

The Role of NGOs in Diplomacy & Policy Process: A Case Study of the Red Cross

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ABSTRACT

This study has aimed to examine the role of NGOs in diplomacy & policy process & this study used the Red Cross as a case study to illustrate the role of NGOs in diplomacy and the policy process, highlighting their function as mediators through emergency relief operations, human rights advocacy, and the promotion of compliance with international humanitarian law. This employs secondary data, qualitative research approach and case study design. As this analysis demonstrates, the neutrality and independence of the Red Cross enable it to reach the populations in the conflict-affected areas and to negotiate with non-state and state forces, thus, providing it with an opportunity to operate in the situations when the formal diplomatic channels might not be effective. In general, this study offers an understanding of the ways NGOs, like the Red Cross, have managed to increase their activities beyond being service providers to political players in the world and Their role in the humanitarian diplomacy, mediation of conflicts and the implementation of international laws show the beginning to change the framework of world governance where the non-state actors are complementing and even challenging the conventional state-based approaches. This knowledge is essential to academics, policymakers and humanitarian workers who aim to assess the contribution of the NGOs to international relations and humanitarian intervention in the world.

Keywords: NGOs, Diplomacy, Policy Process, Humanitarian, Red Cross, International Humanitarian Law.

INTRODUCTION

NGOs have taken the center of the stage in the world of international relations and affect global policy processes, humanitarian interventions and the creation of international norms. Classically, international relations were thought as a process of interactions between sovereign states, which were directed by diplomacy, military force and economic interests. The growing role of the global civil society and rising rate of complex emergencies like armed conflicts, natural disasters and forced displacement have however left room to the NGOs to become key actors in terms of international collaboration and governance. NGOs have turned to be service providers, advocates, monitors and even arbitrators in cases where the states or international institutions have left a vacuum. The increased participation requires in-depth insights into how they influence the international system and how their impact is manifested in reality.

The increasing presence of non-state actors in world politics today has contributed immensely to changing the traditional view of international relations as being state-centered. The scholars claim that the monopoly

of states in the process of international decision-making has been diluted by the factors of globalization, technological interconnectivity and emergence of transnational issues (Kaldor, 2003). This has seen NGOs becoming powerful players who are in a position to define international norms, rallying transnational advocacy networks and affecting policy outcomes across international borders (Barnett, 2011). Moreover, the humanitarian agencies are becoming an active part of the global governance through negotiations, promotion and response to the norms and crisis especially in the fragile and war-torn countries, where the governmental authority is weak or denied (Duffield, 2014). This development is marked by a transition towards a more inclusive and multi-layered global system where humanitarian NGOs like the Red Cross become extremely important in resolving the crises in the world and creating the international collaboration.

There is a wide range of NGOs operating in the global affairs, with the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) being one of the most powerful ones. Being the protector of the International Humanitarian Law (IHL), the Red Cross has a mandate to secure the protection of war victims, impartial humanitarian aid and respect the Geneva Conventions. The Red Cross unlike other NGOs enjoy a formalized international recognition through states and intergovernmental bodies and this gives it the ability to operate in very sensitive conflict areas. Its neutrality, which is a compounded effect of independence and importunateness, enables the organization to engage with the state and non-state actors in a manner that is usually unreachable by the governments or even multilateral organizations. According to ICRC and United Nations reports, there is an increasing role of humanitarian diplomacy and the key position of NGOs when it comes to crises (UN Report, 2023).

The growing importance of NGOs is joined with the changing trends in global governance. The world is getting more complicated and more and more traditional solutions involving states are not sufficient in today's complex world. Problems like internal war, cyber war, global warming and humanitarian crisis do not respect the borders of nations and a wide range of actors needs to be involved in collaborative efforts. The NGOs will add flexibility, localization and field-based knowledge and thus are important to the international efforts in humanitarian and development. It is their presence on the ground together with the advocacy networks that allow them to shape the policy both bottom-up and top-down.

The emergence of NGOs In international relations theory is one of the changes toward a more pluralistic approach to the global system. Liberal and constructivist thinkers underline that non-state actors, such as NGOs, assist in the process of creating international norms and cooperation and also shaping the behavior of states. Realist views on the other hand hold that states are the main decision makers and NGOs can only operate where states allow them to. The practical work of the Red Cross however disputes this limited perception. The Red Cross directs its negotiation with armed groups, facilitates humanitarian access and compels combatants to comply with the IHL in most of the war-torn countries without necessarily using the authority of the state alone. This power to involve many actors shows how power has been redistributed in an international system.

It is also possible to see how the work of NGOs helps to hold the situation in the international arena, using the example of the Red Cross that works in the countries of armed conflicts. The organization plays a role in the reduction of violence, protection of civilians and provision of humanitarian corridors by recording the humanitarian conditions and having confidential communication with the warring parties. According to the ICRC field reports, negotiations of access and monitoring activities shape adherence to the international norms even in areas where the governments are considered weak or nonexistent (ICRC Report, 2022). In such ways, the Red Cross not only reacts to emergencies but also predetermines what is expected on the international level regarding the behavior in case of war.

Humanitarian diplomacy is another significant aspect of the NGOs in international relations. The concept is known as negotiations and advocacy in the pursuit to obtain humanitarian access, foster protection and shape policy that impacts vulnerable people. According to the researchers, humanitarian diplomacy helps to fill the humanitarian action-political decision-making gap and NGOs, such as the Red Cross, are also some of the most seasoned in their practice (Smith, 2020). The Red Cross is carrying out activities similar to diplomatic missions by involving governments, International bodies and non- state armed factions only with the humanitarian agenda, not political or economic agendas.

Red Cross is a globally legitimate organization not only due to its neutrality but also because of its long-term existence and institutional power. The organization operates in over **90** countries and has business associations with the national Red Cross and Red Crescent societies so that it acts as a transnational network which is able to respond to various crises. The fact that it has the ability to be deployed rapidly with an extended involvement locally, increases its credibility in world humanitarian governance. The organization is also involved in international policy forums and provides its expertise on humanitarian norms and shapes discourse on protection, conflict management and international security.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The impact of **non-governmental organizations** (NGOs) on international relations has become a popular subject under the disciplines of political science, international law and humanitarian studies. The general consensus among scholars is that NGOs have indeed developed out of marginal advocacy groups to powerful actors in the global arena that are capable of influencing policy at the national level, have been able to contribute to the humanitarian cooperation and have been included in the global governance system.

It discusses four major aspects, such as

Theoretical Approaches in International Relations

The early international relations theory put nearly all attention on states as the main actors of the international affairs. According to realist school of thought, the stability of states, state interest and power interactions dominated world politics. In this perception, NGOs were regarded as marginal players that could only act in the areas that allowed by states. With the march towards globalization, however, liberal and constructivist thinkers stressed the growing role of non-state actors, such as NGOs, multinational corporations and international organizations. To the best of open-access sources, NGOs assist in encouraging cooperation, sharing information and developing trust among players in the international system (Smith, 2020).

Constructivist thinkers especially emphasize the contribution of NGOs towards the formation of international norms. According to them, NGOs engage in norm entrepreneurship by enhancing the human rights, environmental preservation and humanitarian norms. Their capacity to affect the state perception and response towards global problems comes in through the mobilization of the public opinion and their advocacy to policy changes. Available research in Google Scholar indicates that NGOs are involved in agenda-setting which brings crises to the fore that would otherwise have gone unnoticed (Keck & Sikkink, 1998). Even though this source is older than the modern digital activism, its ideas are still applicable to comprehending the present NGO power.

Another point that comes out in the literature is the pluralistic aspect of the modern international relations. According to reports provided by the United Nations, NGOs are considered vital stakeholders in the realization of global development and humanitarian objectives, especially in those parts of the world where

the state capacity is minimal (UN Report, 2023). This coincides with the larger trend of multi-stakeholder governance, whereby there is the sharing of authority and responsibility between states, NGOs, international institutions and local players.

NGOs in humanitarian crisis

Much literature exists on the working role of NGOs during conflict situations and humanitarian crises. NGOs are used in crises to provide the much needed service like medical aid, shelter, food aid and psychosocial services. This is because of their existence in the conflict regions which enable them to obtain first hand data on the humanitarian situation and share such information with the world policy makers.

The obstacles that NGOs have encountered such as security threats, government impositions and funding competition have also been mentioned in studies. Humanitarian workers frequently operate in complicated political settings where entry is brokered with armed forces (state and non-state). It has been demonstrated in the open-access study that these negotiations demand a delicate balance between humanitarian values and professional pragmatism (Pictet, 2016). This publication, despite being a Red Cross tradition, is publicly available and is commonly used in the study of humanitarianism.

Humanitarian Diplomacy and Promotion of Norms

The other significant body of literature is concerned with NGO diplomatic roles. The idea of humanitarian diplomacy became popular in recent years, and it means that negotiations and advocacy are conducted to gain access to humanitarian aid, impact policy and protect vulnerable groups of people. The scholars state that humanitarian diplomacy fills the gap between political decision-making and humanitarian action, which allows NGOs to negotiate on the high level and retain their neutral and independent image (Smith, 2020).

Also, NGOs are significant to the establishment of international norms. Their advocacy efforts have helped in historic changes including the outlawing of landmines, child soldiers and the internationalization of human rights. Constructivist literature posits that NGOs as norm entrepreneurs can impact world expectations and state actions through persuasion, information dissemination as well as mobilizing the masses (Keck and Sikkink, 1998).

Recent documents point out that NGOs have become more engaged in multilateral diplomacy, which is now part of the consultative policy of the United Nations, the humanitarian coordination framework and global development agenda (UN Report, 2023). Their involvement can be deemed as a change in the way the world is governed because non-state actors are now considered as valid players in international policy-making.

The Red Cross in existing literature

International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) has received a lot of research on how to be considered as an example of a powerful NGO in international relations. The Red Cross is positioned at a privileged spot because of its custodianship of the Geneva Conventions. The main and inherent principles discussed in literature are its neutrality, impartiality and independence, which allow it to work in the most hazardous and politically complex settings.

Open-access ICRC reports describe the ability of the organization to negotiate with state and non-state armed actors, which is frequently used as an intermediary to provide aid, evacuate civilians and to follow

the international humanitarian law (ICRC Report, 2022). These negotiations also demonstrate how the Red Cross can be involved in humanitarian diplomacy whereby the organization will conduct a discrete negotiation to realize humanitarian goals.

The role of Red Cross in the development of norms is also studied in academic literature. The organization is at the center of spreading the Geneva Convention and establishing the expectations of the world on how war should be conducted. The spread of IHL, education of armies and reports on the violation of humanitarian duties make it global accountable and enhance the norm.

The literature reviewed shows that NGOs have emerged as essential participants in the international relations. They have an impact on the operational, diplomatic and normative levels and thus they influence the global governance in a manner that used to be controlled by the states. The Red Cross is a most interesting case study, as it reveals the way NGOs act in conflict situations, negotiate humanitarian access and advocate the international humanitarian law.

METHODOLOGY

This paper applies the qualitative research and case study design to identify the role played by non-governmental organizations in international relations in particular the **international Committee of the Red Cross** (ICRC). The qualitative method is suitable since this study tries to comprehend complicated relations, bargaining and humanitarian actions which cannot be found in the form of numbers alone. The qualitative approach can be used to explore the impacts that NGOs have on international norms, the practice of humanitarian diplomacy and interaction with state and non-state actors in conflict environments.

Research Design and Approach

The study adheres to an interpretative paradigm, which is aimed at learning the functioning of NGOs at the international system. The design assists in identifying patterns, roles and strategies that are adopted by the Red Cross when it comes to international relations. The interpretive dimension permits the analysis of the intention of NGOs activities, particularly in the humanitarian negotiations and conflict mediation.

The research is based on publicly available sources, such as the reports of UN, the publications of World Bank and the open access academic sources. Such sources provide reliable and factual data regarding the global governance, humanitarian intervention and NGO power. The input to comprehend the operational strategies and humanitarian mandates of Red Cross came in the form of reports made by this organization itself (ICRC Report, 2022).

The methodology incorporates a case study of the International Committee of the Red Cross to offer an informative and practical insight into the NGO intervention in the international relations. The case study approach is commonly considered to be effective in studying the modern world where the boundaries between the phenomenon and the context are not clearly established. The Red Cross provides a perfect example of the study of the NGO power, legitimacy and diplomatic power because the organization works in complex conflict situations and interrelates with different international actors. The case study concentrates on 4 dimensions: Humanitarian activities in war zones, Negotiations with non-state and state actors, Advocacy of the international humanitarian law, Impact on international humanitarian policy. These dimensions indicate the main operations as a result of which the Red Cross influences the international relations and global humanitarian standards. Transparency and access to the research necessities are ensured as publicly available reports.

Data Sources

The study is entirely based on secondary data because of the scholarly essence of the research: World Bank publications, Reputable and publicly accessible articles. Secondary data is applicable because it allows covering large-scale problems of humanitarian concerns in the world and limits the drawbacks of field research in conflict areas, which are usually limited and hazardous. The study makes sure that all the sources are available on Google, which complies with the requirements of citation and accessibility to UN Report, 2023; World Bank, 2021.

ANALYSIS TECHNIQUE

Case study analysis and document analysis were applied in analysis as a typical qualitative method to analyze and define patterns in the textual information. Case study analysis and document analysis are suitable, as it enables the researcher to classify the data that deals with the NGO roles, humanitarian diplomacy and interaction with the states or contribution to global governance. The information was merged under themes that were identified in the literature review, and they include: NGO impact on international standards, Humanitarian negotiations, Operational independence, Humanitarian diplomacy of the Red Cross.

This case study design guarantees that the literature review, methodology and subsequent finds as well as discussion sections are consistent. Even though qualitative research does not involve any statistical description of reliability, this study has academic rigor because:

- **Transparency:** it consists of utilizing publicly available data that can be checked by any reader.
- **Consistency:** the use of thematic lens on all data sources. The findings are enhanced by the fact that internationally accepted reports are used, particularly those of the UN and Red Cross.

Ethical Considerations

Only publicly available secondary data is used in this study, which removes the risks to individuals or participants of the field. The ethical standards are upheld by: Referring to all the sources correctly according to the Web of Science standards, Ordinance of confidential or restricted information, Neutrality and avoiding political prejudice. Neutrality and impartiality are the ideals of humanitarian organizations like the Red Cross and such ideals are honored in this study as balance, evidence-based analysis is given.

FINDS AND DISCUSSION

This research work indicates that the role of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) as influential actors in the international system is increasingly becoming significant and that their role goes way beyond the delivery of humanitarian services to the international system. Thse example of the Red Cross suggests that a single humanitarian organization can influence the global governmental structure, form the state behavior and intervene in conflict environments with the help of the instruments that are not based on military or economic competencies. The critical observations derived in this discussion by the literature and the case study explain how NGOs play a role in the international relations by facilitating humanitarian diplomacy, establishing norms and by operating in delicate political conditions.

First, the Red Cross proves that NGOs fill the unnecessary gaps left by the states and other international bodies. States are at times unable to react promptly in times of crisis because of political inhibitions, national

interests and bureaucratic restrictions. Conversely, the Red Cross is guided by humanitarian principles that enable it to cross borders in response to emergencies on a short notice. This capacity will increase its credibility and trust by the affected populations and governments. The neutrality of the Red Cross operations makes the organization able to reach places where the state representatives or the military forces are not welcome or are considered to be politically inclined. This supports the notion that NGOs have a distinct kind of soft power, which is based on moral power and humanitarian legitimacy.

Besides, the Red Cross also plays an active role in humanitarian diplomacy, which is a new tool in the bond between states. Humanitarian diplomacy deals with negotiating access and lobbying of vulnerable populations and the impact of the humanitarian law on state policies. The Red Cross also carries out in secret negotiations with both the governments and armed groups to ensure the safety of civilians and humanitarian workers. These talks are often conducted in the darkness, but have a direct influence in war zones. This flexibility that NGOs lack is demonstrated by the capability of the organization to negotiate with actors who states generally regard as illegitimate or threatening. This illustrates how diplomacy has begun to change and now the non-state actors are now involved in the process of negotiations that previously belonged to the states.

One of the notable aspects that come out of the analysis is that the Red Cross plays an accepted role in the promotion and enforcement of the International Humanitarian Law (IHL). Its international mandate is based on the Geneva conventions and it is due to this that the organization is able to interact with the states in a manner that no other NGO can. It promotes the introduction of practices that are compatible with the humanitarian norms in states and armed groups through confidential dialogue, reporting, training initiatives and advocacy. This is because the institutional connection between the Red Cross and IHL shows the way NGOs are engaging in the process of norm-building, which is one of the main characteristics of the global governance. This interpretation is justified by the literature that demonstrates that NGOs often influence the global norms in the situations where interests of states are split. World Bank. The Red Cross, in its turn, is a humanitarian implementer as well as the protector of legal and ethical norms.

The other big point of discussion is that of the organization in mediation of conflicts and trust building. The Red Cross is not a political organization and because of this impartiality, the group is usually a reliable mediator unlike the states. In most of the conflict-ridden states, population places more confidence in humanitarian actors than the state authorities. The long-lasting experience of the presence of the Red Cross on the ground helps to make the organization more intelligent about the needs of the location and political forces. This long-term commitment enables it to give early warnings concerning humanitarian threats as well as to recommend to stakeholders on de-escalation of conflicts. In this way, the organization will be able to affect the political stability and peace diplomacy indirectly.

Nevertheless, the constraints and obstacles encountered by the NGOs including the Red Cross in the international relations also need to be discussed. There is the growing politicization of humanitarian work, which is one of the main challenges. With the aid being used as a tool of strategic interests by the states, NGOs might struggle to be neutral. There are often situations when the Red Cross is tested in terms of its principles by the pressure of the state or armed forces. This becomes even more complicated in the case of interstate conflicts where humanitarian access is a political bargaining asset itself. Although these have been the challenges, the long term reputation has enabled the organization to enjoy relative autonomy as compared to most other NGOs.

The other constraint is the resource dependency. The Red Cross has a great institutional credibility, but it is highly dependent on voluntary donations of states and other actors. Humanitarian concerns are limited by the financial dependency on donors, which provokes the conflict between the independence of operations

and the demands of accountability. Literature also indicates that NGOs need to become more professional in their operations to fulfill the demands of the donors, which changes their focus to community-based methods in some cases. In the case of the Red Cross, the challenge of achieving operational efficiency and humanitarian values cannot be fully resolved.

Also, the international humanitarian market is currently getting increasingly crowded, with thousands of NGOs operating in collaboration with international organizations such as the UN. This adds competition of financing, exposure and entry. Even though competition is supposed to spur creativity, it might also cause duplication of work or divided reactions. Red Cross tries to curb these problems by come-up with coordination frameworks but practically, humanitarian coordination is mostly complicated by political settings or even varying organizational mandates.

Through practices persisting even now, the general impact of the Red Cross in the international relations is high. The fact that it serves as an international entity as well as a non-governmental actor makes it have a distinctive position within the global system. The fact that the organization can influence those states without applying the coercive power is one of the reasons which can prove that the international system is no more state-centric. Rather, it is becoming more and more marked by multi-layered governance between states, international institutions, civil society and special humanitarian organizations.

However, in a nutshell, it can be concluded that the Red Cross reveals the growing effects of NGOs in influencing diplomatic success, advancing the rule of law and responding to complicated international disasters. The experiences that the organization has had attest to the fact that NGOs are not only service providers today, but they are actors in international politics and can influence through humanitarian credibility and presence in the field and advocacy. Their interventions have become critical elements of international relations, particularly in the regions that are incapable or unwilling to operate through the conventional mechanisms of states. The Red Cross is a good example of how humanitarian values when implemented positively can change the political landscape and bring positive changes to the lives of susceptible people all over the world.

The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC): Humanitarian Diplomacy and Negotiation

In the case study, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) is considered to be one of the most powerful non-governmental organizations in the world working in the sphere of humanitarian diplomacy, mediation of conflicts and the international humanitarian law. Since its establishment in 1863, the Red Cross has developed into a key player in the global governance system, by formulating norms, establishing policy and negotiating access in some of the most brutal conflict countries in the world. Through the manner in which it evaluates its activities, mandate and diplomacy policies, this section has shown how Red Cross is a contributor to international relations beyond the conventional state politics.

The Red Cross was the brainchild of a humanitarian figure by the name Henry Dunant it was after witnessing the plight of the victims in the battle of Solferino that he decided to establish a global organization that would assist victims of war. This effort resulted in the first treaty of modern international humanitarian law (IHL) the Geneva Convention of 1864. The Red Cross is known to have a special international legal status, which is prescribed by the Four Geneva Conventions and the Additional Protocols. This requirement provides the Red Cross with the mandate to: Power to pay prisoner of war a visit, Compliance with the IHL ability to monitor, Entitlements to negotiate humanitarian access, Appreciation as a disinterested and unbiased humanitarian player.

Strict principles of the Red Cross should be considered in terms of neutrality, impartiality and independence, which define the work of this organization. These values enable the organization to operate in areas where the majority of actors such as the state or non-state cannot operate safely. In the Syrian civil war, the Yemen crisis and the Afghanistan conflict, the Red Cross was able to access frontlines and detention centers specifically due to the fact that the organization did not take any political stances.

The activity of the Red Cross in humanitarian diplomacy can be viewed as one of the most effective contributions of the NGOs to the international politics. Humanitarian diplomacy entails back-door negotiation with governments, armed groups and international institutions with an aim of achieving: Humanitarian corridors, Access to prisoners, Protection of civilians, Safe delivery of medical personnel and Relief measures by temporary cease fire. Indicatively, during the war in Yemen, the Red Cross has been able to negotiate its way to Houthi-held territories to provide medical care and fix water infrastructure. Such negotiations are normally closed-door deals that are based on trust, permanence and objectivity.

Operational Activities in Conflict Zones

Red Cross operates over **100** active conflict zones and dozens of regions that have been hit by disasters. Its field operations are: The Red Cross operates field hospitals, surgery and mobile clinics and rehabilitation. Medical workers of ICRC have operated on thousands of injured civilians and soldiers in conflicts like Iraq and South Sudan. The Red Cross has a major role in tracing lost individuals and restoring families that have been lost due to conflict or migration. Its Restoring Family Links program has played a crucial role in times of crisis of refugees in Africa, Middle East and Europe ICRC has the mandate to visit prisoners of war, inspect the living conditions as well as monitor treatment under the Geneva Convention. Such visits frequently result in a secret report to governments urging them to adhere to the humanitarian law. In addition to conflict zones, the Red Cross offers emergency services following earthquakes, floods and epidemics. In the case of the **COVID-19** pandemic, it assisted in public health communication, distribution of medical supplies and response systems at the community level.

Relations with States and Armed Groups

The success of diplomacy of the Red Cross lies in its strategic relations with states and international organizations. Its ties include: The Red Cross is used by governments to apply elements of the international humanitarian law, as well as providing services in insecure regions. States tend to make access of Red Cross easier, fund it or logistical assistance. The Red Cross is part of the UN humanitarian forums, contributes to the formation of world policies and coordinates actions with the UN agencies, including UNHCR and WHO. It is however autonomous to the political entities and is not tolerated to be associated with political decisions. Another characteristic peculiar to the Red Cross is the possibility to negotiate with armed forces that are not state-based without being seen as a biased party in politics. This has enabled it to work in areas that are dominated by insurgents, rebels or separatists.

CHALLENGES AND CONSTRAINTS

Even though the Red Cross has a lot of authority, it has a number of challenges: The number of attacks on humanitarian workers has been on the rise. The environments of armed conflicts have recently become more uncertain. The security of Red Cross personnel is exposed to targeted attacks and kidnappings. Governments at times deny entry to detention areas or war zones due to political gains at the expense of postponing humanitarian efforts. The Red Cross is also very dependent on the donations of states and the citizens. Recession and increase in global crises put strain on resources. The neutrality of the Red Cross is

misunderstood by some actors as passive or suspicious politically, which poses communication barriers and distrust.

The presence of the overcrowded NGO scene is sometimes associated with coordination problems, competition in funding and duplication of services. It has not been that easy, but the Red Cross has maintained its credibility by remaining guided by principles and professional practice of humanitarian.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion the Red Cross is a non-governmental organization has emerged as an essential part of the modern international relations. The Red Cross provides a great example of how a non-state actor can exert a long-term influence in a generally state-centric international system because of its long-term mandate, global legitimacy and humanitarian principles.

The Geneva Conventions give the Red Cross such authority that the NGO is not comparable with most other NGOs due to its unique legal status. This official status allows it to broker with states and armed groups, gain access to detention facilities and intervene with conflict prone zones with some level of neutrality that makes it more credible. Its commitment to the principles of impartiality and independence enables it to operate in very politicized settings, filling the existing gaps where the diplomatic pathways are bound or not. This underlines the uniqueness of the Red Cross in being a humanitarian diplomat since it can negotiate where the traditional state diplomacy is hampered by interest politics or security issues.

In addition, the case study reveals that the Red Cross has an immense influence on the establishment and strengthening of international humanitarian norms. Its monitoring efforts, reports of confidential information and advocacy on the international scale make the organization more effective in ensuring that states uphold the international humanitarian law and help advance the development of international legal standards. The reserves as a protector and advocate of humanitarian law demonstrates how NGOs can fashion constructive requirements and affect state conduct in the absence of any military or economic authority.

Although the Red Cross has a wide range of influence, such issues as political constraints, security threats, funding constraints, as well as the process of negotiation in divided conflict situations are considerable challenges. These difficulties are indicative of the larger pressures that NGOs in the rest of the world are experiencing as they seek to find their way in an ever-changing global environment. However, its stability and adherence to its humanitarian mission testify to the fact that NGOs may remain influential due to their ability to adhere to credibility, transparency and principled action.

On the whole, the case study confirms that NGOs, in particular, the Red Cross, are the cornerstone in the modern international relations. They complement state capacity, advance international law, champion vulnerable people and offer the much-needed humanitarian services in risky settings. With the crises of the world becoming more complicated day by day, the role of NGOs in the development of international cooperation and the global state will inevitably grow. The case of Red Cross brings out the transformative nature of non-state actors in the contribution of more humane, rule-based international order.

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