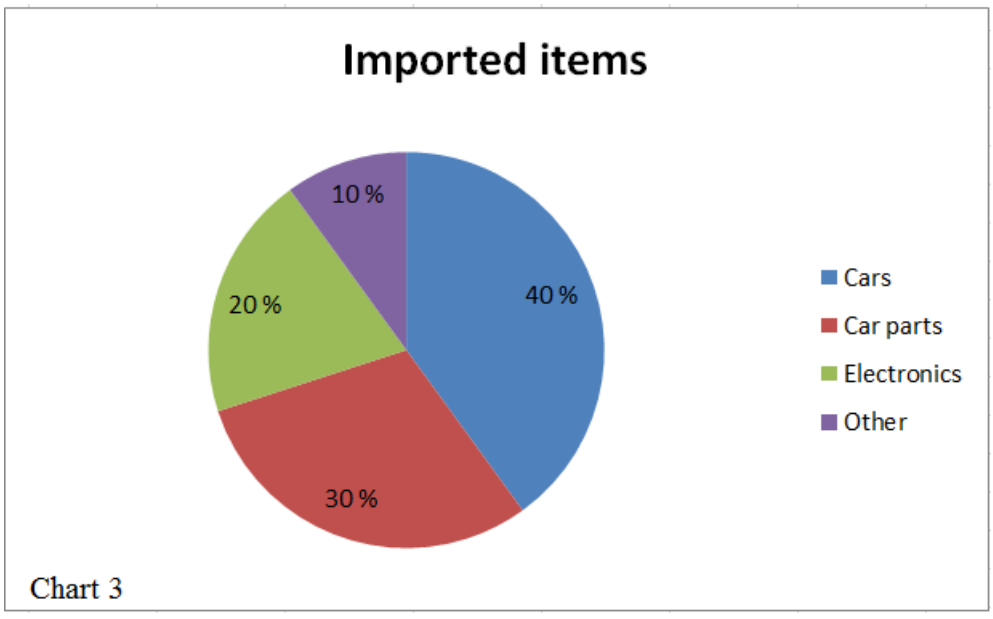


Chart 3

Chart 3 displays the division of items exported between the respondents. As we can see the main export item is cars and related items such as car parts and engines. The respondents revealed that the exporting of cars that have manual gears have been reducing slightly because Africans have started to prefer automatic gears. They think that this is due to the idolizing everything American and the increase of importing cars with automatic gears from the United States.

In the case of cars and their parts, the respondents said they use the internet to find suitable items. They buy all over from Finland and then drive them to the harbour (if they are exported whole) or to the garage that is going to strip it down to pieces (if exporting spare parts).

When exporting fragile items such as working electronics etc., the items are wrapped carefully and normally placed inside a car that is going as a whole. This way they save money and they increase the margin of profit from the shipment since they have more to sell. There is no special consideration towards cars.

When they consider the total costs of the transportation and exporting, all respondents said they count the cost of acquiring the items to the total costs.

5.3 Analysis of the part 3 of the questionnaire – From

This section gets to know the starting point of the transportation process.

There were variances on where the exporting / transporting process begins, depending on where the items are bought and also depending on how you determine the start of the transportation process. The starting point of the process depends on what kinds of items are obtained. For example one of the respondents told that his process of transportation starts in the Turku area because that is where majority of his items of interest can be found.

Chart 4 demonstrates few of the things that influence the decision making process when determining what transportation mode to use.

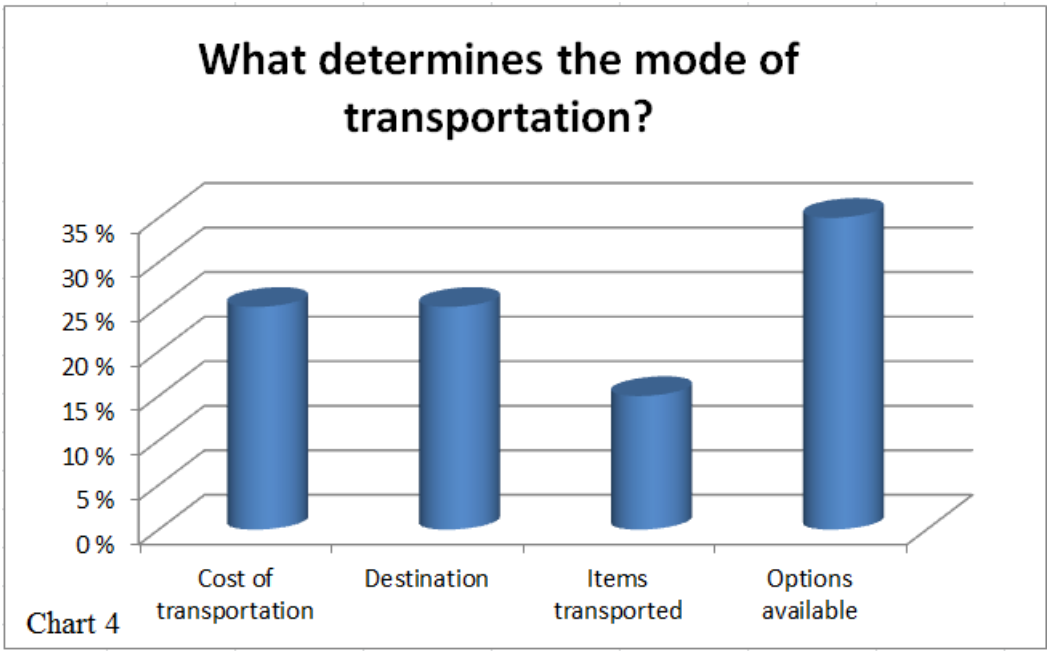


Chart 4

As to be expected the options available to get the items to the destination country is the biggest factor in deciding what mode of transport to take since you can't choose something you don't have and the options you have in your disposal depend on the destination country. Most of the transportation is intermodal, meaning that more than one method of transportation is used) since Finland is quite remote place to export things from.

Most common route used from Finland among the respondents was Finland – Germany – Africa (Nigeria).

5.4 Analysis of the part 4 of the questionnaire – Before

In this chapter we take a look on the things you have to prepare before the process of transportation and exporting starts.

When you have all the items you are going to send to Africa, you have to contact the company that is going to transport them to the harbour. Since most of the respondents were into exporting cars and car parts, they have the option to drive the cars to Germany (rare) or what they do in most cases is that they contact a trucking company that transports the cars to Germany.

The papers involved are receipt of goods that are transported, TIR carnet, Packing list, Bill of lading, customs clearance and importation tax/duties. These documents are made between the shipping agent and the authorities who require them, e.g. the customs.

For customs clearance you have to inform them before hand of your shipment and what kinds of items you are transporting, as well as the value of them. That is done with a bill of lading. This is how they know to calculate the amount of taxes. The agent usually has the bill of and the process in the destination harbour is swifter when they are inspecting your goods.

Most of the respondents used an agent so they didn't have to personally go through all the paperwork involved.

40% of the respondents didn't see any kind of risks in the export business but 60% of them could name a few. Most of the respondents were concerned of damage to the products or theft. Delays in various stages of the transportation process were also considered as a risk since a severe delay can lead to demurrage = more costs. Most used Incoterm was Ex-Works so the costs are all on the exporter. Even though damage was a valid concern for the respondents, none of them had actually experienced it.

5.5 Analysis of the part 5 of the questionnaire – During

The average transportation time is about a month and there isn't much variance in that if everything goes well. In case of some unforeseen event it of course changes.

The respondents were following their shipments either by contacting the agent through phone / e-mail or online from the shipping company's website. The online version of tracking was more popular since it gave the respondents the freedom of tracking their shipments whenever they wanted instead of having to operate between the office hours of the shipping company.

5.6 Analysis of the part 6 of the questionnaire – At the destination

All of the respondents had chosen to enter the continent of Africa through Nigeria and the city of Lagos. 80% of them had a business partner at the destination to receive the shipment but 20% travelled themselves to meet the shipment in Lagos. To get the goods out of the harbour, they have to finalize the paperwork involved and that includes paying the import taxes to the government on time. 50% of the respondents also continued the transportation process and transported their items inland by truck.

When asked about how they ensure the safety of the shipment in each stage of the process, all of the respondents had to admit that the safety of the shipment is in the shoulders of the shipping company / agent. There is not much they can do once the items have been loaded into the truck to Germany. When the items arrive to Nigeria, then they can have business partners and hired help to make sure that the goods are safe and get to the destination, no matter if the destination was in Lagos or somewhere more inland. Also prompt payment of all invoices and taxes ensured that nothing unexpected happened to the shipment in the Nigerian end.

5.7 Analysis of the part 7 of the questionnaire – Additional input

Here is some advice and input the respondents had to give in general.

When considering what forwarding agent to use, make sure you choose an agent that has an office in the destination country. This will reduce the times you have to send the paperwork back and forth between you, the agent and the recipient. When the agent has an office in the destination country, they send the paperwork for you to sign and then forward the relevant documents to their office in the destination and the recipient of the shipment can pick them up from there. This saves time and is simpler all around.

You should pick your business partners wisely. If you trust the wrong people, you may lose more than your money.

6 CONCLUSION

The aim of this final thesis was to find out what is the process of exporting aid (used items) to Africa and more precisely to Nigeria when you are a single person. The example of single person is accurate in the case of EOAW ry since it only has one active and motivated person, the face of the organization itself, Deborah. Of course the organization as a whole gives her leverage, but it is an NGO that doesn't have a steady funding. The idea was to interview (face to face and by questionnaire) people who already do export business and find out how they do it in practice in order to get a better view of the work load of the process and the steps needed to get the items from Tampere to Nigeria. Unfortunately not many were willing to share monetary issues with me, so the costs of the process are vague at this point. Also the many variables, such as cost of the items (if not donated), deals to be made with partners to reduce price, etc. affect the overall cost and therefore every shipment might have a different price tag. This makes it more difficult to give an accurate amount of costs.

Luckily for the organization, exporting humanitarian aid to Nigeria doesn't need a SONCAP (Standards Organization of Nigeria Conformity Assessment Programme) certification since used products are an exception to the requirement, as long as the used products brought to the country are not used cars. This reduces partly the paperwork that has to be made.

The information gathered shows that it is relatively easy start exporting items to another continent and I could tell from their responses that even though exporting used items to Nigeria is practically easy, it requires money and knowledge of what the Nigerians want to buy. Though this is not a factor in our case since we are importing things that we know are needed by the poor.

By doing this research it is clear to me that there is a lot of background work that has to be done before you start exporting anything. You have to find out who exports where, what the prices are and what affects it and is there something that you can do to reduce it. You have to get the information on the customs clearance and check what you want to import to the country is not on the prohibited list. Not to mention that you have to acquire the stuff that you want to send there and it can reduce costs if you decide to buy

what you send, instead of getting them as a donation. And organization has more or less a steady flow of donations so EOAW shouldn't have any problem in having items to ship to Nigeria, but if you're a private person this is also a factor.

As a NGO, EOAW has already acquired the items they want to ship abroad. They have to package them and make a booking for a slot on a boat to Nigeria. Then they have to rent the container, back it full and well and arrange transportation for it from Finland to Germany where it goes to the ship. The paperwork has to be in order, meaning the shipping documents mentioned in the chapter 3.3.2., in which we discussed the documents needed. You have to send the documents to your agent on time so that the missing paperwork does not delay the handling of the container in any of its checking points. When the container reaches the harbour, you have to have already arranged the offloading of the container and the transportation to the final destination with the appropriate equipment. In this case it would be a truck. If the renting agreement of the container (since it would be more expensive to buy a container) does not specify anything else, the Ngo is also responsible of returning the container. That means booking a slot on a boat going back to Europe and all the paperwork that go with it. Not many rental companies just let you rent their container, ship it across the world and leave it there for them to figure out how to get it back. I would recommend EOAW to plan of importing something in the container since they have to pay for the return trip also. This is also a good way for them to get genuine items from Africa to be sold for the benefit of the organization and the programmes they have.

I would also recommend to EOAW that they shift their focus from gathering donations from Finland and transporting them to Africa towards to efforts of helping the local economy by acquiring items of need from the local market. This would cut their logistical expenses a great deal since they don't have to send items from all the way from Europe and it will put money back to the economy of the country. They wouldn't have to rent containers or book slots or pay for agents. The transportation process would be cut down to be less than a third of what it would now be. This would make a greater impact on the organization's level of optimization of finances and the help given is more precise in terms of what items are given since the items come from the same country.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1. Final Thesis Questionnaire

- Do you want these answers to remain confidential (for my eyes only)? Yes / No
- Are you willing to answer follow up questions regarding your answers here? Yes / No

Background:

1. What type of business do you do?
2. Where is your business located?
3. Do you have employees?
4. What is exporting to you?
    a. Main business
    b. Part time business
    c. Hobby
    d. Do not want to specify
5. How often do you export? Does the frequency depend on something, what?
6. What is the average value of your shipment?
7. How is the cost of shipment/export divided? What does the costs consist of?
8. Does someone help you with a part of the exporting process? A partner? Who?
9. What exporting services you use at each stage of the process?
10. Do you need your own insurance?

Items

11. What do you export?
    a. Cars
    b. Car parts
    c. Electronics
    d. Other
12. Where do you get your exporting items?
13. How do you package your goods?

14. Do you count the cost of the goods to the total costs?

From

15. From which city do you start your exporting? Why?

16. Do you export from other countries? Meaning, the starting point of shipment is also abroad, not in Finland.
    a. If yes, what kind of differences there are in the exporting process compared to Finland?

17. What determines the mode of transportation? What mode of transportation do you use?

18. What is the overall route of the items?

Before

19. What do you need to do before the shipment is exported? How do you prepare for it?

20. What kind of paperwork is required for your shipments and who does the paperwork? What is the sequence of the paperwork exchange?
    a. export tax and tariffs, then the bill of lading, the packing list of the consignment, etc…

21. What do you need to do for customs clearance?

22. What kind of incoterms is used?

23. What kind of risks there is in exporting from Finland/other countries? Are the risks related to the goods, mode of transportation, destination country, something else?

During

24. How long is the average transportation time? Is there a lot of variance in the time?

25. How do you follow your shipment during the exporting?

26. Are damages during transportation frequent?

At the destination

27. What is the destination country of your export in Africa?
    a. What is the destination city?

28. Who receives the shipment in Africa?

29. What do you need to take care of in the destination country to get the goods out of the area?

30. Do you transport your goods to inland?

31. How do you ensure the safety of your shipment at all stages of transportation?

Additional input

32. Is there anything that hasn't been asked but you feel like is important to know for anyone exporting to Africa? Feel free to express your knowledge and expertise in this field as well as your experience and lessons learned. Thank you.