RETAINING SKILLED WORKERS IN A CONFLICT SETTING: 
A STUDY OF HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT 
APPROACHES IN INTERNATIONAL NON-GOVERNMENTAL 
DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATIONS IN SOUTH SUDAN

A thesis submitted in fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of 
Doctor of Philosophy

By

Akim Ajieth Bunny
M.P.A., Public Policy and Management, University of Pittsburgh, U.S.A., 2009
B.S., Business Management, Point Park University, Pennsylvania, U.S.A., 2006

School of Management
College of Business
RMIT University

January 2017
DECLARATION OF AUTHENTICITY

I certify that except where due acknowledgement has been made, the work is that of the author alone; the work has not been submitted previously, in whole or in part, to qualify for any other academic award; the content of the thesis is the result of work which has been carried out since the official commencement date of the approved research program; any editorial work, paid or unpaid, carried out by a third party is acknowledged; and, ethics procedures and guidelines have been followed.

In addition, I acknowledge the support I have received for my research through the provision of an Australian Government Research Training Program Scholarship.

Akim Ajieth Bunny

January 2017
DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this thesis to my closest friend and Pastor, Rt. Rev. John E. Santor of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Erie, Pennsylvania, USA, who pushed the author along in this project, with hope, prayers, spiritual growth, enthusiasm and prudent advice, and for helping me conquer the many distractions. Since meeting him 16 years ago, Father John expected me to succeed and his unwavering high expectations made me believe that it was possible.

This thesis is also dedicated to Anne Matuszewski, a then popular teacher of English and Literature at Duquesne University and St. Bernard School in Mt. Lebanon, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, and a friend of mine and a mum who acquainted the author with the American custom, including how to make a speech in public, and how to drive safely on the road. She sadly died of brain tumors on December 9, 2006 while the author was on a holiday visit to Australia. Growing up as Anne Cunningham in Mt. Washington and East Hills of Pittsburgh, she was the youngest child (the last born) in her family, proud of her Irish Catholic Heritage, which the author later became part of after spending some years with her and her family as a whole in Pittsburgh. Besides inducting hundreds of middle school-aged children into the mysteries of good writing and how to make a speech in public, Katherine Anne Matuszewski, was also active in helping several African immigrants, known as the “Lost Boys of Sudan”, (the author included), and who arrived in America in 2001 under the auspices of the Catholic Charities in collaboration with the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) in Washington, D.C.

She was affectionately known to several people as ‘Mama Anne’, referring to the fact that she was doing the role of a mother to everyone irrespective of their nationality, color or gender. She showed me the path of least resistance and shared her knowledge, wisdom, and sense of humor. I would have struggled to complete this doctoral degree without her help and to her I dedicate the finished product.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

“Research is a passion and desire to learn new things, challenge old ideas, dramatically invigorate the thinking of others and enable the training of new researchers.” – Professor Brian Corbitt, RMIT University

First and foremost, Glory and great thanks to the Almighty God, the father of our Lord Jesus Christ and of all mankind, for giving me the health, patience, strength, courage and determination to complete this study.

Next, a whole variety of people have given me their time and support while I have been working on this research. The completion of this thesis would not have been possible without the cooperation, trust and support provided by a significant number of people that I wish to recognize. First, I am most grateful and permanently indebted to my supervisors, Associate Professor Rosalie Holian, Dr Darryn Snell, and Dr Victor Gekara, who guided me from the very beginning of this PhD all through its completion, and for their insightful suggestions and extraordinary efforts to get this thesis in its current form and context. They were my source of proud and truly inspirational. I would like to take this opportunity to wish them great health and happiness as they continue to supervise other doctoral students. I also wish to acknowledge the assistance of the Australian Government and the RMIT University, in providing scholarships which contributed substantial funding enabling me to conduct this research and complete my doctoral studies. Special thanks go to a number of people in the RMIT College of Business, especially Sherrin Trautmann, Dr Larissa Bamberry, and Dr Nthati Rametse for being such a wonderful mentors and champions throughout my doctoral journey. I can never hope to thank you adequately for the countless hours you spent with me, but I am permanently in your debts. You made me feel like a friend and an equal person and taught me more lessons than I cannot even count.

Next, I want to thank people at those organizations whom I have interviewed their managers and employees across South Sudan, and for their willingness to discuss the topic with me. I would also like to thank those academic staff and government officials who participated in this study as expert practitioners. Though I respect their wish to remain anonymous, they know who they are, and I am immensely grateful for the time and intellectual energy they gave to this research. These organizations have a lot to be proud of including their willingness to look at their critical challenges and retention issues as multinational
organizations. Without the home team, I could not have created the time or summoned the energy to write this thesis so my thanks flow once again to my wife, Asunta Agot Majur Nhial, for her undivided support, to my adorable daughter Yom, and my sons Gai, Nhial, and Wel, also known as “Welpiath,” “Mr. Good News” as his Granma Rev. Monica nicknamed him. Special thanks also go to my father-in-law Lt. Gen. Majur Nhial Makol, my mother-in-law Rev. Monica Ayak Kuol Dut, brother-in-law Nhial Majur Nhial, and sisters-in-law Anna Awuok and Anyieth Majur Nhial for their supports and encouragement. My special thanks also go to Prof. Aggrey Ayuen Majok, the former Vice-Chancellor of John Garang University and the current Vice-Chancellor of the University of Rumbek, for allowing me to take up four years of leave of absence from the University in order to further my studies at RMIT.

To all the friends that I basically put on hold for four years, I thank you for standing by our friendship and look forward to spending time doing the things we enjoy. To the new friends I have made along the way, especially the ones in my doctoral cohort such as Dr Asmare Emerie Kassahun, Dr Rodney Castricum, and Don Tennakoon you were a wonderful resource during the program and one that I look forward to working with in the future. I also thank my Christian friends across the different denominations, in particular, Rev. John Riak Ayiei, Rev. Stephen Achieu Magot Majok, Rev. Daniel Kuol Amol, Rev. Peter Ayor Alier, Rev. David Mabior Lual, Rev. Pastor Wang Wang, and Rev. Pastor Komi Bana for their encouragements and prayers throughout this journey. Also, the following names are worth mentioning, specifically, for their notable support and assistance in varies ways: Beer Manyok Manyiel, Atem James Wal Garang, Peter Mamer Aguto Anyang, and Panther Garang Bior.

To my relatives, I would like to recognize the constant support of my cousins Abraham Chol Gai and his wife Martha Anyieth Achiek Kech, Philip Malueth Gai, and Andrew Chol Gai, who is also an alumnus of RMIT. I appreciate all the years you put up with me saying “I have research to do” and look forward to spending time doing things that you are interested in. Your love, support and understanding helped keep me pointed in the right direction. Also, I would like to thank my parents who taught me many lessons about Christian faith and life theories over the years, especially ideas about sacrificing so your children can attend pinnacle schools to enhance their intellectual capital and ‘emotional intelligence’. Finally, my special gratitude goes to my brother David Manyok Ajieth Buny for assuming and shouldering all the responsibilities related to family matters while I was working on this thesis.
RESEARCH SUMMARY

This study is about skills retention in a conflict setting. While a number of studies have been conducted on staff turnover and staff retention (Bakuwa et al. 2013; Malunga 2009; Loquercio et al. 2006), there is as yet no clear agreement on the most appropriate Human Resource Management (HRM) approaches for retaining skilled workers in war and conflict zones. To date there are only a handful of studies which have studied the skill retention challenges that conflict settings present for HR managers and their responses to this situation (Tessema & Ng’oma 2009; Tessema et al. 2005; Ehrenreich & Elliott 2004). The overwhelming focus of research on skills retention has been conducted in non-conflict settings where the organizational environment is largely taken for granted. What is known from the literature is that management has sought to address retention challenges through a range of employee retention approaches such as providing satisfying working conditions, higher salaries and better benefits (Loquercio et al. 2006). Findings from this literature suggest effective HRM approaches can work to retain skilled workers, and may also serve as a source of competitive advantage (Kehoe & Wright 2013; Pfeffer 2002; Barney 2001). However, skills retention is affected by both external and internal environmental factors and when it comes to conflict settings the external environment cannot be easily ignored or taken for granted given the risks to people’s safety. This is particularly true for organizations such as those involved in humanitarian, peacekeeping or development work. This is the focal point for this study. It examines the skill retention challenges for International Non-Governmental Development Organizations (INGDOs) operating in the conflict society of South Sudan and the approaches adopted by HR managers to retain staff in this difficult environment.

South Sudan is the newest country in the world and it is facing numerous challenges, including security challenges, human rights issues and the national reconciliation process; political progress, and the delivery of aid assistance to people in needs, as it struggles to find its footing and achieve peaceful and secure development. At the time of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement in 2005 and independence in 2011, development needs in South Sudan were massive. However INGDOs under the auspices of the United Nations Mission in the Republic of South Sudan (UNMISS) and partner agencies such as UNDP, USAID and DFID managed to ensure sufficient funding to bring development aid to the local populations. In late 2013, internal conflict erupted as a result of a power struggle between President Salva Kiir and his deputy Dr. Riek Machar. Confrontation between government troops loyal to Kiir and rebel groups quickly spread throughout the country, killing thousands and displacing
millions (OCHA 2014). Despite several efforts at ceasefire agreements and the threat of external sanctions to both sides by the UN, EU and the US, the fighting has continued to ravage South Sudan. The extent of the conflict and its consequent disruption in such a fledging nation means that it can be difficult to retain professional workers in South Sudan. A number of the INGDOs operate in South Sudan but it is unclear what approaches are adopted by managers in this sector to recruit and retain staffs. To address this research deficiency, this study examines the factors contributing to staff turnover and the HRM approaches for retaining skilled workers among INGDOs operating in South Sudan.

The study adopts an interpretivist qualitative approach involving semi-structured interviews and focus groups with INGDOs managers and employees working for INGDOs in South Sudan as well as expert practitioners familiar with the sector. Results of qualitative interviews identified a number of challenges influencing the retention of skilled workers working for South Sudan’s INGDOs. The findings of this study indicate that in South Sudan the retention of skilled workers was influenced by a range of issues including among others: health, safety and security concerns; living/working conditions, including housing and access to basic amenities (water, electricity, sanitation); lack of access to adequate healthcare and schools; long working hours and burnout; poor management styles and practices as well as lack of equipment and infrastructure: uncertainty associated with short-term contracts due to reliance on donor funding; difficulties with cultural adjustment; and tensions between local staff, regional workers, and expatriates. Overall, management approaches included offering attractive salaries, medical insurance and paid leave, training and development and promotion opportunities, performance feedback, communication and participatory decision-making. Additional incentives included temporary allowances for field staff, transport bonuses, salary increments, study grants, and a pension scheme. There were mixed reactions from skilled workers, some were satisfied with the mix of financial and non-financial rewards, while others felt these were not adequate. Managers needed to be aware of external factors and competition between INGDOs, corporate sector, and UN agencies in the region. The findings to date suggest that problems with the retention of skilled workers in South Sudan may depend less on financial factors and more on factors such as physical security. Management approaches which may work well in other countries, especially the West, may not be sufficient in South Sudan. The findings also suggest that most employees working within the INGDOs sector in South Sudan may prefer to continue to work for international organizations rather than local Government or local NGOs. With respect to further research,
it would be useful to extend this study to skilled workers in UN agencies and other international development organizations operating in the region such as USAID and DFID. There are rapidly changing economic conditions and differences in operating environments in developing countries, and research on HRM approaches for retaining skilled workers in Sub-Saharan Africa is still lacking, and studies related to staff attraction, retention and turnover in other Sub-Saharan African countries is needed.

Results of the findings, overall, indicated that because of the political instability in South Sudan, there is a strong argument to be made for bundles of interventions which include attention to health, safety and security concerns and working conditions in the sector. The results further explore the organizational location of decision-making related to security concerns and suggest that because environmental challenges often lie beyond the scope of skilled workers, planning and decision-making to improve retention requires multi-organizational collaboration such as combining diverse insights into more accurate understanding of the retention challenges and more innovative solutions within and beyond the INGDOs sector. Findings of this thesis come from a multiple sources of qualitative data, in particular the interviews with organizational managers, employees and expert practitioners. This thesis contributes to the emerging body of knowledge exploring the retention challenges and HRM approaches for retaining skilled workers within the INGDOs sector in South Sudan and Sub-Saharan Africa and discusses this research and practical implications. The study adds to the research on HRM approaches in INGDOs sector in South Sudan, and has a potential to add to our understanding of HRM approaches in South Sudan and Sub-Saharan Africa in general. The study also adds to our global understanding of retention and turnover within INGDOs sector in a conflict context. In particular, the insights and empirical findings of this study represent a significant contribution in advancing the knowledge, as well as HRM literature and debate. This study therefore recommends that inconsistencies in the way of regulations and governing INGDOs are interpreted and implemented, which have at times disrupted INGDOs programs and contributed to increasingly restrictive operating environments and turnover for INGDOs staff, need to be addressed by the South Sudanese government. However, addressing these retention challenges required robust and unified strategy from government at both central and state levels, as well as at the levels of UN, Donors and Diplomats in the country. On the organizational side, this study recommends that INGDOs managers should address the issue of short-term employment contract practices in the sector and provide new staff, expatriates and regional workers in particular, with realistic
information about the security situations in South Sudan. The study also recommends that living and working conditions, particularly at the field levels, should be improved so as to attract and retain more skilled workers in the INGDOs sector in South Sudan.
TABLE OF CONTENTS

DECLARATION OF AUTHENTICITY ................................................................. III
DEDICATION ........................................................................................................ IV
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT ......................................................................................... V
RESEARCH SUMMARY ......................................................................................... VII
TABLE OF CONTENT .......................................................................................... XI
LIST OF FIGURE AND DIAGRAMS ................................................................. XV
LIST OF TABLES ...................................................................................................... XVI
LIST OF APPENDICES .............................................................................................. XVII
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACROYNMS ................................................... XVIII

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION ............................................................................. 1
1.1 INTRODUCTION .............................................................................................. 1
1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM ............................................................ 1
1.3 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS ....................... 5
1.4 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY .................................................................. 5
   1.4.1 Methodological Significance ................................................................. 7
   1.4.2 Research Implications ......................................................................... 8
   1.4.3 The Importance of Studying the INGDOs Sector in South Sudan ........... 9
1.5 ORGANIZATION OF THE THESIS ............................................................. 13

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW ................................................................. 17
2.1 INTRODUCTION .............................................................................................. 17
2.2 HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT IN GENERAL ................................... 18
2.3 HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT IN NON-PROFIT SETTINGS ........... 27
   2.3.1 Factors Affecting Human Resource Management in Non-Profit Settings .... 31
      2.3.1.1 Lack of Financial Resources and Funding ....................................... 31
      2.3.1.2 OHS and Physical Security Conditions ......................................... 32
      2.3.1.3 Poor Living/Working Conditions .................................................. 37
      2.3.1.4 Short-term Employment Conditions .............................................. 39
      2.3.1.5 Tensions between Local Workers and Expatriates ......................... 41
      2.3.1.6 Cultural Factors .......................................................................... 46
2.4 HRM IN NON-WESTERN SETTINGS, AFRICA IN PARTICULAR .................. 49
2.5 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK ...................................................................... 60
CHAPTER 3: THE CONTEXTS OF INGDO SECTOR AND SOUTH SUDAN ....... 70

3.1 INTRODUCTION .................................................................................. 70

3.2 THE CONTEXT OF THE INGDOs SECTOR .................................................... 72
   3.2.1 INGDOs in Global Context .......................................................... 72
   3.2.2 INGDOs in the South Sudanese Context ...................................... 74
   3.2.3 What INGDOs do and how they operate ..................................... 76
   3.2.4 Funding Arrangements within the INGDOs Sector ....................... 81
   3.2.5 Staffing Arrangements within the INGDOs Sector ....................... 84

3.3 SOUTH SUDAN IN CONTEXT .................................................................. 85
   3.3.1 History of the Conflict ............................................................... 87
   3.3.2 The People .................................................................................. 90
   3.3.3 Economy .................................................................................... 92
   3.3.4 High Levels of Poverty and Unemployment .............................. 94

3.4 CONCLUSION ....................................................................................... 96

CHAPTER 4: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY .................................................. 98

4.1 INTRODUCTION .................................................................................. 98

4.2 THE CHOICE OF QUALITATIVE PARADIGM ........................................... 99

4.3 METHODOLOGY ............................................................................... 101

4.4 METHODS OF COLLECTING QUALITATIVE DATA ............................... 106
   4.4.1 Group One: Semi-Structured Interviews with INGDOs Managers .... 109
   4.4.2 Group Two: In-depth and Small Group Interviews with Employees ...... 113
   4.4.3 Group Three: In-depth Interviews with Expert Practitioners ............ 114

4.5 CHARACTERISTICS OF STUDY PARTICIPANTS .................................. 116
   4.5.1 Demographic Characteristics of Participating INGDOs ................. 116
   4.5.2 Demographic Characteristics of INGDOs Managers ................... 117
   4.5.3 Demographic Profiles of the Skilled Workers’ Participants ............. 120
   4.5.4 Demographic Profiles of Expert Practitioner ............................... 121

4.6 DATA ANALYSIS ................................................................................ 123
   4.6.1 Data Transcribing ...................................................................... 123
   4.6.2 Data Coding ............................................................................... 125
       4.6.2.1 Open Coding ..................................................................... 125
4.6.2.2 Thematic Coding ................................................................. 126
4.7 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS ................................................................. 127
4.8 CHALLENGES AND LIMITATIONS ................................................................. 130
4.9 ROLE OF THE RESEARCHER ................................................................. 133
4.10 KEY OBSERVATIONS .............................................................................. 136
4.11 CONCLUSION ......................................................................................... 141

CHAPTER 5: FINDINGS: UNDERSTANDING THE CHALLENGES FOR RETAINING SKILLED WORKERS IN A CONFLICT SETTING ................................................................................................. 142
5.1 INTRODUCTION ......................................................................................... 142
5.2 CHALLENGES AFFECTING RETENTION OF SKILLED WORKERS .......... 143
  5.2.1 Challenging Security Conditions .......................................................... 144
  5.2.2 Poor Living and Working Conditions ....................................................... 153
  5.2.3 Long and Inconvenient Working Hours ..................................................... 156
  5.2.4 Lack of Equipment and Supplies ............................................................ 159
  5.2.5 Short-Term Employment Contracts ......................................................... 162
  5.2.6 Tensions and Mistrust between Expatriates and Local Staff .................... 170
  5.2.7 Cultural Factors ..................................................................................... 176
5.3 CONCLUSION ......................................................................................... 182

CHAPTER 6: FINDINGS: HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT APPROACHES FOR RETAINING SKILLED WORKERS IN A CONFLICT SETTING ................................................................................................. 183
6.1 INTRODUCTION ......................................................................................... 183
6.2 HR MANAGEMENT APPROACHES AND STAFF RETENTION .............. 184
  6.2.1 Competitive Salaries and Medical Benefits ............................................. 184
  6.2.2 Training and Professional Development Opportunities ........................... 189
  6.2.3 Career Progression Opportunities ........................................................... 197
  6.2.4 Performance Feedback ........................................................................ 202
  6.2.5 Clear Communication Channels between Staff and the Management .... 211
  6.2.6 Employee Empowerment Practices ....................................................... 215
6.3 CONCLUSION ......................................................................................... 221
CHAPTER 7: DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS ............ 223

7.1 INTRODUCTION ........................................................................................................ 223
7.2 SECTORAL FACTORS INFLUENCING EMPLOYEE RETENTION ................... 224
7.3 SOCIETAL FACTORS INFLUENCING EMPLOYEE RETENTION ................. 229
7.4 WHAT MANAGEMENT IS DOING TO RETAIN SKILLED WORKERS .......... 237
7.5 SKILLED WORKERS’ PERCEPTIONS OF MANAGEMENT APPROACHES..... 243
7.6 REVISITING CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK ......................................................... 246
7.7 IMPLICATIONS FOR THEORY AND PRACTICE ............................................. 247
7.8 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR MANAGERS/POLICY-MAKERS OF INGDOs ...... 253
7.9 LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER STUDIES .......... 258
LIST OF FIGURES AND DIAGRAMS

Figure 1.1 Structure of the Thesis ........................................................................ 14
Figure 2.1 Research Framework ........................................................................ 61
Figure 3.1 Distributions of Indigenous Ethnic Groups across South Sudan ........ 91
Figure 3.2 Percentage of population living in households whose main livelihood is agriculture and livestock, by state ................................................................. 93
Figure 3.3 Poverty and Unemployment Headcount by state ............................ 95
Figure 7.1 Sectoral Factors Influencing Retention of both Expatriates and Local Skilled Workers in South Sudan ................................................................. 224
Figure 7.2 Societal Factors Influencing Retention or attrition in South Sudan .... 229
Figure 7.3 INGDOs Managers’ Approaches for retaining workers in South Sudan ... 240
Figure 7.4 A framework comparing literature findings from non-conflict settings with the findings in conflict settings ................................................................. 247
LIST OF TABLES

Table 4.1 Differences between Positivism, Interpretivism, and Realism .................. 100
Table 4.2 Organizational Managers’ Work Experience Profile ......................... 112
Table 4.3 Demographic Characteristics of Participating INGDOs ....................... 118
Table 4.4 Demographic Data of the Organizational Managers’ Participants ........... 119
Table 4.5 Demographic Profiles of the Skilled Workers’ Participants .................. 120
Table 4.6 Demographic Data of the Expert Practitioners’ Participants ................. 122
Table 4.7 Phases of Thematic Analysis .............................................................. 126
LIST OF APPENDICES

Appendix A: Ethics Approval Letter ........................................................................ 288
Appendix B: Invitation Letter to Research Participants ........................................... 289
Appendix C: Interview Questions ............................................................................ 290
Appendix D: Informed Consent ................................................................................ 292
Appendix E: Invitation to Participate in a Research Project ..................................... 291
# LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AGOA</td>
<td>African Growth and Opportunity Act</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AU</td>
<td>African Union</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AUD</td>
<td>Australian Dollars</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AUSaid</td>
<td>Australian Agency for International Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BRAC</td>
<td>Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAFOD</td>
<td>Catholic Agency for Overseas Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAP</td>
<td>Consolidated Appeal for South Sudan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAR</td>
<td>Central African Republic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CARE</td>
<td>Cooperative for Assistance and Relief Everywhere</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CARITAS</td>
<td>Confederation of Catholic Relief, Development &amp; Social Service NGOs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CID</td>
<td>Crime Investigation Department</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CPA</td>
<td>Comprehensive Peace Agreement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CRS</td>
<td>Catholic Relief Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DAC</td>
<td>Development Assistance Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DFID</td>
<td>Department for International Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DRC</td>
<td>Democratic Republic of Congo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EAC</td>
<td>East African Community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EBD</td>
<td>Emotional Behavioral Disorders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EU</td>
<td>European Union</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FBOs</td>
<td>Faith-Based Organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FCWTGs</td>
<td>Federation of Community Work Training Groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G8</td>
<td>Group of Eight/Group of Donor Countries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GDP</td>
<td>Gross Domestic Product</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GHG</td>
<td>General Health Questionnaire</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GNI</td>
<td>Gross National Income</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GONGOs</td>
<td>Government-Organized Non-Governmental Organizations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GOSS</td>
<td>Government of South Sudan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HIV/AIDs</td>
<td>Human Immunodeficiency Virus/Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HR</td>
<td>Human Resource</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HRM</td>
<td>Human Resource Management</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ICNL International Center for Non-Profit Law
ICRC International Committee of the Red Cross
ICT Information and Communications Technology
ICVA International Council of Voluntary Agencies
IDPs Internally Displaced Persons
IHRM International Human Resource Management
IMF International Monetary Fund
INGDOs International Non-Governmental Development Organizations
INGOs International Non-Governmental Organizations
LNGOs Local Non-Government Organizations
MNCs Multinational Corporations
MOLHRM Ministry of Labor, Public Service and Human Resource Management
MSF Médecins Sans Frontières
NCA Norwegian Church’s Aid
NEPAD New partnership for African Development
NGOs Non-Governmental Organizations
NLC National Liberation Council
NNGOs ‘Northern’ Non-Governmental Organizations
NNGOs National Non-Government Organizations
NPA Norwegian People’s Aid
NPOs Non-Profit Organizations
OCHA Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
ODA Official Development Assistance
OECD Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
OHQs Organizational Headquarters
OLS Operation Lifeline Sudan
OT Occupational Therapists
OXFAM Oxford Committee for Famine Relief
PM Performance Management
POs People’s Organizations
PSCs Public Service Contractors
QWL Quality of Work-Life
SCI Save the Children International
SCO Civil Society Organizations
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SPED</td>
<td>Special Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPLA-IG</td>
<td>Sudan People’s Liberation Army-In Government</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPLA-IO</td>
<td>Sudan People’s Liberation Army-In Opposition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPLM/A</td>
<td>Sudan People’s Liberation Movement/Army</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SSG</td>
<td>South Sudanese Government</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SSNBS</td>
<td>South Sudan National Bureau of Statistics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SSNF</td>
<td>South Sudan NGO Forum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SSRRC</td>
<td>South Sudan Relief and Rehabilitation Commission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UK</td>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UN</td>
<td>United Nations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNCSTD</td>
<td>UN Commission on Science and Technology for Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNDP</td>
<td>United Nations Development Programme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNICEF</td>
<td>United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNOCHA</td>
<td>United Nations Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USAID</td>
<td>United States Agency for International Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USG</td>
<td>United States Government</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VOs</td>
<td>Voluntary Organizations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WANGOs</td>
<td>World Association of Non-Governmental Organizations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WB</td>
<td>World Bank</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WFP</td>
<td>World Food Programme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WHO</td>
<td>World Health Organizations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WTO</td>
<td>World Trade Organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WVI</td>
<td>World Vision International</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WWF</td>
<td>World Wide Fund for Nature</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

"Peace is impossible without development and development is impossible without peace." – (Collinson & Muggah 2010)

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this thesis was to understand skills retention challenges for International Non-Governmental Development Organizations (INGDOs) operating in a conflict setting, South Sudan in particular. The current social, economic, and political crises facing South Sudan justify the need for INGDOs and therefore their professional workers. However, the conditions within South Sudan are currently challenging, leading to a high staff turnover of skilled workers. This chapter introduces the thesis and outlines the purpose and structure of the study. The research problem and purposes of the study are first presented followed by the research objectives and research questions and the rationale for undertaking this study. The importance of this study in the INGDOs sector in the South Sudanese context is then explained. Finally, an overview of the thesis is described next.

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Worldwide, the INGDO sector is now the eighth largest economy in the world worth over $1 trillion a year (Lewis 2002; Edwards 1999). It employs nearly 19 million paid workers, not to mention countless volunteers (Lindernberg 2008). INGDOs spend about $15 billion on humanitarian and development assistance each year, about the same as the World Bank (Lindenberg & Dobel 2002). There have been massive changes in development sector over the last two decades or more (Mawdsley et al. 2014; Tvedt 2002). There are different opinions and viewpoints of the meaning of the concept ‘INGDOs’. However, for the purpose of this study, INGDOs are taken to be diverse group of organizations known as international ‘development’ NGOs which have their roots in industrialized countries but which work predominantly overseas for development and poverty alleviation purposes. INGDOs’ role in development and poverty alleviation can be direct through interventions at the family, household or community level or indirect through strengthening policies, service delivery and institutions that give poor people a say in the policies that affect them (Makuwira 2010; Mallaby 2004). INGDOs are also best seen as developmentalists who carry ideas related to
community empowerment and social, political or economic changes into world’s poor countries and serve as agents of modernization (Lewis & Kanji 2009, p. 205). This gives emphasis to the idea that an INGDO is an organization that is primarily engaged in work relating to the areas of development work at local, national and international levels. This complements a concise definition provided by Vakil (1997, p. 2060), that INGDOs are ‘organizations geared to improving the quality of life for disadvantaged people’. INGDOs have established themselves as significant agents in social and economic development (Carr 2011; Lewis 2009). This establishment is evidenced by a significant change in the development of funding passed through them (Fowler 2013; Edwards & Hulme 1992).

According to the South Sudanese National Bureau of Statistics (SSNBS) data from 2005-2011, there are an estimated 200 INGDOs in South Sudan. On average an INGDO in South Sudan has worked there for 6 years (Ruiz-Postigo et al. 2012). The SSNBS data shows that INGDOs account for $2.2 billion of the national GDP. The INGDO sector is the second major employer after the Government of South Sudan (GOSS) and accounted for more than 16,000 or 4.8% of total employed persons in 2005-2011. In 2011, the collective amount spent by INGDOs in South Sudan exceeded US$ 577 million (Koppelman 2012; Dagne 2011). This had and continues to have a positive impact on South Sudanese government finances.

As the development sector expands, it faces similar challenge like the corporate and public sectors, especially in recruiting and retaining skilled workers (Townsend et al. 2004). The working environment may additionally contribute to the difficulty of recruiting and retaining skilled workers and further be responsible of high staff turnover rate in the INGDOs sector (Hassin 2009; Guttieri 2005; Okumu 2003). The working environment in the INGDOs sector differs significantly from the other sectors (Ehrenreich & Elliott 2004; Fowler 1991). The more salient differences involve working in multicultural teams, in insecure environments, in situations where there is high tensions between locals and expatriates, as well as in situations where workers frequently witness severe human suffering and poverty (O’Sullivan 2010; Malunga 2009; Vance & Ensher 2002). These challenges may limit the desire to work in the development sector for a long time. However, in spite of these retention challenges, the important roles that INGDOs play make their workforces’ effectiveness critical (Cernea 1988). Indeed, recruitment and retention of skilled workers is an issue for organizations operating in less financially and politically stable environments (Tessema & Ng’oma 2009; Shannon 2003). Prior studies show that recruitment and retention of skilled workers is a challenging task that organizations operating in high-risk environments often face (Olowu
INGDOs workers often work under the most difficult conditions in developing countries, far from their families, often sleeping in tents, on rough terrain, and in inhospitable environments (Eckroth 2010; Musa & Hamid 2008; Cernea 1988). A study conducted by Loquercio et al. (2006) in the Horn of Africa on staff turnover in both humanitarian and development NGOs found that some of the factors that cause skilled workers to look for another job include dissatisfaction with working conditions (“push” factors), while factors that draw them towards other organizations include, higher salary and better compensation and benefits (“pull” factors).

Staff turnover problems impact on organizational effectiveness among INGDOs in Sub-Saharan Africa (Padaki 2007; Okumu 2003). Samuel and Chipunza (2009, p. 625) also observed that “in Sub-Saharan Africa, a particular difficulty of INGDOs is [not] being able to recruit competent and skilled workers, but extreme insecurity, bad working conditions, and lack of work flexibility in the workplace”. To demonstrate the magnitude of the problem, Ipinge et al. (2009) conducted a longitudinal research on 40 professional workers from different INGOs operating in the Eastern Africa region and they discovered that only 5 out of the 40 professional workers remained with their original organizations after two years. According to Drucker (2010, p. 100), “the first sign of decline of an industry is its loss of appeal to qualified, able and ambitious workers”. Losing large number of skilled workers can be costly and disruptive (Olowu 2010, p. 141). Losing qualified workers can cause an organization not to achieve its mission and vision (Malunga 2009). Rapid turnover of skilled workers also limits the ability of organizations to start building a foundation of knowledge and experience from which to draw future learning and on which to continue building an increasingly competent and rigorous body of staff retention practices (Davidson & Raynard 2001). Development, being a long-term process, requires INGDOs to maintain continuity of qualified workers as one of the preconditions for success (Kiraka 2003).

According to Murdie and Kakietek (2012, p. 474) INGOs operating in conflict and post-conflict societies are finding it difficult to engage and retain skilled workers. Conflict societies are defined as countries on a stage of political instability or which have cycles of continued armed conflicts or civil wars in which the risk of destabilization and threats to security are commonplace (Tulloch et al. 2011). In 2013, a record total of 45 violent conflicts occurred worldwide (Muhumuza 2014). Conflict refers to a state of war and an absence of peace between societies (Roome et al. 2014). According to Tulloch et al. (2011), a
country becomes classified as ‘conflict-setting’ after the complex emergency has started and one of the defining features of this period is an extreme security condition. Extreme security condition is defined as the volatility and deterioration of security situation, law and order (Barnett & Weiss 2008). In the case of extreme security threats, an organization’s ability to attract and retain competent workforce and deliver basic services diminished. A research conducted by Shannon (2003) found that the ability to recruit and retain talent is one of the most critical issues of people management in conflict and post-conflict settings. Hughes and Rog (2008, p. 747) argued that in order for organizations to engage and retain suitable talent in their workforce, they must consider factors that may affect workers in both internal and external environments. According to Lemann et al. (2008) lack of housing, working conditions, health safety, and security conditions are some of the reasons why skilled workers do not work for INGOs in developing countries. These issues were also identified in India and Ecuador-based organizations (Jantzi et al. 2008; Townsend & Mawdsley 2004). The importance of general living conditions, including accommodation, good drinking water, electricity, road and transport, were also identified by Okorley and Nkrumah (2012), Townsend et al. (2004) and Mensah (2002) and as factors affecting attraction and retention of professional workers employed by aid organizations in Ghana.

Whether a staff chooses to leave an organization is dependent upon the staff’s perception of attractiveness of job and the employment alternatives (Malunga 2009), applicable to staff across all organizations (Lewis 2003). There is, however, considerable heterogeneity both between types of organizations, the context in which they operate and among aid workers (Bakuwa et al. 2013). The context of development NGOs also differs substantially from most profit-driven and public organizations, which have been the primary focus of staff turnover research. First, they often operate based on philanthropic values which guide both individuals and organizations behavior (Kiraka 2003; Korten 1990). Second, the need to respond rapidly to crises demands a high degree of flexibility from organizations and employees (Loquercio et al. 2006). Finally, operations tend to take place in exceptional and often even dangerous places of the world (Stoddard & DiDomenico 2009; Debebe 2007). Since the generalizability of findings from for-profit to non-profit and INGDOs has been called into question (Makoba 2002), it is essential to consider the distinct context of the development sector when examining why people leave or stay. The current social, economic, and political crises that South Sudan is grappling with justify the need for a strong and vibrant INGDO sector to complement and supplement government efforts. The few studies available on aid agencies
operating in South Sudan focus on identifying the challenges UN agencies are facing and as such none specifically dealt with investigating and understanding factors contributing to staff turnover in the INGDOs sector, although it is recognized as a major problem in almost all of the INGDOs operating in Sub-Saharan Africa and South Sudan specifically.

1.3 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The aim of this study is to understand factors contributing to staff turnover and HRM approaches for retaining skilled workers in the INGDOs sector in South Sudan and considers the practical implications. This study aims at achieving the following specific objectives: (a) determine the nature of turnover within INGDOs operating in South Sudan; identify environmental challenges contributing to staff turnover; (b) identify the HRM approaches contributing to staff retention; (c) fill a gap in the knowledge about the effective management of INGDOs by specifically evaluating the factors that influence approaches for retaining skilled workers and the responses of INGDOs’ managers and employees to these factors; (d) and to make recommendations that are relevant for practice, e.g. for management and policymakers of INGDOs. This study sought to answer the following research questions:

1) (RQ1). What challenges influence the retention of skilled workers for INGDOs operating in conflict settings; and what are the implications of these factors for HR management approaches?

2) (RQ2). What steps and approaches have managers of INGDOs in conflict settings taken to address retention of skilled workers; and how are these perceived by workers?

1.4 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

There are four main reasons for undertaking this research. First, it aims to address research gaps and deficiencies in the literature on retention challenges and management approaches for retaining skilled workers in conflict setting, while evaluating the organizational capabilities to respond to challenges presented by the external environment (Becker et al. 1998). Secondly, in respect to practical outcomes, the focus on understanding retention challenges and management approaches for retaining skilled workers in a conflict setting should add to the understanding of how best to retain skilled workers in difficult environments. Practically, INGDOs, managers, employees, expert practitioners and other stakeholders may all benefit from the outcomes of this research. Previous researchers
(Onyango 2014; Bakuwa et al. 2013; Chiboïwa et al. 2011; Bollettino 2008; Samuel 2008) in staff turnover and retention approaches in private sector organizations in developing countries have emphasized the urgent need for empirical studies in INGDOs. As suggested by Datta et al. (2005), development organizations are looking for effective approaches to improve employee retention and productivity. Apart from Akingbola’s (2013) sole attempt to link HRM and employee recruitment and retention in the nonprofit sectors by providing cases in which HRM practices can develop positive beliefs and attitudes associated with effective people management, there has been no empirical research conducted to support these findings. The most prominent model of HRM in developing countries (Alfes et al. 2013; Debrah & Budhwar 2004) focuses on the availability of staff empowerment practices and the pressures and challenges of globalization on the level of staff retention. This model fails to acknowledge other important dimensions of the HR system such as pre-deployment security training, cultural awareness and context-specific strategies, which are components of effective staff retention in developing countries (Hilhorst & Schmiemann 2002).

Reviewing the current literature, there are no empirical studies which explore management approaches and their influences on staff retention within the INGDOs sector. The field of HRM had grown in the African continent since the late 1990s. While there is an increasing body of literature on HRM in South Africa, Botswana, Nigeria and Kenya as the four main economic powerhouses in Sub-Saharan Africa, there remains a limited research into the development of HRM in other developing African countries. In existing HRM studies, the important aspect of the societal context is often ignored, thus the behavior of emerging markets is not known. In his review of the existing African management research, Itika (2011) found that, of the 54 nations regarded as African countries, only 20 had been examined in top journals. While agreeably some African countries such as Egypt, South Africa and Nigeria have become dominant players in the world economy and hence have received an increased amount of research attention, other African countries such as South Sudan, which have much to offer in the world economy, remain understudied. It is within this backdrop that the author was encouraged to study the South Sudanese setting. In an attempt to understand the South Sudanese context, this study adopts the term ‘HRM’ in the broadest sense. Debrah and Budhwar (2004) argue on the need to define HRM in a broad sense when exploring HR retention approaches in developing countries, including the very question of whether or not it exists and the variations in the models. South Sudan as part of Africa is very much influenced by its multi-ethnic society and its religious and political contexts. Given that
Christianity and Indigenous African traditional practices are South Sudan’s main religions and given the assumption that religion, national culture and politics all have roles in influencing human behavior; further inquiry into the role of contextual and environmental factors must be undertaken. The findings of this study could provide important insights for policy-makers and managers for organizing and managing INGDOs in South Sudan, as well as for scholars and practitioners interested in developing sustainable INGDOs. In a developing country such as South Sudan, the management approaches to retaining skilled workers may be less understood than that in Western settings. Therefore, this study can enhance the understanding of the causes of high staff turnover in INGDOs sector in South Sudan. In addition, this study can be used as a baseline study for further studies in the INGDOs sector, an increasingly important sector that has been largely overlooked by management scholars throughout the world.

1.4.1 Methodological Significance
In existing staff retention and staff turnover literature, many of the important researches are conducted from positivist point of view. Such researches discussed the theory behind factors contributing to decisions to leave or stay and establish constructs to determine the possible causes of staff turnover and staff retention (Bakuwa et al. 2013; Sandwell 2011). The identified causes are often derived by developing several hypotheses. The findings are then confirmed on the variables that can best predict intention to leave or stay (Kwenin et al. 2013). A contribution of this study is the qualitative stance and the interpretivist aspect it takes in understanding the phenomenon of why people stay or leave within INGDOs operating in a conflict setting, South Sudan in particular. Qualitative researchers are often encouraged to exploit the potentialities of social observation in order to gain an inside view (Minichiello et al. 2008). In this study, in-depth and small group and semi-structured interviews were used to get close to the subjects being studied and see the world from their perspectives. The main purpose for conducting in-depth and small group and semi-structured interviews was to gain insights into managers’ and employees’ experiences at work and experts’ view of the sector and to understand the processes by which different levels of factors contributing to staff turnover and staff retention emerge. Managers’ and employees’ interpretations of their experience at work provide richer data in understanding factors influencing people’s decisions to leave or stay in a conflict setting. Experts’ interpretations of their perspectives about the INGDOs sector provide richer data in understanding the challenges contributing to staff turnover and HRM approaches for recruiting and retaining
skilled workers among INGDOs operating in conflict settings. This qualitative approach, which is relevant for this study, is one of the earliest in researching into challenges contributing to staff turnover and HRM approaches retaining skilled workers among organizations operating in conflict settings. Interpretivist approach, on the other hand, is also well suited in examining a situation and understanding a phenomenon thoroughly (Minichiello et al. 2008; Schwandt 1994). When using interpretivist theory the emphasis is on the importance of the processes which lie between social structure and behavior. The central character in these processes is the person who is active in the construction of social reality (Crotty 1998, p. 33). It is anticipated that by utilizing this theoretical perspective more relevant themes will emerge that both address the research questions and give light to alternative and improved HRM practices in the INGDOs in South Sudan.

1.4.2 Research Implications

This study has four important implications for theory, practice and policy. First, as long as the perception about working environment in South Sudan continues to be negative, skilled workers, expatriates in particular, will leave the sector and INGDOs will not be able to continue pursuing activities to relieve suffering, promote the interests of the poor, protect the environment, provide basic social services, and/or undertake community development. In order for organizations operating in conflict settings to succeed, societal factors such as living and working conditions need to be well-managed before an organization can expect skilled aid workers to reciprocate with higher levels of commitment and intention to stay longer in an unstable political and economic environment. Second, the dependence on financial resources from external donors has implications for attraction and retention of skilled workers in the INGDOs sector in a conflict setting. In conflict and post-conflict societies, funding sources for INGOs tend to be complex, including sources such as private donations or government project funding (Merlot et al. 2006; Kiraka 2003; Lewis & Sobhan 1999). This study suggests that in order to address the problem of overdependence on external funding sources and retain skilled workers in less politically and financially stable environments, INGDOs must formulate efforts to replace any donor financing with fundraising programs focusing on individual donations, one-time recurring fundraising events or by reallocating expenditures from other sectors in order to be sustainable and retain workers.

Third, findings also indicated that international staffs, also known as expatriates, often occupied the key leadership positions in the INGDOs sector, and were typically paid higher
than local employees despite their equal levels of education and job experiences. Division and mistrust between locals and international staffs lead to staff turnover and poor performance within the development NGOs (Carr et al. 2010; Hilhorst & Schmiemann 2002). These relationship problems between locals and international aid workers have implications for the INGDOs’ operations, their principles and efforts to alleviate poverty, and their HRM practices to attract and retain workers in developing countries. This study suggests that to address power differentials within the sector, INGDOs managers need to start replacing international staffs who had left the sector with local staffs, thus giving positions to local staffs which had previously been reserved for expatriates. Fourth, there is a need to investigate the utility of Western HRM practices in a less financially and politically stable environments like Sub-Saharan Africa and South Sudan. In order for organizations operating in conflict settings to succeed, research should explore the adoption of Western management practices in the economic, business and human resource environments of the aid organizations operating in conflict-ridden countries to determine whether Western-based practices are in reality effectively ‘working’ in attracting and retaining skilled workers. Implications from this study may very effectively benefit INGDO operating in armed conflict settings, governments, policy-makers, INGOs managers, and HR departments in particular, as to how they could attract and retain a skilled workforce in conflict societies.

1.4.3 The importance of studying the INGDOs sector in South Sudan

INGDOs have established themselves as significant agents in the social development and economic intervention occurring in developing countries (Lewis 2009). This establishment is evidenced by a significant change in the development of funding passed through them (Fowler 2013; Edwards & Hulme 1992). Edwards and Hulme (2005, p. 15) define INGDOs as “intermediary organizations engaged in offering other forms of support to communities and other organizations.” Therefore, an INGDO has divergent organizational assumptions in comparison to traditional profit-based organizations. They function within a social context, often working towards the good of the surrounding community (Lewis 2009). At the moment, especially with the economic downfall, INGDOs are in financial difficulties. They are making employee layoffs and are struggling to find funding for their operations while others are restricting their expenses (Tandon 2000; Edwards 1999). Thus, the specific aspect of talent management that is of top priority, especially in INGDOs, is staff recruitment and retention and the employee support derived from managers, as organizations battle to attract and retain their talented employees to contain unnecessary organizational costs. With
INGDOs often doing the fundamental and tedious work that other organizations do not want to do, they inherently have an increased retention risk. Often staffs recruitment and retention difficulties are linked to political instability and the INGDO’s inability to provide long-term employment opportunities, as they often relied on unstable, external funding from international donors (Lewis & Sobhan 1999).

Other challenges such as difficult working conditions, economic conditions, funding resources limitations, and donor funding conditionalities, and alternative job employment with fixed term contracts at other organizations such as UN agencies, Oil and Mining MNCs, USAID and DFID have been the other influencing factors behind staff recruitment and retention difficulties in the workforce in the INGDOs sector (Carr et al. 2010). The INGDOs within this study, therefore, need to recruit and retain their employees through different means. Often this involves inspiring employees with the organization’s vision, its strategies and its positive impact on the community. Therefore, HRM approaches to attract and retain INGDO’s experienced and qualified employees are crucial for its survival. Over the past decades, the employment practices in the INGDOs sector have increasingly reflected a pronounced upgrading of aid workers’ skills and profound changes in the recruitment and retention of skilled workers (Richardson 2006). Many challenges have led to changes in traditional job recruitments in the nonprofit setting, especially humanitarian and development sector. For example, many of the managerial posts in the headquarters in the INGDOs sector have been reduced (Hunt 2008), while field-based workers have been increased due to focus on saving lives, alleviating suffering and maintaining human dignity (Makuwira 2010).

There has been a shift from providing a basic service to humanitarian and sustainable development, all of which require effective people management (Muteswa & Ortlepp 2011) and access to negotiation skills (Korff et al. 2015). Similarly, in non-conflict environments, particularly Western countries, skills requirements in the nonprofit sector have changes over the past decades (Lindenberg & Dobel 2002). In line with these changing skill requirements, the occupational profile of nonprofit organizations has been modernized in the 21st century by strengthening aspects such as recruitment and retention processes, negotiation and fundraising competencies (Drucker 2010; Lewis 2009). For the most part, competition between nonprofit organizations over scarce financial resources and declining funding from donors due to financial crisis has reinforced the need for competent and experienced workers in the nonprofit setting (Lewis & Sobhan 1999; Fowler 1992). With regard to employment
practices, the prevalent trend in nonprofit sector is the evolving use of short-term employment contracts (Kinyili et al. 2015; Rousseau & Shperling 2003; Hilhorst & Schmiemann 2002). Aid workers’ opportunities for career development and salary increment are increasingly being determined by the availability of funding from donors and less by any additional qualifications (Kiraka 2003). Therefore, there has been a shift of emphasis away from technical skills and academic-related qualifications towards the key skills that are required for the operational success of an organization in politically insecure and financially unstable environments (Bollettino 2008). Resilience and coping strategies in hardship situations are becoming increasingly crucial in the recruitment and retention of professional workers in the INGDOs sector. Coping strategies have been defined as thoughts and behaviors used to manage situations that are assessed as threats or stressors, where time spans are important, involving “a cyclical process of resources depletion and repair that unfolds from day to day and week to week” (Griffin & Clarke 2011, p. 360). INGDOs’ HR departments also place greater emphasis on independent living skills, communication and advocacy skills, and financial management skills (Kiraka 2003).

Nevertheless, a review of literature shows that most of the research about challenges contributing to staff turnover and HRM approaches for recruiting and retaining skilled workers in regard to nonprofit sector has focused on non-conflict settings in the West (Okumu 2003). This demonstrates that many questions remain unanswered. One of the major shifts in nonprofit setting research in the last two decades is the growing interest in understanding challenges contributing to staff turnover and HRM practices where people are increasingly recognized as a source of organizational success and mission accomplishment (Lindenberg 2008; Debebe 2007; Lindenberg & Dobel 2002). Similarly, in the INGDOs sector in South Sudan, the retention challenges that INGDOs managers face are how to maintain continuous funding from donors and organizational growth, and how to recruit and retain skilled workforce within the context of conflict and political instability (Kagunyi 2009). Therefore, what needs to be more explicitly established is how certain factors influence the operations of organizations in the South Sudanese INGDOs sector. There are four reasons why this study is being carried in the South Sudanese context:

First, the usefulness of Western HR recruitment and retention approaches among INGDOs operating in South Sudan needs to be examined. Findings in South Sudanese context converge with studies on staff turnover and staff retention practices in African context.
Bakuwa et al. 2013; Ng’ete et al. 2012; Lehmann et al. 2008), which suggests that adopting indigenous and context-specific retention strategies leads to improved organizational performance and decision to stay longer among professional workers. Similar to a claim made by Mpabanga (2004) in regard to findings in the Botswanaian context and their applicability to the African context, the results of the South Sudanese studies suggest two significant practicalities. First, there is a relatively high universality to HRM approaches for retaining skilled workers as guiding principles, although some concepts may differ according to societal and political contexts (Chiboiwa et al. 2010). Horwitz et al. (2010) argues that HRM practices for retaining skilled workers in Sub-Saharan Africa are not all unique to Africa and many represent modifications of those in the Western countries. These modifications occur because organizations are under pressure to replicate more progressive people management approaches by organizations that operate in a similar set of environmental settings and institutional limitations (Tulloch et al. 2011; Hassin 2009; Earle 2003). Secondly, there may be stronger HR recruitment and retention attributions in African continent due to the African collectivist culture as opposed to countries with an individualistic culture, particularly the West. Nonetheless, there are still other retention challenges and HR retention attributions that are not known in the African countries such as South Sudan due to the limited studies and civil unrests in these countries.

The third reasons for the South Sudanese context is that this study explores the challenges contributing to staff turnover and HRM approaches for retaining skilled workers among INGDOs operating in a conflict setting. It seems that Sub-Saharan African countries are under threat of economic and political instability and great pressure to catch up because of being ‘latecomers’ as global economic players (Itika 2011; Horwitz et al. 2010; Kamoche 2004) and therefore may be ready to accept Western approaches pertaining to staff recruitment and retention and adopt them. In the case of South Sudan, the South Sudanese government formed the Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs and Disaster Management in 2011 to encourage organizations to utilize effective people management programs to increase employee retention and organizational performance in responding to extremely dangerous security situations and poor working conditions in the country. A key issue is whether the same management strategies that are applied in the non-conflict settings are applicable in conflict settings; and the extent to which the practices in the conflict context are similar to or different from those prescribed in the existing employee retention models. The environmental and cultural perspective suggests that as each political environment and culture is relatively
unique, it may require specific understanding in order to be effective in attracting and retaining people. Regrettably, not much is empirically known about the challenges contributing to staff turnover and approaches for retaining skilled workers among INGDOs operating in conflict settings and different culture in South Sudanese context.

Fourth, despite enormous HR recruitment and retention challenges and decades of political uncertainty in Sub-Saharan Africa and several years of dependence on foreign aid and high unemployment, which require treating work and employment as important commodity (Newenham-Kahindi et al. 2013; Kamoche et al. 2004), the challenges contributing to staff turnover and the practices of HRM in South Sudan continue to show certain distinctive features (Kagunyi 2009). This study locates sectoral and societal factors contributing to staff turnover and approaches for retaining skilled workers in that context. Accordingly, one of the major objectives of this study is to explore the implications of staff turnover and HRM approaches for retaining professional workers within INGDOs sector in the South Sudanese setting. It is noted that although much research on why people stay or leave has been conducted in a variety of organizations in non-conflict settings, particularly Western settings (Kaufman 2012; Hausknecht et al. 2009; Holland et al. 2007; Boxall et al. 2003; Guthrie 2001), very little seems to have been conducted in the conflict settings, particularly Sub-Saharan Africa and South Sudan. With exception of studies by Kagunyi (2009) and Okumu (2003), other studies have actually only focused on the concepts of entrepreneurial traits and organizational commitments (Malunga 2009; Ugboro & Obeng 2000), which have different conceptualizations from staff recruitment and retention in conflict settings.

1.5 ORGANIZATION OF THE THESIS

This study is organized into seven chapters, as seen in Figure 1.1 below. This study is organized to reflect the researcher’s specific and distinct contribution to knowledge. The sequence of topics and subtopics of the study introduces the issues and problems being studied, the research method undertaken, the findings from the data gathered and analyzed, and the conclusion and implications obtained from the findings. Generally, the study is organized in the following manner.
Chapter One: the current chapter presents the introduction. It also presents the research problem and background, the purpose, and the justification and significance of the study.

Chapter Two provides a review of academic literature over a wide range of topics relating to skills retention challenges and HRM practices that primarily impact on employee recruitment and retention in both stable and conflict settings. It first explores the definition of HRM practices from the general perspective, and scans the academic articles that have been written about it. It then advances to explore HRM in nonprofit setting, including examining factors that influence HRM approaches for retaining skilled workers in the nonprofit sector, for example, OHS and security conditions, poor working conditions, short-term employment contracts as a result of limited financial sources and stringent donor funding conditionalities,
tensions between local workers, regional workers, and international staff, and cultural differences. The chapter also explore the definition of HRM in non-Western setting, particularly Sub-Saharan Africa. The chapter concludes with the discussions of theoretical framework and research model.

Chapter Three outlines the South Sudanese and INGDOs contexts of the study. With respect to the context of INGDOs, the aim of this chapter is to provide relevant background information and clarification in regard to the background of INGOs in both global and South Sudanese perspectives, the legal framework regulating INGDOs in South Sudan, and the ‘real’ operating context in South Sudan. What INGDOs do, for example, their contributions to employment in developing countries, particularly Sub-Saharan Africa, have also been elucidated. In regard to the context of South Sudan, the chapter proceeds by reviewing the history of the conflict and the people of South Sudan through a historical lens. It also discusses the political-economic background, high levels of poverty and unemployment in South Sudan and the environmental factors affecting INGDOs operations in South Sudan and Sub-Saharan Africa. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the funding and staffing arrangements for INGDOs this research studied.

Chapter Four describes the methodology that has been used in the research for this thesis, and offers explanations for the choice of paradigm. The methodology was designed to answer the research questions, and to be flexible enough to respond to questions and issues raised during the review of literature, the field research, and the analysis of the qualitative data. The chapter also explains the research methodology approach and framework and includes details of the rationale and procedures for undertaking the qualitative techniques and the use of interpretivism to increase knowledge and understanding of the phenomena. Ethical issues are discussed, and finally aspects of the methodology that worked well and aspects that caused constraints and difficulties are reviewed and explained.

Chapter Five presents the findings from the forty in-depth and small group and semi-structured interviews with INGDOs managers, skilled workers, and expert practitioners from the variety of organizations, academia, and government in South Sudan, focusing on the challenges contributing to staff turnover among INGDOs operating in a conflict setting in South Sudan. The chapter identified a number of challenges influencing the retention of skilled workers working for INGDOs in conflict settings. Findings indicated that, overall, skilled workers’ decisions to leave was influenced by factors such as health, safety and
security concerns in South Sudan, poor living and working conditions, especially poor housing and lack of basic social amenities such as electricity and running water, short-term employment contracts due to stringent donor funding requirements, socio-cultural factors, hostile government policies towards foreign workers, and tensions between locals, regional workers, and expatriates. This chapter also examines these environmental challenges to determine the extent to which they affect HRM approaches in a conflict setting, thereby staff turnover. The chapter also draws on staff turnover issues faced by the INGDOs managers and staff turnover consequences.

Chapter Six presents the findings from the forty in-depth and small group and semi-structured interviews with INGDOs managers, skilled workers, and expert practitioners from academia and government in South Sudan. The chapter focuses on identifying the strategies and initiatives that INGDOs operating in South Sudan, as employers, had undertaken to address staff retention, particularly in a conflict setting. In particular, this chapter draws on HR retention practices deployed to cope with the challenges outlined in Chapter five, represented by the compensation and benefits, training and professional development, career development opportunities, and performance feedback. The chapter concludes with the explanation of other key driving forces for recruiting and retaining skilled workers, for example, effective communication channels between employees and the management and employee empowerment practices.

Chapter Seven, the last chapter, discusses the results from three stages of this study, in particular, the findings from managers, employees and expert practitioners, and provides the conclusion of the study and gives an indication of the way forward for future research investigations. It discusses the overall results, identifies contributions, managerial implications, limitations of the research findings, and recommendations for management and policy-makers of INGDOs, as well as limitations and recommendations for further studies.
CHAPTER TWO
LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Human Resource Management (HRM) practices have through the years developed patterns of activities and responses to particular situations that, because they have proven to consistently elicit the desired responses, have been accepted as standard practices which most, if not all, organizations may rely upon. Aside from ensuring that employees excel in job performance, another of the important goals of the HRM manager is to ensure that employees in the organization find their work meaningful and engaging enough to develop a sense of ‘ownership’ of their jobs. The result of such sense of ownership, it is hoped, is that those employees who contribute much to the organization would find an attachment to their job sufficient to keep them within the organization over a long period of time. This is what is referred to in academic literature as employee retention. Certainly, the type of employees the organizations would like to recruit and retain are those who have much to contribute in terms of productivity and operational effectiveness; those employees who fall below the bar consistently are better considered for eventual transfer or separation. For those employees whom the organization would like to retain, there must be a reason and purpose such employees would wish to be recruited and retained other than the likelihood of a poor economic and security environment; had this been the only reason for employee retention, these valuable employees would consider transferring jobs as soon as the economy and physical security improved.

This chapter focuses on current research and understanding of skills retention and HRM approaches to retaining staff. The key research findings in the areas of why employees stay or leave and the approaches management has undertaken to influence staff retention are presented here. It first explores the definition of HRM from the general perspective, and thoroughly reviews the academic articles that have been written about it. Secondly, it explores HRM in nonprofit setting, both in conflict and non-conflict settings, and discusses the factors contributing to staff turnover, for example, occupational health, safety and security conditions, poor working conditions, short-term employment contracts due to lack of
financial resources and funding from donors, tensions between locals and expatriates, and cultural factors. Thirdly, it explores HRM in non-Western settings, Africa in particular, and reviews HRM approaches for retaining skilled workers in a less financially and politically stable context, Sub-Saharan Africa in particular. The literature reviewed assists in the development of a conceptual framework which will be used in the study to understand challenges contributing to staff turnover and HRM approaches for retaining skilled workers in both conflict and non-conflict settings.

2.2 HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT IN GENERAL

As a field of study, HRM has so far been dominated by Western writers. As many scholars have noted (Guest & Conway 2011; Fenwick & McLean 2009; Boxall et al. 2003) Western scholars fashioned the most influential early works on HRM. These included new HR management and administrative textbooks (Bryant & Allen 2013; Truss 2001), along with a series of popular publications such as Management and Ideology (Browning 2006; McCourt et al. 2003) which laid strong emphasis on corporate culture and the management of people in a desired resuscitation of Western organizational competitiveness. The African contribution to HRM literature has included searching critical reviews (Nyambegera et al. 2016; Kamoche et al. 2015; Ghebregiorgis 2006; Debrah & Budhwar 2004) and empirical explorations of the interaction between societal institutions, national and local culture and HRM not yet complemented in the Western literature (Newenham-Kahindi & Kamoche 2016; Law & Kamoche 2015). One subsequent development from the Western literature on HRM has been the growth of a field known as International Human Resource Management (IHRM) (Fenwick & McLean 2009; Merlot et al. 2006). Researchers in the field of HRM in both Western countries and Sub-Saharan Africa are concerned with the human resource problems of organizations such as INGOs and MNCs in foreign subsidiaries such as expatriate management or, more generally, with the unfolding HR issues that are associated with the various stages of the internationalization process. A closer look at the functions of HR in today's organizations in both the West and developing countries like Sub-Saharan Africa indicates that there are many competing models and paradigms. Practically, the HR functions in any given establishment are substantially flexible, structurally dependent over time and primarily determined by many external factors such as the period they have been in operation, many times changing and restructured as time goes by (Cooke et al. 2016; Theriou & Chatzoglou 2014; Cascio 2014; Guest 2007). HRM history indicates that the HR practice has had to be amended many times over, and priorities have indeed been reinvented to focus
on different aspects gradually. The changes have been mainly in reaction to socio-economic elements that are outside the direct control of senior managers and HR officials. Scholars have published major works in the HR field, for instance, Ghazali et al. (2013) defines HRM brusquely as the practice of managing employment. Many standardized texts do not provide specific ways of defining HRM, although they separate hard and soft varieties of it. Scholars such as Cook et al. (2016) and Guest and Conway (2011) have built their studies on research carried out by Truss (2009) as well as Wright et al. (2002), who claimed that soft HRM acknowledges workers as resources worth devoting resources in, and has a penchant for focusing on high involvement/high commitment HR practices. On the other hand, hard HRM acknowledges workers as a cost that should be kept at a minimal, and thus, attempts to put more emphasis on techniques of flexibility as well as capping on learning and development expenses. Others such as Edgar and Geare (2005) perceive HRM as all the actions related to the management of employment interactions in an organization.

Scholars have applied the term HRM in three ways. First, are the traditional management activities such training and development, compensation and benefits, performance feedback and employee empowerment. Secondly, employees are viewed as the major asset in the organization and there is a willingness to develop these employees. Thirdly, the management people integrate the personnel management function into the strategic management. Becker and Gerhart (2007) point out that HRM was considered a strategic asset of an organization and HR policies and practices were important to an organization’s competitive advantage in a competitive world. Research scholars in both Western and non-Western settings have given several definitions of HRM. Huselid (2011) referred to HRM as the design of management systems to ensure that talented employees in the organization are being used efficiently and effectively to achieve organizational goals. Asiedu-Appiah and Asamoah (2013) defined HRM as a set of professional activities which include a range of personal practices that can be integrated to ensure a professional approach in managing people in the organization. Bowen and Ostroff (2004) stated that HRM is the planning, organizing, directing, and controlling of the procurement, development, compensation, maintenance, and separation of human resources so that individual, organizational, social objectives are achieved. HRM’s distinguishing style to organizing and managing individuals provides organizational purposes and objectives by HR professionals in conjunction with line managing staff.
Reviewing their HR literature, scholars such as Gold et al. (2013) recognize a number of HRM and personnel management comparative models. They define these as role perspective, systems/structure perspective, employment relations perspective, people management perspective and planning perspective. In every circumstance, theories and practices of managing individuals within all of the HRM traditions and people’s/personnel management differ. In general terms, within the realms of the planning perspective, personnel management is marginal and reactive to corporate plans (Shaw et al. 2013). Within the people's management perspective, individuals are viewed as a variable expense, conditional on organizational control and compliance (Wright & Nishii 2007). Personnel management within the employment relations perspective admits that personal interest is a dominant factor at work and that it is inevitable to avoid conflicts of interest at work among the different stakeholders (Delery & Shaw 2001). Within the systems/structure perspective, personnel management enforces staff control measures in a top-down system, which is also used for the flow of information (Luna-Arocas & Camps 2007). Personnel management is specific in the role perspective. It is also skilled and motivated by personnel expertise (Khondaker & Sultana 2012). According to Lamba and Choudhary (2013), HRM is essential to the corporate planning framework and is strategy focused. Within the perspectives of people management, HRM observes individuals as social capital (resource) dedicated to work and capable of being developed (Cook et al. 2016). HRM provides support to concurrence of interests amongst participants and de-emphasizes workplace conflicts of interest within the employment relations perspective. Within the systems/structure perspective, HRM promotes worker’s informed choice and participation, with clear communication pathways to the managing teams, intended for developing and enhancing employee commitment and trust.

Meyer and Smith (2000) have long established that the capabilities of attracting and retaining top quality workers are vital to organizational competitiveness. Many research studies touching on strategic HRM have looked into the relationships between organizational performance and HR practices and effectiveness. Nonetheless, significant research analyses have proposed that a methodical approach towards developing a workplace environment that scores high in work performance frameworks that provide sufficient support for the attainment of operational objectives and implementation of corporate strategy might not be enough to get the best employees, as well as retaining them not resulting in high organizational performance (Lamba & Choudhary 2013). Organizations are additionally required to offer employee-focused high involvement and good employment practices that
develop an optimistic workplace experience that attracts and retains the best workers (Konrad & Linnehan 2006). A lot of focus with regard to “desirable” employment practices has been put on approaches of retaining workers, associating commitment and satisfaction to retention, and has added more weight to social community practices, employment conditions, wellbeing programs, telecommuting, family-friendly work policies, communication as well as flexible employment. Meyer and Smith (2000) argue that determining whether an organization is a good employer can be assessed from different areas, including public, industry, employer and employee perspectives. According to Hutchings and Shea (2011), the employee’s standpoint – methods used in securing the employees obligation to the organization - and the employers’ standpoint – methods employed to safeguard effective business operations can significantly affect the organizational success, although there is need to stress that workers may identify distinctive differences between organizational practice and policy. While contesting for getting the services of the best staff members from the labor market, Erickson and Gratton (2007) argue that companies do not transform into good employers by simply using other organization's strategies and best practices. They are rather required to offer a different experience to develop a loyal organizational workforce, what they refer to as creating a “signature experience.”

Advancing desirable employment practices, Macky and Boxall (2009) argue that the perception of high-performance work systems has been the center of significant interest in the recent past but proposes that high involvement work systems develop beyond high-performance work systems best practices. Macky and Boxall (2009) suggest that collected work practices that have to do with how tasks are arranged and employment tasks that relate to termination, retention, development, negotiation, consultation, motivation, deployment and recruitment affect employee performance on many levels. Guest (2011) proffers the necessity of having a worker-centered method that accentuates the association between workers’ reports about particular employment activities and their life and works satisfaction levels. Such activities put more focus on the involvement of the employees in the correlation between performance and employment practices, yet there exists no particular research analysis that clearly sets the variances between employee and employer perceptions. Other scholars such as Richardson and Vandenberg (2005) notably argue that even though depending on idiosyncratic understanding about events, high-involvement work systems are seen as having a higher influence over people and more so on companies’ efficacy than unbiased evaluations of similar events. HRM activities such as direction setting, training,
flexibility, incentives and work design are seen as precursors of high-performance work systems (Demirbag et al. 2014; Kehoe & Wright 2013; Boxall & Macky 2009). They subsequently result in turnover intentions, job satisfaction and organizational commitment, which positively affect workers’ opinions of the desirability of an organization and their subsequent prospects of remaining committed to the organization.

Other HRM activities and functions which have been fairly documented in the literature in both Western and non-Western settings typically include recruitment, retention, and turnover (Farndale et al. 2010; Shaw et al. 2009; Wright et al. 2005). Recruitment is the process of attracting competent employees to apply for vacant positions within an organization and requires effective planning to determine the human resources needs of the organization (Alfe et al. 2013; Boxall & Rasmussen 2003). Employee retention referred to an effort by which employers attempt to retaining employees in their workforce to prevent high turnover that would otherwise result in high training cost, and loss of talent (Sun et al. 2007, p. 99). At the core of the HRM function, employee retention involves taking measures to create trust between the employer and the employee by putting in place attractive working conditions and viable career perspective for staff in the organization (Kyndt et al. 2009, p. 210). A more detailed and recent definition for the concept of employee retention is a process in which the employees are encouraged to remain with the organization for the maximum period of time (Cascio 2014, p. 442); the “systematic effort by employers to create and foster an environment that encourages employees to stay by having effective HR policies and practices in place that address their diverse needs” (Chawla & Ratna 2012, p. 451). This involves taking measures to persuade employees to continue their employment with the organization for the longest possible duration, in order for the organization to maintain and continue to utilize their valuable knowledge, its operations, its history, and future prospects (Kehoe & Wright 2013, p. 370). For non-profit organizations such as INGOs, employee retention is also a key issue. This is highlighted by Loquercio et al. (2006, p. 13) in their study of Western-based humanitarian and development NGOs in the Horn of Africa region for whom attracting, developing and retaining professional workers is one of their strategic objectives. The concept of employee turnover, on the other hand, refers to “proportion of people leaving the organization over a specified period of time” (Armstrong et al. 2010, p. 376), the “influx and exit of valuable workers into and out of the workforce” (Loquercio et al. 2006, p. 3), and “the departure of staff from the formally defined organization” (Hancock et al. 2013, p. 576). Exit from an organization can take the form of resigning, redundancy or retirement. Another
simple ways to describe employee turnover is “how long employees tend to stay” or “the rate of traffic through the revolving door” (Yang & Fu 2012, p. 838). According to Hancock et al. (2013), the study of employee turnover has been important for management scholars and HR practitioners for decades and remains an issue of widespread interest for years to come. In HRM and nonprofit context, the term “employee turnover” or “staff turnover” is the rate at which an organization, as an employer, gains and losses experienced and skilled workers (Chani & Cassim 2014; Albattat & Som 2013; Curry et al. 2005; McElroy & Rude 2001).

Prior HRM studies and attempts to professionalize the recruitment and retention of skilled workers among organizations operating in both conflict and non-conflict contexts have raised some concerns. Firstly, some of the research findings have produced inconsistent results with regard to the role and effectiveness of HRM in the recruitment and retention of employees (Herman & Renz 2008). Secondly, efforts to transfer HRM approaches related to recruitment and employee retention from Western settings to non-Western settings, particularly conflict settings, sometimes fail to produce the expected outcomes (Horwitz et al. 2009). Organizations in both conflict and non-conflict settings recognized that to be competitive, they need to invest in effective HRM practices beyond those mandated by employment laws. Research indicates that integrated HRM practices lead to increased productivity, decreased turnover, and increased effectiveness of staff recruitment and retention (Browning 2006; Chew & Sharma 2005). In financially and politically stable contexts, particularly Western countries, HRM has evolved to encompass systems for the effective compensation, training and development, communication channels between employees and the management, effective leadership, career development opportunities, performance management, and organizational culture (Bryant & Allen 2013; Ugboro 2003). However, in less financially and politically stable countries, particularly non-Western settings, these factors are less significant. In non-Western settings, particularly conflict settings, HRM tend to focus on employees as the greatest assets (Horwitz 2015; Sydhagen & Cunningham 2007; Kuada 2006; Horwitz et al. 2002). This suggests that recruitment and retention of skilled workers is critical for organizations operating in unstable contexts because organizations operating in difficult environments are often dependent on their staffs to get their mission accomplished (Ehrenreich & Elliott 2004). Indeed, it is the people who deliver the programs and services that organization’s stakeholders expect; therefore, planning for recruiting and retaining skilled workers in unstable context must be done with strategic purpose (Malunga 2009). Unlike for-profit organizations in Western settings which can use technology to automate the
production of their products and reduce staff (Mpabanga 2004), organizations in less financially and politically stable countries typically provide some type of service. Thus, they rely on the professionalism and competence of their staff (Cooke et al. 2015; Namakula & Witter 2014). Whether referring to top leadership, program directors or managers, or field coordinators, the quality and competence of the workforce differentiate successful organizations from unsuccessful organizations (Bakuwa et al. 2013). Overall, HRM practices in industrialized countries are different from those in less financially and politically stable countries in important ways, and yet similar in other ways (Horwitz et al. 2010).

Mahal (2012) investigated the role played by HRM in enhancing and fostering employee recruitment and retention, within the context of emerging economies in South Asia, particularly India. In this study, HRM activities included leadership, teamwork, training and development, recruitment and retention. The findings suggested that a significant positive relationship existed between employee retention and HRM. Accordingly, it follows that if the employees in the organization are provided a good working environment, this brings effective employee retention and stability among the workforce. HRM is important in improving employees’ intention to stay longer in the organization. Conversely, employee retention is both a binding force on HRM and the backbone of the modern management philosophy (Mahal 2012, p. 43). A study conducted by Nwokocha and Iheriohanma (2012) in Nigeria recommended adoption of a strategic plan, inclusion of employees in the decision-making process in the organization, adoption of a personalized compensation plan, creation of career planning, training, and development programs, and institution of flexible work programs, particularly for critical-knowledge employees. Such practices are expected to help organizations retain core employees, which in turn should enable them to be more effective in recruiting and retaining skilled workers in the organization. Leadership, one of the HR retention practices as identified by Mahal (2012), was the focus of the studies conducted by Muchiri and Ayoko (2013) and Muchiri (2011) on the moderating role of transformational leadership in Sub-Saharan Africa. Their studies in particular qualified leadership in their study as ‘responsible leadership,’ the description of which was derived and operationalized from the perspective of employees and how they view the actions of their leaders. Based on this study, employees described responsible leadership as (1) a stakeholder culture that compels action in an ethical and socially responsible manner; (2) human resources (HR) practices which are fair and inclusive of all employees, and (3) managerial support for the development and success of employees. Out of the responses of the 4,352 employees
surveyed, the findings suggested that responsible leadership inspired pride in their
organization and enhanced their satisfaction with their stay there, resulting in at least an
added retention of one more year than their stay would otherwise have been.

One of the rarer studies that comments on HRM practices, recruitment and employee
retention deals with organizations operating in an Arabian context. As mentioned in chapter
5, socio-cultural factors have a tendency to impact on employee recruitment and retention,
therefore it is likely that studies conducted in other geographical environments may yield
insights as to how retention may vary as the context of HRM practices vary. Abutayeh and
Al-Qatawneh (2012) explored this issue in their study of recruitment and retention practices
among organizations working in Eastern Mediterranean region, particularly Jordan. They
identified six HRM practices, namely recruitment, selection, training, performance
management, compensation, and career management. The study sought to distinguish among
the six and differentiate how each impacts on how involved employees felt in their jobs – that
is, how engaged they were in their work, a crucial indicator of retention. The findings of this
study suggested that all six of the HRM practices significantly contributed positive effects to
job involvement and retention, but to varying degrees. Among the HRM practices,
‘recruitment’ and ‘selection’ have registered the most robust effect on job involvement and
employee retention, while ‘training’ has the lowest effect (Demirbag et al. 2014; Mamman et
al. 2012; Muuka & Mwenda 2004; Mamman et al. 1996). The particularly strong relationship
to selection may be explained by the tendency of organizations to exercise careful adherence
to a proven process which, in the end, produces those employees whose skills and aptitudes
are well-matched with their jobs (Mitchell et al. 2001), and whose psychological profiles
particularly correspond to the demands of the job (Hausknecht et al. 2009).

While the foregoing studies by Abutayeh and Al-Qatawneh (2012), Mahal (2012) and
Nwokocha and Iheriohanma (2012) consider HRM as a factor that has impacts on employee
recruitment and employee retention, some studies take the reverse view. Matzin et al (2012)
examined how HRM may be influenced by the motivational model for employee retention –
i.e., how employee retention may help to shape the HRM approaches that are implemented in
the organization. The geographic setting of the study was in Malaysia, and it focused on
entrepreneurial firms, reasoning that employee retention is crucial for small firms, whose
work forces are relatively limited and resources for recruitment and training are scarce. The
study arrived at a model which is a modification of Herzberg’s Two-Factor Theory, which
appears to correspond to the HRM practices found to be positively correlated to employee retention among organizations operating in both stable and less financially and politically stable context. The findings indicate that organizations that employ the model for employee retention will promote development of HRM functions which are tailored to effectively enhance employer-employee relationship. As discussed earlier, HRM is an activity undertaken by an organization that is aimed at ensuring that its employees remain at their jobs for the long term (Van & Beijer 2015; DeNisi & Biteman 2014; Shaw et al. 2009). These activities include recruitment, selection, training and development, performance management, benefits and rewards. HRM approaches are spearheaded by the HR department, but also involve line management in the implementation (Voorde & Beijer 2015). The retention of skilled workers, however, goes further than HRM practices which are largely routine in most organizations (Chew et al. 2005). It involves the workers’ entire attitude and relationship towards their jobs. Several factors extend beyond the workplace into the workers’ home – work family balance, for instance, is one of the most important considerations, because where workers could not strike a satisfactory allocation of their time and attention between matters of the home and matters of the workplace, there will be internal conflict that would render the workers ineffective and dissatisfied at either function (Davis & Luiz 2015; Cascio 2014). Other necessary considerations are burnout, anxiety and stress, which are manifestations of the same conditions, that is, that skilled workers are poorly matched to the demands of the jobs they had been assigned, causing tension that builds up and makes the work unsustainable (Becker & Gerhart 2007). These factors all pertain to the job itself, and necessitate a redesign of the job requirements in a manner that matches employee circumstances.

The other factors are organizational and require a systemic adjustment to suit the greater number of workers. The leadership style, empowerment, pay, performance assessment, career development, and working conditions are aspects of the organization which should be implemented in a manner that supports the professional workers as much as they serve the organization’s goals (Kinyili et al. 2015; Chong et al. 2012; Gómez & Rosen 2001). The design, implementation, and maintenance of attractive compensation are therefore important parts of HRM (Bryant & Allen 2013). Decisions about salaries, incentives, benefits, and quality of life issue are important in recruiting, motivating, and retaining skilled workers (Shaw et al. 2009; Barney 2001). Strategic decisions about pay levels, pay structure, job evaluation, and incentive pay systems influence the ability of an organization to compete in the workforce, attract the most qualified and competent employees, and retain its most
talented and productive employees (Nyambegera et al. 2016; Chew & Chan 2008). The overall structure and culture of the organization should not only be designed to attain the organization’s strategic objectives but should also foster employee engagement, which is found to be a mediating factor in the effect of HRM practices on employees’ turnover intentions (Kinyili et al. 2015; Drucker 2010; Collins & Smith 2006). They should bring together people, materials and processes, and of these, the most important is the people.

The last set of factors affecting employee retention involves the external macro-elements, which might be argued that the management has no control over them (Merlot et al. 2006; Kane & Palmer 1995). However, the organization may adjust to these factors in a way that would minimize their disruptive tendencies. For instance, pertaining to the effects of globalization, health, safety, and security conditions, Asiedu-Appiah and Asamoah (2013) and Ananthan and Rao (2011) found that even where Western HRM practices are the norm in the industry, practices in the country of origin of the specific organization is still a factor that influences the implementation of HR platforms by which the organization seeks to reinforce employee-organization linkage. HRM should therefore discern those elements in the culture that tend to enhance employee relationships with their jobs and include them in the implementation of recruitment and retention practices, while seeking to attenuate or eliminate those elements that tend to degrade these relationships (Horwitz et al. 2009). Modern workplaces are more complex than the workplaces of the past (Ugboro 2006; Sayers 2006). Technological advances have created so many possibilities that have increased the flexibility of work conditions so that there are enough alternatives for management to hone HRM to better suit their workers (Kamoche & Harvey 2006; Kuada 2006). For instance, the ability to transmit information online has made work-from-home arrangements possible, allowing workers to achieve family-work balance, reducing sources of anxiety, stress and burnout, and thus engaging the professional workers more closely with their jobs (Hausknecht et al. 2009). HRM activities are the means to introduce greater flexibility into the workplace, creating a win-win situation where both employer and employee achieve satisfaction and ensuring a fruitful long-term collaboration that serve the goals of both parties (Boselie et al. 2005).

2.3 HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT IN NON-PROFIT SETTING
In financially and politically stable settings, particularly Western countries, HRM is taken to be a function of the conventional HRM practices pertaining to employee empowerment, training and development, compensation system, and performance appraisal (Della Torre et
al. 2014; Shaw et al. 2009; Holtom et al. 2008). However, in non-Western settings, particularly in conflict settings, conventional HRM practices such as employee empowerment, training and development, compensation and reward, and performance appraisal may not be important because of the difficulty of working environment and security concerns. For example, in conflict settings, compensation and reward and training and development opportunities that would have been effective in non-conflict settings can weaken (Tulloch et al. 2011; Hassin 2009), become unhelpful or cease to function effectively in attracting and retaining skilled workers (Della Torre et al. 2014). Compensation and reward systems are used as a HRM motivational tool and can be employed to improve the quality of the workforce; however, in the conflict environments these are unlikely to take priority (Devkota & Teijlingen 2010). Indeed, there is relatively limited literature about the function of compensation and reward, as HRM strategy, in the conflict settings and how these may be employed to improve staff recruitment and retention. Existing research presents different findings on the importance of pay and conditions on which a person makes decision to choose workplace. Better reward was positively linked with decreasing intention to leave work among workers in Thailand (Spires 2012), and Lehmann et al. (2008), in a study of reasons for staff turnover in Southern Africa, found better reward systems as a reason for staying in the nonprofit sector. Work environment and job satisfaction are other factors determining staff recruitment and retention in high-risk environments (Olowu 2010). A study among skilled workers in North Vietnam revealed that the most influencing factors in their jobs were appreciation by the community, managers, colleagues, reward and training opportunities (Martineau 2003). Lack of good supervision is also recognized as having an influencing effect on staff retention in nonprofit sectors in conflict societies (Dickmann et al. 2017; Tulloch et al. 2011), and good supervision contributes to worker engagement and efficiency (Olowu 2010). Providing continuous supportive supervision has a particularly high influencing impact in the conflict environment (Pavignani 2003). Other HRM practices such as assessment visits can also raise the hopes and morale of staff who have struggled through long periods of isolation and danger during conflict (Lehmann et al. 2008).

Furthermore, training and development of skilled workers will have suffered during conflicts; both basic and continuing training professional development opportunities may have been either disrupted or wholly scrapped (Tulloch et al. 2011). In these circumstances special conflict setting training and in-service training may need to be undertaken by nonprofit organizations. However, the standards of training and professional development opportunities
under such conditions are often criticized for being poor and at the expense of long-term training (Korff et al. 2015). Conflicts setting training activities are often conducted by less-qualified HR personnel working with few or no training resources, thereby resulting in a reduction in training capacity and subsequently employee turnover (Roome et al. 2014). In-service training may be considered as emergency training needs, and are popular with nonprofit organizations, especially INGOs; however, they have also been criticized for being unsuited for specific contexts, especially conflict contexts (Wood & Sullivan 2015; Martineau 2003). The standard of in-service training may be questionable; however, it is this type of training that is most valuable HRM strategy for recruiting and retaining skilled workers in high-risk environments and is generally informal (Hassin 2009; Lehmann et al. 2008; Ehrenreich & Elliott 2004). However, if in-service training is to be successful in attracting and retaining skilled workers in high-risk environments, it needs to be tightly linked to effective leadership and good supervision (Roome et al. 2014; Ferreira & Leite 2013). Shortages of skilled workers among nonprofit organizations, especially INGOs operating in conflict settings, can result in the need to shift tasks from highly trained workforce to available staff with less training and skills to do the job (Tessema et al. 2005).

In nonprofit setting, particularly in less financially and politically stable contexts, HRM is taken to be the function of transforming the small and medium sized nonprofit organizations into ones, able to function, to complete their design, to develop their human resources, to evaluate their personnel, to shape effective management system, and to formulate long-term plans and development policies (Musa & Hamid 2008; Lau & Ngo 2004). Recruitment and retention of human resources in the nonprofit setting in developing countries, particularly conflict-ridden ones, depends largely on the availability of projects and budget and may come either through internal or external selection sources (Jackson & Haines 2007; Martineau 2003). Additionally, selection policy of qualified and experienced staff in the nonprofit setting, conflict settings in particular, depends on the procedures followed by each nonprofit organization (Wagner 2014). Although some inconsistencies existed in regard to the definitions and utilization of HRM in nonprofit setting, some consensus exists that balancing of global integration and local responsiveness is an essential feature of nonprofit setting HRM (Akingbola 2013; Padaki 2007). Periodically, HRM components in definitions and utilizations include HRM values, and structural or process element, in particular, how different HRM policies and practices are undertaken in different organizations, communities, and countries (Kane & Palmer 1995). Taking into consideration the usefulness of HRM for
nonprofit organizations there are practices which have emerged and which denote nonprofit setting as a special case. These practices include HRM values, the level of formality of HRM, and the staffing arrangements undertaken by the sector. Prior empirical studies of nonprofit organizations management from the literature shows that nonprofit setting manifest HRM approaches that are highly participatory in nature, with a strong ideological driven (Wood & Sullivan 2015; Lewis 2003). In reality, participatory management is not just a HR management style, but incorporates ideological goals of people recruitment and retention (Wagner 2014; Stark Biddle 2004). Sheehan (1998), in her study of humanitarian and development NGOs in Mozambique, found that participatory management was not just about employee empowerment and involvement in day-to-day operations of an organization, but a process of matching the nature of work with the employee. Since Sheehan’s work focused on INGDOs with special emphasis on promoting the participation of the beneficiaries, the participation of employees is therefore important in HR recruitment and retention approaches.

In addition, HRM approaches in nonprofit organizations involve philosophical value of volunteerism. Volunteerism, according to Hudson and Bielefeld (2007), is linked up to the definition of nonprofit organizations and is not just about utilizing volunteers, but their creation, maintenance and termination process. A HRM approach suitable to nonprofit organizations must recognize and engage in volunteerism to be effective in nonprofit setting (DiMaggio & Anheier 1990). As the significance of HRM in nonprofit organizations has grown there has been an increase in formalization and professionalization of nonprofit workforce (Lindenberg & Dobel 2002). This, however, has not gone without concerns from nonprofit organizations, particularly humanitarian and development NGOs, as those within the nonprofit setting are strongly opposed to the people management practices from other settings—perceiving them as threats to their value-based culture and survival. Conflicts arise between professionalizing the nonprofit workforce with new HR management techniques and the significance of maintaining high utilization of volunteer workforce (Curling & Simmons 2010). While analyzing the impact of Western-based HRM practices and globalization on people management among aid organizations and MNCs operating in Sub-Saharan Africa in the past two decades and recently, Horwitz et al. (2004) found that as nonprofit sectors became expanded and global, their people HRM approaches became more complex and the use of volunteer workers decreased, creating tensions as volunteerism forms the core of the passion and commitment nonprofit sector engenders. Based on the existing literature on nonprofit organizations, especially INGOs, there are some challenges to the use of Western-
developed HRM policies and practices in nonprofit organizations in non-Western settings, conflict and post-conflict settings in particular (O’Sullivan 2010; Padaki 2007; Okumu 2003).

2.3.1 Factors Affecting Human Resource Management in Non-Profit Settings

Similarly, there are other organizational and external factors that influence HRM approaches related to staff recruitment and retention in non-Western settings. These factors are discussed in more details in sections 2.3.1.1, 2.3.1.2, 2.3.1.3, 2.3.1.4, 2.3.1.5 and 2.3.1.6 below.

2.3.1.1 Lack of Financial Resources and Funding

The first factor that influenced HRM approaches for recruiting and retaining skilled workers among nonprofit organizations working in non-Western settings, particularly conflict environments, is the lack of financial support and funding from donors—leading to ‘budget constraint’ (Lindenberg & Dobel 2002, p. 18). The composition of nonprofit organizations funding sources, According to Musa and Hamid (2008), influences the level and type of skills investment in the organization and the use of HRM to recruit and retain skilled workers. Lack of financial resources and funds is one of the most important factors influencing HRM strategies and initiatives in the nonprofit sectors in non-Western societies (Hunt 2008; Merlot et al. 2006; Kiraka 2003). Funding source for nonprofit organizations, particularly INGOs, operating in non-western settings tend to be more complex, including sources such as private donations or government project funding (Teegen & Vachani 2004). Increasingly, some funding sources require reporting, which impacts negatively on nonprofit organizations HRM as some activities are endorsed by funding from that source while others are not (Wagner 2014; Nikoi 2008). For example, private donations are providing funding to help the poor communities in both post-conflict and conflict settings and expect that as close to 100 percent of that funding as possible will be used in that way (Dickmann et al. 2017). However, to provide the best services to the poor communities being served, highly skilled workers are needed (Richardson 2006). Furthermore, in order to meet the needs and expectations of donors, nonprofit organizations operating in unstable environments, INGOs in particular, must keep their cost down and therefore cannot afford to pay competitive salaries, which in turns, limits their ability to recruit and retain competent workers in extremely difficult working environment (Dickmann et al. 2017; Demirbag et al. 2014; Stoddard et al. 2009). The composition of nonprofit organizations funding sources in less financially and politically stable countries influence the level and type of skills investment in the nonprofit sector and the use of HRM to attract and retain talented workforce (Wood & Sullivan 2015). Nonprofit
organizations like INGOs have an interactions relationship with international pressure donor groups such as governments and multinational agencies, through their lobbying funding activities that influence their HR retention activities (Bollettino 2008).

Dichter’s (2009) study on the effects of globalization on INGOs operating in Sub-Saharan Africa explains how the influence of donor funding conditionalities have grown on nonprofit organizations’ HRM activities in developing countries, which in turn has raised the level of staff turnover among nonprofit organizations operating in developing countries. For example, donor funding conditionalities’ influence on INGOs HRM approaches in Sudan’s Darfur region led to a decline in the recruitment and retention of skilled workers, particularly expatriates and regional workers (Musa & Hamid 2008). While these donor funding conditionalities in the private sector are not unlike those in the public sector, one particular difference is the funding mechanism that influence on the level of interactivity between nonprofit organizations working in less financially and politically stable countries and donor agencies based in the West. Indeed, some nonprofit organizations receive funding from governments and multinational enterprises so that, as Dichter (2009) notes that an effective communication channel phenomenon seems to be occurring between the donors in the West and the recipient organizations in developing countries. There is an argument to be made that the level of funding from donors in the West can influence on nonprofit organizations’ HRM and their ability to engage in advocacy and effective staff recruitment and retention, which in turns limit their ability to influence the challenges of the external environment (Teegen & Vachani 2004; Wagner 2014). Overall, the level of funding received by nonprofit organizations, particularly INGOs, influence the impact an organization’s HRM activities have on people management in developing countries (Lewis & Sobhan 1999; Fowler 1992).

2.3.1.2 OHS and Physical Security Conditions

The second external factor that influences HRM practices in the nonprofit sector in non-Western settings are occupational health and safety (OHS) and physical security conditions. Many employees working in the nonprofit sectors will quit working the moment security concerns rises. Security should therefore be enhanced to ensure staff turnover is at a considerable number. Employees working in conflict prone areas lack job satisfaction and these in many cases affect staff turnover (Tullock et al. 2011). It should therefore be noted that some employees will chose to stay in those areas of conflict despite security concerns if they are compensated highly and have extended family members to take care for (Fowler
Occupation health safety relating to various jobs will also be a determinant to staff turnover (Forastieri 1999). The more occupational health safety issues, the less it is likely to retain staff members exposed to the hazards (Arrow et al. 1996). Nonprofit sectors with less OHS and security concerns are more likely to retain staff as compared to nonprofit sectors with high OHS and security concerns (Kalua 2014). In non-Western settings, particularly conflict environments, factors such as OHS and security conditions affect the general operation of nonprofit organizations and their HRM practices for recruiting and retaining skilled workers. The physical security conditions refer to extreme insecurity conditions that have long badly compromised operations of nonprofit organizations, including INGOs, and all kinds of organizations operating in conflict-ridden countries (Barnett & Weiss 2008; Stoddard et al. 2006). OHS is concerned with protecting the safety, health and welfare of people engaged in work and has received the attention of many governments in developing countries, the employers, including INGOs, and the professional workers employed in various sectors (Bollettino 2008; Eckroth 2010). Although there had been some advances in legislation, conditions are often still poor and enforcement of legislation is lacking in emerging countries (Dagne 2011). OHS and security concerns are probably more acute for skilled workers in nonprofit setting in less financially and politically stable countries than in the Western settings (Darby & Williamson 2012; Musa & Hamid 2008). Health elements can cover both physical and psychological aspects. It was noted by Collins and Clark (2003) that healthy workplace or wellness approaches take on a variety of forms, including those directed at the physical work environment, for example, cleanliness, safety and ergonomics; health practices, for example, supporting healthy lifestyle, fitness, and diet; and social environment and personal resources, for example, organizational culture, a sense of control over one’s work, and employee assistance programs.

Effective HRM approaches not only improve the health and well-being of individual employees, but contribute to organizational performance objectives, including employee recruitment and retention (Docquier & Marfouk 2007). Security concerns have been touchstones for political debate for decades and violence has called into serious question the viability of any substantial ongoing HR staff development efforts in less financially and politically stable countries (Johnson 2014). Threats are everywhere in less financially and politically stable countries as lawlessness and conflicts are widespread (Ali 2014). The emergences of the term ‘complex political emergencies’ signals a recognition that there are areas of the world where insecurity, instability and disorder are more permanent conditions
(such as in South Sudan or Somalia) where conventional thinking about ‘development’ or ‘relief’ interventions may be of very little value (Lewis 2006). In addition, new thinking about relief therefore problematizes it in three ways. The first is that development or relief work is increasingly understood as not, as was once believed, politically neutral, because political factors limit access to resources, and aid itself becomes a political resource (Duffield 2010). The second is the recognition that even after a problem has passed, the capacity of communities to access resources may be impaired and people may remain vulnerable (Owusu 2005). The third is the idea that relief and development tend to have different objectives, with the former concerned with physical survival and the latter aiming at sustainability and the building of appropriate social and economic systems (Mawdsley et al. 2014).

While some governments in less financially and politically stable settings may be contributing to the conflict, others are concerned with minimizing political conflicts in their home countries and disruption of vital services and productivity while ensuring that conditions do not deteriorate too badly (Bollettino 2008; DeTorrente 2004). On the other hand, the nonprofit organizations, especially INGOs, are concerned with providing relief and emergency assistance and to undertake improvement in OHS only insofar as these are in the interest of stable industrial relations; and union movement has sought to make work safer (Goodhand & Chamberlain 1996). These perspectives are different and conflicting. The only interest group with an unambiguous commitment to improving OHS is the union movement in many less financially and politically stable countries. However, many difficulties and problems are against the movement achieving its OHS objectives, including the ongoing internal conflicts and the limited number of skilled workers in these countries which have been organized into unions and the many pressing issues which require the movement immediate attention (Ding et al. 2012). The contexts in which nonprofit organizations and their staff live and work in less financially and politically stable countries mean accepting risk (Aredo 2002). In the last two decades, the number of attack on nonprofit organizations workers, especially INGOs workers, in less financially and politically stable countries has risen and continues to rise exponentially (Kiggundu 2016; Wagner 2014). Nearly 80 percent of INGOs worker victim are nationals of the country being served (Docquier et al. 2007). The average number of national staff victims more than doubled between 1997 and 2006, from an average of 50 plus per a year in the first half of the period, to nearly 120 in the second of the period (Smick 2007). However, this does not mean that expatriates working for nonprofit organizations, INGOs in particular, are less at risk. Expatriates have the fifth highest job-
related death rate among INGOs victims in developing countries, and are the only group for which the cause of death is primarily orchestrated attack (Goodhand & Chamberlain 1996).

In addition to these physical security risks, there are growing psychological risks for INGOs staff (Cooley & Ron 2002). A study by Loquercio et al. (2006) in the Horn Africa region, in which longitudinal impacts on INGOs workers were examined over a period of time, indicated that the longer workers are in the field in conflict and post-conflict settings, the more psychological support may be needed. The study further revealed that, at around the fifth assignment, there was a dramatic increase in levels of anxiety, depression, cumulative stress, burnout and potential post-traumatic disorder. Surprisingly, the longer people stay in the field in conflict and post-conflict environments does not necessarily mean that there is more resilience. In fact, it could be that the longer people work in the field, the more they are cumulatively exposed and affected by the environment (Goetz 1997). Subsequently, burnout and staff turnover are becoming realities for nonprofit organizations and their workers in developing countries (Cooley & Ron 2002). From an economic perspective, this loss of knowledge capital as well as organizational capacity can become a debilitating outcome (Macrae et al. 1997; Macrae et al. 1996). This awareness of long-term psychological risk become more significant since the total nonprofit organizations, especially INGOs, workers population has grown to over 77 percent in the last ten years, even though incidents of violence on their staff are rising on the daily basis (Smick 2007).

In another development, the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) cites a study in Bangladesh showing that more than 50 women were raped while travelling to and from work in a six-month time period to demonstrate that in some developing countries individual belief they are justified in attacking aid workers who work for international NGOs (UNICEF 2006). Similarly, Goetz (1997) found that at BRAC, the Bangladeshi development NGO, there is a widely held belief that female staff leave because they were reluctant to ride bicycles in public places, fearing for their safety from harassment. In another study, Duffield (2010) describes a case of a woman in Afghanistan who experienced criticism and censure after seeking permission from her husband and father to stop wearing the Bourka to her job with an INGO working in Afghanistan. A study conducted by Macrae et al. (1997) in Sudan’s Darfur region identified adequate housing and security, rather than salary incentives, as primary concerns for INGOs workers, particularly expatriates and regional workers moving to rural areas. The increased level of violence against INGOs workers, coupled with the
increased population of relief and development workers, have prompted nonprofit organizations working in less financially and politically stable contexts to devote more time and resources to ensure the OHS and physical safety of their staff through contingency planning, monitoring and training (Wagner 2014; Aredo 2002). As Clemens and Pettersson (2007) suggested, maximizing effectiveness, the increased level of OHS and physical security should be coupled with increased levels of psychological security. The wellbeing of nonprofit organizations workers in less financially and politically stable countries is in jeopardy if they are not benefiting from a cohesive frame of HRM policies and programs (Musa & Hamid 2008; Goodhand & Chamberlain 1996). Especially for the first-assignment workers, there are additional risks if the training and briefing do not include adequate and integrated preparation of psychological issues pre-deployment (Duffield 2010; Kiraka 2003).

Repressive government policies, internal conflicts and war situations are causing changes in the HRM practices related to recruitment and retention of skilled workers in the nonprofit setting in less financially and politically stable countries (Clemens & Pettersson 2007). WHO study from six African countries (Lehmann et al. 2008) show social unrest and civil war as the single most important factor leading to skilled workers’ turnover in less financially and politically stable environments. Duffield’s (2010) study in Afghanistan showed that countries that faced war and conflict situations in recent times to be among those with the highest levels of staff turnover. Other political situations that had affected HRM activities related to recruitment and retention and the work of nonprofit organizations in general included the civil war and fighting among tribal groups (Johnson 2014). Fighting among largest tribal groups and other minority groups has been constant for a number of years, and has contributed steadily to instability and violence in developing countries (Ali 2014). There are also increasingly violent confrontations between rogue militia forces and the national government’s own security forces and local police in emerging countries (Catley et al. 2012). Opportunistic banditry has grown steadily and become a deeply debilitating threat to INGOs’ operations. OHS and security conditions are one of the causes of employee turnover in developing countries (De Cieri & Dowling 2006; Anheier & Themudo 2002). The Angola study by WHO emphasizes the importance of the perceived environmental challenges and it found that social unrest and conflict ranked high as a reason for staff turnover (Lehmann et al. 2008). A study conducted by Chimbari et al. (2008) in Zimbabwe found that expatriates leave the nonprofit sector because of political reasons, by far the most important push factor, followed by lack of facilities and despair about the future of the country.
2.3.1.3 Poor Living/Working Conditions

The third factor that influences HRM approaches for recruiting and retaining skilled workers among nonprofit organizations operating in non-Western settings, particularly conflict environments, is poor working conditions. Employees must have the important apparatuses to perform their obligations. This incorporates the best possible hardware, apparatus and computer innovation and additionally sufficient lighting, work space and ergonomically-rectify seating (Albrecht et al. 2009; Forastieri 1999). Poor working conditions because of physical components lead to low efficiency and general employment dissatisfaction (Songstad et al. 2011). The last mentioned, especially when left unaddressed, leaves workers feeling undervalued and they eventually clear out (Roome et al. 2014). In addition, difficulty and upsetting nature of the work, different parts of the occupation, for example, feeling undervalued, next to zero professional success potential, better open doors in another field, achievement of advanced education, and absence of managerial backing, might appear to be unappealing to numerous potential and current employees (Stilwell et al. 2004). Poor living conditions are also a major contributor to low staff turnover in nonprofit sectors, especially in war-torn societies (Tulloch et al. 2011). The need to improve living conditions is vital to boosting employee performance and retention. Nonprofit sectors with quality living and working conditions have large staff turnovers. Any organization looking to enhance staff welfare must cater for good housing and working conditions. The nonprofit sector is however faced with financial constrains at times and meeting the requirements for good living and working conditions poses a major challenge (Newbrander et al. 2011; Newbrander et al. 2011). Most HRM studies in the nonprofit setting list poor working conditions as push factors contributing to staff turnover, especially in less financially and politically stable countries (Songstad et al. 2011; Albrecht et al. 2009). Living and working conditions have been identified in the literature as being other determining factors in deciding whether to leave or stay in the nonprofit sector in developing countries (McCoy et al. 2008; McCourt & Awases 2007). Herzberg et al. (2011, p. 48) defined working conditions as “the conditions of work, the amount of work or the facilities available for doing the work. Since Herzberg developed this theory in 1959, there has been increasing awareness of work-related stress (Lin & Lam 2013; Ager et al. 2012) provoked by stressors such as high work load, requirement for working fast and meeting strict deadline (Songstad et al. 2011), conflicting demands and interruption (Armstrong et al. 2010). Problems and staff turnover are seen to arise when
exposure to such demands is chronic and elicits a strong enough pattern of response to strain the individual’s physical and mental resources (Ganster & Murphy 2000, p. 518).

Poor living and working conditions may affect the way in which organizations operate and the way they undertake their recruitment and retention approaches. For example, the South Africa study by WHO emphasizes the importance of the perceived external environment and it found that poor working conditions ranked high as reasons for leaving the country (Lehmann et al. 2008). For example, organizational workers, expatriates in particular, leave Zimbabwe because of poor working conditions, by far the most important external factor, followed by lack of facilities and despair about the future of the country (Chimbari et al. 2008). The external environment, which is the context in which the organization operates, has an effect on how workers are attracted and retained in modern organizations (Kiraka 2003, p. 35). Hughes and Rog (2008, p. 747) indicate that the work environment should enable workers to do their best. In fact, this should not only be less intimidating to the new hires, but conditions of work should be appealing (Dickmann et al. 2017; Smock 2009; Branham 2005; Brown & Yoshioka 2003). This is supported by Armstrong et al. (2010, p. 149) who argued that healthy, safe and conducive working conditions should be provided to workers. Deery (2008, p. 804) further recommended that organizations should provide adequate resources and better working conditions for their staff so that they can do their job properly. According to Deery (2008), organizations must ensure that working conditions are appealing, safe, healthy and well-equipped to attract and attract the right people to their workforces.

El-Jardali et al. (2007, p. 7) in their empirical study of HRM approaches for recruiting and retaining practices in Eastern Mediterranean region, particularly Jordan, identify the importance of working conditions in developing countries as a push or pull factor influencing skilled and experienced workers’ retention rates. Mokoka et al. (2011, p. 117) in his study of South African health sector found that skilled and qualified workers who left particularly the health sector to work in another sector cited difficult working conditions and heavy workload as their major concerns for leaving their organizations. However, according to Chimbari et al. (2008), there are no hard and fast standards in assessing whether working conditions are satisfactory, because the quality of being satisfactory is particular not only to the group of workers in one type of job, but also to the individuals for whom the assessment is being made. For conditions to be adjudged satisfactory, they should meet the subjective expectations of the individual workers (Mamman et al. 2012; Kamoche 2011; El-Jardali et al.
Evidence has been adduced in field studies linking better working conditions with improved staff retention for specific groups of workers, and poor working conditions with staff turnover (Tariah et al. 2011; Albrecht et al. 2009). What may be observed of the studies conducted in Jordan and other emerging countries is that so-called working conditions that influence the decision to leave or stay are varied, but the most apparent seems to be the presence or absence of institutional support. Among Jordanian workers, this is manifested through the lack of sufficient compensation. For both the skilled and the unskilled workers, there was a lack of professional support in terms of better job opportunities.

2.3.1.4 Short-Term Employment Conditions

The fourth factor that influences HRM approaches for recruiting and retaining skilled workers among nonprofit organizations operating in non-Western settings, particularly Sub-Saharan Africa, is short-term employment contracts. Short-term contracts are typical even for both conflict and non-conflict settings (Hilhorst & Schniemann 2002). In addition, full-time and open-ended contract personnel, has also been discussed for years in the HR literature (Belous 2010; Tekleab et al. 2005; Rousseau & Shperling 2003). The reliance on short-term contracts is related to the short-term funding cycles, however, the fact remains that nonprofit organizations like INGOs contracts are almost never long enough to accommodate language learning and work environment acquaintance even when aid workers aspires to do so (Loquercio et al. 2006). Short-term employment contract, as an impediment which affects employee recruitment and retention, can be categorized under broader term, ‘terms of contract’, ‘job insecurity’ or ‘end of contracts’ (Loquercio et al. 2006, p. 8). Among a range of classification available, short-term employment is commonly referred to as ‘contingent’ (Belous 2010), “irregular”, “non-standard”, or “untypical” employment (Bourhis & Wils 2001). Largely, the terms refer to those who are employed in jobs that do not fit the traditional description of a full-time, permanent job (Anderson & Walsh 1996). The practice of the short-term employment contract is generally understood to encompasses short-term employees recruited by short-term consultants or organizations which are external to the employer (Tekleab & Taylor 2005), or those hired directly by the nonprofit organizations to be short-term employees, contract employees, subcontractors, consultants, leased employees, part-time employees and self-employed (Belous 2010; Tekleab et al. 2005; Lee 2001).

As a distinct labor subset; however, “short-term employment” is commonly defined as a job where the individual does not have an explicit or implicit contract for long-term employment,
the short-term nature of the job being recognized by both parties (Bidwell 2013). The different descriptions and definitions of short-term employment contract, and the linked uncertainty, offers a change to research scholars in the field of employment and industrial relations as any educated guess of the size of the short-term workforce depends on the definitions that is used (Belous 2010). The practice of short-term employment resulted in job insecurity. Job insecurity is a term associated with negative outcomes such as decreases in organizational commitment, job satisfaction and trust in the organization, and an increase in the intention to quit the job (Ugboro 2003). Job insecurity is a major concern of professional employees in organizations today (Chiboia et al. 2010, p. 2106), and it occurs when staffs feel that their jobs are uncertain and will end soon (Ghazali et al. 2013, p. 96). As demonstrated by Green (2011) in his analysis of longitudinal and nationally representative data for Australia and New Zealand, the practice of short-term contract threatens the employees with loss of material, social, and psychological benefits related to employment. According to Dickmann et al. (2017) and Ashford (2008), a high level of job insecurity is expected to produce low employee’s performance due to staff not putting much effort into performing their duties. Loquercio (2006, p. 18), in his study of international NGOs in the Horn of Africa, suggested that thinking needs to go into the standard duration of employment contracts with staff because traditional resourcing practice, with many staff employed on short-term contracts has inhibited skills development, individual and organizational learning. Indeed, rapid staff turnover, especially among expatriates, and the widespread use of short-term resourcing is one of the main constraints on both HR staff capacity building programs and organizational learning and has ultimately negative influences on the quality of development programs (Muteswa & Ortlepp 2011; Richardson 2006; Lewis & Madon 2004).

The practice of short-term contracts, according to Jordan and Hartel (2002), is not only damaging in terms of staff retention, but also for learning. Indeed, it discourages people from investing in learning because job insecurity is forcing them to rather concentrate on finding the alternative job (Ghazali et al. 2013). Apparently, everyone needs time to learn how to do it job, and the time to perform it well. But when staff are moved on or rotated too quickly, the opportunity to do this disappears (Uzuegbunam 2013). Frequent changes or high rates of staff turnover also make it impossible to ensure systematic handovers between incoming and outgoing staffs, with resulting loss of knowledge and frustration on all side (Gold et al. 2013; Ugboro 2003). Ager (1999) argued that the duration of mission is limited by funding constraints, the necessity to include periods of rest and the fact that for INGOs aid workers,
staying away too long from their home environment would influence their decisions to stay. However, according to Chiboiwa et al. (2010), the duration of assignments should be raised to a standard minimum of twelve months, and more for key positions such as program and HR managers. This gives more flexibility to the organization and more benefits for staff. Donors are also requested to look into the problem and provide more predictable funding frameworks that would allow giving longer-term contracts (Ager 1999). Asiedu-Appiah et al. (2013) argued that to prevent job insecurity among employees, the organization can promote the employee’s well-being at work. Besides that, Green (2011) and Rousseau and Shperling (2003) also suggested that it is important for the organization to find alternatives to cope with the insecurity with the least number of disadvantages possible. Cullinane and Dundon (2006) recommended providing as much job growth as possible. According to these authors, employees who are made to feel that their jobs are precarious may put a great deal of effort into impress, but they are also likely to be looking out for more secure employment at the same time. In this sense, letting employees know from the beginning that they can grow in an organization is an encouragement to stay (Jordan & Hartel 2002; Shaw et al. 2001).

2.3.1.5 Tensions between Local Workers and Expatriates
The fifth factor that influences HRM approaches for recruiting and retaining skilled workers among nonprofit organizations operating in non-Western settings, particularly Sub-Saharan Africa, is tensions between local workers and expatriate managers, also known as international staff. Expatriates are defined as nationals of the country in which the organization has its roots, employed by the organization to work abroad (Mukasa 1999, p. 28). The word comes from the Latin ex (out of) and patria (country, motherland). In business, the term expatriate is often used for professionals sent abroad by their companies, as opposed to locally hired staff (Eriksson et al. 2009). It is also defined as a practice of sending home country managers to other country locations (Syed et al. 2014, p. 213). These definitions are problematic especially in the context of INGDOs and other nonprofit organizations that have operations in a number of countries. The choice of expatriates and localization is an important consideration for nonprofit organizations today (Beamish & Inkpen 2010). An organization that fails to utilize all human resources they have, including local staff, may fall short in competing with other organizations (Chew 2004). Local staff in several countries are now more than ever equipped with the characteristics of transformational leaders and organizations should take advantage of them (Carr et al. 2010; Toh & DeNisi 2005).
In their study of determinants of success of expatriate managers in the UK and Spain, particularly on transferers of knowledge, Bonache and Zárraga-Oberty (2008) opined that, in addition to the specific characteristics of the human-related factors, organization using expatriates, local staff may perceive that senior positions in the organization are filled by expatriates and that local workers’ career progression is threatened by expatriates. In the opinion of Syed et al. (2014), the perception that expatriates may build for local workers may result in lower search for other jobs. While there is some evidence of attention towards equal opportunities and equal representation in organizations (Bonache & Zárraga-Oberty 2008), the usual trend is to comply with minimal legal requirements. Any mistrust of the management by host-country nationals may result in lower productivity and may initiate high staff turnover and absenteeism within the group. This may in turn negatively affect the organization’s performance and produce a hostile environment for expatriates (Toh & DeNisi 2005). Research into the tension between expatriates and local workers produced a number of common problems and dilemmas that organizations experienced (Mukasa 1999). One of the most mentioned problem was that of the decision-making processes (Billis & MacKeith 2003; Brown 2002). Tensions often occurred between local staff and senior managers because of the staff expectations that they would want to be equal partners in the decision-making process (Mukasa 1999). Another common challenge was to do with the governance of the organizations and the relations between headquarters and field offices (Suzuki 2008). These stemmed largely from the headquarters’ inability or unwillingness to carry out their responsibilities of governing the organizations (Harris 2010). Headquarters often lacked the time or the local culture, language or the expertise to be able to carry out these responsibilities effectively (Harris 2003). As a result, senior staff were often left to make policy decisions with little or no support from the headquarters (Suzuki 2008).

Stark Biddle (2004, p. 110), in his study of INGDOs in Sub-Saharan Africa, found that expatriates managers often lacked management skills, having come from the developed world. Edwards and Hulme (2005), in their comparative analysis of a number of Save the Children’s local partners in Southern Africa, concluded that those organizations who used ‘expatriates’ to run programs were on the whole less successful than those who used local staff. Local staff, they concluded were better at making linkages with grass-roots beneficiaries and the organizations experienced fewer division and mistrust between ‘local workers’ and ‘expatriates’. Aside from the cost argument, there is what Dichter (2009) terms the ‘moral’ argument. This argument asserts that country nationals are the best to run
country programs and that it is the best way to ensure long-term effectiveness and sustainable development. In addition, some are concerned that the use of expatriates takes away much needed work from qualified local workers, thus weakening rather than building or strengthening local capacities (Seibel 2001). In cases where organizations were supposed to be transferring skills, expatriates rarely worked on a management basis which meant in practice, they retain overall control, rarely devolving decisions-making powers to local workers. Also, anxious to create a good impression at home in the short-time they had abroad, expatriates worked on short-term projects which were not sustainable once they left (Mukasa 1999).

The reviewed literature highlighted a number of other concerns related to the use of expatriates. Among these was the concern that the use of expatriates was usually donor driven. Donors were usually more willing to finance projects that are headed by expatriates (Dichter 2009; Fowler 2003). This often meant that projects were initiated to suit donor requirements rather than to reflect the local needs and aspirations (Mukasa 1999).

Fowler (2003, p. 86) divides the reasons for using expatriates into justifiable and unjustifiable categories. Among the justifiable reasons are when skills are not available locally. Dichter (2009) argues that while it may have been the case that local skills were not available a few years ago, it is no longer a reasonable argument to make. Rather, it is a weakness on the part of the organizations recruitment processes that fails to identify local skills. According to Fowler (2007), the second justifiable reason is the case in which there is a need to build the confidence of the donor in the short-term. To this list, Fowler adds cases in which there is a need for mutual learning and the breakdown of stereotypes. Other justifiable reasons are when comparative experience is needed and expatriate managers can reduce learning time and finally when there is ‘recognized’, valid need for the challenging inputs that expatriates can bring (Fowler 2003, p. 86). Dichter (2009) also make the similar argument that at the formation stage of a project, it is useful to have someone who really knows the organization well and that expatriates fill this requirement. Fowler (2013) also identified a number of unjustifiable reasons for the utilization of expatriates. These reason while being problematic, were nevertheless common in the decision to use expatriates. Among them were, that expatriates act as impartial gatekeepers for resources, meaning that they are independent from the ‘corrupting’ influences that local staff are. Expatriates are also seen to be better able to ensure that organizational concerns are met, cross country consistency with organizational goals and the promotion of the organization’s national identity, which acts as a donor motive (Carr et al. 2010; Fowler 2003; Mukasa 1999). Dichter (2009) also maintains that there is
common reason but unspoken in regard to the use of expatriates in developing countries. This is to do with the prestige attached to having an expatriate working in the host country. The author illustrates with examples in third world countries, particularly Sub-Saharan Africa, where government officials often rejected local staff in favor of expatriates.

A noteworthy study of local workers’ views on expatriates was presented by Hailey (2012) which highlighted the position of local workers toward expatriates. The author studied the perspectives of Singaporean managers on their expatriates colleagues from different angles. The author looked at four areas of the Singaporean employees’ views, for example, the perceptions on expatriates pay and appraisal, perception on the adjustment of expatriates, perception on the different management styles employed and the reasons for the use of expatriates. The study suggests that expatriates are looked at as if they are outsiders who have low commitment and inadequate interpersonal skills. Expatriates are perceived to take decisions that benefit them and not the organization, since the career span in the subsidiary is usually too short (Vance & Ensher 2002; Li & Kleiner 2001). Those perceptions were inextricably linked to the privileges, especially the appraisal programs enjoyed by expatriates over locals. The most worrying finding in this study was the frustration of the young Singaporean generation of managers who were discouraged by the continued usage of expatriates; thus resulted in poor performance and higher employee turnover in those studies organizations (Hailey 2012). Other research scholars in this field have also highlighted the issue of discontent among local workers and resentment toward expatriates because often inexperienced expatriates are ostensibly treated as superior relative to the locals in terms of their compensation, benefits and career development opportunities (Li & Kleiner 2001). This is especially true when expatriates do not have a clear advantage over the locals in terms of work experiences, academic qualifications or expertise (Hailey 2012). Locals may feel that they are treated like second-class citizens; they may also perceive expatriates as being sent to be ‘watch dogs’ for headquarters instead of valued-added resources (Toh & DeNisi 2005; Vance & Ensher 2002; Mukasa 1999). Contrary to the fact that organizations often underutilized local human resources, there is also some evidence that locals can offer more control to organizations than expatriates can (Li & Kleiner 2001). This is particularly true in situations where cultural asymmetries between the headquarters and the host country are high and the operating environment is risky (Volkmar 2003; Vance & Ensher 2002).
Vance and Ensher (2002)’s multi-country study of local workers in nonprofit organizations highlights the important contributions that can be made by host-country national in achieving success in expatriate-managed operations. Furthermore, if the environment that the organization enters is one where its existing personnel have little relevant knowledge or expertise to effectively run the local branch, local human capital would be especially useful because the local managers speak the local language and also understand the country’s culture and political system better than most expatriates sent to perform the job (Toh & DeNisi 2005; Wong & Law 1999). Local workers are thus often better equipped than expatriates to penetrate deep into the target community (Suzuki 2008). Nonprofit organizations researchers have long contended that human capital is a critical capability that is used for value creation in most organizations and MNCs (Davis et al. 2015; Pfeffer 2002). Human capital theory is predicated on the fact that employees possess skills, expertise, and knowledge that can be used to create economic value for the organizations operating in both stable and unstable societies (Cooke et al. 2015). An organization’s human capital base can be expressed in terms of the stock of knowledge, skills and experiences (especially, the level of education and training) embodied in its employees (Becker & Huselid 2006). It can also be expressed through the flow of knowledge, skills and experiences that are acquired when organizations implement HRM strategies (Delaney & Huselid 2006). Organizations therefore build their human capital base by designing programs to attract and retain talented and high-skilled employees who would enable them to fulfill their strategic needs. For instance, Pfeffer (2002) has argued that organizations who want to be successful in the present global business environment must make the appropriate human resource investments to acquire and develop employees who possess higher quality skills and capabilities than their rivals. Furthermore, organizations invest in human capital building activities that allow them to increase productivity and future returns (Horwitz 2015; Horwitz et al. 2009; Sun et al. 2007; Kamoche et al. 2004). The human capital of an organization is therefore the knowledge, skills and expertise embodied in its employees that can be used to produce services of superior value to stakeholders, and thus improve the overall performance of the organization (Okpara 2016; Theriou & Chatzoglou 2014; Dieleman et al. 2009; Luna-Arocas & Camps 2007).

While not too recent, this seminal study was conducted in Uganda concerning the case of international NGOs as employers. Mukasa (1999) sought to determine whether or not expatriate staffs were necessary in international development NGOs. It cited six key issues pertaining to the employment conditions at the international NGO. They include: the frequent
changes of expatriate staff; the tendency for local staff knowledge to be undervalued; the emergence of structural barriers in staff relationships; cultural sensitivity and awareness; contradictions and lack of clarity in overall staffing policy; and tensions around differences in lifestyle and living standards. The interest placed on the working conditions expatriate staff members are exposed to is relevant; local staffers do not have many of the problems the expats endure because they are acclimatized to the political, cultural and social environment of their own country. Expatriate staff members, however, occupy the key senior positions in field offices of INGDOs, principally due to accountability to their donors as to how the organization had been managed. One issue that persists among INGDOs that was found in the Ugandan study is the relationship between the two types of staff they employ – i.e., the paid and unpaid staff, or volunteers. NGOs normally attract people with a high commitment to the principles and aims of the organization. Likewise, these people have high expectations concerning their involvement in decision-making; most of the academic literature which discusses these topics does not, however, make the distinction between paid and unpaid staff. Mukasa (1999) notes, however, that volunteers are more averse towards accepting higher positions in the organization or being designated as the decision-maker. One reason is because they shun the additional responsibilities higher positions would entail; they perceive their volunteer work in the nature of something they merely did during their spare time, and saw no further commitment beyond that. In fact, when asked the purpose for which they joined the organization, the unpaid volunteers usually cited personal reasons such as gaining relevant work experience, rather than a more altruistic motivation (Mukasa 1999).

2.3.1.6 Cultural Factors
Another factor that may affect nonprofit organizations HRM; thus staff turnover, is organization culture and national culture (Hofstede & McCrae 2004). As much as the workplace conditions provide the environment for workers’ physical well-being, the organization culture and structure provide the environment for the employees’ social well-being. It has been argued that nonprofit organizations have an organization culture that is distinctive to other organizations (Alatrista & Arrowsmith 2004; Linderberg 2001; DiMaggio & Anheier 1990). Cunningham (2011) describes nonprofit organizations culture as a culture that emphasizes value commitments and participatory-democratic decision-making. National culture, on the other hand, affects HMR approaches related to staff retention and the way organizations are organized and managed (Nyambegera 2002), influences strategic decisions and leadership styles of HR managers (Budhwar & Sparrow 2002), as well as HRM
approaches such as performance feedback (Tiwari & Saxena 2012). National culture can be defined as a set of shared values, assumptions and beliefs that are learnt through membership in a group, and that influence the attitudes and behaviors of group members (Kane & Palmer 1995). In cultures with high power distance, loyalty and obedience to those in higher authority is required, and, in fact, is the norm. In this case, management usually makes use of performance feedback based on the behavioral criteria rather than results criteria.

Additionally, drawing upon the Hofstede typology, it is not difficult to see how a nation’s culture might impact on HRM practices related to employee retention and performance. For example, the US scores 40 on power distance, which means moderate acceptance of status and hierarchy differences, while India score 77 when measured against the world average of 66.5 (Hofstede & McCrae 2004). This suggests that individual are more likely to accept without argument upward supervisor feedback in India than in the United States. As such a nonprofit organization or MNC operating in both nations will have to adapt appropriate management practices and feedback mechanisms, as employees for example are less likely to be willing to receive downward feedback in India (Paul & Anantharaman 2004). Similarly, in countries known for collectivist values like Sub-Saharan Africa, people prefer group-based, rather than individual-based training (Abugre 2016; Kiggundu 2016), and according to Beugré and Offodile (2001) people may respond to group-based, rather than individual-focused performance feedback. In a jurisdiction where cultural and institutional framework of the host country may be considered supportive, nonprofit organizations such as INGOs might gain benefits such as increased motivation and commitment to stay longer from employees. Supporting this assertion is McPeak (2001) who suggested that the culture of nonprofit organizations, especially INGOs, is a culture which encourages the development of people management strategies, practices and policies, which are philosophically aligned with a value-based culture. This is similar to the concept of ‘soft’ HRM as defined by Alfes et al. (2013) and Truss (2009) as the ‘developmental humanism model’ which focuses on proactive and committed staffs that collaborate in processes for both greater human development and better organizational performance. This implies that ‘soft’ HRM would be a fit for nonprofit organizations (Cooke et al. 2015; Horwitz et al. 2009; Muuka & Mwenda 2004). This also suggests that the more nonprofit organizations culture emphasizes value commitments and participatory-democratic decision-making, the more likely they will emphasize ‘soft’ HRM approaches, thus effective staff recruitment and retention (Goffee & Jones 2013).
The impact of cultural factors on HRM is not only relevant in the case of nonprofit organizations, especially INGOs, in the recruitment and selection of employees for international assignments, but also in the more common case of employees in domestic corporations with elements of diverse cultural backgrounds. For instance, this may include local corporations affiliated with foreign companies, the corporate culture of which diffuses into their international operations (Davis et al. 2015; Caligiuri 2014; Chawla & Ratna 2012). Also, it may include situations where the foreign corporation is transitioning to a more diverse corporate climate in conformity with a wider culturally diverse demographic (Martins & Coetzee 2007; Chew & Sharma 2005). Kaplan and Maertz (2011) undertook a deeper inquiry into the complex relationship between diversity climate and staff retention in Western settings, particularly the United States. Relevant factors considered in the study to be affecting HRM include calculative forces of attachment, supervisor effectiveness, turnover intention, and the level of pay satisfaction, as explanatory factors in the relationship between diversity climate and employee retention. The sample was a nationally representative sample drawn from multiple nonprofit organizations, for which reason the findings were deemed to be robust and generalizable to date. Among salient findings were that (1) all employees can benefit from positive diversity climates, regardless of gender or race; (2) perceived support for organizational diversity can be related to increased employee retention; and (3) the link between the perception of an organization’s diversity climate and employee retention depend upon the degree to which perceptions of tangible benefits are attributed to the diversity climate. The foregoing studies sought to establish impacts on HRM approaches for recruiting and retaining employees by cultural factors relating to special situations such as expatriate work assignments and the diversity climate. However, there are also studies that relate to the general work environment where no special situations exist, and that cultural factors inevitably and unavoidably shape the motivational factors that influence employee retention. Aladwan and Fish (2013) conducted such a study in the case of frontline employees, that is, employees who work in conflict settings such as aid workers, and in that aspect is similar to the White et al. (2011) study which dealt with multinational corporations expatriate managers in post-conflict settings. The findings arrived and suggested the establishment of a three-factor solution model in determining employees’ intention to separate from the organization. The three factors are classified into work opportunities, personal needs, and personal responsibilities, and the nature and definition of the contents of these factors depend upon the cultural setting and contexts. The study suggests that a Western cultural setting significantly differs from the non-Western cultural setting, among other distinctions.
2.4 HRM IN NON-WESTERN SETTINGS, AFRICA IN PARTICULAR

Human resource management policies and practices are carried out within an economic, social, political and legal environment. Therefore, there is a need for considerable historical and cultural insight into local conditions to understand the processes, philosophies and problems of national models of HRM (Hofstede & McCrae 2004). Africa is the second-largest and second most populous continent on earth with an estimated population of 1.2 billion people. The Africa’s population and human resource base make it one of the most attractive continents for international NGOs and MNCs in the world (Ellis et al. 2015; Caligiuri 2014). As INGOs and MNCs increase their presence in Africa, they will need to build capabilities and utilize local competencies (Horwitz 2015; Kamoche et al. 2004; Jackson 2002). The knowledge of HRM, and more importantly, knowledge of the factors that impact on HRM in Africa will become increasingly critical to the way organizations operate in Africa and ultimately their success (Horwitz et al. 2009; Harvey 2002). Hence, the successfulness of organizations operating in Africa cannot be separated from local values, customs, and the overall external cultural environment (Jackson 2015; Kamoche et al. 2015).

Although an extensive literature has emerged in the field of international and comparative management on the diffusion of HRM practices (Kamoche & Harvey 2006; Jackson & Schuler 2005), several authors have pointed out that as academic scholars continue to focus mainly on the industrialized nations of the “West” and the emerging economies of the “East”, empirical evidence based on African countries is limited (Mamman et al. 2012; Horwitz et al. 2004; Muuka et al. 2004). On a positive note, there has been a significant growth in the breadth of coverage of the literature on HRM in Africa in the last 20 years (Newenham-Kahindi et al. 2015; Horwitz 2015; Jackson et al. 2015; Debrah & Budhwar 2013; Kamoche et al. 2012; Mamman et al. 2012; Newenham-Kahindi et al. 2012; Kamoche & Newenham-Kahindi 2012; Dibben et al. 2011; Newenham-Kahindi 2011; Kuada 2010; Amaeshi et al. 2008; Kamoche et al. 2004). Much of the literature on HRM in Sub-Saharan Africa has been influenced by cultural accounts (Birt et al. 2004; Jackson 2002; Edoho 2001). This is coupled with a long history of dominance of bureaucratic public enterprises and strong political influence (Budhwar & Debrah 2004; Kamoche et al. 2004). Cultural accounts, according to Hofstede and McCrae (2004), view variations as in line with distinct cultural communities that are shared across clusters of nations within specific regions, which may be defined against a general standard. Culture is seen as a given: countries may develop their social
capital, but it is not possible to depart from established ways of doing things (Kamoche et al. 2012; Kamoche & Harvey 2006; Chew & Sharma 2005; Lau & Ngo 2004). Martins and Coetzee (2007) argue that in dealing with HRM issues, the impact of cultural variations on beliefs about participation and control need to be taken into account. This suggests that it would be inappropriate to simply impose Western models on non-Western contexts.

Studies on HRM in Sub-Saharan Africa have focused largely on the communitarian dimensions in African culture, the challenges this poses for organizations and the extent to which this may be harnessed to promote optimal HRM, and wider organizational outcomes (Mamman et al. 2012; Nyambegera 2002; Nyambegera et al. 2000). Gebregiorgis (2006, p. 279) argues that a systematic and human orientation, and a tendency to view practice in relation to an ideal, are culturally embedded values shared by many African managers. This would suggest the need to develop a broader HRM management philosophy based on African values. However, today the focus is more on the identification of factors contributing to ‘skills drain’ and the creating of an enabling environment for INGOs and MNCs, which are emerging with some kind of a mixed management and administrative culture (Itika 2011; Kamoche 2011; Kuada 2010, 2006; Muuka et al. 2004). More than half of the world’s conflicts have taken place and continue to take place in Sub-Saharan Africa. In 1990s, one out of every three countries on the African continent was involved in a conflict of some kind. Today, there are more refugees in Africa than anywhere in the world (Cohen & Deng 1998). This lack of peace and stability and cultural differences has aggravated the problem of the staff turnover among the expatriate managers (Tessema & Ng'oma 2009). The post-world war II political history of many African countries is marked by conflict and frequent military coups. This is particularly true of the newly independent nations. In Sub-Saharan Africa, forty-three countries got their independence between 1956 and 1983, with South Sudan as the last one in 2011. However, most of them experienced political turmoil of some kind, during the same period. Instability is typical of authoritarian rule and many African countries lack democratic responsibility and pressure (Tessema & Ng'oma 2009; Tessema & Soeters 2006). Sub-Saharan African countries in general are characterized by low predictability of events, volatile and unstable political environments and corrupt legal practices (Somasundaram et al. 2007; Gebregiorgis 2006; Leonard & Grobler 2006). In the conflict and culturally different settings like Sub-Saharan Africa, nonprofit organizations like INGOs and profit-driven companies like MNCs may even find recruiting and retaining people challenging than in non-
The work environment in Sub-Saharan Africa is often challenging and in many cases poses a threat to personal safety (Kamoche et al. 2012; Jackson 2004; Horwitz et al. 2002). HR retention policies and practices in Sub-Saharan Africa may need to deal with the consequences of human and capital flight, death of employees, lack of senior management, poor productivity, inconsistent or poor availability of some categories of workers, for example, expatriates (Malunga 2009; Debebe 2007; Ehrenreich & Elliott 2004). In some African countries, for example, Sudan’s Darfur region, Mozambique and Congo, expatriate managers themselves have become targets of armed conflict (Namakula & Witter 2014; Kwaja 2010; Kagunyi 2009). In the armed conflict, difficulties can emerge in recruitment and people’s willingness to work in some locations or professions (Dockel & Coetzee 2006; Birt & Winternitz 2004; Stilwell et al. 2003). Donors, especially in the case of INGOs, also recognize this problem and lower the standards of expatriates recruited (Okpara 2016; Loquercio et al. 2006). This therefore puts nonprofit organizations under pressure to recruit personnel rapidly, make compromise and lower their selection criteria. All these have impacts on HRM approaches in Sub-Saharan Africa. Armed conflict and difficulty of the operating context also create shrinkage of financial resources among nonprofit organizations operating in Sub-Saharan Africa as resources are redirected towards security and logistics concerns, while a dependence on external sources of funding increases (Ehrenreich & Elliott 2004). In the West, employee retention is usually contingent on effective HRM approaches being in place in the nonprofit sector to ensure adequate levels of compensation, work-life-balance, equipment and tools, and good managerial structures (Cooke et al. 2015; Della Torre et al. 2014). However, in conflict and culturally different context, Sub-Saharan Africa in particular, some or all of these HRM approaches are limited (Kuada 2006; Shuey et al. 2003). The conditions required to ensure an adequate level of employee recruitment and retention are often lacking in Sub-Saharan Africa and staff turnover and poor performance commonly exist (Devkota & Teijlingen 2010; Newbrander et al. 2007). An important reason for this is that human resource systems are likely to have broken down and the basis on which HRM work is redundant (Newenham-Kahindi 2011; Muuka et al. 2004, Mamman et al. 1996). However, other traditional HRM practices such as job descriptions and traditional performance measures may become irrelevant in dangerous and culturally different context like Sub-Saharan Africa (Tulloch et al. 2011; Dieleman et al. 2009). Organizations operating in Sub-
Saharan Africa may influence employee recruitment and retention by drafting new job descriptions to reflect immediate needs, ensuring health and safety and providing pre-deployment training, but if these are not coordinated properly, these HRM policies and practices may be difficult to be realized (Chiboiwa et al. 2011; Barnett & Weiss 2008).

Employee motivation is also an important component of effective HRM in nonprofit organizations in the West. However, conflict and culturally different environments like Africa are likely to undermine the professional conscience and ‘intrinsic’ influence of nonprofit organizations to perform well (Mathauer & Imhoff 2006). Poor motivation influences staff productivity and HRM practices in all settings. In some settings, HR managers influence staff recruitment and retention through performance-based pay initiatives, including in post-conflict settings such as Rwanda, Eritrea, and Sierra Leone (Horwitz 2015; Humayoun 2011; Ghebregiorgis & Karsten 2007). Nonprofit organizations such as humanitarian and development INGOs are however dependent on having appropriate and effective HRM in place to influence the decisions of employees in politically uncertainty environments to remain longer. This was observed in East Timor where despite difficulty of the operating environment, local employees and expatriate managers were reportedly influenced not only by the concept of ‘volunteerism’, but effective HRM approaches such as rewards and benefits employed by their organizations to retain them in such a context (Martins et al. 2006). However, in conflict and culturally different settings, for example, Sub-Saharan Africa, recruiting and retaining professional staff remains a challenge. In Sub-Saharan Africa, it is possible to identify several impacting factors, each posing significant constraints for HRM practices. The work environment in which people live and work in Sub-Saharan Africa is context-sensitive. Several years of civil war and decades of political, social and economic instability contributed to high staff turnover and failures of HRM practices for organizations operating there (Hilhorst & Schmiemann 2002). Indeed, one of the most discouraging results of the conflict and cultural differences can be found in the continent’s extreme poor living and working conditions, extreme insecurity exacerbated by the presence of armed oppositions groups in some regions, and not being familiar with the local culture and language (Ehrenreich & Elliott 2004). Cross-cultural issues are among the most central and most persistent factors that influence HRM activities in Africa (Horwitz 2015; Kamoche et al. 2015; Eriksson et al. 2009; Horwitz et al. 2009; Amaeshi et al. 2008; Okumu 2003). Operating internationally, organizations, INGOs and MNCs in particular, usually face a lot
of cross-cultural challenges such as understanding differences in communication patterns and styles, values, principles, and different paths of decision-making (Nyambegera et al. 2000).

National culture and traditions may affect HR retention strategies in terms of transferring related national characteristics to the organizational life (Anakwe 2002). Behavioral types or attitudes of top managers and HR managers are under the influence of local culture therefore it has direct or indirect impacts on human resources and retention approaches (Jackson 2004). Socio-cultural factors also affect HR retention approaches by changing ways of response of HR managers for local sensitivities. Cultural values should be taken into consideration by organizations so that, not to confront public reaction for their actions (Nyambegera 2002). Conflict and culturally different settings HR retention approaches may need to deal with the consequence of professional workers turnover, death of aid workers, and a lack of senior management, poor productivity, and poor availability of some categories of professional groups, for example, expatriates (Fee et al. 2016; Vasquez 2014). Nonprofit organizations operating in Western countries are often dependent on having appropriate and effective HRM practices in place which are to influence the decisions of employees to remain (Shaw et al. 2009; Paul 2004), but often ineffective in conflict and culturally different settings like Sub-Saharan Africa (Sydhagen & Cunningham 2007; Beugré & Offodile 2001; Edoho 2001).

One of the other challenges in people management in Sub-Saharan Africa, and which contributes to staff turnover among nonprofit organizations operating in the continent, is the importation of Western-based management theories into Africa by organizations rooted in the West and by individuals trained in the West, without due care and sensitivity to operating context (Kiggundu 2016; Cooke et al. 2015; Horwitz et al. 2009). There exist major differences between HRM functions in Western settings and HRM functions in organizations operating in Sub-Saharan Africa. Many nonprofit organizations and MNCs operating in these African regions are foreign based, meaning that they are headquartered in Europe, Australia and the United States. There exist significant differences in the level of expertise between Africa and the rest of the world, partly because the number of the educated members of the society is not as large as compared to the West. Many nonprofit organizations and MNCs are therefore forced to import resources, including human resources into these African regions. Once they get deployed into these Sub-Saharan African regions, they additionally import their managerial practices that are totally different to what is practiced in these areas (Law & Kamoche 2016; Kamoche & Newenham-Kahindi 2012; Dibben et al. 2011; Azolukwam &
Perkins 2009). One of the most prevalent challenges between Western resource imports and locals is the existence of cross-cultural differences. The management styles practiced in the West is significantly different from the management styles practiced in Sub-Saharan Africa (Mamman et al. 2015; Mamman et al. 2012; Newenham-Kahindi 2011; Dibben et al. 2011; Kuada 2006; Ghebregiorgis & Karsten 2006; Fink et al. 2005; Muuka et al. 2004; Edoho 2001). What is considered a norm in the West may not necessarily be understood in equal terms in Africa. Lack of observing certain norms in these environments may influence employees to seek employment in areas where there is no cross-cultural conflict back home.

The development and evolution of people management practices in Africa has been genuinely influenced and impeded by colonialism (Horwitz et al. 2015; Jackson 2004; Nyambegera et al. 2000). The colonial organizations presented Western management hypotheses and practices, considered as the drivers and the panacea for the African socio-politico-monetary improvement. Western scholarship and, writings degraded and censured the bewildering management ability and practices of early African human advancements, as evidenced, for instance, in the working of the colossal Egyptian pyramids (Webster & Wood 2005). These outside management frameworks for the most part neglected to accomplish the normal objectives as they disapproved African social inactivity and social milieu (Kalua 2014). The research contended for the advancement of indigenous African management logic, which will be established in the African society, esteem framework, and convictions, to give the viable path to the productive and viable running of organizations in Africa, with its worldwide intensity. The *Ubuntu* management framework and the “new administration procedures”, which insists on humanness, communalism, and African patriotism, give the veritable beginning stage to the improvement of indigenous African management philosophy (Muchiri 2011; Fink et al. 2005; Mangaliso 2001; Mbigi 1994). Insightful conceptualization from Europe and the U.S. concerning people management and administration in Africa have had a tendency to belittle its improvement, making a paired administration frameworks of “created” Western administration speculations and ideas and “immature” African management thoughts (Nyambegera et al. 2016; Law & Kamoche 2016; Debrah & Budhwar 2013; Horwitz et al. 2009; Kuada 2006). Western management and administration writing stridently stresses this dichotomy, with unabated importation of Western administration hypotheses and practices to Africa at the disservice of creating indigenous African management hypotheses (Newenham-Kahindi & Kamoche 2016; Jackson & Haines 2007; Ghebregiorgis 2006).
While exploring factors influencing HRM activities related to recruitment and retention of qualified employees in Northern Africa, in particular the Arab Republic of Tunisia, Yahiaoui and Zoubir (2006) analyze political and cultural differences and their influences on people management strategies in Sub-Saharan Africa. Their study considers various cultural, political, and economic factors that have shaped the practice of HRM over the past decades, and how these HRM approaches have struggled to gain acceptance in the African business environment. Thus, while substantial progress has been made in education, employee selection, and training, there still remain concerns about managerial competence, especially among HR managers in Sub-Saharan Africa. Their finding reports that this is a matter of concern as the subsequent leadership styles result in high absenteeism and high staff turnover.

Onyango (2014), Nyanjom (2013), Kamoche et al. (2004) and Nyambegera et al. (2000), in their Kenyan-based studies examining the people management challenges in Sub-Saharan Africa, argued that after independence from British in 1960s, many African countries started off on a promising note and were seen as engine of growth for developing countries. Unfortunately, these dreams were hampered by unstable political regimes, corruption, economic mismanagement and violence. As in studies of HR recruitment and retention studies conducted in Botswana (Bernard 2012; Mabanga 2004) and South Africa (Davis et al. 2015; Browning 2006; Grobler & Warnich 2006; Horwitz et al. 2004), people management strategies in Sub-Saharan Africa are also under threat from HIV/AIDS and a serious case of brain drain. With the installation of a new democratic government in early years, there is hope now that some of these problems may be resolved, with the ultimate goal of improving the recruitment and retention of talented staff in both public and private sectors.

Studies conducted in Ethiopia and Eritrea by Tessema and Ng’oma (2009) and Mekonnen and Mamman (2004) note that, against the backdrop of marked political instability, Sub-Saharan Africa lagged behind in the education, training, and development of effective skill retention strategies. Crucially, HR retention approaches such as education and training seem to be at odds with the needs of the economy. This problem has further been exacerbated by a brain drain and political uncertainty as skilled workers in Sub-Saharan Africa pursue a better quality of life abroad. In conclusion, the authors recommend the introduction of modern HRM while recognizing the limitations imposed by factors like government interference, nepotism, and various cultural factors. Muuka and Mwenda (2004), in their study of recruitment and retention practices in Zambia, traced the HRM landscape with a review of past approaches, present realities, and what they see as future HR retention challenges in
Zambia and the Sub-Saharan Africa as a whole. In their finding, they consider the impact of issues like privatization and high unemployment on employee management approaches, as well as HRM challenges that have continent-wide implications, such as the HIV/AIDS crisis. Croucher and Rizov (2014) and McCourt and Ramgutty-Wong (2003), in their studies of recruitment and retention practices in the island nation of Mauritius, analyzed how factors like adaptability in international trade, long-term strategic thinking, a commitment to training and professional development, have combined to influenced HR retention policies and practices in Sub-Saharan Africa, thus, staff turnover. In their findings, they concluded that the pressures of globalization are now forcing African managers to rethink their strategies for developing sound people management approaches and cultivating a high quality and competent workforce against a backdrop of entrenched nepotism.

Mpabanga (2004), in her study of HR recruitment and retention approaches in Botswana, detailed how, over a three-decade, the African continent rose from one of the poorest places to one of the fastest growing economies in the world. To her, this macro-economic advances have not, however, been matched by effective strategies in the retention of skill, both in the public and private sectors. This is now a major challenge for many African countries, including how to grapple with problems like high staff turnover. Budhwar and Debrah (2013), in their study of factors affecting HR retention strategies in Tanzania, examined how a history of socialism meant to ensure self-reliance and equitable distribution of income ultimately ground the economy to a halt, subsequently necessitating unprecedented reforms. A series of reforms have brought some measure of economic recovery and the country is now embarking on efforts to bring about an improvement in the creating and utilization of skill attraction and retention strategies, particularly in the public and private sectors. Based on their finding, the challenge to skill retention in Sub-Saharan Africa is to ensure that the private sector follows suit and that the reforms do not alienate those they are supposed to benefit, the skilled employees. Horwitz et al. (2004), while highlighting the need to address the discriminatory legacy of apartheid and adversarial relationships in South Africa, argued that HRM approaches related to people recruitment and retention should be formulated at both the national and organizational levels. To these authors, legislative requirements to enhance racial and gender diversity also require systemic change in recruitment and retention practices and transformation of organizational cultures in Africa. In conclusion, they evaluated the dual challenges of achieving both employment equity, necessary to redress past unfair discrimination, and achieving high performance, necessary for competitive advantage.
In Ivory Coast, a country which has enjoyed relative economic success and serves as an economic powerhouse for many African countries, Beugré and Offodile (2001) identified the influence of culture on staff recruitment and skill retention and propose how the introduction of new non-Western-based HR retention approaches and information technology might contribute to the better utilization of people management in Sub-Saharan Africa.

Arthur and Boyles’s (2007) study of skill retention challenges in West Africa, particularly Ghana, noted that many of the West Africa countries started off at independence on a very promising economic and political note but, in a familiar theme, were derailed through economic mismanagement and political instability. This context has subsequently had a significant impact on the generation of HR strategies and the use of appropriate recruitment and retention techniques. In conclusion of their finding, they proposed some approaches for addressing these weaknesses and helping organizations adopt more effective skill retention mechanisms. Aldamoe et al. (2013) take a look at skill retention strategies in Libya. In their study, they examine the origins and effects of the country’s revolutionary political ideology which combines socialism and Islam. In the earlier years, this ideology sought to combat bureaucratic inefficiency and political apathy, among other things, and to create a sense of participation in government and economic activity among the people. The authors analyze the various challenges contributing to staff turnover and achievements over the years in the retention of skilled and experienced employees and identify the need to address current shortages in skilled workers in Libya. Zareen and Razzaq (2013) and Snape and Redman (2010) conducted a study based on a scan of the current pool of literature in both developed and developing countries that analyze the impact of HRM approaches on employee retention and organizational performance. While employee psychological perception was identified as moderating factor, the findings indicated that a single HR retention plan cannot effectively attract and retain the different groups of employees within an organization, whether conflict or non-conflict setting. The psychic and attitudinal dispositions of the individual employees are considerations that significantly determine which skill retention plans will actually be effective or not. From the literature review conducted, the study proposed a four-factor retention plan (incorporating performance appraisals, employee participation, training and development, remuneration), designed in accordance with the target employees’ psychological perception, which could effectively influence employee retention, employee performance and organizational productivity (Zareen et al. 2013).
The study by Chawla and Ratna (2012) conducted a cursory survey among a random sampling of 107 executive level corporate and nonprofit employees in India, and arrived at a list of key HRM approaches that positively influenced employee retention. These include: (1) training; (2) consultation with employees to set targets for performance; (3) satisfaction with the level of compensation received; (4) rewards and recognition which are given for meritorious performance; (5) presence of conditions in the work environment that are conducive for work (e.g., friendly and motivating); (6) good match between demands of the job and the employee’s job capability (i.e., knowledge and qualification). The findings of the study are suggestive at best, due to lack of any inferential statistics to provide conclusive justification for them. However, they are useful as an enumeration of likely factors other studies may choose to explore with the use of more stringent methodologies. Aside from the search for factors that influence employee retention, academic studies have also sought models by which the link between HRM approaches and employee retention may be conceptualized. The study by Matzin et al. (2012) proposed the adoption of a motivational model for employee retention within the context of HRM in the Malaysian SME sector. The model is founded on the principle that workers will be motivated to function at a higher level of performance provided they are given the opportunity to engage in work they consider to be challenging and enjoyable, engaging them to meaningfully employ and expand their skills and abilities, and wherein they perceive intrinsic benefits (Appelbaum 2000). The model proposed by the Matzin et al. (2012) study identifies a number of factors it classifies into hygiene (extrinsic) and motivator (intrinsic) factors, and segregates these list into organizational strategic factors (i.e. achievement, recognition, and advancement, which are all motivators), organizational culture factors (i.e., the work itself and responsibility from motivators, and staffing, supervision, working conditions, interpersonal relations, and job security from hygiene factors), and finally benefit factors (salary, compensation and benefits, which are hygiene factors). These distinctions create taxonomy of drivers in the motivational model applied to employee retention (Matzin et al. 2012).

According to Maslow’s needs hierarchy (Rainlall 2004) human beings have five major categories of needs: Firstly, the physiological needs, e.g. oxygen, food and drinking water. The second thing is the need for safety. Third are the social needs for love and acceptance as belonging to a group. The fourth category has to do with esteem in the sense of having respect from others and of oneself, i.e. self-esteem. Finally, there is self-fulfillment which is the need to develop and apply one’s potential and skills (Rainlall 2004; Collins & Clark
These five needs are organized in a pyramid to reflect that there is a hierarchy among the needs: Once a lower need has been satisfied, the individual can start focusing on a higher need. Notably, the needs for self-fulfillment and esteem are rarely dominant of the individual are pre-occupied striving to fulfill the basic physiological, safety, and social needs (Rainlall 2004). The study conducted by Matzin et al. (2012) shows the motivational model for employee retention. The model is partially based on the Herzberg’s two-factor model, which identified the motivating factors and the hygiene factors. It will be recalled that hygiene factors affect dissatisfaction, such that the absence of hygiene factors causes dissatisfaction, and their presence eliminates dissatisfaction but does not necessarily motivate employee performance. On the other hand, the absence of motivator factors does not cause dissatisfaction, but their presence causes satisfaction, motivation and intention to stay (Hofmann 2006). Like many other theories of people management, several studies in Sub-Saharan Africa have been conducted using models developed from Herzberg’s two-factor theory to understand factors contributing to staff turnover and staff retention across the African continent. Ng’ethe et al. (2012), for example, used Herzberg theory to study HRM activities to achieve staff retention among institutions, particularly public universities that are operating in a highly competitive environment in Kenya. Ssesanga and Garrett (2005) used a model developed from Herzberg theory to establish HRM factors influencing retention of academic staff in Uganda. Mokoka et al. (2011) and Samuel and Chipunza (2009) also used the Herzberg theory to examine factors contributing to staff turnover and HRM strategies influencing staff retention in private and public organizations in Southern Africa. This theory therefore can guide a researcher in exploring factors contributing to staff turnover and HRM approaches for retaining skilled workers in a nonprofit setting in politically unstable environment. Herzberg argued that employees are influenced to stay by HRM practices rather than values that are external to the work (Rizwan et al. 2014). In other words, decision to remain is internally generated and is propelled by variables that are intrinsic to the work which Herzberg called “motivators”. These intrinsic variables include achievement, recognition, better rewards and benefits, responsibility, advancement, and career growth. On the other hand, certain factors cause dissatisfying experiences to employees; these factors largely results from non-job related variables (extrinsic). These variables were referred to by Herzberg et al. (2011) as “hygiene” factors which, although does not influence employees to stay; nevertheless, they must be present in the workplace to make employees happy. The dissatisfiers are organization policies, operating environment conditions, salary, co-workers relationships, and management and leadership styles (Rizwan et al. 2014).
Herzberg et al. (2011) argued further that, eliminating the causes of dissatisfaction (through hygiene factors) would not result in a state of satisfaction; instead, it would result in a neutral state. Motivation; thus intention to stay, would only occur as a result of the use of intrinsic factors (Matzin et al. 2012). Empirical studies (Rainlall 2004; Brown & Yoshioka 2003) have, however, revealed that extrinsic factors such as competitive salaries and benefits, training and development, satisfactory working environment, and job security were cited by employees as key factors that influenced their retention in the organizations. Considering the work situation of INGOs and MNCs workers in conflict settings in light of Herzberg’s assertions, it would appear that at each need, it could be characterized as creating either intention to stay or intention to leave, since both are complementary and distinct components. What this means is that it is not enough to recognize that nonprofit organizations, INGOs in particular, workers in conflict settings have unmet or met needs. Identifying which influence intention to stay and which needs create intention to leave is equally as important. Motivators deal with aspects of work itself (Matzin et al. 2012). Hygiene factors reflect the context in which the work itself is performed (Hur 2017; Abugre 2016; Ng’ethe et al. 2012). The work of nonprofit organizations staff, INGDOs in particular, as discussed in chapter 5, involves working in areas with tough working conditions and extreme insecurity.

2.5 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK
The extant literature review and the theoretical underpinnings presented in section 2.5 above provide necessary guidance in preparing a theoretical framework for this study. This study followed the theoretical framework of Matzin et al. (2012) and Merlot et al. (2006) as the foundation. The importance of developing a theoretical framework has been emphasized by Miles and Huberman (1994, p. 18) who stated that establishing a theoretical framework is significant because at the initial stage of the research, it helps to specify what will be studied. In addition, conceptual framework encourages the identification of factors which are relevant to the study, including relationships among them, and the nature of information to be collected (Akingbola 2013). On the basis of extant literature and other information obtained in the study, a conceptual framework has been developed for the study (figure 2.1). Drawing upon interpretivist approach, this research framework is used to understand retention in non-conflict settings, particularly the West. While analyzing why people leave or stay in a non-conflict setting, the conceptual framework proposes to utilize sensemaking theory to explain
how the environment is socially constructed and reconstructed as people define what will be considered information, collected and analyse their data, use it to make decisions, and act.

**Figure 2.1 Research Framework**

Most of the research done on employee retention has been conducted in non-conflict settings whereby organizational and societal environments have been taken for granted. This general framework follows two paths: first, the study of employee turnover, considering the stability of the context; second, the study of HRM approaches for retaining highly skilled labor, considering the stability and peacefulness of the context.

As shown in the framework above (figure 2.1) the foregoing factors contributing to employee turnover in stable societies are defined as follows:

Inadequate compensation refers to “an inadequate income” or “a poor salary” (Armstrong et al. 2010, p. 218). A number of studies in stable societies have shown that employees consider salary to be one of the most important factors on the job and that perceived inadequate compensation is a major source of job dissatisfaction and staff turnover (Carr et al. 2010). Furthermore, inadequate compensation may indirectly result in increased poor performance in the workplace (Parkes & Langford 2008; Curry et al. 2005). Inadequate compensation also
contributes to recruitment difficulties, resulting in more vacancies, and consequently higher workloads (Cascio 2014; Bryant & Allen 2013). From the literature it is clear that, in stable societies, employees leave when they are not satisfied with their compensation packages (Jackson et al. 2014; Gruman & Saks 2011), and are less likely to become unproductive when their training and professional development opportunities are not adequate (Wright et al. 2005). Organizations operating in non-conflict environments may make the mistake of thinking that compensation packages are not the most factors contributing to employee turnover; however, a study conducted by Kaufman (2012) in the United States indicates that inadequate compensation is the main factor leading to turnover in industrialized countries.

Lack of training and development opportunities alludes to gaps in training and education to attract and retain competent and skilled workers (Mwangi 2017; Armstrong et al. 2010). A lack of training and growth opportunities for employees can cost an organization more than money as well as its reputation (Ghazali et al. 2013; Glen 2006). Without proper training and growth opportunities, employees are left to figure out methods and survival strategies on their own, and the redundancies and missteps can quickly add up to trouble for any organization (Ferreira & Leite 2013; Tessema et al. 2005). In stable societies, orientation for the new employees and skills training are two important components of job preparations for which organizations are responsible. Job preparation begins with the initial step in training and development during new-hire orientation process (Glen 2006). Employees who start new jobs without any kind of orientation or training are often unaware of workplace policies and practices that would benefit their job performance (Curry et al. 2005). Additional training and opportunities for growth throughout the employment contract keeps employee skill sets up-to-date and enables a more productive and efficient workforce (Ferreira & Leite 2013; Hong et al. 2012). According to Chong et al. (2012) when employees lack the training necessary to become more productive, the performance reduces and they will either leave for jobs that provide training and employee support or they will be terminated for poor performance.

Workplace conflict is defined as a state of discord caused by the actual or perceived opposition of needs, values and interests between people working together (Roome et al. 2014). Employee involved in workplace conflict, especially when HR department fails to investigate or resolve the problems (Demirbag et al. 2014); thereby triggering employees’ decisions to leave for alternative employment opportunities. According to Korkmaz (2012) unresolved workplace conflict has a severe consequent on employee recruitment and
retention. Lack of sufficient communication between employees or departments is one of the most frequent causes of workplace conflict and therefore employee turnover in stable societies (Leonard & Grobler 2006). Inadequate communication can lead to conflicting goals, performance problems, workplace stress, and passive-aggressive behavior (Robertson & Cooper 2010). The most common problem of workplace conflict is stress. Employee stress can affect job satisfaction, which leads to anger, depression and anxiety (Haslam et al. 2005). This in turn can lead to missed deadline and low morale (Cardozo et al. 2012). Stressed employees are more likely to become ill, which can mean missed work and increase workload on other employees. At its worst, workplace conflict can cause employee turnover, damage organizational reputation, and cause workplace mistrust (Curry et al. 2005).

Ineffective leadership refers to organization’s failure to provide support for employees who showed interest in advancement opportunities (Jaramillo et al. 2009). On the contrary, effective leadership demonstrates the organization’s interest in retaining human capitals for high-level roles within the organization through advancement opportunities from within policies and succession planning (Liu et al. 2013). However, providing advancement opportunities to employees without proper leadership training puts the organizations at risk for catastrophic employee turnover (Robertson & Cooper 2010). Indeed, effective leadership and employee development opportunities can help HR managers understand how to balance their responsibilities of managing department functions and employees simultaneously (Jackson et al. 2014; Delaney & Huselid 2006; Briscoe & Schuler 2004). Without effective leadership training in place, the HR managers will fail to attract and retain qualified and experienced employees because they did not receive the training they needed and employees will suffer because of potentially poor management-employee relation (Jackson 2004).

Lack of effective communication is defined as delays in communication, failure to communicate with the appropriate team member, provision of inaccurate or incomplete information, and matters left unresolved until the point of urgency (Mercedes et al. 2015, p. 42). It affects the management of human resource as well as leading of an organization (Baker et al. 2012). It has been noted in the HRM literature that communication plays important role in managing human relationships; however, it is inappropriately practiced in certain contexts. In Western societies, for example, HR managers and employees usually exposed to the significance of communication, however, this is not realized in certain situations. Nonetheless, when it is not realized, it triggers reactions that sometimes find
expression in employees leaving or intending to leave an organization, lack of commitment to work, leadership problems and other management-related issues (Robertson & Cooper 2010). Ghazali et al.’s (2013) view corroborates the fact that tasks in organizational setting will not be completed successfully when the quality of communication in such context is low or ineffective. Conversely, organizations who communicate regularly with their employees lessen the risk of high employee turnover (Hom et al. 2012). Adequate communication with employees is, as with most other retention practices, essential (Baker et al. 2012). Keeping employees informed about organizational challenges, staffing plans and changing organizational demands is one way to ensure employee attraction and retention (Becker & Huselid 2006; Sutherland & Jordaan 2004). However, neglecting employees concerns about job security through lack of communication and exclusion from decision-making process can influence the job performance, such as policy or procedural changes, negatively influences the way employee perceive their organization (Nwokocha & Jheriohanma 2012). Employees’ negative views of the organization transform to dissatisfaction and ultimately low morale, disengagement, and high employee turnover (Balkin & Gomez-Mejia 2006).

As also shown in the framework above (figure 2.1), the foregoing employee retention approaches in stable societies are defined as follows:

Innovation in the workplace technically means to introduce a new idea or take an existing idea and make it better (Logie et al. 2008). In the business world, the term tends to refer to the process of introducing something new. This process starts from the origination of an idea and goes to the transformation and implementation of that idea, taking into account the system on which the process unfolds (Lakshmi 2012). Innovation is held by many employers in stable societies, particularly the West, to be not only the key to success, but also the key to employee attraction and retention. Organizations employing the transformational leadership style encourage their employees to introduce and adopt innovations within the sphere of their work responsibilities. When employees are intellectually stimulated to exercise their creativity, they are challenged to realize their intellectual potential, a principal component in employee retention (Ahmad et al. 2016; Netswera et al. 2007; Ul Haq & Azeem 2010). At the same time, the organization, as an employer, is better able to attain its desired outcomes in terms of quality, productivity and longevity of workers (Lakshmi 2012).

Training and development, one of the management strategies for improving retention of skilled workers in stable societies, is defined as the field which is concerned with
organizational activity aimed at bettering the performance of individuals and groups in organizational settings (Hong et al. 2012). It has been known by several names, including human resource development, and learning and development (Cetron & Davies 2005). HRM practices such as training and development opportunities are important determinants of employee retention because they motivate workers and “lock” them to their jobs (Hong et al. 2012, p. 64). Traditionally, training provides the knowledge and facilitates the teaching of the skills necessary to perform a job well (Delaney & Huselid 2006). Employee development, however, focuses on preparing employees for future jobs (Owusu 2005). Chong et al. (2012, pp. 48-50) suggest that a practice of training and development needs to be adopted in order to ensure workers are acculturated to the concept of life-long learning so that their skills are continuously upgraded to meet current and emerging organizational requirements. It is the responsibility of organizations (as employers) to ensure that workers of all ages and at all levels have opportunities to pursue relevant training and development (Mwangi 2017; Tessema et al. 2005). Cetron and Davies (2005, pp. 40-46) recommend that training and development is a necessity for anyone who works in present-day organizations. Organizations that provide diverse, cutting edge training have a strong retention advantage over those that offer fewer opportunities to improve their workers skills and knowledge base (Noe & Peacock 2002). Improvements in organizational performance such as productivity and quality of services are outcomes of training and development efforts. Fulfilment of the individual employee needs through the training and development programs permit organizations achieve desired outcomes and enhance employee retention (Hong et al. 2012, p. 63).

Reward system, one of the HRM factors that influence employee retention in stable societies, is defined as a stimulus given to individuals to alter their behaviors (Baker et al. 2012). Rewards typically serve as reinforced (Poling et al. 2001). Rewards are not only in the form of money, but also intrinsic or extrinsic (Sahoo et al. 2010). Benefits, such as pension, life and health insurance, and retirement plans, and allowances such as subsidized transportation and organizational cars, represent a significant reward element in many large organizations (Hong et al. 2012, p. 65). Reward systems are viewed as tools for retaining workers. Giving rewards to employees can enhance the motivation level among them to perform well (Ul Haq & Azeem 2010; Wei & Rowley 2009). According to Hong et al. (2012), organizations are in danger of creating an unsatisfactory working environment if there is no reward system in place. Balkin and Gomez-Mejia (2006) found that if professional workers are satisfied with how the organization operates and communicates its reward policies, they remained
committed to the organization. Baker et al. (2012) also indicated that organization’s reward system can affect the performance of the employee and their desire to remain employed.

Employee participation is defined as a process whereby employees are involved in decision making processes, rather than simply acting on order (Konrad & Linnehan 2006), and it is part of a process of empowerment in the workplace (Pichler et al. 2008). Employee empowerment is delegating and encouraging people to gain the skills and knowledge that will allow them to overcome obstacles in the work environment (Chong et al. 2012). Empowerment is also about providing employees with opportunities to make their own decisions with regards to their task (Cook et al. 2016; Ghazali et al. 2013). Empowerment is also the process of enabling or authorizing an individual to think, behaves, take action, and control work and decision making in autonomous ways (Hong et al. 2012; Ugboro 2006). When employees are encouraged to participate meaningfully in the decision-making functions the organization forges a stronger bond between the employees and the employing organization (Cummings & Worley 2009). Employee participation strengthens the feeling of connectivity with the organization; this connectivity is employee retention (Lakshmi 2012).

Creation of a stress free and hassle free environment refers to a creation of workplace environment that is free from harassing treatment (Lakshmi 2012). The creation of a stress free and hassle free environment is considered the requisites of employee retention and can only be attained if employees feel free from intimidation and undue constraints, in order to venture into creative innovations and openly express their ideas and comments when participating in decision-making (Carroll & Buchholtz 2012). A stress-free and hassle-free environment engenders workers’ best efforts and allows them to take the kinds of risks that further performance excellence (Lakshmi 2012). Healthy employee-employer relationship connotes a phrase “hygienic environment”, characterized by dynamic information interchange and the absence of barriers between the employees and the employer (Lakshmi 2012). Hygiene factors include compensation, benefits, and the physical aspects of the working environment (McKeown 2002); thus a hygienic relationship indicates a transparency and amiability in the dealings and collaboration between workers and managers. Employee motivation is defined as a level of energy, commitment and creativity that an organization’s workers bring to their jobs (Matzin et al. 2012). Achievement of the above-mentioned drivers – i.e., risk-free and hygienic environment, a culture towards innovation, and participative management – contribute towards employee retention (Lakshmi 2012). Another important
contributor would be the alignment of the organization’s goals with those of the employees, such that they perceive that exerting effort to achieve organizations’ objectives redounds to the achievement of their own objectives. The organizations’ goals are more likely to be achieved if employees’ and managers’ efforts are focused towards them (Mahon 2016).

Teamwork is defined as a cooperative process that allows ordinary people to achieve extraordinary results (Maddux & Wingfield 2003, p. 9). Hu and Liden (2014) also explain that a team has a common goal or purpose where team members can develop effective, mutual relationships to achieve team goals. Working in teams has the advantage of allowing a tightly coordinated group of people to work at their own initiative to complete a project or job quickly, efficiently, and with a high level of quality (Maddux & Wingfield 2003). Usually, the level of commitment is high, communication is open, and problem-solving is fast and effective, which provides a strong foundation for engaging and retaining employees (Lakshmi 2012). Free flow of information refers to a situation where individual employees feel free and are openly willing to identify and raise issues, questions or concerns, or express differing professional opinion or viewpoints dealing with employment practices, safety in the workplace, quality, security or environmental issues and consistently do so without fear of retaliation (Langan-Fox & Klimoski 2007, p. 17). It sometimes goes against traditional management to allow for the free flow of information, which probably springs from the fear that an organization’s secrets may be leaked to competitors. Modern management, however, espouses the need to share information with employees to enable them to make informed decisions at their level, thereby serving participative decision-making (Langan-Fox & Klimoski 2007), and allowing employees to feel they are trusted and that they have a personal equity in the organization—thereby enhancing employee retention (Lakshmi 2012).

2.6 CONCLUSION
Understanding the HRM situation is vital in developing the nonprofit sector, particularly INGDOs, in conflict and non-conflict settings. From hiring to firing, HRM approaches have a direct impact on the workforce of the organization, and the policies adopted in this area shape the manner employees relate to their employer. The linkage between HRM and line management is seamless in the ideal modern workplace, and line supervisors and management are agents of HRM tasked with the enforcement of HRM practices, particularly regarding training and development, performance assessment, and recommendations for promotion, rewards and other forms of recognition. In many cases, employees’ decision to
stay or leave is prompted by their relationship with their immediate superiors, which is another reason why supervisors and managers should be considered vital HRM practitioners. Well-designed HRM approaches are effective tools for fostering employee retention in all organizations, and therefore should be integrated into the strategic goal-setting and management of the organization. By ensuring the long-term stay of knowledgeable and skilled employees in the organization, the organization’s leaders can more confidently forge ahead with more robust plans and set more assertive goals for the business, which could only serve to benefit its stakeholders, most of their entire workforce that would grow with it.

This literature review was conducted to identify the range of factors contributing to staff turnover in nonprofit sector and strategies being used to address challenges to staff retention and HRM development in both conflict and non-conflict settings. There are some differences across conflict and non-conflict environments which have an impact on the nonprofit sector retention approaches. While non-conflict societies remain stable with less threat to human safety, conflict societies remain unstable and threat to security is a major concern for skilled workers (Tulloch et al. 2011). In conflict societies, there is often an unstable economy along with damaged financial structures which may lead to a reliance on donor funding (Lewis 2014; Lewis 2013; Salamon 1999; Fowler 1992). Problems affecting the functioning of nonprofit organizations in conflict societies, INGDOs in particular, include human resources constraints as a result of staff turnover, financial constraints and dependence on foreign funding which leads to provision of short-term contracts, occupational health and safety and security, poor working conditions, and division between locals and expatriates.

The literature has indicated that conflict influences many approaches of the HRM department in the nonprofit sector, but the extent and range varies across settings. Conflict setting HRM may need to deal with the consequences of staff turnover, death of professional workers during the conflict, lack of senior management, inconsistent or poor availability of some categories of workers, for example, expatriates, damaged infrastructure, weakened policy-making structures, poor performance including absenteeism, low productivity and deteriorating skills shortage (Roome et al. 2014; Tulloch et al. 2011; Olowu 2010). The literature in non-conflict setting, particularly the West, points to several strategies and interventions that have been implemented with some success in retaining skilled workers. However, HRM system in conflict settings should be developed which includes the creation of a dedicated HR focal point (Ehrenreich & Elliott 2004), that is responsive to the specific
distortions influencing the workforce and is responsible for staff management planning; a
detailed HR assessment that documents the number, location and condition of all INGOs
facilities, training facilities and professional workers, from which an information system and
database can be developed; workforce planning for recruitment and retention, deployment,
training, appraising and supporting the workforce; and performance management. The role of
the government in working in partnership with and coordinating different nonprofit
organizations, particularly INGOs, in policy development and service provision needs to be
clear and strategic in conflict societies. Capacity to make realistic personnel safety plans to
implement service provision and HR plans to retain skilled workers also need to be developed
in conflict societies. Security training strategies will vary according to the impact of the
conflict on the INGOs workforce and INGOs should work in conjunction with balancing
distortions in the skills mix. The next chapter outlines the context of the sector (INGDOs) and
the context of the location (South Sudan) in which this study was conducted.
CHAPTER THREE
THE CONTEXTS OF THE INGDO SECTOR AND SOUTH SUDAN

3.1 INTRODUCTION
This chapter provides a contextual understanding of the INGDOs sector and South Sudan. The general aim of this chapter is to tell the reader about the INGDOs operating in South Sudan and the South Sudan’s operating environment. To understand the challenges contributing to staff turnover and HRM approaches for retaining skilled workers among organizations operating in conflict settings, it is necessary to understand the sectoral and contextual aspects of these issues. INGDOs have the primary aim of saving lives and reducing human suffering (Kiraka 2003), and their operations are concentrated in conflict and post-conflict societies of the world where local capacity to respond to a disaster is low (Okumu 2003). The rationale of INGDOs is normative instead of profit-driven, as reflected by their responsiveness to need (Edwards 1999) and the generous nature of their staff (Lindenberg & Dobel 2002). The environment in which INGDOs operate in conflict and post-conflict settings is challenging. In conflict settings, conditions for INGDOs tend to be quite dangerous in case where governments have collapsed and there is no exerted authority which can provide security. Darfur, Afghanistan, Iraq and Somalia in recent years can be used as an example of this, where aggressors frequently hijacked INGDOs supplies and placed bombs in INGDOs offices in retaliation to INGDOs’ interventions in conflicts (Teegen & Vachani 2004; Lewis 2002). In post-conflict situations, INGDOs face problems such as frequent delays by damaged road, mines, bandits, unpredictable travel permits, imposed duties, fees and checkpoints (Stoddard & DiDomenico 2009).

Apart from these challenges, there are several other sectoral factors that influence and limit INGDOs’ operations in conflict environments. Political uncertainty, political movements against certain materials, and services and organizations put a lot of pressure on INGDOs (Edwards 2009; Smillie 2007; Fowler 2003). Some of the political situations that had influenced negatively the work of INGOs included the two decades conflict in Sri Lanka, the
Rwandan genocide, and the two-decade long civil war in Congo (Stoddard & DiDomenico 2009). The wars in Iraq and Afghanistan have also exacerbated concerns by INGDOs on the security in these countries, and questions arose as to whether any meaningful long-term development activities in these areas were achievable and sustainable (Bollettino 2008; Olson 2006; De Torrente 2004). Overall, the collapse of states, civil wars, large population movements due to insecurity in their own countries or the destruction of infrastructure not only made INGOs work difficult, but put aid workers at risk (Makoba 2002). In many cases, long-term development activities had to be suspended to enable the provision of the needed humanitarian aid demanded by such situations (Bebbington 2004). The problem with these situations is that they also cause people to lose their traditional coping strategies that have helped them survive conflicts and disasters, making assistance and responsibility of the INGDOs much greatly needed (Hulme & Edwards 2013; Agbola 2004). These situations also comprise the success of long-term development projects; threaten the long-term economic independence of the poor communities being served by INGDOs (Lewis 2014; Lewis 2002), and lead to staff turnover (Debebe 2007; Kiraka 2003).

The societal context of South Sudan, on the other hand, provides an understanding about the difficulties faced by INGDOs managers in attracting and retaining skilled workers in a conflict context. In South Sudan, the political environment is an important consideration given its difficult history and the role of political parties in shaping the policies of INGDOs is also significant. This may affect both the aid budget and the sectors and regions in which assistance would be targeted. Far-reaching political developments take place on an almost daily basis in South Sudan—ones which the aid agencies have to take a stance. However, this volatile environment presents international agencies with massive challenges when it comes to determining and implementing a coherent course of action (UNOCA 2014). Information about the situations on the ground is often lacking or cannot be obtained due to a lack of security or logistical constraints. The way aid was organized in the region had even exacerbated the confusion (Riehl 2001). In terms of transparency, international donors tend to use competitive tender procedure in the awarding of projects and programs. As a result, INGDOs working in the same field have to compete for the same money and become less willing to share information, experiences and insights. Different actors, e.g. the UN, the South Sudanese government, INGOs, National NGOs (NNGOs), the national military, enterprises and diplomats work according to their own logic and have their own
interpretations and truths about the situation. The players in the aid structure tend to be guided by preconceived ideas about each other’s capacities and motives (Lewis 2002).

In recent years the pace for civil society has been narrowing in South Sudan. South Sudan’s NGOs Bill narrowly defines the scope of INGOS activities to exclude key areas such as tackling corruption, promoting good government and advocating against human rights violations and have been criticized for striving to monitor and control INGOS activities (Dagne 2012). In addition to the narrow definition of INGOS, major defects with the Bill include the requirements for mandatory registration accompanied by oppressive requirements such as the need to provide the NGOs Coordination Board with precise information, which according to Toh and Kasturi (2012) is difficult to provide at the time of registration. The yearly renewal of permits, the criminal liability of directors and reporting obligations of contacts with the rural population are considered to contravene the spirit of the Transitional Constitution of South Sudan. So although the legal operating environment is enabling if INGOS to follow the government line, overall the context is more challenging. For instance, external factors such as security issues and environmental issues may be among the common factors influencing HR retention strategies. Highly unpredictable staffing needs, related to the difficulty of forecasting humanitarian crises adds the problem of ‘brain drain’ to the existing HR retention challenges (Loquercio et al. 2006). Additionally, factors such as harassment of foreign workers, logistical challenges, and government interference in INGOS activities influence the South Sudanese private sector recruitment and retention strategies.

3.2 THE CONTEXT OF THE INGDOs SECTOR
This section presents contextual information on INGDOs. The purpose of the INGDOs context is to draw on existing research studies on the INGDOs, including what they do and how they operate, to advance theory in both conflict and non-conflict settings.

3.2.1 INGDOs in Global Context
While the beginning of civil society extends far back into the eighteenth century (Edwards 2009), the present-day model of the non-governmental organization, or NGO, is largely a result of the institutionalization of the agents of change–mainly government instrumentalities and big business (Wamucii 2014). In the course of the interactions of these large entities, the interests of individual citizens and the general public are often overlooked, necessitating the creation of a so-called third sector. While NGOs as a group are a subject of academic curiosity and investigation, the international NGOs are presented with circumstances that
local NGOs are not subject to. The first thing INGDOs have to deal with in unstable situations is their own ‘presence’ in the country. Sometimes there will already have been a national member organization but within the demise of the totalitarian regime, the situation has changed dramatically. The existing NGOs may be too tainted by association with the previous regime or may have become political parties (Teegen & Vachani 2004). New NGOs spring up, sometimes suddenly and without much of a base in the local population. In additional, State moves from being the ‘enemy’ to something more complex, which INGDOs have to learn to work with and still keep some distance from. Furthermore, nowhere is the effect of cross-border mismatch more pronounced than for the INGDOs in contrast to special interest, advocacy, and policy organizers. The United Nations defines non-governmental organizations as “not-for-profit, which is organized on a local, national, or international level to address issues in support of the public good” (Otto 1996, p. 110). World Bank (2002, p. 48) defines INGDOs as “those organizations that pursue activities to relieve human suffering, promote the interests of the poor, protect the environment, provide basic social services, and undertake community development”. Vakil (1997, p. 2058), in an early attempt to define and classify non-governmental development organizations described INGDOs as “agencies engaging in overseas provision of services for relief and development purposes, as well as task-oriented.” Task oriented and made up of people with common interests, INGDOs perform a variety of services and humanitarian functions, bring citizens’ concerns to governments, monitor policy and program implementation, and encourage participation of Civil Society stakeholders at the community level (Wamucii 2014).

Despite these definitions, the INGDOs had generally been regarded as a catch-all term for ‘any international body that is not founded by an international treaty’ (Martens 2002, p. 280). There are a number of concepts attached to international NGOs; one such concept was as third sector organizations which work internationally, or alternatively, those which belong to developing country contexts, according to the United Nations system that was established after World War II. Under this system, the status of ‘non-governmental organization’ was given to international non-state organizations designated as consultants in UN activities (Lewis 2009); the same status was not awarded third sector organizations which functioned within the developing country context, the distinction appearing to be the attribute ‘international’. The idea of a third sector or ‘middle’ sector is in reference to the state/public sector and the market/private sector, giving NGOs its own distinct personality that is neither of the two sectors, although it may be receiving resource or ideological support from them.
The concept is in contrast to that of Uphoff (2003) which views NGOs as a sub-sector of the private sector, being private voluntary organizations (Makoba 2002).

There is little consistency in the use of the term non-governmental organization or NGO, each use appearing to vary with the location or activity. In Australia, organizations working with the homeless in Melbourne, Australia may be called ‘not-for-profit organizations’ not quite with the status of an NGO, while in Juba, South Sudan the same type of organization doing the same work is called an NGO. The same would be called a non-profit organization in the US or ‘not-for-profit organization’ in the UK, but for some reason the US Agency for International Development (USAID) uses the term ‘private international organization’ which conducts development work overseas. Other third sector organizations resent being called ‘voluntary’ because somehow it diminishes them as being less professionalized and, besides, most of their workers are not ‘voluntary’ in the sense that they do receive remuneration for their labors, albeit modest in amount (Setsile 2002, p. 4).

Today, there are tens of thousands of different INGDOs across the world with different groups focusing on many different issues. Over the past decade there has been a significant increase in the number of INGDOs around the world. At the international level the main role of INGDOs are concentrated in three major debatable issues: poverty alleviation, environmental, and development issues. Energy organizations can fall under all three categories. Under The Charter of the United Nations, Article 71 it states, “The Economic and Social Council may make suitable arrangements for consultation with non-governmental organizations which are concerned with matters within its competence” (Vakil 1997, p. 206). This alone does not make INGDOs a significant player in global decision-making process but rather a significant influencer when it comes to development.

3.2.2 INGDOs in the South Sudanese Context

It is clear that the INGDOs sector is not homogenously defined in literature. Therefore, there need to understand how the INGDOs are defined in South Sudan in order to understand characteristics of the sector, the scope, and their roles. In the South Sudanese context, the South Sudan NGO Forum (SSNF) defines INGDOs as “private voluntary grouping of individual organizations not operating for commercial gains but which have organized themselves nationally or internationally for the benefit of the public at large and for the promotion of industry and supply of amenities and services” (SSNF 2012, p. 18). As a result, the definition of what constitutes INGDOs that will be adopted in this research project is the
SSNF system developed by the Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs and Disaster Management and its operational arm, the South Sudan Relief and Rehabilitation Commission (SSRRC). The defining attributes include: organized, private, self-governing, and non-profit-distributing. These are seen as the most appropriate for this research project. In South Sudan, the INGDOs are presented as the ‘third sector’, independent of the other sectors, for example, the state and the private sector. The SSNF definition provides important distinctions between organizational types that are literally quite different. For example, there are obvious differences between a credit union, a university and an INGDO engaging in development work, though all could be described in some circumstances as non-profit organizations.

The first INGDO, for example NPA, arrived in what is now South Sudan in 1956; the same year that Sudan gained its independence from British. On average an INGDO in South Sudan has worked there for 13 years, a period which has enabled each INGDO to amass local experience and expertise on which the agency such as the UN relies. INGDOs in South Sudan work hand-in-hand with UN agencies in all spheres of development and humanitarian aid. For example, INGDOs construct classrooms and support literacy, work with the ministry of agriculture on livestock vaccination, provide specialized health services, distribute food, drill boreholes, build capacity of institutions, and works on reconciliation and peace-building with local communities. INGDO staff often work under most difficult conditions, far from their families, often sleeping in tents, on rough terrain, and in unfriendly environments. Many INGDOs staffs have put their own lives at risk in order to contribute to the welfare of South Sudan. The major players in South Sudan include INGDOs such as Oxfam, Norwegian People’s Aid (NPA), CAFOD, CRS, CARE, World Vision, Mercy Corp, Caritas International, Plan International, Samaritan’s Purse, Concern Worldwide, and Save the Children. The INGDO sector is an essential employer in South Sudan in terms of numbers and they have a strong commitment to ensuring full engagement of national staff in their programs. For example, more than 16,000 South Sudanese were employed by INGDOs in 2011 (Koppelman 2012). There are nine South Sudanese citizens for every expatriate staff member working in the INGDO sector. At the managerial level the ratio of nationals to expatriates is nearly one to one (SSNF 2012).

With respect to how the INGDO sector is regulated in South Sudan, the Non-Governmental Organizations Act (2015) requires INGOs to register and submit to constant monitoring by the government. Any INGOs interested in operating in South Sudan is required to register
(European Commission 2016). In order to register, the organization must take a number of steps, including making available information regarding “all known or probable sources” of its funding. In order to keep its registration, the INGO will also have to submit to government monitoring, evaluation, and auditing of all its activities. Significantly, the legislation includes provisions mandating the use of local talent. It requires that at a minimum, 80 percent of the employees of an INGO, in all level of the organization, be South Sudan citizens. In addition, when hiring to fill the remaining 20 percent of positions, INGOs are also required to give South Sudanese applicants “priority” (European Commission 2016). Concerning how INGDOs train their staff, expatriates who work for INGDOs in South Sudan are sometimes contracted by another organization. This organization is responsible for the training and development of the staff. INGDOs allow expatriates to go on training, but the initiative must come from the expatriate and he/she has to organize it him/herself (People in Aid, 2007). For local staff, there is more of a system for training. There is a budget available for the training of staff. INGDOs select people who can be trained. Staff members can put in a request for training, but also HR managers can indicate that someone needs to be trained. The request is taken into consideration and the reason for training, and the suitability for the organization, is assessed. Then a selection is made and a plan of whom can go where and when. For additional information about the INGDOs sector in South Sudan, see page 2 in Chapter 1.

3.2.3 What INGDOs do and how they operate
This section focuses on what INGDOs actually do, and argues that what they do can be summarized broadly in terms of three main overlapping sets of roles: those of implementers, catalysts and partners (Lewis 2009, p. 88). The role of civil society representatives in general and INGDOs in particular in the international arena, is becoming increasingly significant in all sectors of daily life, and governmental organizations are finding it increasingly indispensable for governmental organizations to pursue their strategic objectives (Contu & Girei 2014; Uzuegbunam 2013; Khondaker & Sultana 2012; Ugboro 2006). Kilby (2006) agrees INGDOs pursue a wide range of objectives such as relief, development, advocacy, and empowerment through a variety of methods such as direct action, funding, lobbying, and networking. Of course, each role is not confined to a single organization, since an INGDO may engage in all three groups of activities at once, or it may shift its emphasis from one to the other over time or as contexts and opportunities change.
The implementer role is defined as the mobilization of resources to provide goods and services, either as part of the INGDO’s own project or program or that of a government or donor agency (Lewis 2009; Lewis 2002). It covers many of the best known tasks carried out by INGDOs and includes the programs and projects which INGDOs establish to provide services to people (such as healthcare, credit, agricultural extension, legal advice or emergency relief) and react quickly to local demand (Ager 1999) as well as the growth of ‘contracting’, in which NGOs are engaged by government or donors to carry out specific tasks in return for payment. The role of catalyst is defined as an INGDO’s ability to inspire, facilitate or contribute towards developmental change among other actors at the organizational or the individual level. This includes grassroots organizing and group formation (Uphoff 2003; Lewis 2002) and building ‘social capital’ empowerment approaches to development (Kilby 2006; Hocutt & Stone 1998), lobbying and advocacy work (Lewis 2002; Lindenberg & Dobel 2002; Mukasa 1999; Korten 1990), innovation in which INGDOs seek to influence wider policy processes, and general campaigning work. The role of partner encompasses the growing trend for INGDOs to work with government, donors and the private sector on joint activities (Lewis 2009; Bebbington 2004), as well as the complex relationships which have emerged among NGOs, such as ‘capacity building’. Generally, INGDOs in rural communities operate with a distinguished, clear and focused viewpoint (Hunt 2008; Kiraka 2003). They study the areas, tradition, situation, and need of the people so that they can formulate goals which find a way out of poverty and offer lasting self-help approaches even without further assistance of INGDOs in the future.

In developing world, the concerns and goals of INGDOs are often critical. In years of drought, famine or conflict, the INGDOs have been pivotal in providing food to those most marginalized groups. INGDOs often provide essential services in the developing world that in developed countries governmental agencies or institutions would provide (Edwards et al. 2009). Normally, INGDOs concerns and goals are always in line with state’s policy, acting as a contributor to economic development, essential services, employment and the budget (Lewis 2009). In a wider approach, INGDOs concerns and goals are centered on social justice to the marginalized members of society in developing countries or failed states. There are several concerns and goals for INGDOs in the development literature, however, De Cieri and Dowling (2006) identified four major concerns and goals for INGDOs in developing countries: competitiveness, efficiency, balance of global integration and local responsiveness, and flexibility. While these goals and concerns are applicable to the INGDOs sector, the way
in which they are applied differs from organization to organization and from country to another. Competiveness is increasingly concern for INGDOs (Ramia 2003); however, the non-profit context creates difficulties in translation (Lindenberg 2001). In particular, external funding groups such as the UN, IMF, USAID, DFID, AUSAID and World Bank pressure INGDOs to keep administration costs low to demonstrate efficiency (Cunningham 2011). Such pressures lead to constraints on resources that restrain INGDOs from developing more efficient internal policies and practices such as those for retaining and engaging skilled workers (Bakuwa et al. 2013; Davidson & Raynard 2001; Nyambegera et al. 2000). As INGDOs operate in a global context, they attempt to balance integration and local responsiveness concerns. INGDOs create central coordination structures to pull the organization together while concurrently trying to maintain enough autonomy for ‘grassroots’ units to be meaningful (Doh & Teegen 2003; Tembo 2004; Salm 1999).

Two additional concerns and goals have been proposed for a non-profit context, that of the pursuit of social good, and organizational reputation. A key difference distinguishing INGDOs from other types of organizations within the third sector is the centrality of pursuing social good (Cunningham 2011; Hudson & Bielefeld 2007). Lindenberg (2001, p. 268) sums up the management implications of this by stating that “INGDOs workers have been willing to trade salary dollar for organizational participation and the satisfaction of working for a better world”. Lyons and Hocking (2000, p. 153), in a study comparing managers across non-profit and public sector organizations in developing countries, found that “non-profit managers wanted work that ‘made a difference in human lives’, and that helped to bring about social and political change”. While INGDOs’ pursuit of social good provides committed staff members at reduced cost, this only occurs so long as staff members feel engaged with organization mission. Related to the pursuit of social good is the importance of organization ‘reputation’. INGDOs are highly dependent on external funding sources that are sensitive to the reputation of the organization (Merlot et al. 2006; Salm 1999).

Further, INGDOs have to maintain public faith that the maximum amount of funding resources is going directly to recipients and not being spent on administration costs. Pressure on INGDOs to protect their organization’s reputation is great as high growth in the industry has resulted in the emergence of ‘suspicious newcomers’ such as government-run organizations, and organizations created as tax dodgers (Dichter 2009, p. 47). With the 2004 Indian Ocean earthquake and tsunami as a means of protecting the reputation of humanitarian
and development organizations, many organizations, especially INGDOs, put a notification on their website advising the public to be wary of any group collecting donations that was not a member of their cohort. In regard to employment, usually, the contribution of INGDOs in developing countries is not so much as the employer itself, as it is in performing the role of champion of labor and human rights particularly for workers in multinational companies. When INGDOs do accept recruits from among local residents to staff its projects, a significant number of them are skilled and professional workers who receive attractive remuneration and medical benefits. Aside from monetary income which employees are expected to receive, the other salient benefit to them is the skills transfer and training that they may hope to obtain while working for the INGDO. Had there been evidence of significant acquisition of new skills, then the talented employees would still have obtained some positive return on their labor.

Nevertheless, empirical studies of INGOs by Egels-Zandén and Hyllman (2011) and Malunga (2009) have indicated that in cases where there were supposed to be a transfer of skills, the local workers and likely even regional employee hardly received any significant transfer of skills. This was because the expatriates rarely worked on this basis, that is, in a manner that would have devolved important knowledge or competencies to the locals. The ‘resource dimension’ pertains to each group’s source of finances. In contrast, INGDOs often do not have members, and they must compete for financial resources from private individuals or sponsors and they must consistently advertise their activities in order to garner more support. INGDOs are also mandated by law and their donors to regularly and frequently account for the financial support they receive. Trade unions are therefore more financially stable in the long terms than are INGDOs (Egels-Zandén & Hyllman 2011; Van de Walle 1999). The trade union-INGDO cooperation is vital for balancing influence against workers’ interests in emerging economies. The three barriers to their smooth cooperation tend to cause friction between them and undermine the effectiveness of NGOs as an agent for the protection of workers from the abuses of multinational enterprises and governments.

According to Makoba (2002), the prevalence of weak states and declining markets of the Third World in general and many Sub-Saharan African countries in particular has made the work of development-oriented NGOs more significant than ever. The number of INGDOs registered in the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) countries has increased from 1,600 in 1980 to 2,970 in 1993 (Hulme & Edwards 2014, p. 4).
In the same period, total spending of these INGDOs rose from US$ 2.8 billion to US$ 5.7 billion in current prices. Makoba sees INGDOs as a catalyst for social and economic change, a vital and necessary Third Sector that must step in to fulfil the developmental aspect which weak African governments could not and private business organizations would not. INGDOs are seen as independent, ‘efficient, less bureaucratic, grassroots oriented, participatory and contributing to sustainable development in grassroots communities’ (Smillie 2007, p. 45). A contrary opinion is advanced by Van de Walle (1999, p. 346) who states that the advancement of aid to Africa through INGDO work suffers from a ‘complex crisis of legitimacy’ due to the fact that the current achievements of the aid fall far short of the official rhetoric about it. The solution lies in changing how both donors and recipients manage aid, to pursue a sound development strategy, where the main impetus for reform emanates from the African countries (Van de Walle 1999). INGDOs are viewed by many such as World Bank and IMF as having an advantage over local development NGOs in the sense that the grassroots movement has limited issue expertise as well as limited resources. INGDOs, however, have both, but may be short on the knowledge concerning local culture and political knowledge, as well as limited awareness of local economic conditions. It is therefore plausible that aid and resources to Sub-Saharan Africa could be better managed by a partnership among INGDOs, local organizations, and governments (Malunga 2009).

A more pragmatic view is expressed by some scholars such as Mallaby (2004) who sees the activity of INGDOs as actually being more harmful to the poor, because of what may be construed as interference by Western political activists. Protests have been launched by these ideologues to block development projects which they perceive are exploitative of developing countries, but these protests sometimes have the effect of preventing clean water or electricity from being provided to the poorer segments of society. Mallaby (2004) cites a case in Uganda where the World Bank was promoting the construction of a dam near the source of the river Nile, near a scenic spot called Bujagali. At that location, Western INGOs were staging a protest purportedly against industrialization intruding against nature. Local residents, however, viewed the Western INGOs’ actions are unnecessarily preventing the provision of cheap electricity that could fuel economic growth which could benefit the poor Ugandan citizens. The result is that project proponents and governments unduly delay or scrap out of a fear of activist backlash. Some INGDOs gain strong but misguided support by waging their protest through the Internet. Many of the protests are based on inadequate or misleading information, yet they gain such impetus that projects are often halted which should have
benefitted the developing nation. Mallaby (2004, p. 50) concludes that ‘The World Bank has come to reflect the agenda of activists, who insist upon safeguard for individual freedom,’ in the course of which it loses touch with the realities of developing countries. With regards to frameworks currently in place for INGDOs working in Africa, the African region, as well as other geographical and cultural regions, has distinct features that influence the manner in which INGDOs disseminate aid and pursue development. There are areas of policy which impact upon and define how aid is located within the larger sphere of the continent’s development.

3.2.4 Funding Arrangements within the INGDOs Sector

Whether the organizations are small or large, various INGDOs need budgets to operate. The amount of budget that they need would differ from organization to organization. Unlike small or local NGOs, large INGDOs may have annual budgets in the hundreds of millions or billions of dollars. For instance, the budget of the World Vision International (WVI), the world’s largest INGDO, has an annual budget of $2.8 billion in 2011, which is greater than the budget of all UN agencies combined other than the World Food Programme (WFP), and more than the gross national income (GNI) of many African countries (Fowler 2013). While the World Vision International’s global revenue in 2011 was larger than the aid budgets of 12 out of the 23 OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC) donors the budgets of the Catholic Aid for Overseas Development (CAFOD) was over $95.75 million in 2010 and employed 5369 staff worldwide. INGDOs are now providing more aid to developing countries than ever before, and the budgets of particularly large INGDOs have surpassed those of some Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) donor countries (Hammad & Morton 2011). Seven INGDOs (World Vision International, Oxfam International, Save the Children International, Plan International, CARE International, CARITAS International and ActionAid International) had combined revenue of more than $11.7 billion in 2011, up 40 percent since 2005 (Fowler 2013).

The sources of INGDO revenue can vary quite significantly. Private donations amounted to 89.5 percent of the revenue of ActionAid in 2012, while CARE International received more than 60 percent of its revenue from official donors (Uzuegbunam 2013). Between 2007 and 2011, all NGOs (mainly INGDOs) contributed over $20 billion to humanitarian assistance from private sources, while also channelling $14.4 billion from official donor sources. INGDO sources of funding also often vary by country. Private voluntary organizations
registered with the USAID received more than six times as much funding from private donors in 2008 than from USAID (Lindenberg 2008; Martens 2002). While the origins of INGDO funding vary significantly from organization to organization, INGDOs in general are collectively dependent on official donors for approximately half of their budgets (Morton 2005). Funding such large budgets demands significant fundraising efforts on the part of most organizations. Major sources of INGDOs funding are membership dues, the sale of goods and services, grants from international institutions or national governments, and private donations. Several USAID grants also provide funds accessible to INGDOs in emerging countries. Even though the term “non-governmental organizations” implies independence from governments, many NGOs, including development NGOs, depend heavily on governments for their funding (Lewis 2003). A quarter of the $162 million income in 1998 of the famine-relief organization Oxfam was donated by the British government and the European Union (EU). The Christian relief and development organization Catholic Relief Services (CRS) collected $55 million worth of goods in 1998 from the American government (Uzuegbunam 2013).

The $755 million mobilized in 2013 out of the $1.27 billion dollars needed by the Consolidated Appeal for South Sudan (CAP), a consortium of various aid organizations working in South Sudan to save lives and strengthen resilience across the young country through 306 projects implemented by 128 partners and coordinated by 21 clusters, was donated by US and Norwegian governments. Although government funding of NGOs is controversial, the whole point of development and humanitarian intervention was precisely that NGOs and civil society had both a right and an obligation to respond with acts of aid and solidarity to people in need or being subjected to repression or want by the forces that controlled them, whatever the government concerned might think about the matter (Lewis & Sobhan 1999). Some NGOs such as Greenpeace do not accept funding from government or intergovernmental organizations (Gilbert 2009). One of the other important issues noted in the aid arena is the overhead costs. Overhead is the amount of money that is spent on running an INGO rather than on projects (Fowler 2013). This includes office expenses, staff salaries, banking and bookkeeping costs. What percentage of overall budget is spent on overhead is often used to judge an organization with less than 4% being viewed as good (Fowler 2013). Following on from this view, the World Association of Non-Governmental Organizations (WANGO) states that ideally more than 86% of the budget should be spent on programs with less than 20% going to overhead costs.
Over-dependence on official aid has the potential to dilute “the willingness of organizations to speak out on issues which are unpopular with governments” (Edwards & Hulme 2014, p. 130). In these situations INGDOs are being held accountable by their donors, which can erode rather than enhance their legitimacy, a difficult challenge to overcome. Some research scholars have also argued that the changes in where INGDOs receive their funding has ultimately altered their functions (Teegen & Vachani 2004; Edwards & Hulme 1996). INGDOs have also been challenged on the grounds that they do not necessarily represent the needs of the developing world, through diminishing the so called “Local Voice”. Some postulate that the international-local NGOs division exists in the arena of development and humanitarian aid (Lindenberg & Bryant 2001). They question the equality of the relationships between international and local parts of the same NGOs as well as relationships between local NGOs working in partnerships. This suggests a division of labor may develop, with the international NGOs taking the lead in advocacy and resource mobilization while the local NGOs engages in service delivery in the developing world (Lindenberg & Bryant 2001). The potential implications of this may mean that the needs of the developing world are not addressed appropriately as international NGOs do not properly consult or participate in partnerships. The real danger in this situation is that Western views may take the front seat and assign unrepresentative priorities (Lewis 2002).

The outpour of INGDOs has also been accused of damaging the public sector in multiple developing countries. The mismanagement of INGDOs has resulted in the breakdown of public health care systems. Instead of promoting equity and alleviating poverty, INGDOs have been under scrutiny for contributing to socio-economic inequality and disempowering the services in the public sector of the third world countries (Makuwira 2010; Pfeiffer 2003). The scale and variety of activities in which INGDOs participate has grown rapidly since the 1980s, witnessing particular expansion in the 1990s (Uzuegbunam 2013). This has presented INGDOs with need to balance the pressures of centralization and decentralization. By centralizing INGDOs, particularly those that operate in conflict zones at an international level, they can assign a common theme or set of goals. Conversely it is also advantageous to decentralize as this increases the chances of INGDOs behaving flexibly and effectively to localized issues (Anheier & Themudo 2002).
3.2.5 Staffing Arrangements within the INGDOs Sector

Staffing arrangements are the tools used to manage people working in an organization. These staffing arrangements can be used to manage managers, employees, project officers, field workers, and coordinators. Since the INGDOs sector is run by these groups discussed above, staffing arrangements are considered to be “resources and tools” for attracting and retaining skilled workers. Although some inconsistencies are evident in the definition and operationalization of staffing arrangements (Korten 1990), agreement exists that balancing of global integration and local responsiveness is an important aspect pervading all aspects of staffing arrangements (Boselie & Boon 2005). Recurring HRM elements in definitions and operationalization include HRM values and structural or process components such as how different HR management strategies, policies and practices are done in different organizations. In considering the applicability of staffing arrangements for INGDOs three areas emerge that signify INGDOs as a ‘special case’; HRM values, the level of formality of HR management and the staffing arrangements used. Previous studies of INGDOs management from development and HRM literature show that INGDOs exhibit values that are highly participatory, with a strong ideological drive (Murdie & Kakietek 2012; Edwards 2009; Stark Biddle 2004; Lewis 2002). Indeed, participatory management is not just a management style, but incorporates ideological ‘development’ goals of participation. A study conducted by Sheehan (1998) in Mozambique, a country located on the southeast coast of Africa, found that participatory management was not just involving and empowering workers, it also matched the nature of INGDOs work to beneficiaries and staff. Volunteerism is tied up in the definition of INGDOs and is not just about using volunteer labor, but pervades their creation, maintenance and termination (Hudson & Bielefeld 2007).

Staffing arrangements which are applicable to INGDOs must recognize and engage in staff retention to be effective in INGDOs setting. As the importance of management has grown there has been an increase in formalization and professionalization of management policies and practices (Offenheiser et al. 2015). In developing countries, for example, increasing professionalization has led to INGDOs sector needing to recruit staff with specific skills, for example, hardship and coping skills (Murdie & Kakietek 2012; Kiraka 2003). This has not passed without concern from INGDOs sector as those within the sector are strongly suspicious of techniques coming from other sectors. INGDOs viewed techniques coming from other sectors as those that are destroying their valued-based organization culture (Drucker 2010; Edwards et al. 2009). According to Mukasa (1999) two tensions that arose
were between local workers and expatriates and between professionalizing the workforce and the importance of maintaining high use of volunteer labor. Indeed, Lindenberg and Dobel (2002, p. 16)’s analysis of INGDOs sector’s responses to globalization over the past two decades found that “as INGDOs became bigger and more global in nature, their situation became more complex and dangerous and the use of volunteer labor decreased, creating internal conflict as “volunteerism” not check writing, forms the core of much of the passion and commitment they bring into existence”.

3.3 SOUTH SUDAN IN CONTEXT

South Sudan is a landlocked country located in Eastern Africa and borders Ethiopia to the east, Kenya, Uganda, and the Democratic Republic of Congo to the south, and the Central African Republic to the west. To the north lies the predominantly Muslim country of the Republic of Sudan. South Sudan is one of the poorest countries in Sub-Saharan Africa and the weakest and least developed country in the world with a Gross Domestic Product of USD $11.8 billion in 2013 (SSNBS 2015). The Republic of South Sudan covers a geographical area of approximately 650, 000 square kilometers and is the size of the U.S. state of Texas. In Australian terms, South Sudan is roughly the size of New South Wales, with former ‘Sudan’ being the size of Western Australia (Zambakari 2013). The population is estimated at 8-10 million with a density of 15 people per a square kilometer. More than 90 percent of the population lives in rural areas. The average annual population growth rate is 2.2 percent. Prior to the conflict in 2013, the population was projected to increase to 12 million by 2015, due to both the annual growth rate and the return of South Sudanese from the Diaspora, following the historic independence of South Sudan in 2011. Females constitute 52 percent of the population while males account for 48 percent. The total fertility rate is estimated at 6.7, while the average life expectancy at birth for both male and female is 42 years (World Bank 2014). The country’s official language is English, and Arabic is the second official language. Most South Sudanese are Christian, and there is a Muslim minority.

The South Sudanese Transitional Constitution guarantees freedom of religious and ‘special rights’ to the all people of South Sudan irrespective of their race or political backgrounds. Having learned from the past failed policies of the united ‘Sudan’; after gaining independence, the South Sudanese leaders were so determined to resolve any ethnicization and introduced regulations related to national economic policy and national culture policy (Jok 2012). Although some of these policies have failed, others such as ‘peace villages’
policy have fostered ethnic peace and social justice in some parts of South Sudan. One of the major aims of these policies was to eradicate poverty by raising income levels and increasing employment opportunities for all South Sudanese, irrespective of ethnicity. Another major objective was to restructure South Sudan to correct economic imbalance such as inequalities of wealth and unemployment. In spite of ongoing conflict, the preservation of the country’s unity and the bonding of a unified nation have preoccupied South Sudanese’s leaders since becoming an autonomous region in 2005 (Jok 2012). In 2006, the South Sudanese president Salva Kiir Mayardit introduced his vision 2020, whereby he envisaged South Sudan to be technologically and economically advanced country by the year 2020. The key aspects of South Sudan’s path to modernization would be to introduce democratic reforms and sustain stable economic development and a united society. The vision needs to be seen in the context of South Sudan’s natural and historical heritage.

Nevertheless, the current South Sudanese society, regardless of ethnic background and history of tribal conflicts and mistrust, appears to have a common vision for the sustainable development, especially in investing in agriculture to become less dependent of foreign aid in Sub-Saharan Africa (Ding et al. 2012). A stable, united, and democratic country is considered to be more pragmatic, innovative, rational and tolerant to prepare for the challenges of the 20th century (Edwards 2010; Ployhart 2006). The fledging nation is also expected to be confident and prepared to take on the rest of the world, guided by the national motto ‘Justice, Liberty, Prosperity’ while being urged not to forsake their culture. As a result, culture has emerged as important for South Sudan. The notion that culture determines achievement was very much advocated. Jackson and Haines (2007) maintained that the obsession with culture and morality could be seen as an attempt to address the decline in morality and African traditional values due to growing influence of globalization and Western cultures.

Despite the fact that there is a convergence in the way people management strategies are being practiced in contemporary Africa (Kamoche et al. 2004), South Sudanese leaders have played pivotal role in introducing the ‘Africa-to-Africa Policy’ after independence to re-orient South Sudan to Kenya, South Africa, Botswana, Uganda, Ethiopia, Tanzania, Rwanda, and Burundi models of economic and socio-cultural development. The reason for this was to move away from being dependent on Western-based people management practices and policies. It seems that Western-based people management practices may not be ideal in unstable and multicultural setting and in a mainly African society (Horwitz et al. 2009).
Consequently, many of the South Sudan’s development programs were assigned to business organizations from Sub-Saharan African countries which may be more ‘alike’ to the South Sudanese, in the hope that they would provide training for the local South Sudanese. Additionally, the government tried to instil the indigenous African cultural values of sense of community life, sense of good human relations, sense of hospitality, and sense of respect for authority and the elders (Kamoche et al. 2015; Horwitz et al. 2009; Browning 2006). In doing so, the South Sudanese government attempted to develop new skills development initiatives and revisiting old traditional practices of people management.

3.3.1 History of the Conflict
The modern states of South Sudan and Sudan were part of Egypt under the Muhammad Ali Dynasty, later being governed as an Anglo-Egyptian condominium until Sudanese independence was achieved in 1956 (Johnson 2014). Together with Darfur, Nuba Mountains, and Southern Blue Nile, South Sudan has been subject to the political, economic, and cultural hegemony and marginalization at the hands of successive Arab regimes in North Sudan. In fact, repressive regimes in North Sudan were not so much concerned with the people of the South Sudan as they only see South Sudan as a resources base (Grant & Thompson 2013). Sudan as a whole has endured a long internal conflict since independence from Britain and Egypt in 1956. The colonial rules resulted in protracted civil war, which began shortly after independence, between Northern Sudanese (most of which are predominately Arabs and Muslims) and South Sudanese (most of which are predominately African and Christian). The Sudanese conflicts have often been described by the media as a struggle between ‘Arabs’ and ‘indigenous Africans’, triggered by ethnic tensions and competition over resources. However, as with many other conflicts in Sub-Saharan Africa, there is no simple or singular root causes of the Sudanese conflicts. Complex sets of interrelated factors are driving the war. Historical grievances, local perceptions of race, demands for a fair sharing of power between different groups, the inequitable distribution of economic resources and benefits, disputes over access to and control over increasingly scare natural resources, and the absence of a democratic process and other governance issues, have contributed to the conflict in Sudan, but none of them is a primary cause (Johnson 2014). Since independence from Britain, the new wave of civil wars in Sudan have changed traditional relationships between Sudanese ethnic groups and politicized them, giving local conflicts much wider political dimensions (Deng 2010).
Until Juba conference in 1947, the British government, in collaboration with the Egyptian government, administered South Sudan and North Sudan as separate regions. At this time, the two regions were merged into a single administrative region as part of British strategy in the Middle East and North Africa. This act was taken without consultation with South Sudanese leaders, who feared being subsumed by the political power of the larger Muslim north. South Sudan is inhabited primarily by Christian and Animists and considers itself culturally African, while most of the north is inhabited by Muslims who are culturally Arabic (Johnson 2003; Deng 1995). After the 1953 agreement in London by the British and Egyptian governments to grant independence to Sudan, the internal tensions over the nature of the relationship of South Sudan to North Sudan were heightened. Matters became highly volatile as the 1st January 1956 Independence Day approached, as it appeared that northern Sudanese were backing away from commitments to create a federal government that would give the South Sudanese regional autonomy (Macrae et al. 1997). Shortly after independence civil war broke out. A prolonged period of conflict and human suffering followed. The Anyanya I Rebellion (also known as the First Sudanese Civil War) started as a loosely knit rebel group in 1955, deriving its name from a snake poison. The Anyanya I conflict runs from 1955 to 1972 between the northern part of Sudan and Southern Sudan region that demanded representation and more regional autonomy. Half a million people died over the 17 years of civil war. This conflict ended with the conclusion of the Addis Ababa Ethiopia Peace Agreement in 1972, giving the South Sudanese regional autonomy. This peace agreement was dishonored in 1983 when President Jaafar Muhammad Nimeiry unilaterally nullified the agreement and instituted Sharia law over the entire country (Macrae et al. 1997).

In May 1983 in Bor the Anyanya II Rebellion (also known as the Second Sudanese Civil War) was started, pitting the South Sudanese rebel groups known as the Sudan People’s Liberation Movement and Army (SPLM/A) against the central government in Khartoum. The Anyanya II war was largely a continuation of the Anyanya I civil war of 1955 to 1972. Although it originated in South Sudan, the conflict spread to the Nuba Mountains, Southern Blue Nile and Darfur region. It lasted for 21 years, and is one of the longest civil wars on world record (Knozf 2013; Jooma 2011). This conflict resulted in the independence of South Sudan six years after the war ended in 2005 (Johnson 2014; Christopher 2011). Approximately 2.5 million people died as a result of war, famine and disease caused by the Anyanya II conflict. 4 million people in South Sudan were displaced at least once, and often repeatedly, during the civil war. The civilian death toll is one of the highest of any conflict.
since World War II (Johnson 2003) and was marked by a large number of human rights violations. These include slavery and mass killings (Natsios 2012). This civil war ended with the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) in Kenya in January 2005, giving South Sudanese the right to vote either for unity within Sudan or separation. In January 2011, a UN supervised Referendum on South Sudan Self-determination was conducted and an overwhelming majority of South Sudanese voted in favor of separation from united Sudan. On July 9th, 2011, South Sudan’s independence was realized, thus ending more than 190 years of marginalization and political dominance and the beginning of a transitional period led by President Salva Kiir Mayardit, the first President of the Republic of South Sudan.

In December 2013, South Sudan plunged again into civil war. How the conflict was triggered remains highly contested. The opposition groups lay responsibility on President Salva Kiir, who became suspicious of his critics’ intentions and decided to disarm officers and soldiers in his presidential guard unit who were believed to be loyal to the former vice president, Dr. Riek Machar. On their part, government officials described the conflict as an unsuccessful coup attempt by Dr. Machar in collaboration with several former cabinet ministers, who were then detained while Dr. Machar himself managed to escape. However, according to Johnson (2014), the root causes of the ongoing conflict in South Sudan can be traced back to July 2013 when President Salva Kiir sacked vice president Dr. Riek Machar, along with his entire cabinet. Other international observers believed that this conflict was triggered by a power struggle within the ruling party, the SPLM, as the party had lost vision and direction and consequently failed to genuinely deliver on the promises made during the liberation war for freedom and independence (De Waal 2014). Although both President Kiir and his deputy Dr. Machar have supporters from across South Sudan’s ethnics’ divides, recent conflict has been communal, with opposition groups targeting members of the president’s Dinka ethnic group and government soldiers attacking Machar’s Nuers (Johnson 2014). Decades of civil wars destroyed physical infrastructure and social structures and has transformed the country economically, culturally and politically. As a result of the protracted political instability in the country, South Sudan has suffered serious neglect, a lack of infrastructural development and major destruction and displacement. More than 2.5 million people have been killed and millions more have become refugees within and outside the country (OCHA 2014).

The impacts of the current conflict and decades of economic and political instability in South Sudan are quite enormous on the civilian population and INGOs staff. Many INGOs workers,
both locals and expatriates, have been caught in the crossfire leading to grave human rights abuses, and subsequently staff turnover (Eckroth 2010). According to OCHA (2014), the current political situation in South Sudan creates a chilling effects and an atmosphere of fear and uncertainty for aid workers. Such political instability continues to threaten INGOs workers’ safety and livelihoods in South Sudan. This new humanitarian crisis and existing ethnic tensions saw INGOs becoming involved in the delivery of humanitarian aid for war-affected civilians instead of national development. Although efforts to negotiate access to disputed territories where conditions for both local populations and INGOs staff are deteriorating have been initiated, they ended up doing little to save staff from the threats to their personal safety (Okpara & Kabongo 2011). Additionally, in the wake of the recent political crisis in South Sudan, which has persisted since December 2013, economic development has been dependent on the oil revenues and foreign aid. Oil export income finances about 70 percent of the total public development programs of the country, with the international NGOs funding most of the balance of the programs. Government revenues from non-oil sources of revenues finance less than 2 percent of the programs. This heavily dependence on oil revenues and foreign aid raises a number of concerns for macroeconomic management and for key development programs in South Sudan (Pinaud 2014).

### 3.3.2 The People

South Sudan like most countries in Sub-Saharan Africa is a multi-ethnic and multi-cultural nation, with more than 60 different ethnic groups, each with its own language, culture, custom, and tradition. Based on their linguistic patterns, they are classified into Nilotes, Nilo-Hamites groups, and the South-Western Sudanic groups. The vast majority of people in South Sudan speak of the Nilo-Saharan languages and Arabic, but the official language is English, and this is also fairly widely spoken (Jok 2012). In 2011, South Sudan’s population was estimated at 10-12 million, divided along eight major indigenous ethnic lines with approximately 35.5 percent Dinkas, 15 percent Nuers, 8 percent Shilluks, Anuaks and other similar groups, 8.4 percent Azandes, 8.3 percent Baris, 4.5 Lotukos, 3.1 percent Arabs, and 15.1 percent others (Knopf 2013). Figure 3.1 below explains the distributions of major indigenous ethnic groups across South Sudan.
As seen from figure 3.1 above, it is generally known that these indigenous groups are of different faith or religion. The indigenous Nilotes (Dinka, Nuer, and Shilluk) are part of a cattle culture in which livestock is the main measure of wealth and are used for bride wealth, and adhere to Christianity and Traditional African Faith, including the Dinka religion. The Nilo-Hamites peoples (Bari, Latuho, Anuak, Murle, Didinga, and Toposa) are an ethnic group of agro-pastoral herders and observe African Traditional Religions, Islam, and Christianity. This suggests that they are religiously diverse. The South-Western Sudanic groups (Azande, Madi-Muru, and the Balanda groups) are mainly small-scale farmers and traditionally practiced an African Traditional Religion, supplemented to a large extent by Christianity (Knopf 2013). The cultural and religion differences among the ethnic groups have been long recognized and the infamous ‘divide and rule’ policy of the British colonial administrations prevented the socialization of the different groups. While trying to control half of the world at the time, the British government of 1899 did not have the force to occupy Sudan. However, like other colonises across Africa, they had to institutes the ‘divide and rule’ policy in Sudan with the ultimate goal of the making Sudanese distrust, fear, and fight each other, instead of their colonizers (Johnson 2003). The ‘divide and rule’ policy separated South Sudanese provinces from the rest of Sudan and slowed down their economic and social development (Natsios 2012). The current conflict in Darfur and the increasingly dangerous situation in South Sudan are best understood as products of the same policy (De Waal 2014).
The important thing to note from this history is the differences of the three groups inhabiting South Sudan. Each group has a distinctive position within the social and economic framework. At the beginning of the 19th century, Nilotic peoples remained in the rural areas with a predominantly cattle economy and subsistence farming as means of livelihood (Jok 2012; Deng 2010). The British colonial period from 1898-1956 witnessed a dramatic social transformation of the country with movement of large numbers of the Nilo-Hamites peoples in quest for better grazing and farming land. Subsequently, the other groups of the Nilo-Hamites peoples settled in the areas which had developed into urban and commercial centers.

The South-Western Sudanic groups, on the other hand, were confined to the agricultural farming and served as fishermen and hunters. Relations among various South Sudanese ethnic groups were affected in the 19th century by the occupation of Ottoman Empire, Arabs, and eventually the British. Some ethnic groups sympathize with the occupiers and others did not, putting one ethnic group against another in the context of foreign occupations. For instance, some groups of the Nilo-Hamites and the South-Western Sudanic peoples were more accommodating to the British rule than were the Nilotes. These groups of Nilo-Hamites and the South-Western Sudanic peoples treated the resisting Nilotes as hostile, and hostility developed between the three groups as a result of their differing perceptions to the British colonialism (Johnson 2014; Tvedt 2002). The attainment of South Sudan’s independence in 2011 and the adoption of the national constitution guaranteeing justice, equality, respect for human dignity and advancement of human rights and fundamental freedoms by the South Sudanese government greatly influenced the nature of relations among these ethnic groups in modern times, although many conflicts are still running along ethnic lines; thus, reproducing past animosities.

3.3.3 Economy

South Sudan’s economy is one of the world’s weakest and most underdeveloped countries, with female-headed households constituting 60% of the poor in the smallholder agricultural sector. Most villages in the country have no electricity or running water, and its overall infrastructure is lacking, with few paved roads (World Bank 2014). Following several decades of civil war with Sudan, industry and infrastructure in landlocked South Sudan are severely underdeveloped and poverty is widespread (Jooma 2011). Subsistence agriculture provides a living for the vast majority of the population. The relative importance of agriculture is greatest in Western Equatoria, where 90 percent of the population reports
agriculture as their primary activity, and the lowest in neighboring Central Equatoria, where agriculture constitutes the principal activity for 56 percent of households (figure 3.2). The importance of agriculture decreases with household wealth, but even among the wealthiest statistical values, 57 percent of household works primarily in agriculture—with 27 percent living on wages and salaries. Agriculture constitutes the principal activity for most of the households and accounts for most of South Sudan’s economic activity (Pinaud 2014). Not surprisingly, the greater the rural population of the region, the greater the likelihood of agricultural prevalence, with exception of the Unity state which is 91 percent rural yet only 66 percent agricultural (World Bank 2014). Military expenditure is on the rise, jeopardizing the availability of resources for service delivery and capital spending on much needed infrastructure. Civil war and prolonged political conflict impact negatively on the South Sudanese economy, further resulting in higher levels of poverty and unemployment (Werker & Ding 2013). Corruption also plays major part in underdevelopment and poverty in South Sudan, in that, it permeates all sectors of the economy and all levels of the state apparatus and manifest itself through various form including grand corruption and clientelistic networks along tribal lines (Pinaud 2014).

**Figure 3.2 Percentage of population living in households whose main livelihood is agriculture and livestock, by state**

Since 2005, a year when the *Anyanya II* conflict ended with the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement between the Sudan People’s Liberation Movement (SPLM) and the Government of Sudan, South Sudan has been working with the International
Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank (WB) to implement macroeconomic reforms, including a managed float of the exchange rate and a large reserve of foreign exchange. The South Sudanese Pound (SSP) was introduced in 2011 at an initial exchange rate of 3.0 South Sudanese Pounds to the U.S. dollar. Sudan as a whole began exporting crude oil in 1999, and the economy boomed as a result of increases in oil production, high oil prices, and significant inflows of direct investment until the conflict began in 2013 (World Bank 2014). The last two years have seen political uncertainties and major changes in South Sudan. South Sudan’s gross domestic product (GDP) grew by 30.7 percent during 2009 to $2,136 per capita, an improvement over the 2.8 percent growth in 2010, but significantly below the more than 10 percent per year growth in 2011 and 2012 prior to the 2013 South Sudanese Civil War.

A continued strong performance in agriculture was affected by a broad-based slowdown in the economy and political instability. Oil production in South Sudan declined by about 20 percent after the conflict started (World Bank 2014). South Sudan is also likely to see negative growth in 2015 as the ongoing conflict and declines in national oil production and global oil prices devastate the economy (African Development Bank 2015). Twelve-month inflation stood at 61.20 percent in June 2015, reflecting the increase in international food prices, expansionary monetary policy, political instability, and poor regulatory environment. Average inflation is projected to remain at 51.9 percent (SSNBS 2015). While the oil sector continues to drive growth, international NGOs such as INGDOs play an increasingly important role in the economy of South Sudan. Overall, agriculture and international NGOs remain important as they employ 80 percent of the workforce and contribute one-third of the South Sudanese Gross Domestic Product (GDP).

### 3.3.4 High Levels of Poverty and Unemployment

The incidences of poverty and unemployment in South Sudan are very high, particularly in rural areas. The World Bank (2014) estimated that more than half of the population was living below the poverty line of $1 a day, and that almost half of those living in rural areas were surviving under humiliating poverty conditions in conflict-affected areas. The health profile of South Sudan is dominated by communicable diseases, with Malaria and childhood infections responsible for over 40 percent hospital admissions. The main causes of death, according to African Development Bank (2015) report on South Sudan were heart and diarrheal diseases. The life expectancy at birth is 59 years; the infant mortality rate is 60 per 1000 live births and the maternal mortality ratio is 55 per 100,000 live births (African
Development Bank (2015). In addition, less than 30 percent of the population has access to safe drinking water. Figure 3.3 shows the poverty headcount rate, especially the fraction of the population living below the poverty line for each state in South Sudan. The poverty rate is highest in Northern Bahr el Ghazal and lowest in Upper Nile (World Bank 2014). From 2005 to 2011, the employment situation improved for the general population, but not for the youth without basic skills and education.

Figure 3.3 Poverty and Unemployment Headcount, by state

The labor market in South Sudan is characterized by an extremely high level of short-term employment contracts, underemployment and unemployment, both in public and private sectors (Toh & Kasturi 2012). An unemployment rate increased from 15.90 percent in 2011 to 19.50 in 2014. Unemployment particularly affects unskilled youth and women. The unemployment rate for youth without basic skills is more than double the rate among educated adults. For youth and women without basic skills and education, the rate is 44.8 percent compared with 23.8 percent for adults with basic skills and education. Recent youth graduates from within South Sudan and abroad generally have difficulty finding work, especially with INGOs, because they have to first undergo training on how to adapt and deal with unfamiliar demographics, cultures, political environments and climates. A study conducted by the African Development Bank (2015) on youth unemployment in South Sudan points out that among the factors contributing to youth unemployment, skills mismatches with available positions are viewed as particularly serious challenges.
According to World Bank (2014), approximately 43 percent of the working population is living in poverty in South Sudan. Although there is no direct measure for underemployment, there is a wide consensus among scholars that income-related and skill-related underemployment is common in South Sudan, reflecting mismatch between education and the labor market. According to Toh and Kasturi (2012), young people in South Sudan lack experience or proper qualifications as most were former child soldiers who spent most of their time in the guerrilla war. In addition, their qualifications and experiences are also not in line with the economic priorities of the government and international NGOs, such as skills for the engineering, construction and masonry, and humanitarian and development sectors. This situation emphasizes the need to develop effective HRM approaches characterizing the areas of priority for both the South Sudanese government and INGOs operating in South Sudan.

Nonetheless, in the absence of reasonable people management approaches and a sound government legal and regulatory labor structure, the multinational enterprises, international NGOs, and UN agencies tend to bring skilled workers from their home countries and neighboring African countries, typically Kenya, Uganda, Ethiopia and Eritrea. Only a majority of South Sudanese are hired, usually as drivers, waiters, loaders, translators, sweepers or cashiers. According to the African Development Bank (2015), many employers in South Sudan both national and foreign complain that young people attitude toward work in unstable conditions is very poor. From the employers’ perspectives, local youth seek much better working conditions and higher salaries and benefits than are afforded by the employers. In addition, many young South Sudanese nationals see themselves as the equals and alternatives of the better-organized, more experienced and better-paid youth from neighboring Sub-Saharan African countries (African Development Bank 2015, pp. 9-10). Cultural perceptions of what represents acceptable jobs, for example, the poor perception of manual work by pastoralist communities, may also influence the employment preferences of young people in South Sudan. Furthermore, many young South Sudanese, particularly those who are taught in Arabic when South Sudan was part of the Sudan, lack proficiency in the English language, and this is also a challenge to their employment likelihoods with government, international NGOs and UN agencies operating in the country.

3.4 CONCLUSION
This chapter has provided a broad overview of the South Sudanese environment and cultural and political background, as well as the context of INGDOs. It argues that societal context
plays a major role in shaping INGDOs activities, including staff recruitment and retention approaches. Specifically, political instability may have a significant impact on the way people are recruited and retained within the INGDOs sector. The chapter also provides a theoretical basis for the further exploration of current developments involving INGDOs. Despite the seeming certainty of its delineation in the UN taxonomy of INGDOs, the nebulous nature of INGDO activity and concerns is evidenced by the broad scope encompassed by its various definitions. INGDOs’ work includes aspects of rural development, community development, and community empowerment theories, despite the theoretical distinctions among the three. It includes economic and social development in communities and neighborhoods, countries, and regions, housing assistance, and employment and livelihood creation. Also, the protection of labor and poverty alleviation would not be possible unless the necessary development expertise and counseling were not allocated for. Furthermore, developmental programs would be more effectively implemented if adverse traditionalist public opinion were not swayed by activist campaigns to inform and enlighten.

The academic literature has shown that large INGOs with high-profile and visibility will have the strongest impact among policy makers such as those in government and multinational corporations. However, those pursuing the grassroots development will be most effective if they plan and work closely with the local staff and regional workers who are most familiar with the social, economic, and political nuances of the nation and the immediate community. Much of this innate source of vital knowledge is put to waste by traditional administrative procedures that reserve for expatriates the planning and management functions of the organization (Okpara & Kabongo 2011). The long-term perspective of local staff would provide continuity and permanence to the development programs and their results, which is an improvement over the comparatively short-term goals of term-limited expatriates. The achievements of INGDOs in the developing countries where they operate are significant to the extent that governments and large multinationals have been compelled to render accountability to their stakeholders and the public in general concerning ethical practices and good corporate governance. Still INGDOs could enhance their effectiveness in the institutionalization of reform and meaningful change. This literature review provides a sound foundation for this determination in this and future academic research. The next chapter describes the methods chosen to collect and analyze data and explains the choice of research methodology.
CHAPTER FOUR
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

4.1 INTRODUCTION
This chapter describes the research methodology that has been used for this thesis, and offers reasons for the choice, field research strategy and research methods, ethical issues, and the aspects of the research approach that worked well and aspects that caused constraints and difficulties. As outlined in Chapter 1, this research aims to understand factors which are contributing to the decisions of skilled workers to leave and management approaches for retaining skilled workers within INGDOs sector in South Sudan and to explore theoretical and practical implications. Specifically, the thesis addresses the following research questions:

- What challenges influence the retention of skilled workers for INGDOs operating in conflict settings; and what are the implications of these factors for management approaches?
- What steps and approaches have managers of INGDOs in conflict settings taken to address retention of skilled workers; and how are these perceived by workers?

The research was designed to address the research questions and to be flexible enough to respond to questions and issues raised during the review of literature, the field research, and the analysis of the field research. Because of what the author want to find out regarding people’s opinions; therefore, he went for qualitative study aligned to interpretivism research paradigm. Interpretive approach necessitates a thorough description of how the study is conducted in order to put the subject matter in its social context. The present chapter is intended to do just that, to provide a description of the situation during the field visit to the participants being studied. By explaining in detail the process of the study, it is hoped that the reader can see how the current situation under investigation emerged, before turning to the discussion of the results in chapter seven. The interpretive stance upon which this study is based entails that as a citizen of South Sudan the author had prior knowledge, experience, and expertise, including language and culture, which guided the research design and emerged throughout the research processes.
The author’s prior knowledge included interactions with the INGDOs involved in the present study prior to the fieldwork, and was to become the foundation of his initial understanding of the phenomena being studied. With this initial understanding the author then decided on the type of the study (qualitative study), the number of organizations to be involved (eight INGDOs representing four types of development activities: long-term development aid, emergency relief, rural development, and advocacy), and the number of participants to be interviewed (forty participants consisting of twenty-two employees, nine managers, and nine expert practitioners). The fieldwork and the initial understanding of the phenomena improved the author’s understanding and became the basis for the follow-up interviews with participants. The result of fieldwork became the author’s final understanding upon which the present research bases its findings and conclusion. With casual conversations, mechanisms can be made to reduce the possibility of respondents simply telling the researcher what they think he wants to know. As a limitation to this approach, it must be emphasized that without adequate briefing there is a possibility that the respondents could misinterpret the author’s intentions and the whole conversation could therefore become irrelevant. To avoid this, the author provided participants with an abridged version of the research proposal, including research design, in advance of the appointment so as for them to know why the author was seeking to interview them.

4.2 THE CHOICE OF QUALITATIVE PARADIGM

The author has designed this study based primarily on a qualitative paradigm and an inductive interpretivist approach (Furlong & Marsh 2002) because of the suitability of this approach for the research objectives, as outlined in Section 1.3 in Chapter One. The approach was based on the principles of Grounded Theory (Glaser & Strauss 2009; Charmaz 2006; Corbin & Strauss 1990), and these guided data collection and analysis. As illustrated in Table 4.1 below, the underlying research philosophy guiding this study is interpretivism. Interpretivism suggests there are multiple realities, and realities can differ across time and places, and even organizations (Lapan et al. 2011; Johnson & Duberley 2000; Morgan & Smircich 1980). Interpretivism also relies heavily on naturalistic methods such as interviewing, observation and analysis of existing texts (Sandwell 2011; Schwandt 1994). According to Denzin and Lincoln (2011, p. 26), “all research is interpretive, guided by a set of beliefs and feelings about the world and how it should be understood and studied”. Creswell (2012, p. 44) described this research approach as “naturalistic inquiry” whereby reality is constructed in the minds of the individuals who participate in a natural setting and
human instrument is the medium for collecting data through the use of such methods as in-depth and semi-structured interviews, small group interviews, and field notes as opposed to non-interactive instruments as surveys and questionnaires. Table 4.1 below illustrates differences between the three research paradigms.

Table 4.1 Differences between positivism, Interpretivism and Realism

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Positivism</th>
<th>Interpretivism</th>
<th>Critical Realism</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ontology</strong></td>
<td>Reality is real and appreciative</td>
<td>Multiple local and “constructed” realities</td>
<td>Reality is “real” but only imperfectly and probabilistically apprehensible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Epistemology</strong></td>
<td><em>Objectivist:</em> Findings are true</td>
<td><em>Subjectivist:</em> Created findings</td>
<td><em>Modified Objectivist:</em> Findings are probably true</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Common Methodologies</strong></td>
<td><em>Experiments/surveys:</em> Mostly concerned with testing of theory and verification of hypotheses</td>
<td><em>Hermeneutical or dialectical:</em> Researcher is “passionate participants” within the investigated world</td>
<td>Cases studies and convergent interviews; Triangulation, interpretation is mainly qualitative, and also quantitative methods</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Adapted from Guba and Lincoln (1994)

Denzin and Lincoln (2011) stated that the constructivism is the more correct term to use when referring to the approach once known as naturalistic inquiry. Constructivism is the term regarded in the social sciences area as the more recent concept for interpretive thinking and reasoning. The interactions between the researcher and the participants contribute to the tacit knowledge constructed within the research context, as opposed to objective knowledge sourced from other quantitative data-gathering means. When using interpretive paradigm the emphasis is on the importance of the processes which lie between social structure and behavior. The central character in these processes is the person who is active in the construction of social reality (Minichiello et al. 2008, p. 33). From this view of the world, the author’s aim in undertaking this assumption is to understand retention challenges for organizations operating in a conflict setting from both employee and organizational perspectives. The author’s aim was also to gain an insight into the lived realities of the individuals working in INGDOs sector in South Sudan using individual, small group and
semi-structured interviewing methods to understand the social phenomena of staff turnover and HRM approaches for recruiting and retaining skilled workers within a conflict setting.

4.3 METHODOLOGY

The author approached this research from a qualitative interpretivist methodological perspective to illuminate the challenges and approaches influencing employee retention in the INGDOs sector. The author was inspired to draw on aspects of decolonizing methodology, a method which recognizes the limitations of the exclusive nature of knowledge that has emerged from Western ‘scientific’ approaches to research codified within ideologies such as imperialism and colonialism (Smith 1999). The justification for utilizing this approach stems from a need to articulate research practices that arise out of the specificities of epistemology and methodology rooted in survival struggles, a kind of research that is something other than a dirty word to those on the suffering side of history. A research like this is long overdue. It will be most useful for both indigenous and non-indigenous researchers in educational and non-educational institutions. It will empower indigenous researchers to undertake research which uses methods that are culturally sensitive and appropriate instead of those which they have learned about in research methods courses in universities which assume that research and research methods are culture-free and that researchers occupy some kind of moral high ground from which they can observe their subjects and make judgments about them.

Decolonizing approaches are the indigenous strategies that allow indigenous scholars to decolonize theories, develop indigenous methodologies and use indigenous epistemology (Porsanger 2010, p. 105). A decolonizing approach responds to traditional positivist approaches by attempting to re-cover, re-create, and research back by utilizing indigenous ontological and epistemological constructs (Smith 1999, p. 11). Decolonizing is also a research approach which allows researchers from non-western nations to break free from the frames of western epistemologies, which are, indeed, suited to western academic thought, but which are nevertheless foreign to non-western ways of thinking (Chilisa 2011; Smith 1999). By exploring the concept of indigenous world-views, and how power imbalances occur between these and more culturally mainstream alternatives, attention is directly to how such imbalances continue to present major challenges for HRM and organizational researchers. Research as intervention needs to be transformational by engaging and empowering the ‘silenced’ voices (Wright 2011, p. 21). Empowerment in indigenous context refers to a social action process that promotes participation of people, organization, and community in gaining
control over their lives in their community and larger society. With this perspective, ‘empowerment is not characterized as achieving power to dominate others, but rather to act with others to effect change’ (Smith 1999, p. 380).

Furthermore, decolonizing approach is a process of conducting research in such a way that the world view of those who have suffered a long history of oppression and marginalization are given space to communicate from their frame (Chilisa 2011). The use of a decolonizing approach is particularly appropriate when there is little knowledge of a research area which deals with “the questions of subjective experience and situational meaning” (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008, p. 6). A decolonizing approach provides “a better opportunity for conveying sensitivity” (Smith 1999, p. 18). As such, it helps to eliminate or reduce the distrust that individuals from ethnically diverse communities may have toward research (Chilisa 2011; Liamputtong 2010). In a country such as South Sudan that has experienced colonialism, imperialism and marginalization in its economic, political, military and academic spheres, it is important to note the parallel process that research itself plays as an intervention in the production of knowledge. As Chilisa (2011, p. 145) stated, the term ‘research’ carries with it some important connotations: intensive study of a situation and the production of knowledge in some form or another, including important ideas like informed practice.

When research is specifically designed to contribute towards social change, as this study does, the notion of research as intervention resonates even further. It is therefore necessary to recognize the role of research as intervention and to consider the means by which it is conducted as well as its overall objectives and consequences (Wright 2011, p. 110). The relational approach in indigenous research is then the recognition of the importance of family, community and connection to country of origin as places that provide sustenance, a sense of identity and meaning (Chilisa 2011). Indigenous researchers implement a relational approach to research because it is a key element of their own indigenous world-view (Smith 1999). Primarily, identity in Sub-Saharan Africa still revolves around ethnic affiliation; INGDOs managers, expatriates in particular, need to tread carefully around personal questions as conversation starters, particularly as they relate to ethnicity, which constitutes a sensitive subject in Sub-Saharan Africa. Culture is more often a source of conflict than of synergy. Cultural differences are a nuisance at best and often a disaster (Hofstede & McCrae 2004). In this study the author has summarized some guidelines and principles leading to
specific conduct toward Sub-Saharan African countries. The knowledge of these principles is not only helpful, but also critical to organizational success when operating in Africa.

Many research scholars express the need for supporting a methodological approach that foregrounds the voices of peoples being researched (Chilisa 2011; Denzin& Lincoln 2008; Smith 1999). Supporting this stance, the author used qualitative approach to the research, rather than quantitative. The rationale for adopting qualitative research approach for this study stems from the research topic and the questions the study sought to answer which mainly examine the experiences and perceptions of participants concerning staff turnover and retention of skilled workers in a conflict setting. The appropriateness of the qualitative method in this regard is its ability to analyze what actually happens in naturally occurring settings (Silverman 2006, p. 351) which facilitate the study of issues in-depth and detail (Patton 2002, p. 14). Perceptions and experiences of organizational managers, skilled workers and expert practitioners concerning staff turnover and retention in the INGDOs sector in South Sudan may vary from one person to another and from one organization to another although some similarities can be discerned. Delving into such issues as how participants perceive and interpret their workplace activities require a research approach that gives them the opportunity to express such perceptions and experiences.

In this regard, the author considered the qualitative approach as a more appropriate option to study the research problem and the questions. In addition, qualitative research emphasizes words rather than quantification (Minichiello et al. 2008, p. 8), and is based on the premise that social reality exists as meaningful interaction created by individuals and is known through understanding of the meanings people give to their human experiences (Bryman 2012, p. 366). In its epistemological position, qualitative research strategy focuses on the understanding of the social world through an examination of the interpretation of that world by its participants and again sees social properties as outcomes of interaction between individuals, rather than phenomena outside and separate from those involved in its construction (Bryman 2012; Corbin & Strauss 1990). Qualitative research approach therefore allows researchers to view events and the social world through the eyes of the people that they study. It also allows the researcher to gain access to the motives, meanings, actions and reactions of people in the context of their daily lives (Minichiello et al. 2008, p. 10).

Qualitative method is usually employed when the research is attempting to understand the phenomena under inquiry in order to develop conceptual insights rather than test hypotheses.
(Minichiello et al. 2008, p. 164). According to Denzin and Lincoln (2011, pp. 11-12), ‘a major strength of the qualitative research is that issues can be examined in detail and in-depth and data usually are collected from a few cases or individuals so findings cannot be generalized to a larger population’. Another one of the greatest strengths of the qualitative research is the ‘richness and depths of explorations and descriptions’ (Bryman 2012, p. 366). Furthermore, qualitative approaches also allow the research investigator to study identified issues in depth and detail, and the fact that data collection is not constrained by predetermined categories of analysis contributes to the depth and detail of qualitative data (Corbin & Strauss 1990). Contrary to quantitative method, qualitative research typically produces a wealth of detailed data about a much smaller number of people and cases (Patton & Appelbaum 2003).

Another key feature of qualitative approach is that the sample of participants is small in number but intensely studied and that it typically generates a large amount of information, which is coded and analyzed. Qualitative studies are also designed to make possible analytical generalizations and allow selected cases to fit with general constructs but not statistical generalization (Minichiello et al. 2008). Qualitative research is ‘inductive’, where concepts are developed from data as the research progresses. Qualitative research looks at people, groups and settings in a holistic manner (Minichiello et al. 2008, p. 127). Qualitative researchers emphasize the meaningfulness of the research and the belief that something is to be learned from all settings and groups (Cassell et al. 2006, p. 112). This gives equity to the study and gives weight to the principles and practices of social inclusive development theory. Qualitative research is flexible and while there are guidelines, there are no fixed rules. The qualitative approach suited the topic, the research questions and the context of this research very well. Flexibility was important as the field research in South Sudan was relatively unstructured.

Although as many interviews as possible were arranged prematurely, opportunities for interviews were taken as they arose. Theories, concepts and themes as the research progressed, and field data confirmed, illustrated and provided further understanding of the issues being studied. Literature relevant to staff turnover, staff retention, and the challenges facing INGDOs in South Sudan was reviewed and analyzed prior to the field research in that respect, concepts and themes had already been conceived. Existing theories had been studied and the interviews highlighted areas where these theories fitted or did not fit the interviews.
Research questions were formulated after the review of literature and prior to the field work, but ideas and concepts were developed during the whole process of the research, before, during and after the interviews. The aim of the field research was to provide rich and detailed information. While surveys would have provided quantitative data that could be statistically analyzed, surveys would not provide the deep insights that were needed to answer the research questions. Even surveys with open-ended questions cannot give the ‘richness’ and depth of qualitative research (Berg & Lune 2004). Corbin and Strauss (1990, pp. 17-18) explains this concept as a ‘trade-off’ between breadth and depth.

The dilemma of breadth and depth is not just between qualitative and quantitative research, but also within quantitative research (Patton & Appelbaum 2003). The question of sample size within the study falls within this dilemma. In this research the choice was to interview only a few managers, employees, and expert practitioners in great depth and spend many times with each of them observing their activities, or to interview a greater range of managers, employees, and expert practitioners in less depth, observing their activities for a day or less. The author chose to conduct the research in less depth and observe participants’ activities for a day or less. As Cassell et al. (2006) suggested there are not set rules about how one should decide on the depth and breadth. However, it seemed important in this research to collect data from as many INGDOs managers and employees as possible in the time available. In addition, it was important to collect data from individuals connected to and supporting the INGDOs, and those with interest, but not directly involved in the management of INGDOs, for example, expert practitioners from a variety of organizations, academia, and government in South Sudan.

According to Patton (2002, p. 186), the ‘key issue in selecting and making decisions about the appropriate groups is to decide what you want to say about something at the end of the study’. Choosing which research participants to include within the groups can be difficult. Patton (2002) further explains that sampling can take a number of forms such as choosing cases that are unusual, special, or information rich, or choosing samples that either are extremely variable or are typical. Stratified samples can also be used giving a range of types within this study. Other sampling approaches include networking, local connections, and snowball method where the first research participant suggests the second and so on or the ‘criterion’ method where research participants that meet criteria are interviewed. Participants
can be interviewed until theories are confirmed or unconfirmed, or even selected opportunistically to take advantage of situations as they occur (Baxter & Jack 2008).

Participants can be selected randomly or sometimes selected to draw attention to the study or to avoid politically sensitive areas (Myers 2013; Creswell 2012). One or a mixture of the sampling methods may be utilized to select the subjects of the research. There are no rules for sample size in qualitative research; however, what is important is that the data collected is meaningful and provides the insights to answer the research questions (Bachiochi & Weiner 2002). In this research the author used a number of qualitative approaches for selecting a sample of the respondents in each groups, and selection method varied between cohorts. However, the research participants needed to meet certain criteria to ensure that they were part of the problem being studied. They were INGDOs managers, professional workers, or experts who had some knowledge or insights into retention challenges for INGDOs operating in a conflict setting and approaches regarding retention of staff.

4.4 METHODS OF COLLECTING QUALITATIVE DATA

The main sources of data collection were interviews, documents, observation and use of field notes. Data collection mostly was conducted in Central Equatoria and Jonglei States, Republic of South Sudan. The author chose these states because many INGDOs operate there. Juba, the capital of South Sudan, is also located in Central Equatoria State and is closer to Bor, the capital of Jonglei State. In addition, the author is a citizen of South Sudan, has a professional experience there and is familiar with the locality, especially Juba and Bor respectively. The author got the ethic approval before he left for South Sudan. The author organized some of the interviews before he went to South Sudan. The author had in-depth interviews, semi-structured interviews, and individual and group interviews. Some of them were audio-recorded and some were interview notes. The author used in-depth interviewing to gain an understanding of the field and people’s experiences and perceptions of social reality through their own interpretations (Minichiello et al. 2008, p. 71). In-depth interviewing which is also known as “unstructured interviewing,” is often used to obtain a “holistic understanding” of the participants’ experiences (Berry 1999); providing the opportunity for thick description on the research topic that quantitative methods do not provide (Lapan et al. 2011). In-depth interviews ‘are repeated face-to-face encounters between the researcher and informants directed toward understanding informants’ perspectives on their lives, experiences or situation as expressed in their own words’
The author used semi-structured interviews to gather focused, qualitative textual data. A semi-structured interview is open; allowing new ideas to be brought up during the interview as a result of what the interviewee says (Lapan et al. 2011; Minichiello et al. 2008). Semi-structured interviews make it possible to gather rich data from people in various roles and situations (Myers 2013; Ashley & Boyd 2006). A researcher who uses semi-structured interviewing commonly seeks “deep” information and knowledge, usually deeper information and knowledge than sought in surveys, informal interviewing or focus groups. Semi-structured interviewing usually concerns very personal matters, such as an individual’s self, lived experience, values and decisions, occupational ideology, cultural knowledge or perspective (Johnson 2002, p. 104).

Furthermore, relevant sources such as observations, field notes, review of relevant literature and government reports, newspaper reports, departmental and organization reports were collected in addition to the interview data from organizational managers and skilled workers in INGDOs sector and expert practitioners from the variety of organizations, academia, and government in South Sudan. Research participants were thus separated into groups depending on certain characteristics that define the groups and that have implications to the research (Denzin & Lincoln 2011). For example in this research, there were three groups: managers, skilled workers such as field supervisors, team leaders, or field coordinators constituted another group. The third group included expert practitioners, who have an interest in the well-being of INGDOs, but are not directly involved in the management of these organizations. Each group required different approaches of data collection, e.g. interviews only, or interviews and observation, but while the groups are separate, they integrated to form the whole research. It was important to include these three different groups of people to provide a comprehensive view of the whole retention challenges and management approaches for retaining skilled workers in the INGDOs sector.

As the author has experience with the INGDOs sector, academic and government settings in South Sudan, participants in this phase were recruited through established networking, local connections, and through the South Sudan NGO Forum (SSNF), and were approached and selected based on their experiences, length of tenure, and knowledge about INGDOs sector in South Sudan. The author’s knowledge of local language and culture was also an advantage in addressing the cultural sensitivities of research participants. All INGDOs operating in South Sudan are members of the South Sudan NGO Forum, an independent coordinating body of
national and international NGOs that exist to serve and facilitate the work of its NGO members in order to efficiently and effectively address the humanitarian and development needs in South Sudan. An invitation to participate in this study was sent by letter and emails along with the Plain Language Statement through this forum (Appendices C and H). As a result, some research participants were located and recruited via this forum. The twenty-two research participants who took part in this phase of the research were recruited through networks, local connections, and NGOs forum.

Furthermore, snowballing, a procedure by which respondents are recruited for interviews by means of informal contact and previous acquaintances between them and the researcher was also used to assist in the recruitment of research participants. According to Minichiello et al. (2008), snowballing is a useful tool for building networks and increasing the number of research participants. However, the success of this technique depends greatly on the initial contacts and connections made. Thus, it is important to correlate with those that are popular and honorable to create more opportunities to grow, but also to create a credible and dependable reputation. As Denzin and Lincoln (2011) suggested, the primary advantage of snowballing is its success in identifying individuals from unknown, and potentially very large, populations beyond any known segments of the population. For this study, the costs to create the sample consisted of the time spent searching the web, emailing potential participants, and managing the contacts database. Contacting potential participants via email also significantly reduced individual response times, as well as the time needed between contacts (Bryman 2012, p. 381). Information about the research and the researcher’s contact details were made available and potential research participants were asked to contact the researcher if they were interested in being interviewed. Consenting participants were given the choice of being interviewed individually or in a small group, whichever is more accommodative of their busy work schedules.

Selection and recruitment play a critical role in social research as the kind of data gathered and analyzed shape the findings and conclusions drawn from the study (Bachiochi & Weiner 2002). The data gathered for social research therefore can be described as the bridge linking the research questions and the findings of the study (Minichiello et al. 2008). Group one of the data collection involves managers from the INGDOs sector. Managers were asked to share their experiences regarding employee turnover, its consequences and what their organizations are doing to retain skilled workers. These managers were those responsible for
recruitment, management approaches, and overall leadership such as general managers, project managers, and program managers. Group two of the data collection involves skilled workers from INGDOs sector. Skilled workers were asked to discuss factors influencing their decisions to stay or leave the organization. These skilled workers were individuals who have a specialized field of work, and a defined training path in order to be able to work in that specialty such as field coordinators and supervisors. Group three of the data collection involves the expert practitioners. Expert practitioners who were working at a variety of organizations, academia, and Government in South Sudan were asked to discuss their perspective on employee turnover and management approaches for retaining skilled workers in a conflict setting in South Sudan. These expert practitioners have specialized knowledge, which may be tied to workplace knowledge or personal knowledge based on experience.

The data for this study was collected between July 2013 and June 2014. Between ten to twenty INGDOs were initially approached for interviews in South Sudan, however, only eight INGDOs later participated in the research. Some of these INGDOs include both the nationally and internationally known INGDOs. The number of participants who participated in the research includes nine managers, twenty-two skilled workers, and nine sectorial experts. The exclusion criteria were that all participants were aged 18 years and over. Managers and skilled workers must have worked for at least one year in the sector, and in a position where they can provide an informed perspective about the organization’s policies and practices regarding employee retention. Research participants were South Sudanese, other African nationals, and people from other countries, also known as ‘expatriates.’ All interviews were conducted at times and locations that were convenient and appropriate to the research participants mostly in Juba and Bor, South Sudan. A good number of interviews were audio-recorded, with participants’ consent, and were approximately 40-60 minutes in length. Section 4.4.1 below discusses how the author selected and recruited INGDOs managers for this study.

**4.4.1 Group One: Semi-Structured Interviews with INGDOs Managers**

The participants recruited for this stage of the research were managers responsible for organizational policies and practices, recruitment and selection, organizational planning, and leadership in the INGDOs sector in South Sudan. This research refers to ‘managers’ as those responsible for organizational policies and practices, recruitment and selection, organizational planning and leadership. To achieve these objectives, managers from INGDOs
sector were asked to share specific experiences concerning staff turnover, its consequences and what their organizations were doing to retain skilled workers within the INGDOs sector in South Sudan. In line with the interpretivism paradigm, this study employs qualitative methods involving eight organizations in the INGDOs sector. Due to the exploratory nature of the questions and the nature of information being sought in this study, qualitative method was used to explore and gather rich in-depth data to tap into the working lives of the INGDOs managers in South Sudan. Recruitment of organizations to take part in the research was undertaken by approaching each organization, firstly through contacting the Country Director or HR Director formally, in writing with a letter of invitation to participate in the research (Appendix D). The invitation also included a copy of the research proposal outlining the objectives of the research and methods to be used. The proposal outlining what was required of the organizations and the benefits that they would gain through participating. The benefits included a report on the findings of the research conducted in their organization.

In order to gain access to managers on this important and sensitive topic, reputable organizations were approached to participate in interviews. The identified organizations had significant exposure in South Sudan for several years, i.e. have long-term operations and programs that necessitated the recruitment and retention of workforces, and have experience and familiarity with the locality. These INGDOs were identified and approached based on these criteria:

- A western INGDO working in South Sudan,
- Not a United Nations (UN) Agency
- A large INGDO of more than 100 employees across South Sudan
- Has headquarters in South Sudan
- Have a diversified workforce and;
- A developmental INGDO in orientation.

Managers were identified and selected using the following criteria: (i) working in INGDOs sector (ii) holding a position at the managerial level of an organizational hierarchy, and (iii) having at least one year work experience in the INGDOs sector. Nine managers were invited to participate in in-depth interviews, and were asked to make comments on retention challenges influencing the decisions of skilled workers to leave and the steps and approaches managers have undertaken to address the problem. The aim of this stage was to gain a greater organizational perspective and to assess any disconnect between organization’s management
and workers in relation to retention challenges and management approaches for retaining skilled workers. INGDOs which were reputable and have been working in South Sudan since 2005 were selected. Organizations were defined to be ‘reputable’ on the basis of their longevity in the country, the size of their budget, as well as the perception of the community in which they operate in about them. As a researcher, the author approached several INGDOs and conducted interviews with their directors or key people to learn more about them, in an effort to decide which to include or exclude.

The participants in this study were managers of the INGDOs working in South Sudan. Management participants were also recruited by the snowballing sampling method. The participants worked for INGDOs, including organizations whose focuses were in agriculture, food security, rural development, and education when the interviews took place. All the participants voluntarily consented to and supported the study issues. After obtaining consent from the participants, each interview was recorded to facilitate data organization. Each interview lasted approximately 40-60 minutes in length. By means of the interviews, using the researcher’s expertise in interview methodologies, the researcher sought to examine issues in-depth. All interviews were conducted during work hours either in participants’ place of work or at another appropriate location, including in the area where human resource management-related decisions was made. Some of the interviews were conducted in small group discussions, for instance, when a manager needed some staff to assist him in explaining some technical procedures. Some of the interviews took place while the author and the respondents were having meals, while others took place under the trees.

During the interviews, participants were encouraged to talk about any phenomena, including experiences and stories, associated with the study field. Research quality checks were performed twice during each interview by using similar questions as participant validations. The participants were also directed to identify previous employment at INGDOs sector prior to their description of, and self-reflection on, the study topics. If the participants did not know how to answer any interview question (s) in the beginning, the researcher guided the respondents to recall the major motives for their skilled workers’ turnover behavior. If respondents did not follow the discussion path, the researcher led them back to the topic (Minichiello et al. 2008). To reduce bias, the researcher simply reworded questions as opposed to providing suggestions for input. In a qualitative study, a limited sample size may still adequately represent a research population. For this study the sufficient sample size was
determined by data saturation (Symon & Cassell 2008). During data collection, saturation occurs when responses of the subsequent participants are the same as those of the previous participants (Lincoln 1995). Of the nine managers who participated in this study, three were females and six were males. Participants were at different managerial levels, including country directors, HR managers, operation managers, and program managers in eight INGDOs. Work experience for all participants ranged from 2 to 12 years. Basic information for the management participants is listed in table 4.2 below.

### Table 4.2 Organizational Managers’ Work Experience Profile

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Current INGDO Types</th>
<th>Current Position</th>
<th>Length of service</th>
<th>Number of Positions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Long-term Development Aid</td>
<td>Country Director</td>
<td>2-9 years</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Emergency Relief</td>
<td>HR Manager</td>
<td>3-6 years</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Rural Development</td>
<td>Program Manager</td>
<td>7-9 years</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Advocacy</td>
<td>Operations Manager</td>
<td>8-12 years</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Furthermore, relevant sources such as field notes, review of relevant literature and government reports, newspaper reports and departmental and organizational reports were collected in addition to the interview data. In total, 40 in-depth interviews, including nine with managers, ranging in length from forty-sixty minutes, were conducted. Prior to interview, each participant received a copy of the themes around which the interview would be structured, in order to give them time to reflect and prepare answers to the questions. Each of the participants also received a Plain Language Statement and a copy of the Consent Form as required by the College Human Ethics Advisory Network (CHEAN), a subsidiary of the Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC) at RMIT University (Appendix D and E).

The indicative interview topics were used in each interview in the same order (Appendix C). Research participants were also asked other questions depending on the answers given to the indicative interview topics, giving the research participants a more flexible conversational style at times. The following were the indicative interview topics or themes discussed during the interview with organizational managers:

- Nature of Staff Turnover in the organization
- Recruitment of staff
- Key factors influencing workers’ decisions to stay or leave the organization
- HRM approaches influencing the decisions of workers to stay
Organization’s management of internal and external factors in the sector
Strategies employed by organization to retain staff, and for addressing the problem of staff turnover
Whether or not some strategies are successful than others in retaining staff

From these discussions with organizational managers, a number of factors were noted as having influenced, both negatively and positively, the INGDOs’ staff recruitment and retention strategies in South Sudan. Section 4.4.2 below looks at how the author selected and recruited skilled employees working in the INGDOs sector for this study.

4.4.2 Group Two: In-depth and Small Group Interviews with Skilled Workers

The face-to-face interaction with the research participants in this study gave the author the opportunity to gather primary data about how skilled workers viewed their organizations in relation to policies and practices for recruiting and retaining them. It is also pertinent to note that the paucity of data on workers’ perceptions and experiences on employee turnover within the INGDOs sector in South Sudan made it more appropriate to gather first-hand data on the topic instead of relying on secondary data. Besides, using primary data in qualitative research brings about broader perspectives as the people being studied might view things differently from what an outsider with little contact might have expected (Bryman 2012; Corbin & Strauss 1990). These reasons informed the choice of primary data for this research.

To gain access to skilled workers on this very sensitive topic, eight organizations were identified within the INGDOs sector to participate in the second phase of this research. Only skilled workers who have worked in INGDOs sector for at least one year were identified and chosen. These skilled workers were individuals who have a specialized field of work, and a defined training path in order to be able to work in that specialty such as field coordinators, team leaders, and supervisors. To achieve this, skilled workers from INGDOs were asked to discuss factors influencing their decisions to stay or leave the organization. The exclusion criteria used to recruit skilled workers were as follows:

- Participants must be at least 18 years and above
- Must have worked in the sector for at least one year
- Must be in a position where they can provide an informed perspective about the organization’s policies and practices regarding retention of staff
- A South Sudanese, other African nationals or from other countries
The following were the indicative interview topics or themes discussed during the interview with skilled workers:

- Role in organization
- Length of time working in the organization
- Career path opportunities within the organizations
- Are there job opportunities outside their organizations
- Work-life balance
- Working relationships
- Opportunities for future development
- Aspects of HRM policies and procedures
- Intention to stay (short-term/long-term)

4.4.3 Group Three: Interviews with Expert Practitioners

This section discusses the steps and approaches the author undertook to select and recruit expert practitioners, also referred to as ‘experienced administrators,’ for this thesis. The people the author interviewed were well informed about INGDOs sector and its employment in South Sudan. In total, the author interviewed nine expert practitioners using “expert interviewing,” a technique used when conducting interviews with “experts” or “experienced administrators,” who are able to inform on a particular field under inquiry (Minichiello et al. 2008, p. 52). Expert interviewing is a field of research methods and methodology that has come to increasing prominence in recent years (Denzin & Lincoln 2011, p. 184). The notion of “experts” in research methodology refers to persons responsible for development, implementation or control of solutions, strategies or policies. Experts usually have a privileged access to information about groups of persons or decision processes and have a high level of aggregated and specific knowledge that is otherwise difficult to access. Expert interviews are usually recommended as a technique of data gathering in research fields that are new (Patton 2002, p. 110).

The term “expert” is applied to someone widely recognized as a reliable source of technique or skill whose faculty for judging or deciding rightly, justly, or wisely is accorded authority and status by their peers or the public in a specifically well distinguished domain (Minichiello et al. 2008). An expert, more generally and in particular, is a person with extensive knowledge or ability based on research, experience, or occupation and in a particular area of
study (Moore & Stokes 2012; Van den Akker 1999). Expert also implies use of qualitative judgments regarding some people being seen as perhaps better than, or superior to, others. Moreover, the idea of expert interviewing involves the formation of identities in relation to concepts of professionals and professionalism and points at the power bound up in and associated with them (Patton 2002, p. 220). Equally, the idea of experienced or elites potentially intertwines with the phenomenon of celebrity (Moore & Stokes 2012, p. 459). According to Van den Akker (1999), experts are called in for advice on their respective subject, but they do not always agree on the particulars of a field of study.

Experts interviewing, according to Mikecz (2012, p. 485), is ‘used whenever it is appropriate to treat a respondent as an expert about the topic in hand.’ Moore and Stokes (2012) stated that experts are “relatively unstudied” because of their power and ability to protect themselves from intrusion and criticism. Studies using expert, from academic, political, or social backgrounds, are quite rare; most research in social sciences involves “ordinary” individuals leading to an asymmetry in the distribution of knowledge, as they provide information about the “masses” to the experts (Denzin & Lincoln 2011). Expert-oriented studies aim to lessen this asymmetry by providing a flow of knowledge the other way. For many qualitative investigators, one of the most pressing research concerns lies in gaining access. The researcher’s success in gaining access will have a significant effect on the nature and quality of the data collected, and, ultimately, on the ‘trustworthiness of data’ (Mikecz 2012, p. 483).

This research refers to “expert practitioners” as individuals who have expertise in the management and administrative fields and have specialized knowledge, which is tied to workplace knowledge or personal knowledge based on experience whether in academia or government. Expert practitioners were interviewed in group three to obtain their perspective on employee turnover and HRM approaches for retaining skilled workers in INGDOs sector in South Sudan. The expert practitioners recruited for this stage of the research were experts in the fields of HRM, organizational strategy, leadership and training and development. Much of the literature on staff turnover and retention in the INGDOs sector in Africa is coming from Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Malawi, and Horn of Africa countries; thus this exploratory approach was needed to identify issues and factors that were relevant to the INGDOs sector in South Sudan context. The in-depth interviews with experts took place from July 2013 to
June 2014. The aim of this phase was to obtain their specific experiences concerning employee turnover and employee retention. In particular, the objectives were to:

- Identify the main challenges facing INGDOs sector in South Sudan in relation to Employee Turnover
- Identify key factors influencing skilled workers’ decisions to stay or leave, including personal, organizational, and external factors
- Identify HRM approaches related to retention of skilled workers
- Identify employee expectations across the INGDOs sector and assess if there are differences noted by the expert practitioners

Expert practitioners were individually recruited by the researcher who identified them through local connections, networking relationships, and their reputation in the mainstream media as experts in their field, and were approached and selected based on their experiences and knowledge about the INGDOs sector and its employment in South Sudan. The author’s knowledge of local language and culture was an advantage in addressing the cultural sensitivities of research participants. All research participants received either an email or a letter explaining the objectives of the research and an invitation for them to contribute their insights according to their areas of expertise. The purpose of the recruitment of the participants in this phase of the study was to provide broader expertise in the field of HRM approaches, retention and staff turnover in the INGDOs sector; thus, making the findings and recommendations from the research reasonably transferable across other communities and INGDOs sector in South Sudan and the region. The nine interviews were one-on-one interviews in nature and ranged in length from forty to sixty minutes.

4.5 CHARACTERISTICS OF STUDY PARTICIPANTS

This section looks at the demographic profiles of organizational managers, skilled workers, and expert practitioners who participated in this research, as well as the demographic characteristics of INGDOs who participated in this study.

4.5.1 Demographic Characteristics of Participating INGDOs

The participating organizations were from various INGDOs types and they included: long-term development aid, democracy promotion, emergency relief, and advocacy. The interviewed INGDOs were deemed to be large, with the number of workers over 900. The eight organizations interviewed within the INGDOs sector had employed 3640 workers,
including 2750 South Sudanese nationals and regional workers from other African countries such as Kenya, Uganda, and Ethiopia, as well as 890 expatriates from industrialized countries. It is important to note that the participating organizations had in their employment more local staff, including regional workers, than expatriates. The reason for more local staff than expatriates was due to the fact that national workers ensure that much of what the executive management and board members plan is put into action, and their knowledge of an organization’s overall programmatic strategies and capabilities, as well as the fact that they are large storehouses of information, in addition, to Government of South Sudan’s labor laws requiring all international NGOs operating in the country to vacate some of the positions for local staff to fulfil them. Some organizations did however admit that budget constraints and the nature of the industries were the determining factors for their smaller intake of expatriates. The eight organizations were selected based on the following criteria:

- A developmental organization in orientation
- A large organization with more than 150 employees across South Sudan
- Have headquarters in South Sudan
- Have a diversified workforce – comprises locals and expatriates

The reason for more local staff than expatriates was due to the fact that national workers ensure that much of what the executive management and board members plan is put into action, and their knowledge of an organization’s overall programmatic strategies and capabilities, as well as the fact that they are large storehouses of information, in addition, to Government of South Sudan’s labor laws requiring all international NGOs operating in the country to vacate some of the positions for local staff to fulfil them. These organizations did however admit that budget constraints and the nature of the industries were the determining factors for their smaller intake of expatriates. Table 4.3 below provides a profile of the nine organizations that participated in this study.
Table 4.3 Characteristics of Participating INGDOs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Current INGDO Types</th>
<th>Number of organizations</th>
<th>Size of organization (number of employees)</th>
<th>Number of Local Staff</th>
<th>Number of Expatriates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Long-term Development Aid: supporting local communities to achieve development over time</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>800</td>
<td>720</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democracy Promotion: the rights of indigenous people, equality; and fair distribution of land and resources</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>520</td>
<td>400</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emergency relief: in the wake of disasters and civil conflict</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>925</td>
<td>650</td>
<td>275</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural Development: in local communities in order to address the root causes of poverty,</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>445</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>145</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advocacy: promoting democracy and human rights by influencing decision-making processes</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>950</td>
<td>680</td>
<td>270</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.5.2 Characteristics of INGDOs Managers

The organizational managers’ experiences regarding staff turnover and retention of skilled workers in the INGDOs sector in South Sudan were the most significant assurance of a quality research outcome, and so participants were recruited and interviewed because of their knowledge and expertise related to management of INGDOs and their workforces. A total of sixteen organizational managers were identified and invited to participate in the in-depth interviews with the researcher and nine accepted the invitation. The participants consisted of (3) country directors, (2) HR managers, (2) programs managers, and (2) operations managers. They consisted of two females and seven males. In terms of their length of service with their organizations, five of the organizational managers worked with their organizations for more than five years, while four organizational managers worked with their organizations for less than five years. The majority of the participants (5) held a doctorate, (3) held advanced masters degrees, and (1) held bachelor’s degree or diploma. Table 4.4 reports the demographic data of the organizational managers’ participants.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristics</th>
<th>Number of Participants</th>
<th>Length of Service</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Invited Research Participants</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>1-2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accepted Research Participants</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1-6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20-30</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31-40</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1-2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41-50</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2-5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51-60</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2-6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2-5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1-3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Highest Qualifications</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PhD, DBA, MBBS. DJS.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MPA/JD, MBA. MSc.</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelors/Diplomas</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occupation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Country Directors</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HR Managers</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program Managers</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operation Managers</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expatriates</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6-1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local/Regional Staff</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1-2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Following on from this table above, the results of the in-depth interviews with organizational managers were reported in three ways. First, the categorical responses provided by the participants were presented in chapters five, six, and seven to enable an understanding of the key trends evident. This information was then further explored using comments provided by participants to highlight key issues on staff turnover and management approaches for retaining skilled workers in INGDOs sector in South Sudan.
4.5.3. Demographic Profiles of the Skilled Workers’ Participants

The skilled workers’ experiences and perceptions of the subject matter at hand was the most significant assurance of a quality outcome, and so research participants were identified and chosen because of their experiences and expertise related to the subject. A total of forty-five skilled and experienced workers were invited to participate in the in-depth interviews with the researcher and twenty-two accepted the invitation. The research participants consisted of ten (10) field coordinators, seven (7) team leaders, and five (5) supervisors. Sixteen (16) of the skilled staff interviewed were male and six (6) female. The majority (20) held bachelor’s degrees and advanced diplomas. Table 4.5 reports the demographic data of the skilled and experienced workers.

Table 4.5 Demographic Profiles of the Skilled Workers’ Participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristics</th>
<th>Number of Participants</th>
<th>Length of service</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Invited Research Participants</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>1-2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accepted Research Participants</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>1-2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20-30</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31-40</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1-2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41-50</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2-3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51-60</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2-5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>1-5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1-4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Highest Qualifications</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PhD, MPA/JD, MBA</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1-2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelors</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1-3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diplomas</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>1-4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occupation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Field Coordinators</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1-3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team Leaders</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1-2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supervisors: 7 Expatriates and 15 Locals or regional staff.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1-2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Majority of the research participants (15) identified themselves as local or regional staff from South Sudan and its territories, for example, Abyei and Blue Nile. The rest of the research participants (7) identified themselves as expatriates, including those from neighboring African countries such as Kenya, Uganda, and Ethiopia. Twelve (12) of the participants had worked before in INGDOs sector while ten (10) of the participants have started to work in the sector. Thirteen (13) of the skilled workers have 1-5 years of experience working in the sector. The total years of experience of the participants in INGDOs sector ranged from 1-4 years. All participants changed jobs at least once within the sector. The maximum number of job changes reported is four (4).

The length of stay within the INGDOs sector varies among the research participants. The shortest one was six months and a half and the longest stay in the sector was seventeen years. The average length of stay in the sector is twelve months. The type of employment varies from organization to organization within the sector. Participants either work in the field and headquarters or only worked in one of the locations before leaving the sector. Another variable that was noticed is participants had worked in different field locations for one organization before leaving. All participants who took part in this study had worked at some point in their career in the field in South Sudan or elsewhere in Sub-Saharan Africa. Generally, participants changed job for different reasons. In general the main factors contributing to staff turnover includes personal, organizational, and external factors, as well as the end of employment contract. However, participants in their long career have got more than one reason for their decisions to leave the organization.

4.5.4 Demographic Profiles of Expert Practitioners
The expert practitioners’ knowledge of the staff turnover and HRM approaches for retaining skilled workers in the INGDOs sector in South Sudan is the most significant assurance of a quality outcome, and so participants were recruited because of their expertise related to INGDOs sector and its employment. A total of fifteen expert practitioners were identified and invited to participate in the in-depth interviews with the researcher and nine accepted the invitation. The participants consisted of four (4) academics and five (5) directors and HR practitioners working in a variety of organizations, government, and academia in South Sudan. Six of the participants were male and three female. The majority of participants (5) held a PhD and (4) held advanced masters degrees. The results and categorical responses provided by expert participants are presented in chapters 5 and 6 to enable an understanding.
of the key trends evident, and to highlight key issues on retention challenges and management approaches for retaining skilled workers in a conflict setting. Table 4.6 reports the demographic data of the expert practitioners’ participants.

### Table 4.6 Demographic Data of the Expert Practitioners’ Participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristics</th>
<th>Number of Participants</th>
<th>Length of service</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Invited Research Participants</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>10-40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accepted Research Participants</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>8-35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Age</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-40</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8-15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41-50</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10-15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51-60</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>20-30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>61-70</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>20-35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gender</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>10-35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10-25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Highest Qualifications</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PhD</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10-30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MPA/JD, MBA</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>10-25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelors/Diplomas</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Occupation</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Directors and HR practitioners</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10-15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academics (all South Sudan Nationals)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>10-35</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Five (5) expert practitioners hold PhDs while the rest of experts (4) identified themselves as people holding masters degrees and other professional degrees such as Juris Doctorates. In terms of occupation 5 people also identified themselves as Directors and HR practitioners in federal and local governments while the rest of expert practitioners (4) identified themselves as academics from various Universities across South Sudan. Overall, many considered themselves to be South Sudan nationals and former employees of INGDOs, and therefore, are knowledgeable about the management of the INGDOs sector in South Sudan. Section 4.6 below discusses the data analysis involved in this study.
4.6 DATA ANALYSIS

Data processing and analysis is a process of inspecting, cleaning, transforming, and modelling data with the goal of discovering useful information, suggesting conclusions, and supporting decision-making (Eisenhardt 1989, p. 542). Data analysis has multiple facets and approaches, encompassing diverse techniques under a variety of names, in different business, science, and social science domains (Bazeley & Jackson 2013; Miles & Huberman 1984). Data analysis follows the conventions set by researchers such as Denzin and Lincoln (2011) and Denzin et al. (2008). In this study, data analysis involves coding of the raw data into themes, which assists in analyzing the data collected and assists in the identification and interpretation of patterns and trends. Coding analysis was used to summarize, synthesize, and sort out many observations made out of the data. Coding has become the fundamental means of developing the analysis in qualitative inquiry (Minichiello et al. 2008). Researchers use modelling and coding analysis to pull together and categorize series of otherwise discrete events, statements, and observations which they identify in the data (Charmaz 2006). For analysis purposes, the author analyzed each group separately. The data analysis approaches used in this study were inclusive of data transcribing, coding data, and data analysis. During the data analysis process the data were organized categorically and chromatically using word-file, reviewed repeatedly and continually (Lincoln & Yvonna 2009). Section 4.6.1 below describes the data transcribing approaches undertaken for this study.

4.6.1 Data Transcribing

The transcribing process is very time-consuming and meticulous as highlighted by Bryman and Bell (2007), yet it is regarded as a valuable approach since the author had a greater command of the data. All managers, employees, and expert practitioners’ interviews, a total of 40 interviews (ranging from 40-60 minutes in length) were recorded using an MP3 Player. The author carried out a word-for-word transcription and whenever required, any external notes and information gathered from the three interviewed groups and eight organizations operating in South Sudan were used to reinforce what was obtained in the interviews. Approximately between 8-10 hours were required to transcribe each interview, with the transcript length varying from a minimum of 5 pages to a maximum of 20 pages. It took approximately 2-3 months to complete the transcription process of the 40 interviews. Since some of the interviews were conducted in a mix of languages (English and local South Sudanese languages and dialects), the data was transcribed into English. This step is
necessary to facilitate the analysis process as well as to provide consistency in data transcription. To ensure validity, the author often verified translation of interview transcripts and made corrections whenever necessary. After the entire transcription process was completed, the author went through the interview transcripts again to ensure their consistency. The author used participants’ observation at the beginning stages of his research to facilitate and develop positive relationships among key informants, stakeholders, and INGOs’ gatekeepers, whose assistance and approval were needed for the study to become a reality. These relationships were essential to the logistics of setting up the study, including gaining permission from appropriate officials, and identifying and gaining access to potential study participants. The author used data collected through participant observation to improve the design of the other methods such as semi-structured interviews and small group interviews. For instance, the data helped the author in ensuring the cultural relevance and appropriateness of semi-structured and small group interviews. Participant observation data are invaluable in determining whom to recruit for the study and how best to recruit them (Minichiello et al. 2008).

Following each participant observation event, the author expanded his ‘field notes’ into rich descriptions of what he has observed. This involves transforming his raw notes into a narrative and elaborating on his initial observations, a task most conveniently done using computer or hand (Lincoln & Yvonna 2009). Field notes, later converted into computer files, are often the only way to document certain participant observation activities such as informal or spontaneous interviews, observations, and generally moving about in the field (Bachiochi & Weiner 2002). In the case of this study, the author was expanding his notes while in South Sudan using hand. Eventually when the author arrived back in Australia, all his field notes were typed into computer fields using a word file. The notebook and hard copy of the typed data were then stored in a secure location. A document analysis was conducted on each staff retention/staff turnover document for each INGDO as organization’s text are one aspect of the ‘sense making’ activities through which people construct, sustain, contest and change their sense of social reality (Patton 2002, p. 289). Documents written over the last ten years including websites, HR policies, and publications of all the organizations were analyzed using structural analysis. Structural analysis looks into the ways in which the narratives are structured and what the language in the stories does both on the textual as well as the cultural level (Charmaz 2006, p. 112). The information generated by observations, field notes, and documents were described and summarized. Furthermore, the relationship
was sought between information and specific research questions. Implications for policy or practice were derived from the data and interpretation provided.

4.6.2 Data Coding

Coding is the process of identifying justification statements and developing conceptual categories. Before data coding began, the two research questions were examined to determine the best possible way in which to analyze the data. Here the data analysis was performed using a combination of open coding (Corbin & Strauss 1990) and thematic coding (Baxter & Jack 2008; Bachiochi & Weiner 2002). This approach was appropriate because it provides a flexible method of data analysis and allows for researchers with various methodological backgrounds to engage in data analysis (Braun & Clarke 2006), and allows multiple theories to be applied to analysis across a variety of epistemologies (Johnson & Duberley 2000). Subsequently, the data coding process continued with open coding and thematic coding as explained in sections 4.6.2.1 and 4.6.2.2 below.

4.6.2.1 Open Coding

Open coding is the process of breaking down, comparing, conceptualizing, and categorizing data (Berg & Lune 2004; Bachiochi & Weiner 2002). Such coding was realized in this study by comparing each argument, event, quote, and instance gathered during the data collection for similarities and differences. To analyze the retention challenges and HRM approaches encountered by research participants, open coding was employed based on the guideline proposed by Strauss and Corbin (1998, p.101). By using the open coding, categories along with their properties and dimensions were extracted from the raw data. The process of coding is an iterative process where researcher detects expressive statements in data and the relationship between them is evaluated (DeLone & McLean 2003). Additionally, it is also appropriate to revise some coding categories during the analysis stage, which requires a researcher to revisit the data already coded. The author followed several steps to code the first question; to identify the challenges that INGDOs operating in a conflict setting face in retaining skilled workers. Furthermore, all the printed and ‘document transcripts’ were organized and stored in the relevant files for easy retrieval. In the open coding process, the transcripts (based on individual participant) were printed out. Then the author read through the whole transcript to obtain an overview of the interview content. Section 4.6.2.2 below presents thematic coding.
4.6.2.2 Thematic Coding

To analyze research question two—the HRM approaches for retaining skilled workers and skilled workers’ perceptions of these management approaches in the INGDOs sector—the data were analyzed by using a thematic analysis. Thematic analysis is one of the predominant techniques used for qualitative data analysis (Ashley & Boyd 2006). Thematic coding is the process of searching, identifying, exploring codes and themes that emerge as important to the description of a phenomenon (Sandwell 2011). It is realized through careful reading and re-reading of the data (Liampoutong 2010). The thematic coding approach the author used in this study is based on the approach suggested by Boyatzis (1998). According to Boyatzis (1998, p. 213), “the encoding requires an explicit ‘code’ that maybe a list of themes”. A theme is a pattern found in information that describes and interprets aspects of the phenomena in which the researcher is interested (Ashley & Boyd 2006).

The initial conceptual framework served as the original template for identifying themes for the analysis. When going through the data, new findings that could redefine the initial template were added. Then the modified categories were described further and additional categories and sub-categories that have emerged have been added. “Other category” is created for any concept that could not be categorized in any of the themes. Then the researcher compared their results (Miles & Huberman 1994) and discussed each observation until an agreement is reached (Denzin & Lincoln 2011). As Creswell (2012, p. 118) suggested, codes can emerge from data that is unexpected; thereby assisting researchers in identifying potential codes that were not initially pertinent to the study. Table 4.7 below illustrates phases of thematic analysis.

**Table 4.7 Phases of Thematic Analysis**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phase</th>
<th>Process</th>
<th>Results</th>
<th>Reflective Journal Entries</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Phase 1</td>
<td>Read and re-read data in order to become familiar with what the data entails, paying specific attention to patterns that occur.</td>
<td>Preliminary “start” codes and detailed notes.</td>
<td>List start codes in journal, along with a description of what each code means and the source of the code.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phase 2</td>
<td>Generate the initial codes by documenting where and how patterns occur. This happens through data reduction where the researcher collapses data into labels in order to create categories</td>
<td>Comprehensive codes of how data answers research question.</td>
<td>Provide detailed information as to how and why codes were combined, what questions the researcher is asking of the data, and how codes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
for more efficient analysis. Data complication is also completed here. This involves the researcher making inferences about what the codes mean.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phase 3</th>
<th>Combine codes into overarching themes that accurately depict the data. It is important in developing themes that the researcher describes exactly what the themes mean, even if the theme does not seem to “fit.” The researcher should also describe what is missing from the analysis.</th>
<th>List of candidate themes for further analysis.</th>
<th>Reflexivity journals need to note how the codes were interpreted and combined to form themes.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Phase 4</td>
<td>In this stage, the researcher looks at how the themes support the data and the overarching theoretical perspective. If the analysis seems incomplete, the researcher needs to go back and find what is missing.</td>
<td>Coherent recognition of how themes are patterned to tell an accurate story about the data.</td>
<td>Notes need to include the process of understanding themes and how they fit together with the given codes. Answers to the research questions and data-driven questions need to be abundantly complex and well-supported by the data.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phase 5</td>
<td>The researcher needs to define what each theme is, which aspects of data are being captured, and what is interesting about the themes.</td>
<td>A comprehensive analysis of what the themes contribute to understanding the data.</td>
<td>The researcher should describe each theme within a few sentences.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phase 6</td>
<td>When the researchers write the report, they must decide which themes make meaningful contributions to understanding what is going on within the data. Researchers should also conduct “member checking.” This is where the researchers go back to the sample at hand to see if their description is an accurate representation.</td>
<td>A thick description of the results</td>
<td>Note why particular themes are more useful at making contributions and understanding what is going on within the data set. Describe the process of choosing the way in which the results would be reported.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:** Adapted from Eisenhardt (1989, p. 18).

### 4.7 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Most academic researchers who discuss qualitative research design address the importance of ethical considerations (Creswell 2012; Denzin & Lincoln 2011). Ethics in research is required to define the legality of what to do, or what “moral” research procedure should be used
According to Bryman and Bell (2007, p. 127), “ethical issues cannot be ignored, in that they relate directly to integrity of piece of research and the discipline that are involved.” Researchers need to comply with certain ethical codes of conduct, such as obtaining informed consent, protecting respondents from harm and risk and allowing for free choice. Participants must also have their confidentiality and anonymity protected (Bryman & Bell 2007). Ethical issues arising from this research included gaining consent from all participants, designing a research schedule that accommodates workers and managers in lieu of their busy working schedule, the varying selection process of participants of all groups of the research, the security of data, and ensuring the identification of the participating INGDOs remain undisclosed in the reporting of the findings. Ethics is an area of importance in research underpinning the validity of the result (Miles & Huberman 1994). Ethics has important implications for the negotiation of access to people and organizations and the collection of data (Saunders & Thornhil 2009). RMIT University has clear and rigorous guidelines for conducting research. All groups involved in the research process were approached and interviewed in accordance with the guidelines set out by the University, and ethics committee approval was sought and granted (Ethics Approval Number 1000529).

The semi-structured interviews with organizational managers was classified as low risk due to the nature of the inquiry and the information being sought from the participants and the personal nature of the research directly relating to their experiences regarding staff turnover, its consequences and what their organizations were doing to keep their skilled workers retained in the INGDOs sector in South Sudan. Semi-structured interview sessions were held with organizational managers in appropriate locations mostly in Juba and Bor, South Sudan. Interviews were audio-recorded, with participants’ consent, and were ranging from 40-60 minutes in length. Privacy of individuals was maintained throughout this research, and participants were advised that they would not be identified in any publication arising from the project. Participants were also advised that their information would be analyzed with help of word-file. The interviews were transcribed by the researcher. All organizational managers who participated all received a Plain Language Statement and a letter outlining objectives of the research and the methods to be used (Appendices B and E). All organizational managers were required to sign a consent form, stipulating that they were comfortable sharing their experiences in relation to staff turnover in the INGDOs sector in South Sudan, and that their identity would remain anonymous.
Group two involved in-depth and small group interviews with skilled workers and was also classified as low risk due to the nature of the inquiry and the information being sought from the participants and the personal nature of the research directly relating to their experiences, perceptions, and factors influencing their decisions to stay or leave the INGDOs sector in South Sudan. The ethics application required that a formal letter be sent to participants informing them of the purpose of the research. The letter outlined the objectives of the research and the potential benefits for the participants and their organizations, as well as the methods to be used (see Appendices C and E). All research participants were recruited through networking, local connections, and through the South Sudan NGO Forum, and were approached and selected based on their experiences and knowledge about the INGDOs in South Sudan. Consenting research participants were invited to participate in an in-depth interview to be conducted in their organization and were advised that their participation was voluntary and that they may withdraw from the research at any time.

Group three involved in-depth interviews with expert practitioners, also known as “experienced administrators,” and was also classified as a low level of risk due to the nature of the information being sought by the researcher. In group three of this research, the expert practitioners’ names and organizations were not disclosed in the findings. Expert practitioners were asked to share their knowledge about INGDOs’ staff turnover and HRM approaches for retaining skilled workers in South Sudan. The participants’ voices were recorded on digital audio-recorder and transcribed by the researcher. Participants were advised prior to the interview that the interviews would be recorded. All participants under the ethical guidelines and the qualitative approach were given the option to view the transcripts. However, no participants contacted the researcher over the duration of this research to access this option.

Word-file program, as a plain text configuration, was used to code and organize the interview transcripts. All hard data gathered from organizations was securely locked in a cabinet and soft data from participants in a password protected computer in the School of Management at RMIT University. Data was saved on the University Network System as practicable as the system provides a high level of manageable security and data integrity, provides secure remote access, and was backed up on a regular basis. All electronic data was stored in secure folders e.g. password protected or hidden folders with a selected user group. The expert practitioners who participated were all required to sign a consent form stipulating that they were comfortable with sharing their experiences in this research; all expert practitioners
agreed to share their experiences in this research. Identifying the participants of this group was necessary due to the positions they hold and their reputation as being a reliable source of knowledge in their areas of expertise. Participation in group one was voluntary and no payment was made to any of the participants for their time. Interviews were conducted at a range of sites around Juba and Bor at the convenience of the research participants.

At the end of each interview, the author thanked each participant and gave him/her an explanation concerning the benefits associated with participation he or she would gain through participating in this research. The benefits included a report on the findings of the research conducted in their organizations on an important and somewhat under researched area in the INGDOs sector in South Sudan. These benefits may have encouraged the participants to agree to participate, however, after speaking with the managers, skilled workers and expert practitioners; all commented on their excitement about being involved in such current and interesting research as the key reason they chose to participate. All participants agreed that there may be no personal benefit; however, participants would benefit from the knowledge created and insight gained from the research. Majority of the interviews were conducted on-site within the organizations, mainly to ensure ease of travel and convenience for the research participants.

4.8 CHALLENGES AND LIMITATIONS

Because of the fragile security and political conditions in South Sudan, the author would divide the research period into four periods: pre-referendum, November 2010 to early January 2011; post-referendum, mid-January 2011 to early July 2011; and post-independence; early July 2011 to December 2012, early January 2013 to 2016; the return to civil war in South Sudan. The author commenced his field work in July 2013, focusing on establishing a base of operation and familiarizing himself with main INGDOs actors in rural and urban areas. For reason of access and cost, the author chose to remain, on and off, in Juba, the capital of South Sudan, and where the UN and other INGOs maintain their head offices. The author also had a frequent visit to Bor, the author’s hometown and the capital of Jonglei State, where many INGOs are also headquartered. The author remained in South Sudan until September 2013. Throughout the author’s research period, he travelled extensively, including many areas in Central Equatoria and Jonglei states.

Seasonal considerations required pre-planning. During the rainy seasons, travel throughout South Sudan is extremely difficult. Roads become impassable and flights are in high demand.
For this reason, during periods when movement was restricted by these challenges, attempts were made to be based in areas adjacent to the field locations, as well as areas with a significant presence of international, local, and regional aid and development workers. South Sudan offers a challenging environment for the author like many other researchers. Furthermore, there were many problems of access, thus making the research somewhat not straightforward. The time the author was in South Sudan was also the time of simmering tensions within the SPLM party, the ruling party in South Sudan. Some INGOs leaders had to leave the country as a result of these tensions and substitutes had to be arranged. Some people left the country without notifying the author of their leaving. Others prematurely changed interview schedules without advising the author. The author later came to know about it while at the compound gates.

Furthermore, although some managers were very cooperative enough, especially in keeping up with their appointments and in arranging substitutes for interviews; in many cases, rescheduling and substitutes were not made. Putting to one side the infrastructural shortages, the need to be innovative and resilient in the face of poor transport, limited communications, the almost-constant presence of armed militias, what the author found most difficult was moving between the different tribal groups. Sometimes the author had to go through villages where there was growing animosity towards the Dinka tribe, the largest and dominant tribe in South Sudan. As a member of the Dinka tribe, navigating through these animosities and hatred was also a challenge for the author. All research has limitations and this study is no exception. Limitations refer to threats to internal validity that reflect weaknesses in the study (Minichiello et al. 2008). Being qualitative in nature, the generalizability of the findings is limited. Expert practitioners, also known as experienced administrators, were from a variety of locally-based organizations, academia, and government in South Sudan, while skilled workers and organizational managers from only INGDOs sector were invited to participate in the study, limiting the study participants and potential findings. Given the timeframe to conduct this research, study findings represent only two states of the Republic of South Sudan (Central Equatoria and Jonglei States respectively) and may not represent the views of organizational managers and skilled workers in other states of the Republic of South Sudan.

During the fieldwork period (July to September 2013), many interviewees emphasized the importance of visiting other states of South Sudan to learn about the experiences of INGDOs in those states. Learning about the varied conditions and retention approaches of INGDOs in
other states, and particularly in rural areas is critical for strengthening the findings and making the study inclusive. Another challenge of the study is that managers and employees from those organizations focusing on long-term development aid, emergency preparedness and response, and post-conflict reconstruction assistance were consulted. Involving more organizations, including those organizations with focus on environmental protection, democracy promotion; the rights of indigenous people, equality; and fair distribution of land and natural resources, as well as community-based organizations, could have probably broadened the net of enquiry to enrich this research and make the findings more representative of the situation in South Sudan. Another possible limitation is that, in some instances, the interviews took place under the tree or while having meals or drinks. This made note-taking difficult, but was important in terms of cultural acceptance.

Another technical consideration that needs to be explained was the use of different languages and dialects between the interviews and the analysis. Although many of the interviews were conducted in English, some interviews were conducted using local South Sudanese languages, and as a result, some meanings may have been lost during their translation to English, either naturally because not every word in local South Sudanese languages has a synonym in English, or because the researcher may have used his interpretation of English-speaking audiences for the present research to invoke certain meanings that may not be exactly equivalent to their original. Cultural factors also added to the challenges of using interviews in South Sudan. South Sudanese are known for their eagerness to please visitors and some of the information obtained may have been to provide what the participants perceived as being what the researcher wanted to know, rather than the full truth of the situation. In addition, when questioned, it is unusual for South Sudanese, particularly the Nilotic peoples of the Nile Valley, to say ‘I don’t know.’ Rather it is more acceptable to offer an explanation that could answer the questions.

Furthermore, another limitation is in the use of audio-recorder. Two important points, however, should be made here. First of all, the use of audio-recorder greatly reduced participants’ ability to express their views openly and this was particularly true for those who were not comfortable with their words being permanently preserved possibly for replay to their superiors. Although in the course of time the researcher gained more trust from participants, there were occasions when assuring the participants that the recorded information would not be used other than for the study failed to “open up” the participants. In
such cases, the researcher switched off the audio-recorder and only wrote down the main points emerging from the interviews. Another limitation of the qualitative data was the small sample size. The sample size was 40 participants. Although small, it is not uncommon for interpretivist qualitative research to be conducted with limited quantities of managers, employees, and expert practitioners (Creswell 2012; Sandwell 2011). Like other qualitative studies, the findings of this study are only representative of the experiences and perceptions of its participants. Even though this limits the findings of the study, the depth and richness of the participants’ experiences provided meaning and insight into the issue of retention challenges and HRM approaches for INGDOs operating in a conflict context.

Although the author was able to contact more than 100 participants after spending only three months in South Sudan, more in-depth work is needed to gain a comprehensive view of why professional workers leave/stay in conflict settings. Furthermore, the unfolding/prevailing political uncertainty in South Sudan made civil servants, NGO workers and everyone feel uneasy about recorded information. This feeling was not always openly expressed and on several occasions the researcher had to intuitively decide to switch off the audio-recorder. Based on these limitations, the study recommends a similar research be conducted in future in other regions of South Sudan that were not covered by this study. By doing so, the study would enhance its role in influencing public policies and practices in South Sudan through research. Generally, despite these limitations, findings from the current research provide useful information that could be applied in everyday work situations.

**4.9 ROLE OF THE RESEARCHER**

Over the course of the research period, participants came from a wide range of development organizations. The international presence in conflict-ridden South Sudan is dominated by UN agencies, relief and development NGOs, which employ large numbers of local and regional workers, particularly Ethiopians, Eritreans, Ugandans, and Kenyans. The majority of interviews conducted were small group and semi-structured. While small group interviews provide insights into the attitudes, perceptions and opinions of participants (Miles & Huberman 1994), semi-structured interviews allow new ideas to be brought up during the interviews as a result of what the interviewee says (Sandwell 2011). Small group and structured interviews are often used when the researcher wants to delve deeply into a topic and to understand thoroughly the answers provided (Creswell 2013). The author selected the individual participants on the basis of appropriateness to the research question, availability
and accessibility. These included individuals working in urban and rural areas, both from among locals, regional workers, and expatriates. While in South Sudan, the author conducted formal and informal interviews and engaged in observation as it related to the retention challenges and HRM approaches for retaining skilled workers within the INGDO sector in a region considered to pose a relatively high level of retention challenges. Apart from internal conflict and the militarized state of the fledgling nation, South Sudan is among the most underdeveloped countries in the world. There are few roads and supply of basic goods and services is inadequate. The author’s fieldwork in South Sudan focused on understanding retention challenges for development NGOs operating in a conflict setting and how these organizations have managed to address these challenges and retained skilled workers within that context. While these retention challenges are in themselves of greater significance, the author’s position within relationships was an important fact in facilitating his movement through what is a very challenging environment.

The international NGOs are highly interdependent in South Sudan. In order to facilitate their mission, the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) has created and sustains a parallel transport system. This includes fixed-wing aircraft, transport and rapid-response helicopters and vehicles for both heavy good transport and the movement of UN and INGOs staff. Access to this transport system is controlled and reserved for employees of UN and INGOs or other groups recognized by the UNMISS as contributing to humanitarian and developmental assistance in South Sudan, for example, those with Western passports, government officials, and employees of government ministries and parliamentarians. Subsequently, as an American passport holder, chartering a UN flight from Juba to Bor was realized. By entering into the social relationships with INGOs staff, the author was able to access transport from Juba to the field locations and meet some people to interview. Depending on levels of perceived retention challenges, the author was also able to observe the varied responses by individuals and organizations. In this interdependent environment, the author benefited from a perception that he, as an investigator, had insight or knowledge which was of use to development interests. Following on from this, access to INGDOs and their staff was not a problem at some points. The author was able to meet a wide range of individuals, including managers in senior-level positions; local workers of South Sudanese origin and regional workers from East Africa in both lower and higher-level positions. In addition to the social relationships which develop in such circumstances, the author attributed the ease of access to interest in the research question and a widespread preoccupation with
issues surrounding retention challenges for organizations operating in conflict-ridden South Sudan in general.

Because of the nature of engagement in conflict-ridden areas, people are somewhat thrown together in both professional and social spaces. There were very few instances where employees required clearance from head offices before engaging in conversation or interviews with me. Those instances included one organization in Juba, during a time of heightened security concerns, and another organization in Bor. In the case of one organization in Juba, time constraints made it impossible for the clearance to be given before the author’s scheduled departure from Juba. Generally, in both instances the author was granted permission to interview senior-level and supporting staff. The author carried out his research using both in-depth and semi-structured interviews. In the majority of cases where individuals answered his questions, the main factors in acquiring access were networking, professional connections, and snowball sampling, a non-probability sampling technique where existing study subjects recruit future subjects from among their acquaintances (Sandwell 2011; Minichiello et al. 2008). Some of the sites of contact included planes within South Sudan; at airports while waiting for flights; at transport hubs, while waiting for land cruisers or buses; at INGDOs compounds and organization residences in main areas of the towns; and where pre-planning had been carried out, in offices and compounds.

In addition to interviews, the author engaged in participants’ observations, including accompanying INGDOs staff on road journeys to remote field sites, and spending some times at employees’ residences. A large part of the author’s research elide on interviews and contacts with nationals from South Sudan, regional workers from East Africa and other African countries, and expatriates—mainly from industrialized countries. It is important to note that there was high turnover of expatriates during the period that the author was in the region. Following the January 2011 and subsequent independence in July of the same year, a large proportion of the expatriate INGDOs staff in South Sudan came to the end of their contracts. Generally, national staff and some regional workers remain in place. The author also acquired materials and communications on retention challenges and security-related matters, including daily situation reports, classified documents relating to incidences of insecurity and advisories aimed at the staff of UN agencies and INGOs. In all cases, individuals working within the UN or INGOs provide the author with free access to those documents.
The strength of the author’s approach to acquiring information was that it enabled him to meet a fairly wide spectrum of different kinds of INGOs, including long-established western-based groups, but also smaller, particularly religious groups, and church-affiliated communities which are permanently working in South Sudan. It was normal for individuals whom the author met by chance to recommend that he speak with others within their social or professional networks. In this way, the author was able to constantly build on the number of his interviewees. The author would add that in several instances he met and spoke with specific individuals many times over the course of his stay in South Sudan, maintaining regular contact with them and engaging in updates and earlier discussions. Another obvious strength was that many participants were invited through networking and professional connections as the author was a citizen of South Sudan, who has some professional experience there and familiar with the locality. As a person who grew up in Africa, the author experienced the strong colonizing and assimilating forces that most other indigenous people experienced. As a university lecturer in South Sudan the author had many experiences typical of what is discussed throughout this study. As such the author has experienced much of what is discussed in this research in many different capacities and settings. The author’s personal experience and reactions to these forces give him insight into what issues are necessary to focus upon for this study in terms of INGDOs’ policies and practices for retaining skilled workers, particularly local workers. The weakness of this approach, relying on networking, local connections, and snowball sampling, is that the author’s interviews reflect more individual rather than organizational responses to retention challenges and management approaches for retaining skilled workers in a conflict setting. Given the nature of relief and development work in South Sudan, however, people find that they must often take personal responsibility for decisions and responses to conditions in the field. In this way, their connection with the organizational headquarters can be at times distanced in more ways than mere geography.

4.10 KEY OBSERVATIONS
The main objective of discussing the author’s field observations in South Sudan is to make a reader gain an understanding of physical, social, cultural, and economic contexts in which study participants live in South Sudan, the relationships among and between people, contexts, ideas, norms, and events; and people’s behaviors and activities. As recommended by Creswell (2012) and Minichiello et al. (2008), the author used field notes and observation to
sketch ideas, identify patterns and themes in interviews as they were being conducted, note contextual details from the research sites, reflected throughout the research process and note initial impressions during the observation and interview process. During the author’s travels across South Sudan and during informal meetings with INGDOs managers and employees and other stakeholders such as expert practitioners, he was able to see evidence of the issues discussed in the interviews and he reflected on these observations in his field notes as well. Observational field notes also allowed the author to account for the many retention challenges and HRM approaches that have been undertaken within the eight INGDOs the author interviewed in South Sudan for this research.

The author also used participant observation techniques through his role as an “insider” with comprehensive knowledge of the local context. The author’s role as an academic staff member at Dr. John Garang University afforded him a unique opportunity to conduct the study as an insider of the group. While in South Sudan, the author observed that all participants engaged in honest and open conversations with him and expressed and shared their perspectives concerning why aid workers leave or stay in a conflict setting. Managers were open and honest in sharing their experiences in relation to staff turnover, its consequences and what their organizations were doing to retain skilled workers. Employees were also open and honest in discussing factors influencing their decisions to stay or leave the INGDOs sector. For their part, expert practitioners working in academia, government and the variety of organizations in South Sudan also shared their perspectives on factors contributing to high staff turnover and HRM policies and practices for retaining skilled workers in the INGDOs sector in South Sudan. However, one of the distinctive things the author observed from experts is that most of them were former employees of international NGOs in South Sudan and elsewhere, and as a result, they provided mixed impression concerning factors contributing to decision to stay or leave. Nonetheless, this may be because former employees are unlikely to give a hundred percent approval of the organizations for which they no longer work. The author was particularly encouraged by participants, especially local workers and experts, to play a role as an agent of change to help organizations operating in South Sudan to succeed in their quest for sustainable development assistance and hoped that the results of the findings could be brought to the attention of top management to improve staff retention in South Sudan for the benefit of all stakeholders: managers, employees, organizations, and national government.
Other important factors which the author believe to be contributing to high staff turnover, particularly for expatriates working in South Sudan, but which none of the participants had raised, included political interference, government’s repressive policies towards foreign workers, and difficulties with obtaining work visas and travel permits. Regarding political interference, the author observed that INGDOs were particularly concerned about the intrusion of local politicians and civic leaders in their activities, particularly activities pertaining to recruitment and selection in the sector. What the author learned from the field was that managers had to take every opening or vacancy to the South Sudanese Ministry of Labor for approval before they can commence recruitment and hiring. In addition to this scrutiny and lengthy approval process, organizations were pressured by the government officials to recruit and employ people they know without undergoing proper screening and established assessment process. What the author learned in the field is that this practice was particularly true for local employees because local politicians believed that if they can put their relatives in key INGOs positions, they can ease off the burden of sharing their salaries with extended family members every month. Local politicians also see INGOs workforce as a potential grooming ground for relatives. For example, if a local politician wants to put a relative in a key government position in the near future, the best places to start with is INGOs since these organizations train people well and equip them with the necessary skills and knowledge to be successful in a government post.

Generally, INGOs employment in South Sudan is used as a stepping stone to a top government position and recruitment and promotion were observed through media reporting and government documents to take place on the basis of nepotism and personal relationship with the local politicians, government officials, or other influential persons. The issue of nepotism in South Sudan makes it difficult for INGOs to find experienced and qualified candidates owing to the fact that government officials are always eager to push INGOs to employ members of family and friends. The problem of nepotism consequently makes operation in South Sudan even harder for expatriate managers and makes it difficult for them to find qualified and experienced workers who can easily cope with extreme security situations and difficult working conditions in the country, especially in the cases where their practices are heavily influenced by local authorities. Indeed, when someone is granted a job because of connection with the government official rather than purely based on credentials and experience, the service that person renders to the organization may be inferior.
Another issue that participants did not raise is government’s repressive policies towards foreign workers. In regard to repressive policies towards foreign workers, the author observed during field research that the South Sudanese Government had plans to institute a policy requiring all foreign workers working in South Sudan to leave; therefore, vacating jobs that South Sudanese have the necessary skills to fill. Even though the South Sudan government claimed that the policies are intended for regulating and facilitating the activities of INGOs in the country, many observers feared that these policies are meant to monitor and restrict the functioning of INGOs and their staff in the country. Furthermore, the author believes that these repressive government policies may have negative consequences on civilians affected by the recent conflict who are depending heavily on aid agencies to provide basic services and life-saving assistance. Although the author observed these undemocratic policies to be impacting negatively on organizations operating in South Sudan and their retention approaches, none of the participants raised these issues during the interviews. However, the author believes the main possible reason to explain this may be due to the fact that these repressive policies were considered as “looming threats” by the interviewed organizations which became realities after the data collection. The other possible reason why these retention challenges were not raised by participants during the interviews may be due to fear of being at loggerheads with the government as a result of criticizing government policies. Private as well as public criticism of government policies by international NGOs had in the past resulted in de-registration, their bank accounts frozen, assets repossessed and their names forwarded to the Criminal Investigations Department (CID) for investigation and, as a result, the participants might have been particularly wary of falling into the government trap. In other words, many aid organizations feared that if they speak publicly about the government policies they would jeopardize their operational access to the populations in need. Unsurprisingly, INGDOs managers were unwilling to discuss their views regarding government policies and its impact on their operations in South Sudan.

Still further difficulties that the author observed, but which the interviewees preferred not to discuss were challenges in obtaining work visas and travel permits in South Sudan. With respect to obtaining work visas and travel permits in South Sudan, the author noted that it was difficult for expatriates to obtain work visas and travel permits in a timely manner. The author also observed that expatriates were not able to access rebel-held territories, and if they did they did it with extra care. The author also observed that international staff had to register for travel permits twice, one in Juba and also in the areas where they worked, especially in
the case of rebel-held areas. In particular, Westerners, mainly United States, British and Australian citizens were generally given more scrutiny, although no nationality is guaranteed immediate approval of a visa in South Sudan. This strict scrutiny is perhaps due to the South Sudan government’s recent allegations that some Western countries were providing support to rebel groups and other political groups accused of plotting to overthrow the government in 2013. In addition, the South Sudanese government has become increasingly frustrated with the West after it refused to accept its assertion that the ongoing conflict was triggered by a failed coup attempt in December 2013. The many differences between the South Sudanese government and Western countries have spilled over to INGOs and resulted in some government officials viewing INGOs from the West as conspiratorial actors working on half of Western powers. This explains why Western-based INGOs trying to provide aid assistance in rebels-held areas are often denied access and given massive delays in the processing of their travel permits in South Sudan. Apart from international staff, it was also observed that regional workers from neighboring African countries had also experienced increased constraints regarding access, work visas, and travel permits in South Sudan. In addition, it was also observed that South Sudanese work and travel visas were expensive and difficult to acquire, especially for nationalities that were not part of the East African Community (EAC) bloc. This suggests that there was a tendency in South Sudan to grant visas much faster to those employees whom their countries where members of the EAC.

In contrast, the author’s personal experience and observations pointed out that many of the local populations considered the notion of special scrutiny for expatriates and regional workers as a good strategy, claiming that it makes the government aware of the person coming into the country and for what purpose. However, although some expatriates and regional workers might have perceived difficulties in their work in South Sudan, personal experience suggests that South Sudan is not dissimilar to other conflict-ridden countries, for example, Darfur, Iraq and Afghanistan where movements of aid workers has been excessively restricted. In South Sudan, international NGOs and their projects are highly regarded both at the national and grassroots levels. This means that some of these challenges are not as difficult and challenging as perceived by some expatriates and regional workers, simply because some of these issues can be controlled and influenced in a positive way by organizations. Finally, the author believe aid agencies are more likely to be overcome by those factors which they do not have control and influence over them, for example, security.
conditions, government policies and political interference, than by those factors that they can easily influence, for example, difficulties in obtaining work visas and travel permits.

4.11 CONCLUSION

This chapter explained the approach and philosophy of the research and the paradigm undertaken in this study. It also explained the research methodology approach used in collecting the data. The objective of this research was to understand factors contributing to staff turnover and HRM approaches for attracting and retaining professional aid workers within the INGDO sector and help address questions of retention of skilled workers in a conflict setting, in particular South Sudan. The research employed an interpretive paradigm that is aligned with a qualitative approach to bring about a holistic and valid account of the current reality faced by both organizational managers and skilled workers with regard to staff turnover in the INGDOs sector in South Sudan. The next chapter explores the challenges which are contributing to the decisions of skilled workers to leave the INGDOs sector, focusing on the perspective opinions of INGDOs managers and skilled workers, as well as experts from the variety of organizations, academia, and government in South Sudan.
CHAPTER FIVE
UNDERSTANDING THE CHALLENGES FOR
RETAINING SKILLED WORKERS IN A
CONFLICT SETTING

5.1 INTRODUCTION
This Chapter differs from Chapter six, in that; it paints a very bleak picture of hopelessness and despair. The purpose of this chapter is to understand the challenges of retaining skilled workers in a conflict setting, South Sudan in particular. From the data, particularly the interviews with managers, skilled workers, and expert practitioners, there were seven pronounced categories of challenges that influenced retention of skilled workers in the INGDOs sector in South Sudan. These challenges emerging from the data are represented by physical security conditions, which refers to deteriorating security conditions and violence that has characterized the fledgling nation of South Sudan, poor living and working conditions, workload and burnout due to nature of work, short-term contracts resulting from lack of financial resources and donor funding conditionalities, elements pertaining to the combination or interactions of social and cultural habits resulting from cultural and language barrier, lack of relief equipment and medical supplies, and tensions between expatriates and local staff resulting from differences in lifestyles and living standards. The findings also revealed that even if funding continues to flow to the sector from donors there are other barriers to staff retention in the INGDOs sector in South Sudan, for example, ethnicity—not understanding the local context and remoteness.

In addition to those seven challenges discussed above, poor housing and the absence of basic social amenities such as water and electricity, distance from home, lack of better schools for the kids, separation from family and friends, difficulties obtaining working visas and travel permits, lack of healthcare and sanitation were also considered to negatively influence staff retention, mainly for expatriates, in South Sudan. Other observed challenges which appear to be for organizations although, not necessarily related to retaining staff, is that after the data collection, the country plunged into civil war and expatriates, including South Sudanese nationals with western passports, left the country or unsafe areas. This chapter examines
these challenges to measure the extent to which they affect INGDOs in a conflict setting, thereby impacting on staff retention in South Sudan. This analysis and understanding of these challenges is important to the extent that INGDOs can be more vigilant of their work environment, and where possible either adapt to the changes and challenges or manipulate the work environment to meet their organizational objectives and goals. These major challenges, based on the research framework presented in Chapter Two and responses provided by managers, employees, and expert practitioners from the variety of organizations, academia, and government, as well as author’s field notes and observations, are identified and presented in section 5.2 and its sub-headings below.

5.2 CHALLENGES AFFECTING RETENTION OF SKILLED WORKERS
In terms of challenges affecting retention of skilled workers within the INGDOs sector in South Sudan, it was established that challenges included the security conditions, poor working and living conditions, workload, short-term contracts, socio-cultural factors, and division between expatriates and local staff. Much of the data available on these issues was obtained from in-depth interviews with organizational managers, skilled workers, and expert practitioners, as well as field observations. Other information that was looked at included documents such as annual reports; progress reports and funds appeal documents. Organizational managers explained the situations in some of the places they had worked, and how their overall strategies, including management approaches for retaining skilled workers, were affected by these challenges in the conflict settings in South Sudan.

All international NGOs operating in the country are required to comply with the employment laws of South Sudan. In South Sudan, the parliament has not yet passed a labor law. Currently, the 1997 Labor Law from Sudan is used as a reference point, although it exact legal status is unclear. Although the Government of South Sudan is developing its own Labor Law, it is not known when this is likely to be passed. Recruitment by INGDOs in South Sudan is subject to a degree of government oversight and involvement that may be unfamiliar to them. When seeking to recruit an employee it is standard practice to have the job adverts endorsed by the Ministry of Labor, Public Service and Human Resource Management (MOLHRM) and the South Sudan Relief and Rehabilitation Commission (SSRRC). Some people among the three groups interviewed also noted that other greatest challenges were political interference and donor politics. Since 2005 a large number of INGDOs have closed their offices in South Sudan after clashes with the government. A good number of projects
closed while the lucky ones were taken over by other donors like USAID and DFID. Where projects were closed, people lost their jobs. Some INGDOs left because they clashed with government when they pointed out cases of corruption and lack of transparency in government.

In 2011, for example, the government banned some INGOs activities in the country, particularly those activities related to human rights. The government felt that building the capacity of human rights NGOs is equivalent in seriousness to strengthening opposition parties thereby threatening its own survival. In addition, the South Sudanese Government (SSG) has introduced the NGOs Bill and an NGO Board, leading to a more regressive environment for international NGOs. Some INGOs managers feel that these potential regulations are meant to control and manipulate their activities in the young country. Trends like the ones discussed above are the source of staff instability in the INGDOs sector in South Sudan. Apart from these challenges discussed above, the republic of South Sudan is under a Transitional Constitution and operates under a federal system in which government powers and responsibilities are shared between the national government, ten states governments and local government. Since independence, South Sudan has struggled with the enormity of establishing an independent state. The long conflict left the geographically large country with extreme poor infrastructure, the responsibility to integrate large refugee populations and manage relations between tribal communities within South Sudan.

As more of these factors are discussed in sections 5.2.1, 5.2.2, 5.2.3, 5.2.4, 5.2.5, 5.2.6 and 5.2.7 below, some of the challenges described by the three interviewed groups as hindering operations and effectiveness of international NGOs in South Sudan include the absence of laws and regulations; the lack of clarity regarding the authority of different entities of government; and inconsistency in the application of rules that do exist (OCHA 2014). Often what is ‘law’ in South Sudan is contained in government instructions, circulars, directives, and letters rather than statues promulgated by parliament. Locating these documents and confirming their currency is one of the other key challenges of operating in South Sudan. Each of these challenges is discussed below.

5.2.1 Challenging Security Conditions

The physical security conditions in this study refer to insecurity that has compromised operations of both UN agencies and International Non-Governmental Development Organizations (INGDOs) in South Sudan. Security conditions have been intolerable for many
years now and violence has called into serious question the viability of any substantial ongoing staff retention efforts in the region. At a specific level, much of the security issues are now beyond Government of South Sudan’s control and virtually no international staffs remain in Jonglei, Upper Nile, and Unity States, where the security situation is volatile and unpredictable. On a more general level, however, the security condition in South Sudan includes circumstances in places other than those an aid organization is directly working in, and addresses broader issues than those specific to aid organizations. Threats are everywhere as lawlessness and a deliberate chaotic violence are widespread. Other stressing problems are related to inter-communal cattle raids, robberies and armed groups that defected from the SPLA to the opposition groups.

Some of the political situations that had affected staff retention and the work of relief and development NGOs in general included the civil war and fighting among tribal groups. There are also increasingly violent confrontations between rogue militia forces and South Sudan’s own security forces and local police. Opportunistic banditry has grown steadily and become a deeply debilitating threat to INGDOs’ operations. Fighting among Nilotic tribal groups, for example, Dinka and Nuer, and other minority groups like Murle has been constant for a number of years, and has contributed steadily to instability and violence in South Sudan. For example, the 2013-2014 violence between the Dinka elements of the Presidential Guard and the Nuer elements of former Vice-President Dr. Riek Machar has been the main engine of displacement in the region, killing more than 10,000 people, and displacing 865,000 people, including some 740,000 people within South Sudan and 123,000 people who have fled to Kenya, Uganda, and Ethiopia (OCHA 2014). In addition to widespread displacements, mass killings, sexual violence, and other war crimes have emerged from the recent round of violence. Insecurity has impacted the capacity of the UN and other organizations such INGDOs to provide aid to those displaced and affected by the conflict as their staff usually get abused. Both government forces and rebels have reportedly stolen equipment and supplies from international NGOs’ storage facilities. These challenges have also heightened concerns by INGDOs on the security in South Sudan, and questions arose from expert participants as to whether any productive long-term retention strategies in the conflict settings were likely.

Generally, the collapse of government, conflicts, large population movements due to insecurity in their own neighborhoods or the destruction of infrastructure not only made aid work difficult, but staff retention at greater risk as well. Often, long-term staff retention
strategies and skills development activities had to be suspended to enable the provision of the immediate humanitarian assistance demanded by such situations. Accordingly, interviewed managers, employees, and expert practitioners broadly agreed that the problem with these man-made security conditions is that they also cause people to lose their traditional coping strategies that have helped them survive in the conflict settings. These security conditions also jeopardise the success of other long-term development projects, and threaten the long-term stay of workers involved in development work. Violence against INGDOs workers, assets and premises, especially theft and looting also remain a major challenge for those posted outside the capital, Juba. Economically motivated attacks on aid convoys carrying goods threaten staff care activities, particularly during the dry season when road are accessible and busy.

I believe issues related to security conditions in this country trigger the decision to leave for many of our staff. It’s really difficult for staff to work in unsafe environment. When they go to the remote villages to provide assistance they will do it in a hurry because they want to get back to the base as soon as they can. Sometimes at night in the field, when staffs are sleeping, they are attacked. Some staffs from our agency have lost their lives. Others have been injured (MNGT09).

Recently, South Sudan has been mired in a violent political and ethnic conflict, with no clear end in sight. Civil Society has been torn apart by the conflict, as well as society at large. Development and humanitarian organizations are facing increased pressures from the national military and other armed groups, while supplies have been looted and aid workers have been killed (Global Witness 2013). Advocacy organizations also have to deal with interference from government agencies. The space for engaging government on issues relating to human rights and fundamental freedoms had been shrinking for many years and the conflict has closed much of the space that was left. The conflict has also affected funding cycles. International donors are rethinking their approach to development and relief assistance and this has made it hard for INGOs to plan ahead. Most projects, particularly those in conflict zones, have come to standstill. In support of the above discussion and the earlier statement from one of the management participants, an employee participant shared her experience as illustrated in the following quote:

Targeted violence against INGOs workers has increased in the past several years in South Sudan despite HR managers’ best approaches to strengthen operational security and training opportunities. The majority of security related incidents, for example, kidnappings in the field do not end in the victim’s death, but with a negotiated release, with a small portion of rescues and escapes (EM01).
Many of the expert practitioners that the researcher interacted with in South Sudan and which had knowledge about INGDOs operations in the country expressed their disappointment at the outbreak of armed conflict not long after the country attained independence in 2011. The researcher heard from many experts expressing their unhappiness with the security conditions and political instability in South Sudan, all of which have immensely contributed to the failure of INGDOs to attract and retain competent workers. One expert captures this aptly:

I think factors contributing to insecurity are many in South Sudan and kidnappings aimed at expatriates remain higher than for local staff, although local staff remains in the vast majority of victims in the country (EXP04).

As acknowledged in the Global Witness survey on the decades of civil war in South Sudan that left two and half a million dead, which has also become the subject of concern and discussion within the INGDOs sector, one management participant stated that in essence, the conflict affects all INGOs operations and staff retention strategies in South Sudan:

Although our interventions and improvements efforts such as workshops for learning how to manage stress may have prevented workers from experiencing [occupational] burnout...I think there had been a high turnover in the sector overall and it had been brought about by political instability in South Sudan....this has resulted in common stress factors and turnover for our staff (MGNT05).

Overall, as seen from the statement above, there was consensus among all three groups interviewed that factors relating to security conditions influenced the retention of skilled workers. Participants expressed concerns about the physical safety of aid workers in their workplaces. Lack of safety in both the working environment and en route to and from work was cited as one of the main challenges that affected staff retention. Field sites security was reportedly not vigilant, with incidents of violence being perpetrated in front of security personnel. Workers’ personal possessions were not safe, with instances of possessions and valuables being stolen at workers’ stations, duty rooms and even from inside workers’ lockers. In regard to security situation in South Sudan, there were similarities between managers, staffs, and expert practitioners as shown below:

Security and safety is a major concern for everyone here. Aid workers of all categories are in constant fear of being attacked on duty and on their way to the base or home...But despite the insecurity prevailing in many parts of South Sudan, I believe the INGOs are still present in many areas and have maintained a flexible approach to field work, so as to be able to carry out their activities if and when security permits them to do so (EXP06).

Security situations affect everything we do here. The night curfew has also impacted field staff. This is tough because our staff cannot go any place after work. They can’t go meet friends for a cup of tea or socialize with other agency staff working in the
area. Not having an outlet for socialization after work is a major contributor to staff turnover (MNGT01).

I leave my first job with an INGO due to end of contract, but I am about to let go this current job because of extreme insecurity in the place where I am stationed in. Insecurity is a true challenge that requires us to act now rather than later! (EM22).

Furthermore, interference in development activities, including the politicization of aid and its attempted diversion continue to affect areas hit by seasonal violence, including cattle-raiding and natural disasters. INGDOs workers, especially those posted in rural communities continue to see restrictions place upon entry of staff or good into the countryside, as well as restrictions of movement within the country. Harassment and intimidation of INGDOs workers by national and state authorities continue to include regular arrest or detention, arbitrary or illegal taxation, and interference into management approaches related to recruitment and selection processes and administrative policies. There are also well-known incidences of INGDOs staff being kidnapped or killed in South Sudan at times and this leads to discontent and demotivation among skilled workers.

In the context of South Sudan, lack of adequate physical infrastructure is one of the major bottlenecks standing in the way of retaining skilled workers. Also, political conflict and persistent violence are the major considerations in the construction of security levels, and in determining when to stay and when to leave in South Sudan. Management and employee participants stated that since independence in 2011, South Sudan has been in a violent political and ethnical conflict, with no clear end in sight. Civil society has been torn apart by the conflict, as has society at large. Humanitarian and development NGOs are facing increased pressure from the national military and other form of armed groups, while equipment and supplies have been looted and aid workers have been killed. Development organizations also have to deal with interference in their recruitment and employment activities from government agencies. The way of engaging government on issues relating to human rights and fundamental freedoms had been shrinking for many years and the conflict has closed off much of the space that was left. The conflict has also influenced funding cycles. In regard to security situation in South Sudan and its impact on staff retention, several of the research participants, managers and employees, in particular, broadly agreed that working in the context of such insecurity places a huge amount of pressure on development aid workers and often results in a high turnover of staff. The following quotes illustrated this:

One of the biggest challenges for our staff in this country [South Sudan], particularly field staff, is their safety. The security threats in this country include rapes and other
forms of violence, domestic and community violence, armed attacks and robbery, violence within and between national groups, and confrontations with local populations. Ensuring the safety of our staff when they are threatened with harm has consequently been a major preoccupation of this organization and an important component of our field activities (MNGT04).

The current security situation in South Sudan is very risky in terms of staff safety. It is unstable and unpredictable. People coping strategies are being undermined by intensifying conflict and limited pre-deployment programs due to limited financial resources from donors. No one knows what will happen in coming months or years as the conflict intensifies (MNGT07).

Security concerns weigh heavily on the field staff working in places like Jonglei. There has been a problem with banditry; however, the violence and attacks against development aid workers have only increased. Although [Organization’s name] is fortunate that we have lost no staff, it would be unwise to underestimate the magnitude of the problem (EM16).

Some participants further commented that, on the level of security threats and its severity in the INGDOs sector, expatriates were better off than local workers. South Sudan has struggled with these issues and other recurrence inter-communal violence for decades. Ethnic groups have a history of rivalry over access to water and grazing land. Many groups have easy access to arms. As a consequent, youth from all communities have conducted revenge retribution for past grievances. As discussed earlier, South Sudan’s army and police are unable to provide adequate security to prevent this violence. In Jonglei state, for instance, these dynamics were complicated by an armed rebellion from David Yau Yau, a Murle separatist who waged war on government from 2010-2013. On security, participants were broadly divided as locals believed that security conditions were major concerns, but suggested that expatriates were more secured than locals. Unlike expatriates, regional staffs from neigboring African countries feel equally threatened. Similarly, this also applies to perceptions of risks, acceptable behavior and thresholds of acceptable risk-taking by each group, but particularly by local and regional workers.

The findings from the interviews data revealed that many of the local staff members thought the case of South Sudan was different to other challenging environments where expatriates and international NGOs alike were seen as colonizers and imperialists and therefore became victims. Rising criminality in urban areas however affects all categories of staff; however, some risks are mitigated by defensive living and the local staff thought that expatriates navigate between these challenges quite nicely than local and regional staffs, driving between compounds, accommodations and restaurants. Local and regional workers equally feel insure
in their work in South Sudan and feel unsafe in any work outside the headquarters or capital, Juba, in comparison to their expatriate counterparts. They explained that it was much safer for them during the North-South civil war than now in post-independence South Sudan, simply, because independence has brought with it multiple difficult challenges for South Sudan and its people. One employee participant observed that.

The risk as national staff; when it’s a kind of tribal conflict, even if you are part of the problem or not, you will be affected... Those who are innocent will also be affected, those are the fears we often suffer here. I am working here, but if my tribe gets into conflict, I will be subject to persecution (EM19).

This was supported by another one indigenous staff member who stated that another vital factor that could create difficulties for staff retention, in addition, to deteriorating security conditions is the politics of ethnic domination or ethnic discrimination in South Sudan. If one sees the current structure of the staff in the number of international NGOs, it is interesting to note that key managerial posts are dominated by biggest tribes, for example, the Dinka, the Nuer, the Zande, and the Bari people of the Nile Valley. Despite the end of the civil war in January 2005, the security situation in South Sudan remain uncertain and protests and violence clashes between oppositions groups and clan factions continue to occur sporadically across the country, but they are not affecting expatriates the same way they are affecting local and regional workers because local communities perceived them as aid providers and helpers, rather than occupiers and exploiters. One employee respondent captures this aptly:

Foreigners feel safe here, but for us [locals], we face all problems. We are exposed to robberies and so many things. We live in a fenced and guarded living accommodation, but incidences still happen and people afraid at night.

Based on field notes information, another national staff confirmed this finding noting that, needless to say, South Sudan is not the expatriate destination that it once was. Although some international NGOs are expatriates who left South Sudan at the height of the civil war have slowly trickled back, the situation remain uncertain and jobs are not guaranteed. Expatriates seeking work opportunities in South Sudan should consider their options carefully and continue to monitor development closely. Although a Christian country, South Sudan is a conservative society in which nightlife is limited and alcohol consumption is banned in some places and eating out is nowhere near as frivolous an experience as in the Western world. Despite this view, it was observed that insecurity was a major threat to local and regional workers than it is the case for westerners, mainly due to tribal rivalry. One employee participant (EM03) explained that war in South Sudan is within and that foreigners, were more respected by local communities than locals originating from South Sudan. This
employee provides an example in Jonglei State where an INGDO cannot send an employee who is originally from a Dinka tribe to a Murle area because of fear of retribution, but only a Westerner or any other African national can be permitted to go. Because he is from Kapoeta, further on the Kenya border with South Sudan, he believes he can be posted in Dinka or Murle areas, but not to Chukudum, because of the tribal problems between his tribe and that of Didinga Hills. He concluded that South Sudan is not like other countries because expatriates are not targeted.

These comments above show how the security conditions in South Sudan were not liked by all participants. Participants noted that following the Comprehensive Peace Agreement, the January 2011 referendum, and the independence from Sudan in July 2011, life-threatening security conditions still persist in many parts of South Sudan. Faced with a multiplicity of challenges that are enormous both in scale and complexity, the new and fragile government of South Sudan is struggling to respond due to limited institutional capacity, lack of basic infrastructure and extreme insecurity. Independence has brought increased expectations and young government is expected to show progress in political and security sector reform, and support the needs of conflict-affected populations including returnees, displaced populations and resident communities. However, as many of the senior managers with experience from both South Sudan and abroad put it, development aid is one of the world’s most dangerous professions and that people working in the development sector in developing countries often face unceasing demands that are unsatisfiable, which can be life-threatening and cause intention to leave as well. The quote below reflects examples of people’s experiences and attitudes toward security conditions in South Sudan:

Security conditions push staff to leave. In the future I would like to see a process in hiring where there is focus on hiring field workers that understand self-care and workplace wellness and resilience. We want people who can maintain wellness in a stressful environment. I suggest asking questions of interviewees for a position in the field about their coping skills and how do they take care of themselves. I think such questions should be built into the interview process in the future (MNGT02).

Agreeing with the above statement is one expert practitioner (EXP01), who explained that people are working within the INGDOs sector in South Sudan in a distressing context, which can be life-threatening and that people are filled with a core fear of personal disintegration. This expert also stated that INGDOs workers can be caught in the middle of cross-fire and caught between ideologies, which can be difficult to make sense of and this leaves INGDOs workers, particularly skilled and experienced workers, distressed and it’s always difficult for
senior managers to take practical steps to remedy the situation. This expert also explained that many staffs return from the field with psychological problems, which also impact on their physical health. In order to reduce the risk of staff suffering burnout, this expert suggested that organizations need systems and boundaries in place. In conclusion, this expert concluded that there should be security guidelines covering all these aspects in the sector.

South Sudan is a developing country and one that is still engaging in a devastating conflict. One thing is certain, South Sudan will not suit someone looking for a vibrant modern country, replete with cultural, retail and nightlife opportunities. Added to this, the uncertain security situation is certainly hindrance to all categories of aid workers, including expatriates seeking to live and work in South Sudan. The finding from section 5.2.1 shows that in South Sudan, major violence against aid organizations’ workers is increasingly concentrated in a number of extremely insecure areas. In this study, the researcher explores why that is the case in South Sudan. The study has examined these issues, the areas where skilled workers’ turnover continue despite HR department’s best practices to strengthen operational security and training opportunities in the sector. However, some managers suggested that, in the future, they would like to see a process in hiring where there is focus on hiring field workers that understand self-care and workplace wellness and resilience as a strategy to prevent work-related casualties. However, the potential problem to this strategy would be nepotism. Local politicians in South Sudan usually interfere in aid agencies recruitment and employment processes in an effort to see their relatives and people of their interests employed irrespective of whether or not they have proper qualifications or work experience.

Managers spoke of how they have observed a growing security concerns for their employees in South Sudan and felt that interventions and improvements efforts such as training workshops for learning how to manage stress in physical and psychological aspect and social-cognitive processes, were helpful. Like managers, employees also noted the increase in rampant insecurity as a major contributor to staff turnover in the work environment. Experts simultaneously acknowledged that the increase in the number of militia attacks, and fighting involving armed opposition groups and government-aligned militias in South Sudan has continued to grow and change the demographic make-up of the INGDOs workforce, mainly in all categories of employments. This increase is partly due to greater insecurity at the field locations and headquarters and the number of factors actively involved. Overall, participants from the three cohorts described their experiences suggesting that working environment and
the way organizations now operate impact on staff retention, including an employee’s affinity to an organization. Section 5.2.2 below discusses poor living and working conditions contributing to the decisions of skilled workers to leave an organization in South Sudan.

5.2.2 Poor Living/Working Conditions

This section discusses poor living and working conditions, and burnout due to nature of work and how these challenges have been impacting on staff retention in the conflict settings. South Sudan’s physical environment and lack of infrastructure continue to pose significant challenges for INGDOs strategies, including retention strategies. With only 363 kilometres of paved road in a country approximately the size of New South Wales, Australia, reaching communities in need by land can be a lengthy process, especially during the rainy season when eighty percent of the roads become impassable. This means that posting workers and maintain them in such remote areas is nearly impossible. Another issue highlighted by research participants as contributing to poor working condition; hence staff turnover, is poor communication within the sector. The majority of INGDOs operating in South Sudan have little or no access to reliable email and internet connections; they received almost no literature on development issues and are generally out of touch with issues of global, regional and national importance. Poor networking was also identified by many research participants as another challenge contributing to staff turnover. It is the cause of duplication of efforts, conflicting strategies at community level, a lack of learning from experience and an inability of INGDOs to address local structure causes of poverty, deprivation and under-development. Expert practitioners also asserted that competition for resources also undermines the reputation of the development sector and the effectiveness of INGDOs activities at community level. As a result there is a great deal of suspicion among INGDOs, secrecy and lack of transparency. Employee participants also noted that some INGDOs intervene at community level without any community mapping and implement projects without due regard to ongoing community initiatives.

Furthermore, expert practitioners indicated that conditions in the workplace influence skilled workers’ intentions to leave their organizations. Experts also believed that skilled workers’ shortages with resultant heavy workload, excessive mandatory overtime, the unsatisfactory physical state of field offices, without basic resources and equipment, and demands of beneficiaries by management, local authorities, and beneficiaries made it almost impossible for skilled workers to function effectively, prompting their decisions to leave their
organizations. Work permit and residency visas (*Iqamah*) absolutely must be arranged before taking up employment in South Sudan. Poor health and lack of well-being programs in the sector, as well as the lack of rigorous evaluations associated with those programs were also underpinning reasons for skilled workers leaving the INGDOs sector in South Sudan.

Poor health, housing, dangerousness of work, all have their influences on those who experience them every day, as do diseases and insecure environments. The stress of living in a difficult situation carries over into many other areas of life (MNGT09).

One expert echoed that although South Sudan was slowly emerging from the over twenty years of civil war and decades of political and social instability, it plunged again into conflict in late 2013. Living and working conditions in such rural areas are very tough and often remuneration packages do not compensate for the hardship. In rural South Sudan most INGDOs run facilities are little more than a rundown mud tukul, an indigenous African style cone-shaped mud hut, usually with a thatched roof, found in eastern and north-eastern Africa. Relief equipment and medical supplies are sporadic and so many aid workers cannot even necessarily provide assistance to those who come seeking help. For those workers who have got used to living in bigger towns, such as expatriates, it can be difficult to readjust to living in small village where water, sanitation and electricity may be non-existent.

I believe working conditions are quite difficult in South Sudan than anywhere else in the region. With so many communities to serve, some of them very, very poor, staffs feel they are not really giving good quality care. They are exhausted and therefore some feel they would rather leave. I think some people might not be interested in some areas because of possibility of physical harm (EXP04).

While organizations very rapidly find solutions for providing many of these things to their staff, through generators, and water purification systems, the conditions in some postings can be distinctly challenging. Common perception among experts was that employees leave the sector mainly because of challenges such as poor living and working conditions in the country. Experts called for the South Sudanese Government, at its various levels, to do more in order to tackle these issues, especially issues related to poor networks, and infrastructure. Interviewed employees stated that they may be paid well above public servants, but the reality is that much development work takes place in some of the more challenging locations across South Sudan. In emergencies aid workers may occasionally be called on to live in a tent or share a small room with co-workers, more frequently they may live in the same house or compound as colleagues. They may not have reliable access to the normal amenities of the Western world like electricity, hot and cold running water, reliable heat and cooling, and the freedom of movement to explore at their leisure. In relation to poor
working and living conditions in South Sudan, employee participants broadly shared their similarities that it is continual exposure to a challenging work environment, for example, living in another culture and language set up; the length of time that an individual spent in the field, and witnessing suffering of the people that increased risk for turnover in the sector.

The living and working conditions in this country are the worst I have ever seen. The poor infrastructure are also adding to the already bad living conditions in South Sudan and are only set to get worse every year due to armed conflict (EM09).

Poor working conditions are tough to deal with in South Sudan, especially in the earlier phase of the career. As a national staff, I think the main challenge for us is the poor working conditions followed by the end of contracts (EM18).

Te töö ebaï ejëïk eköe lêër nî piïr rac yic...man ye köc biyic cöök jëël... ku ye anuan dit tau ne wuž yith wuöök man kör buk göö jal eya ne kerde ye piire [The nature of the context indeed leads to worsening conditions in which international staff leave, putting exceptional burden on us who are also looking to leave these intolerable working conditions] (EM15).

In the context of South Sudan, the physical environment was important. As a new nation, South Sudan is building of its institutions from scratch, with core administrative structures and mechanisms of political representation beginning to emerge. The government is still struggling to provide basic services for the majority of the population. Since the country’s independence in 2011, high inflation has been affecting the economy, which remains relatively underdeveloped. Industry and infrastructure in landlocked South Sudan remain limited, imposing prohibitive costs on the procurement and delivery of relief and poverty alleviation items and other operational activities. Rains and annual flooding make large parts of the country inaccessible by road between June and November each year. During an observation session in the field, the researcher found that lack of financial resources and equipment and supplies, for example, medical supplies and workplace first aid kits, was a challenge and also a factor contributing to poor working conditions for these INGDOs operating in South Sudan. INGDOs were expressing difficulty in finding sufficient, appropriate and continuous funding for their programs. They find accessing donors as challenging as dealing with their funding conditions. They perceived there to be certain groups of stakeholders and organizations that control access to donor funds. They have limited resource mobilization partners and are often not looking for funds that are available locally, preferring to wait for overseas donors to provide funding.
There was also a high dependence on donors and a tendency to shift interventions to match donor priorities. An expert practitioner (EXP03) from one of the local universities and Director of one of the church-based development organizations in South Sudan explained that aid organizations need to replace old, dysfunctional equipment in order to make their workers feel safe and supported. He blames the managers for making the field work very unattractive. He concluded that skilled workers do not feel safe working in unsafe working environment and that lack of financial resources resulting from tough donor funding requirements also makes development sector’s work unsafe and unwanted, not by all expatriates and regional workers, but by all categories of employees working in the development sector in South Sudan. The findings from section 5.2.2 revealed that poor living and working conditions were challenging for INGDOs workers and that even if funding continues, there are other barriers to employee retention in the INGDOs sector in South Sudan. These include ethnicity, not speaking the local language, remoteness, and other similar security and political environmental factors. The role of South Sudanese political parties in shaping INGDOs policies, including management approaches, was also significant. Section 5.2.3 below presents high workload as one of the restraining forces affecting staff retention within the INGDOs sector in South Sudan.

5.2.3 Long and Inconvenient Working Hours

Although managers have a level of control over workload unlike security situation which is very different issue, high workload within the sector was found as another major challenge influencing skills retention in the conflict settings in South Sudan. Generally it was found that field offices were busier than other locations. The managers and skilled workers explained that while in sector the most significant sources of job stress for field staff is heavy workload. However, on the issue of heavy workload in the sector some expert practitioners cautioned the choice of inflexible working hours, long shifts and mandatory overtime. They also felt that older workers were reportedly feeling the strain of long hours, forcing them to retire earlier than they had intended to while younger ones were reportedly unhappy with shifts as these impacted negatively on their family and social lives.

While they empathize with both skilled workers and the managers as a whole, they declared that these conditions will not change sooner. With rising political, economic and environmental instability, a growing number of the South Sudan’s citizens are becoming increasingly dependent on INGDOs assistance for survival and community development-
related initiatives. According to South Sudan National Bureau of Statistics (SSNBS 2015), there are well over 15,000 paid INGOs aid workers, along with hundreds of volunteers, providing aid across the ten states of South Sudan in the form of poverty alleviation and relief operations. These people live and work in some of the most hostile and dangerous remote areas. Working in such environment comes at a very high cost to the aid workers’ physical and psychological welfare. Working long hours in high-risk conditions, they make decisions in life-and-death situations that affect many. Struggling with a demand for relief and development aid supplied greater than the resources available, aid workers often face greater morale challenges that result from high levels of stress.

Work schedules, inflexible hours, long shifts and mandatory overtime cause disillusionment, influencing skilled workers to look for other jobs. In South Sudan, a lack of training, together with the inability to attend where it is available because of staff shortages or heavy workload is a another factor in staff turnover. Moreover, staff shortages, taken together with young people’s outbursts and the sense of isolation and vulnerability experienced in providing relief and development care, serve only to compound the situation. In regard to workload, as a another factor contributing to poor working and living conditions and staff turnover, managers, employees, and expert practitioners shared similarities that the combination of low staffing morale and high workload was causing professional staff to leave. They also shared similarities that despite the efforts of their organizations to address the problem, too much work, too few staff, are all too commonly heard in the INGDOs sector in South Sudan. One expert commented that:

I think there are still a lot of people who are working incredibly long hours in the aid industry. A lot of it comes back to nature of what aid workers do and lack of labor laws in this country [South Sudan]. Generally, I see aid agencies trying to make workers balance between work and personal life but it’s not happening (EXP09).

While it is acknowledged that the workload within the INGDOs facilities was high, especially for field workers in the field locations, one management participant was of the view that staffing numbers were not adequate for workload. This manager observed that because of the high workload some in South Sudan, well-trained and highly experienced aid workers often delegated duties to people not adequately trained for such roles; hence, staff turnover:

In fact, decision to leave is exacerbated by high workload. Sometimes field staffs feel that days are not long enough to complete their work. For field workers; they think that there should be more staff to handle extensive workload, but we cannot hire more than what we have now due to budget constraint (MNGT03).
Indeed, one employee noted that extensive workload, especially in a conflict environment is a key contributor to why professional aid workers lead, with high workload also found to undermine aid workers’ job satisfaction, as aid workers are unable to properly deploy their skills to engage communities they serve, or spend time learning from other staff:

You know, the nature of this work requires you to work for 3-4 weeks in the field or sometime longer. It encourages people to leave, especially when the length of time in the field is too long. The length of time that a person is exposed to the stressors of a job increases their chances of leaving before contract ended (EM13).

The researcher learnt that high workload also contributes to burnout, especially where the small number of aid workers results in them being overcommitted. In addition, work is especially intense and demanding where workers may be highly emotional, and where work is routinized and organized around “thin” staffing levels, or where work is fast and intense, workers will have few opportunities to establish relationships with each other, and to share experiences and ideas, contributing to a loss of practice knowledge and capacity to innovate.

In this regard, one employee noted that high workload in the INGDOs sector in South Sudan often lead to work stress and decision to leave:

As aid worker, I often live and work in unpleasant conditions characterized by heavy workload and long hours. Sometime on field mission I have to visit three or four field sites all by myself. This makes me to choose on the area where I will pay more attention because of the needs of the communities we are serving (EM22).

Interviewed employee participants also said that the workload sometime affected their performance and that when this happened, the management perceived it as negligence. Throughout the discussion, skilled workers complained about the lack of basic supplies to provide adequate care for the beneficiaries. The managers interviewed likewise agreed that workload was high but that they had problems with deploying skilled workers due to shortages in almost all the people trained to work in conflict setting. Though deployment was often based on needs, experts asserted that managers did not maintain any standards for deployment of staff, especially in the field sites. The experts also noted that skilled workers often did not want to serve in rural areas where basic facilities were lacking. One expert practitioner noted that.

I think the [conflict and humanitarian emergency] situation increases staff workload even though they work with other INGOs and development partners. Staffs sometime complain about delivering only basic services to the needy (EXP03).

During the observation session in the field, the researcher found that many of the aid workers experience distress symptoms and suffer from to an extent that interferes with their duties.
Furthermore, exposure to this kind of environment comes with security risks. Expert practitioners empathize with both skilled workers and organizational managers and broadly declared that these conditions will not change anytime soon. In support of that finding from an expert practitioner, one of the managers (MNGT01) explained that high workload causes staff to leave. This management participant stated that the average working week in South Sudan among full-time employees is 44 hours and that one in five workers work more than 50 hours a week. He also stated that they have got some of the longest working hours among full-time workers in the world and that if you look at some of the organizations that do have long work hours, for example, the humanitarian NGOs, what they have in common with them is that they don’t have any specific regulation of working hours. He concluded that something needs to be done about this in the near future in order to retain staffs. Another expert (EXP04) concurred with what is said by the above manager, remarking that despite the hype of discussion around work-life balance, people are still working long hours in relief and development sectors and that high workloads are likely to continue to be a reality for a large percentage of aid workers’ leaving. However, he concluded that there are two basic levels where improvements can be made in the sector: the organizational level - primarily through the design of shift schedules, education and better facilities, and the individual level - helping workers to get better sleep, a healthier eating, and the reduction of stress.

In summary, the finding from section 5.2.3 revealed that high workload in the INGDOs sector in South Sudan contributes to staff turnover. Generally it was found that field offices were busier than other locations. The managers and skilled workers explained that while in the sector the most significant sources of job stress for field staff is heavy workload and insecurity. However, on the issue of heavy workload in the sector some expert practitioners cautioned the choice of inflexible working hours, long shifts and mandatory overtime. In the section 5.2.4 below, the researcher will present lack of equipment and supplies as another major challenge compromising staff retention in the INGDOs sector in South Sudan.

5.2.4 Lack of Equipment and Supplies
This section presents what the participants said about lack of equipment and supplies, for example, lack of transportation facilities, lack of recycling equipment, lack of computers, lack of medicines and medical supplies, lack of first aid kits, and lack of other vital equipment to reach development projects in remote areas as factors that were contributing to staff turnover within the INGDOs sector in South Sudan. First aid has been inconsistently
understood and provided, and many respondents called for more first aid training in the field. Concerns about how this essential training is currently provided include the use of uncertified instructors; the relevancy of the type of first aid training, e.g. urban versus remote or wilderness first aid for isolated working conditions with little to no resources available; the quality of country-specific providers; an possible litigation if first techniques are inappropriate or out-of-date. While there were differences of opinion, participants agreed that lack of equipment and supplies was one of the major factors contributing to poor working conditions in the sector in South Sudan; thus, staff turnover. A shortage of supplies and sometimes dysfunctional or lacking equipment were described by research participants as key issues that organizations should address to enhance skilled workers’ retention. Refurbished and better-equipped field offices will enhance quality care to employees and employees’ levels of job satisfaction; affecting employees’ retention levels positively. In regard to this, one of the management participants commented that:

It’s truly a challenge but I don’t believe that people leave because of lack of equipment in the field locations. I think people leave mainly because of other factors, for example, security conditions, poor living/working conditions (MNGT07).

Staff shortages hamper in-service education and on-the-job training of skilled workers, especially orientation and induction programs for newly appointed and newly qualified employees. The overall feeling among participants was that organizations had insufficient and ineffective HR management approaches. Some organizations did not have policies on recruitment, retention or performance appraisal. In regard to lack of equipment and supplies, there were similarities between employees and expert practitioners that lack of equipment and supplies contributed to the poor working conditions; hence high staff turnover. One expert practitioner stated that:

Frankly, I do also believe that lack of protective clothing, water tanks and pumps, and mosquito nets also affect the safety of professional aid workers in the field locations, especially in the case of highly infective conditions (EXP02).

Speaking in relation a lack of equipment and supplies and how their absence leads to poor productivity, limited competences and poor responsiveness, another respondent pointed out that a lack of essential and functional equipment are notable factors of the working environment in conflict societies that contribute to dissatisfaction and staff turnover:

There are no enough resources in the sector. You will find that sometime people are short of supplies such as first aid medicines, computers, printers, etc. in the field. Sometimes things like those are why people leave the job and start looking for another one somewhere else (EM22).
As with all other factors considered to have contributed to staff turnover in South Sudan, if working conditions are substandard or the workplace lacks important facilities such as proper lighting, furniture, restrooms and other health and safety provisions, employees will not be willing to put up with the inconvenience for long time. With respect to the lack of equipment and supplies and its effect on staff retention, one expert observed that:

The other reason for staff not wanting to stay in the field is because there is no clean water and no electricity. There are few generators but sometimes they run out of gasoline to make them running (EXP08).

As discussed in greater detail in the beginning of the chapter, many of the problems associated with the lack of equipment and supplies had not been address in the humanitarian and development sector. One of the employees, which have been working in a capacity where he supplied emergency operation equipment, materials, and supplies to hospitals in South Sudan, reports that general hospitals in Upper Nile region, previously used by aid agencies to referring all but simple emergency cases, are not performing complex emergency cases with only the most basic equipment and medicines. Aid workers, particualrly those in the medical field such as doctors have had to ask the relatives of injured patients to search local pharmacies for blood bags, sutures, and infusion before they can start operation. Medical facilities are also overstretched by increasing number of victims of the ongoing conflict and of the related extreme hardship. One employee captures this aptly:

A lack of equipment and supplies sometimes makes people fearful about doing their job. Lack of essential equipment and supplies such as emergency equipment, an ambulance, extra tyres for Land Cruisers, or tyres replacement tools are common. These items are essential especially when trying to save lives in poor communities. Their absence in the field results in lack of confidence and decision to leave (EM10).

In summary, the results from section 5.2.4 revealed that lack of equipment and supplies in the INGDOs sector in South Sudan contributes to staff turnover. It emerged from this finding that the issue of a lack of supplies or functioning equipment appeared to have a direct influence on staff retention. Field staff members reported waiting period from three months to year for supplies and equipment to be received in the field. There were also discussions with employee participants of receiving expired medical supplies and wrongly labelled first aid kits in the sector. Expert practitioners and employee participants explained that facilities commonly received supplies when country directors or representatives visited, which meant that staff attributed responsibility to managers to provide services. Interviewed organizational managers, on the other hand, felt that taking supplies when going for visit to the field was part of their role, as well as being efficient. As well as issues with supplies, field facilities
reported receiving infrequent managerial visits from the headquarters. Managers interviewed indicated that the low managerial frequency at the field sites was due to transport challenges, many of which related to security conditions and logistical problems. Section 5.2.5 below looks at short-term contract and how it compromises staff retention.

5.2.5 Short-Term Employment Contracts

Short-term employment contract, which is the second challenge that affects employee retention in the INGDOs sector, can be categorized under broader term, terms of contract. Historically, short-term contractors have been used to substitute for workers who are on leave, to fill in for a short time while the organization screens applicants to hire a new skilled worker, and to expand an organization’s short-term ability to handle an increased volume in jobs that are peripheral to core activities (Breaugh & Starke 2000). This picture is changing in that, more often, short-time workers are being used in what previously were core organizational jobs. This can have an effect on morale because both short time and core employees may be working side by side on the same job, but under different compensation and benefits terms. In addition, short-time workers may not get the same training, thereby affecting the risk level in some jobs. Short-term contract doesn’t create stability in one position so people are always in the urge of moving.

Another drawback of short-term contract is that it is too rigid and inflexible and doesn't accommodate personal request such as extended holiday, leave for further studies and training and family post. Short-term contract in turn have a negative impact on the work and personal life balance (Tekleab & Taylor 2005). In a country like South Sudan, where unemployment is high, survival and security needs are on top of the need hierarchy. In South Sudan people prefer secured long-term employment. When discussing the basis of postings and terms of appointment, participants clearly had very uneven information about current policies and practices. Participants noted that there was widespread frustration among skilled workers, not only about the lack of clear incentives or career development guidelines, but also about ambiguity in contracts. Participants also acknowledged that most employees’ contracts were mostly one year while probationary period is always three months. Expert practitioners in particular exerted that the provision of short-term employment contracts in the sector sets a psychological expectation and that skilled workers start looking at other options before expiration of their current employment contracts.
The problem of short-term contract as a cause of professional staff turnover was mentioned again and again among the participants. A case of job insecurity comes from the policies of the donors and their way of funding. There is power imbalance between donors and INGDOs because most of the INGDOs are not financially sustainable. Most of them are almost funded 100 percent by donors and do not have financial sustainability plans in place. As long as this situation continues, true partnership as a relationship of equals between donors and INGDOs will remain unreachable and staff turnover will remain the norm. Overall, while some participants believed that many organizations would like to offer long-term contracts in opposed to short-term contracts, others reported that stringent donor funding requirements may have had undesirable consequences on people retention and that many of the INGDOs projects are funded on a year to year basis, leaving organizations with no options but to let go workers even when it is not in their best interest. In regard to short-term contracts, managers and employees shared different views with one saying that the nature of employment is influenced by funding from donors while the other one commented that it is influenced by the organization.

Most of our positions are mostly one year contract while probationary period is always three months. Donors don’t provide us with enough money to cover living expenses and pay our staff well. This creates huge problems...how you keep your staff or maintain their expertise without resources (MNGT01).

Furthermore, one of the local employees explained that international staffs do not stay longer in South Sudan, so the issue of short-term contracts and little donor investment do not bother them, but for local employees it does. Indeed, local employees criticize the policy of short-term contracts in the sector and suggested that labor regulations in South Sudan have done little in addressing labor market insecurities and the unpredictable nature of employment contracts. According to local employees interviewed, if aid organizations are really serious that they want to see more people working in the sector, they need commitment towards long-term employment opportunities.

I think people leave the sector due to end of employment contracts. The slowness and reluctance of organizations in offering long-term contract or extension of the contract before the end of the current contract contribute to job insecurity and force one to move on to another job before the end of the current contract (EM13).

Although managers and employee shared different views and opinions in regard to short-term contract, one expert practitioner critically believed that the casualization of the workforce has also increased, with more and more jobs being offered as short-term contracts or as casual contracts. While in support of the management participants, he felt that the end of contracts
and the practices of short-term contracts in the INGDOs sector contribute to the reasons why skilled workers leave, as well as to low morale among staffs in the sector.

I think the [practical] reason why turnover of skilled people is so high year on year in the aid world is short-term contracts. Donor funding arrangements should be blamed for having short-term contracts. It is difficult for INGDOs to maintain long-term funding in chronic emergencies such as these ones in South Sudan (EXP05).

In contrast, one local employee maintained that while it is true that lack of funding tends to push organizations into offering short-term contracts, it does not oblige HR managers to do so, and some international NGOs and UN agencies operating in the region still manage to offer longer-term contracts. In addition, this employee seemed to be in close agreement with experts interviewed, in that he argued that the term of contracts in the sector and donors’ unwillingness to fund overhead costs have enormous impacts on staff retention and the organizations’ capacity building programs. In his opinion, the issue of funding should not be used as an excuse by HR managers not to provide longer-term employment opportunities in the sector. He asserted that, in many instances, longer-term employment opportunities and the quality and effectiveness of HR retention approaches could be improved in any context without significant additional expenditure:

Në körki ëti ciik loi në kë löeu këek yên në luöi...kërac ëki ciëëk këëk ye kör bik loi [If they had wanted to offer long-term contracts, they would have done it because they have the capacity to do it...the problem is that they don’t want to do it] (EM07)

During the collection of primary data, for example, interviews and observation sessions, it was also found that employee productivity gets affected by the nature of employment contract. Nature of employment contract contributes to the reasons why key people leave the sector. All research participants from variety of organizations confirmed the issue of staff retention as a significant challenge. Short-term employment contracts result in frequent staff turnover and some aid workers, local employees in particular, leave their postings early (Volkmar 2003). However, through secondary data it was found that replacements has become more and more difficult. Organizational managers also question that if these trends in short term employment growth continue, an increasing proportion of the workforce is likely to experience relatively poor working conditions. Most of the senior managers who were interviewed perceived job insecurity to be one of the other factors influencing the decisions of skilled workers to leave and all felt that overall their organizations were doing a lot towards improving employment contracts in the sector.
One field coordinator who was based in Bortown, Jonglei State, left one organization for another after working for two years complaining that short-term contracts were very stressful as he was always wondering about his future as a married man with extended family. In explaining high staff turnover, some of the senior managers in the eight interviewed organizations pointed to donors’ insistence on low overheads, encouraging the use of short-term contracts through short funding cycles and discouraging staff development and appear to have resigned to the problem, seeing it as the results of restraining forces outside of their control. However, they also concerned with employees on the fact that they were using short-term contracts as a management tool in dealing with under performance as they were able to easily dispose under-performers through renewal of contracts. The general uncertainty in the INGDOs jobs coupled with the poor labor relations was cited as another reason for disengaging with the workforce in the conflict settings.

From the perspective of one organizational manager (MGNT07), short-term contract resulted, to a great extent, in unscheduled turnover. He explained that organizations that make extensive use of the short-term labor market may also experience higher than necessary levels of unscheduled turnover when they fail to cope with human asset management dilemmas peculiar to short term workers. This manager also said that he wish they could do something about it, but it goes back to funding from donors. He concluded that, to cope with these challenges presented by the working environment, they are working now on implementing measures such as gradually absorbing the temporary employees to permanent employment whenever suitable openings arose, provided on job trainings to short-term workers to equip them with skills so that they could be more productive, and frequently reviewed the compensation and benefits terms for staff under short-term contracts. Supporting this discussion is one expert practitioner who stated that:

Short-term contract affect productivity since a lot of time and effort is used in training new employees as their turnover was high. The very nature of temporary employment increases feelings of divided allegiance on the part of temporary workers. [Temporary] workers worked on average fewer hours per week compared to permanent ones because in most cases they were allocated less involving duties compared to permanent workers (EXP06).

Given the turbulent environment and difficulties faced by most of the organizations, another observation was that projects were funded on a year to year basis. It was also found that donors’ unwillingness to fund costs have an enormous impact on organizations’ ability to retain staff and strengthen themselves. In South Sudan the offer of short-term contract of
employment is gaining grounds in an unprecedented proportion, intensity and scale. The increase in the spread and gradual acceptance of the labor practices in the INGDOs sector has become an issue of great concern to stakeholders—the communities or beneficiaries that services are being rendered to. Short-term contract of employment may on general level seem to be justifiable since reduced cost means better services for the disadvantaged communities. However, short-term contract ultimately presents lots of challenges for the employees and organizations alike.

Short-term contracts resulted in low morale among workers. Lack of induction and investment in people skills might have a negative influence over the attitudes they had concerning security and the best way to perform their duties ranked first. Problems sometimes arise because both casual and permanent workers may be working side by side on the same job, but under different terms (EXP08).

Also behind these issues of short-term contracts in the INGDOs sector in South Sudan is the high level of unemployment and accompanying poverty. Information obtained through the field notes and interviews revealed that these employment practices have create a dangerous work environment and have given much attention to the prevalence of short-term employment contracts in developing countries like South Sudan, as many desperate job seekers in the labor force are willing to take any job no matter how dirty or degrading it is. It was however stated that short-term workers occupy a precarious position in the workplace and society, and are effectively a new set of underclass in the modern organizations.

Staff turnover is a burning issue for all organizations operating developing countries, in particular Africa, due to end of contract. End of contract is one reason why people leave. End of contract is even more challenging for local staff than it is for expatriates. The duration of contract for most organizations varies from a month to two years. The term of employment is very short for field workers and ranges from three to six months with no exception sometimes (EXP06).

All three interviewed groups noted that the increase in capital mobility and deregulation of the labor are some of the major causes of short-term contract in the development sector. Management participants, in particular, acknowledged that lack of financial resources, increased global competition for funding, tough donor funding conditionalities, and the urge to cut down on costs of undertaking operations in order to remain competitive, consequently resulted in lots of instability in the sector. Interviewed managers further stated that, in response to these challenges, organizations became tempted to adopt cost-cutting measures, including downsizing, cutting back on employment and use of permanent workers; the offshoot being the current predominance of short-term contracts.
Although employee participants were a little skeptical, all three interviewed groups agreed that all these challenges have an overbearing cost of organizations thus leading to swift cost reduction approaches in which the well-being status of the workforce unfortunately becomes a nightmare. Other possible causes of short-term contracts in the sector include globalization, technological changes and abundance of labor supply. This generally suggests that short-term employment contracts do not normally allow the time needed for learning the local language, building relationships with crisis-affected people, and learning if projects are actually having long-term transformational impact. Short-term contracts do not normally allow the time needed for learning the local language, building relationships with crisis affected people, and learning if projects are actually having long-term transformational impact. All three of these experiences appeared to be foundational to the organisational members’ success and longevity on the field in war-torn countries. Unless professionalizing the INGDOs sector can bring reform to the tradition of reliance on short-term employment contracts, recruitment and retention of skilled workers among organizations operating in conflict settings will never happen. However, unless this reform can take place it is predicted there will be no cumulative net gain when the INGDOs sector eventually professionalizes. Supporting this discussion is one employee who stated that:

Due to tough requirements for accountability and donor funding conditions, many organizations have started to push their expertise under so many things [in the budget]. Organizations know that if they don’t inflate their budget and offer short-term contracts, they will surely experience difficulties later. Professionalization of the INGDOs sector was expected to bring solutions to staff retention issues, but has since failed in bringing real change (EM03).

Following on from the above discussion, one expert practitioner (EXP02), a director of administration and finance and HR practitioner in Jonglei State Government in South Sudan, explained that donor funding conditions not only affect the orientation of projects, but also the way in which they are designed and planned, as well the way in which skilled workers are attracted and retained. He further noted that donor requirements may have undesirable consequences on staff retention and that where organizations are forced to work in a manner that goes against their own principles, priorities or learning practices, local structure is undermined. This expert practitioner, based his personal knowledge of the sector, concluded that the length of the contract is crucial if an organization wants to develop a vision for it workforce. Contrary to that, one of the employee participants, who were also a community elder, explained that the turnover of staff is extremely higher because: “Arwoth Been Dhwook
"Weu Ku Lueelki Yi Cin Weu," “They [expatriate managers] used money for their own personal benefits and they preached to people that there is not money”.

In general, the argument from the above employee participant is suggesting corruption or mismanagement in the workplace or the sector as a whole. Due to short-term funding and donor conditions, contracts given are also extremely short. Although there was a general feeling that organizations need more staff, skilled and experienced workers come in on three-six month contract, which reflects the nature of the sector’s workforce. One employee participant stated that this also has significant repercussions for establishing community and INGDOs relations. Another employee participant noted that the turnover of talented workers is so high not so much due to living conditions, but due to the working environment. It was also observed that the tough requirements for accountability and donor funding conditions are pushing staff away from the sector and that because of these conditions from donors; organizations are finding it difficult to attract and retain their valuable employees.

On the management side, many of the managers interviewed had a feeling that the organizations where their employees went to were better than their organizations in term of funding arrangements and living and working conditions. This made them feel that staff turnover was therefore unavoidable. The majority of the interviewed managers were critical of donors and their policies. They suggested that their often portrayed weakness that they follow money rather than their vision can be blamed on donors because the donors are not willing to provide quality funding. Their funding tends to be short-term, small and project rather than organization based. They also said that donors’ representatives suffer from the same problem as INGDOs. Their policies are predetermined and unchanged. The policies cannot be changed even when they are irrelevant to the local situation. If donors are really genuine that they want to developmentally help the organizations, the managers felt that they need to move towards long-term organizational funding.

Supporting that argument above is another employee participant (EM17) who stated that the more conditions donors place on their managers in regard to services delivery and organizational effectiveness, the more pressures and conditions their managers put on them in the field. This employee participant explained that these conditions and pressures are contributing to staff turnover in the sector and that due to these conditions for quality of services and organizational effectiveness from donors, organizations are finding it difficult to
attract and retain staff. From his personal experience in the sector, he mentioned that more resources are being concentrated on development programs and not on employee-related activities. He concluded that there are no laid down opportunities by the system to say, for example, if an employee stay in an organization for 2 years or more, these are the various programs available to you; you are exempted from short-term contract and rural postings; you can go for permanent position in the head office; these things are not clearly defined. Supporting this argument from an employee above are two organizational managers who stated that:

Conditions of donors lead to offer of short-term contracts here. The length of the contract is crucial if you want to develop a vision for your organization. To make long-term contract, you need stability over a longer period of time. And this implies that you need to get a predictable amount of money per year to make that happens. Well, it’s not happening and we are struggling with scare resources (MGNT04).

I think short-term contracts contributes to staff turnover in the sector since nature of temporary employment increases feelings of divided allegiance on the part of workers, which reduces their level of commitment and productivity. A lot of our time and effort is used in training new employees as the old ones leave...[Temporary] workers worked on average fewer hours per week compared to permanent ones because in most cases they were allocated less involving duties compared to permanent workers (MGNT07).

In summary, there was widespread frustration not only about the lack of clear incentives or career development guidelines, but about ambiguity in employment contracts in the sector. When discussing the basis of postings and terms of appointments, skilled workers, particularly field workers, were especially uncertain about their terms of contracts. Staffs that were interviewed perceived short-term contracts to be one of the other challenges influencing their decisions to leave and felt that overall their organizations were doing a lot towards improving employment contracts in the future. While staff suggested that lack of possibilities of growth and suggestions to improve oneself in the organization demotivated and push staff to look for a better and challenging opportunity somewhere else, expert practitioners noted that the practices of short-term contracts in the sector not only contribute to the reasons why skilled workers leave, but to low morale among workers and lack of induction and investment programs in people skills—which have a negative influence over people attitudes concerning job security and the best way to perform their duties. The next section looks into the problem of tensions and mistrust between local and expatriate staffs and how these issues between the two groups affect staff retention.
5.2.6 Tensions and Mistrust between Expatriates and Local Staff

This section explores problems and challenges associated with the management of staff, particularly locals and expatriates within the INGDOs sector in South Sudan and presents findings from the participants in regard to these problems and challenges. The discussion on power differential between expatriates and local staff offers potentially interesting insights and is an important issue that requires theoretical contextualization with reference to relevant literature on expatriation. The expatriates-local staff literature, though limited, raises a number of issues which have implications for policy. The literature points to the fact that expatriates are costly and may not be all that effective (Okpara & Kabongo 2011; Toh & DeNisi 2005; Mukasa 1999). The research on expatriate performance show a gap between what actually happens in practice to what is assumed to happen. The issue of transfer of skills which is often used as a convincing rationale for expatriate use in developing countries has been noted by Mukasa (1999) in Uganda, to rarely happen. Also, the sustainability of the interventions once the expatriates have left the projects is shown to be minimal. Expatriates may be good for ensuring accountability to donors but are not successful at building community links (Suzuki 2008; Chew 2004). The argument about cost and efficiency while being legitimate causes for concern are in themselves not enough. They tend to overshadow the wider, and some would argue, more fundamental issue of equity and power. As international organizations such as INGDOs involved in humanitarian and development, the power imbalance within their own structures should be a cause for major concern.

Okpara (2016) emphasises the power relations between expatriates and local staff among international organizations and MNCs operating in developing countries, especially in how they work; the way they solve problems; how much a plan means to them; and how much responsibility one can take during work. They note that the relations between expatriates and local staff are characterized in employer-employee terms. Expatriates have salary scales and benefits that are higher than local staff. In addition, expatriates have overall control of the programs. They are involved in the hiring and firing of local staff but not vice versa. In conflict situations, expatriates are flown out but local staff are not. Even in cases where it has been accepted that the use of expatriates should be reduced, there still seems to be a reluctance to address the issue of power differential, as well as tensions and mistrust around differences in lifestyles and living standards between expatriates and local staff. People interviewed for this study confirmed that there are tensions and mistrust around differences in
lifestyles and living standards between local and expatriate staff. Most participants said that the tensions and mistrust between local and expatriate staff contributes to the reasons why talented people leave an organization. The perception of community that INGDOs operated in a way that is contrary to the equal employment principles was reflected in one of the discussions made by one of the experts, who was also one of the community leaders, that:

Miðh ke bai keek ka ye kerîeç e bën loi...Kawajat ace luui nê loilo rac...anhïar bi reer tençø nuur, ku aliir, ku piu piëth ne Juba, [The locals do everything…Expatriates don’t like the dirty work. They like to stay where there is electricity, air condition, and clean water in Juba] (EXP08).

While emphasizing the power relations between local and expatriates, the employees feel that the relations between the two groups are characterized in employer-employee terms. In addition, employees perception that expatriates have salary scale and benefits that are higher than local staff and that expatriates are involved in the hiring and firing of local staff at their own discretion. Participants also spoke on the notion of the power given to expatriates in relation to local staff in the sector and went on to say that in order to redressing the balance of power, key management positions should not be given only to expatriates but also to local workers. While the local staff may have equal or better qualifications as regional workers or expatriates, they may not have the key positions for “political” reason. The political reason is that organizations filled key positions with expatriates in order to satisfy donor requirements. This was cited as a source of frustration leading to skilled workers’ decisions to leave the sector. In regard to tensions and mistrust between expatriates and local staff, several employees broadly agreed that this is another issue contributing to decisions to leave for skilled workers. In the view of one employee participant, organizations provide more benefits to expatriates than they would provide to local staff even though they are doing the same work. She further stated that these unegalitarian employment practices are hindering their work in the sector. Another employee participant concluded that people are not treated equally in the sector and that expatriates are considered more superior than locals. He suggests a need for new law or regulation intended for monitoring INGOs activities, particularly employment activities, in South Sudan.

While concurring with the above discussions, other groups of employee participants remarked that they are totally separated from expatriates in their organizations and that expatriates rarely exchange their ideas with them, and that their locally acquired knowledge and experiences are often undervalued by expatriates in the sector. These employees also
noted that they know little about their current organizations’ strategies, particularly their management aspects. While concluding their observations in the sector, they revealed that there are more expatriates in the key positions than locals and that expatriates also terminated locals’ contracts at their own discretions. In suggesting the way forward, the recommended that managers should not come only from expatriates; they must also come from local staff. While supporting the earlier findings from employee participants, there was also a general consensus among expert practitioners that the frequent turnover of expatriate staff and the absence of local staff in senior positions presented a number of challenges for the overall effectiveness of the programs. While there is some evidence of attention towards equal opportunities and equal representation in organizations today, the usual trend is to comply with minimal legal requirements. These experts agreed that any mistrust of the management by host-country nationals may initiate high turnover and absenteeism across the organization. This may also in turn adversely affect the field offices’ performance and create a hostile environment for local workers towards their expatriates’ counterparts. Two experts commented that:

Although the presence of expatriates is also seen to be better in ensuring organizational concerns are met, particularly financial concerns, there is a noticeable divide and mistrust between locals and expatriates. Expatriates eat at higher class hotels and inhabiting accommodation in guarded compounds in a more secure location than local workers (EXP08).

Conditions for local staff are worsening as they have low salaries, with limited benefits, long hours working without being considered as overtime. My experience is that the system favors expatriates while disregarding locals. I see these practices contributing to staff turnover in the sector (EXP09).

Although employees and expert practitioners agreed that tensions and mistrust was contributing to the reasons why skilled workers leave the sector, organizational managers believed that there was no major tensions and mistrust between the two groups. However, contrary to the notion that INGDOs often underutilize local skills and knowledge, organizational managers noted that there is evidence that local workers can gather relevant information relating to local issues and give that information to organization for quality and effectiveness improvement than expatriate can. They argued that it is particularly true in situations where cultural asymmetric between the headquarters and the host-country are high and the operating environment is risky. Managers also highlight the important contributions that can be made by host-country nationals in achieving success operationally and strategically; however, it is not happening much yet. Contrary to the earlier discussion about
language barrier, employee participants believed that, in the case of South Sudan, there is a rather peculiar problem in that the majority of the senior managerial workforce is expatriates, including other African nationals, so people from many different cultures are mingling together. Overall, national culture is too strong, and strategies are needed to improve it.

Furthermore, managers mentioned that if the community that the INGDOs enter is one where their existing personnel have little relevant knowledge or expertise to effectively run the field office, local human capital would be especially useful because the local workers speak the languages and also understand the country’s culture and political system better than expatriates. The concept of human capital in this context refers to skill and knowledge embodied in the minds and hands of the population. Increasing education, training and experience allows professional workers to produce more output from the same level of physical capital. From the managers’ point of views, organizations prefer to use expatriates in situation where locals may be lacking in skills or competence or in situations where organizations need expatriates to act as impartial gatekeepers for resources—meaning that expatriates are independent from the ‘corrupting’ influences that local workers are.

Although some people are leaving, conflict between locals and expats is not an issue. We have strategies such as training specifically for local workers. We will continue to do more in terms of training [local] workers to take up the top positions in the sector—that way we can rely on locally produced knowledge (MNGT04).

There are instances where some of our local staff complaint about unfair treatment in the field areas by expatriates. It is true that some positions require expatriates with extraordinary skills which we cannot find in South Sudan...We don’t see it as unfair treatment at all but a job requirement (MNGT09).

During an observation session in the field in regard to factors affecting staff retention, the researcher found that expatriates and local workers were not on the same page when it comes to exchange of ideas. These tensions often occurred between the two sets because local staff often felt isolated, unsupported and felt that there was a lack of understanding of the issues they were dealing with at field level. While expatriates were expected to be benevolent, impartial and sometimes to play the role of counselors in the family-like atmosphere by taking care of private issues for each employee, the observation from the field highlights some uncertainty in the community as to what the organizations are really doing. The field observation also suggested that managers can take measures such as shared-decision making to ensure that the right messages about the organization’s mandate and mission is communicated to the right people in the community.
The perception of some research participants, expert practitioners in particular, as to why skilled workers leave the development sector is that many young South Sudanese generation of managers are frustrated and discouraged by the continual usage of expatriate managers, which in turn resulted in poor performance and even higher turnover in the sector. The finding from the interview with expert practitioners also highlighted the issue of discontent among local staff and resentment towards expatriates because often expatriates are apparently considered as superior relative to the locals in terms of their compensation, benefits and developmental opportunities. Experts acknowledged that this is especially true when expatriates do not have a clear advantage over the locals in terms of work experience, expertise or educational qualifications. Interviewed managers, on the other hand, argued that what is interesting to note and focus on is that expatriates were likely to be socially isolated from other staff, distanced from cultural familiarities and, if living in remote or inaccessible regions, geographically isolated which is what they are sometimes given special consideration in opposed to other categories of aid workers. Some of cultural issues people were not aware of or that the outsiders, expatriates in particular, don’t understand in South Sudan are represented by the following quotes from management and employee participants:

It seemed to me that everything went wrong when I first arrived in South Sudan. I used to have firm goals for every project completion, for every plan I was working on, just like I did when I was in my country of origin. However, it just didn’t work here. As time goes on, the feeling of chaos and confusion may take place, but no matter how culturally attuned and sensitive you are, you will never really be a South Sudanese. You are still termed as “Aleei,” “foreigner” (MGNT06).

The cultural barrier is the most obvious negative factor encountered by expatriates here. Cultural training, which should be a part of the preparations for expatriate assignments, is very often neglected by INGDOs managers. Sometimes they comfort themselves that it can be an advantage to not know the local culture and therefore not to get so involved. But to tell the truth, most of the time they feel excluded (EM12).

We do not know much about our organization. It seems that many things are strictly confidential and are not exposed to everyone. We do not dare to ask about such issues and data. We only work here. We are not allowed to make any decisions about our work. Decisions are made by the expatriates in the headquarters. There is no such person as a general manager in the field. The real managers reside in headquarters in Juba. The general manager as such exists in names only in the field, because ultimate decisions are made by country directors in Juba, Geneva or New York (EM01).

Supporting the above findings is an expert practitioner (EXP06), a director of planning and HR practitioner in Central Equatoria State Government in South Sudan, who explained that division between locals and expatriates push some staff away from the sector and that
reducing the expatriates and respecting the locally acquired knowledge is one way of retaining knowledge. This expert also stated that providing equitable pay for the same jobs is another way of retaining knowledge. This expert also suggests that individuals doing the same work should receive the same remuneration. By this, he means not only the basic salary but also the full range of benefits, non-salary payments, bonuses and allowances that are paid to workers in the sector. He also believed that equitable pay for the same jobs for locals and expatriates staff would contribute to staff retention in the sector. While suggesting further action, he concluded that the South Sudanese Government needs to create a unit that will deal directly with International NGOs, both at the states and federal levels in South Sudan.

In summary, the finding from section 5.2.6 above reveals that local workers dislike what they perceived as an ethnocentric approach of their headquarters for staffing in field sites and those locals complain that expatriates always occupy the higher ranking managerial posts. Moreover, the feeling that local staffs are treated worse than foreigners in their own countries may create a hostile behavior that often leads to lower performance of both locals and expatriates. The findings underscore the importance of relationships between expatriate managers and local workers. Lack of trust between locals and expatriates, as well as between local themselves, was an issue with many interviewed INGDOs staff who left or about to leave an organization. The quality of the expatriate-local relationship is a critical feature of the workplace environment, particularly in the conflict settings. With trust available, managers know what truly motivates the employee. Without it, the manager is not aware of an employee’s needs and does not recognize the employee’s growing dissatisfaction.

While emphasizing the power relations between expatriates and local staff, the employees feel that the relations between the two groups are characterized in employer-employee terms. In addition, employees believe that expatriates have salary scale and benefits that are higher than local staff and that expatriates are involved in the hiring and firing of local and regional staff at their own discretion. Some organizational managers disagreed with this finding, asserting that although they have seen some people leaving the organization on the basis on mistrust, they believed that relations between the two sets of staff are extremely friendly and warm and that working relations are also good and staff on the whole worked well with one another to fulfil organization’s objectives. Indeed, many local workers reported that they cannot help it but to believe expatriates and regional workers do not trust them truly. Locals further maintained that the expatriates’ inability to fully trust their South Sudanese partners is
leading expatriate managers to dominate the decision-making process. The fundamental reason for distrust lies in the biased way to interpret the other party's behaviors. Although the degree of distrust probably varies from organization to organization, a general trend of a perception gap due to biased views of other's behaviors seems to prevail in all INGDOs interviewed for this study.

Furthermore, managers in general want to tightly oversee and control the organization’s operations to maintain the organization’s culture. In contrast, local workers tend to value their cultural identity with a desire to be provided with equal opportunity in career growth at par with expatriate managers. Experts, on the other hand, commented on the worsening relationship between the expatriates and locals and its implication for individual and organizational performance, by highlighting the need to consider the contextual and institutional factors that affect the relationship and the categorization of co-workers and points toward factors such as localization of personnel, equity and integration and sharing of cultures as possible solutions to overcome the expatriate-local conflict within the INGDOs sector in South Sudan. From the interview data, the findings concluded that in order to narrow these gaps, there needs to be efforts from both expatriate managers and South Sudanese nationals to study and analyze the differences in their core values and that the South Sudanese Government needs to create a department or unit within the Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs and Disaster Management to deal directly with international NGOs, including INGDOs, both at the national and states levels. Section 5.5 below discusses socio-cultural factors influencing the decisions of employees, particularly expatriates, to leave the INGDOs sector in South Sudan.

5.2.7 Cultural Factors
Section 5.2.7 presents influences deriving from the customs, traditions, perception and beliefs system that had been built over centuries and which can influence management approaches for retaining skilled workers in the INGDOs sector. Participants noted that cultural issues were at times very difficult to navigate through in South Sudan. An understanding and appreciation of such values was vital if an organization hoped to engage in any work productively. In addition, it may be important to understand what distinguished one community from another one in the same community. While South Sudan is a country with 62 tribes and more than 60 indigenous languages and dialects spoken, cultural barrier, including language barrier, was found to be the continuous factor influencing staff retention
within the INGDOs sector. Most of the indigenous languages are classified under the Nilo-
Saharan language family; collectively, they represent two of the first order divisions of Nilo-
Saharan, known as Eastern Sudanic and Central Sudanic. The remainder belong to the
Ubangi languages of the Niger-Congo language family, and they are spoken in south-western
South Sudan. The most recent available population statistics for South Sudan indigenous
languages and dialects go back to the 1980s. Since then, the war of independence led to many
civilian deaths and massive displacement of refugees to neighboring countries and beyond.

Due to the drafting of colonial borders in Africa by European powers during the 19th and 20th
centuries, some indigenous languages of South Sudan are spoken in neighboring countries, in
some cases more so than in South Sudan. Zande, for example, have twice as many speakers
in neighboring Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC); while the Banda group of languages
have more speakers in Central Africa Republic (CAR) than in South Sudan. The conflict
between bureaucratic processes and traditional values and socio-cultural practices poses a
very big challenge in the smooth management of human resource within the INGDOs.
Despite the perceived importance of staff retention in international NGOs, traditional values
and socio-cultural factors were found to pose difficult ties. A look at the South Sudanese
society today reveals that, in spite of the rapid rate of modernization, South Sudan still retains
the norms of its socio-cultural and traditional values. Modernization however comes with
bureaucratic institutions and its inherent laid down procedures.

Finding from the interviews indicated that this was truly a common challenge for staff
stationed in other communities or areas outside the capital, Juba. Findings from the
interviews data and field notes revealed that cultural awareness or its absence can be a
double-edged sword and that lack of cultural awareness affected projects effectiveness in
many instances. The findings further revealed that with regards to national culture,
particularly for expatriates, social, cultural and geographical isolation, as an inherent part of
the overseas experience, were giving rise to employee turnover in the sector. The interview
findings also demonstrated that a combination of social, cultural and geographical isolation
can evoke feelings of abandonment, despair and fear among organizational managers,
expatriates in particular. What is also interesting to note from this finding is that expatriates
adjustment is a complex problem given that factors such as the influence of the spouse,
cultural training and understanding, fluency in the host language and personality or emotional
readiness of the expatriates are key. The following quotes from some of expert practitioners further reinforced this point:

I think working in different cultural environment created a cultural effect for all staff, but for expatriates in particular. There is observable isolation in the ways expatriates are viewed and perceived in our society. There are cases where tensions prevail between local staff and expatriates due to lack of alignment between cultures. As a result, the tension created a culture of isolation, which influences negatively to an organisation and the way staff make decisions related to their staying (EXP07).

I believe expatriates may be reluctant to continue working in the sector because they believe that the values of their Western cultures are in conflict with those of the dominant culture. Local staff may also decide to leave the sector because they believe that they are intellectually inferior to their Kawajats [expats] counterparts (EXP01).

While agreeing with the above discussions about cultural isolation, other managers commented on the notion that socio-cultural factors characterize the relationships and activities of people in a specific region or area and felt the language barrier (Arabic and Indigenous Dialects are the commonly spoken languages) can be the cause of a good deal of consternation and confusion. However, expatriates will find that people do speak some English and are eager to practice their skills. The majority of all signs and postings are also written in Arabic; thus, at the very least, learning and understanding the language is challenging. Coping with the demands of local workers is also challenging for many expatriate managers. The following quotes from some of the organizational managers further reinforced this argument:

I believe attitudes toward national culture can influence everything from services delivery to whether or not workers can work in remote areas. This, in turn, affects the decisions of workers to stay, their sense of connectedness within a community, and their intention to stay (MNGT03).

There are number of factors making people to leave…Mostly, the expats stay here for only a short period of time. There was one expat manager who stayed here for five years. During his stay, he learned the local culture in South Sudan. He understood a lot about this country [South Sudan]. I personally think that it would take at least five years in order to understand the South Sudanese people. But unfortunately, most of the expats managers stay here for a period of one to two years and then leave…Just like local workers leave because they can’t cope with expats; some expats leave too because they can’t cope with the demands of local workers (MGNT06).

No matter what the situation is, I think language barriers cut people off from going to remote areas and providing quality services make it difficult for our staff to find and keep friends in the communities they work in, affect their children’s education, and otherwise make their lives difficult. People leave the sector regardless of how much we are taking care of them due to these and other [uncontrollable] factors (MNGT08).
Although organizational managers said these things above, employees voiced their concern of how difficult it is to cope with anxiety disorders caused by the lack of knowledge in some local or regional cultures and customs or practices. Other observed challenge was political interference. In some regions in South Sudan, particularly Jonglei, Upper Nile, and Unity States, where the security situation is volatile and unpredictable, INGDOs leaders identified the interference of local politicians and civic leaders as another hindrance to their work. Where INGDOs are involved in sensitive issues, for example, democracy promotion and human rights, national and local authorities can threaten INGDOs with de-registration. From the above discussions, a number of challenges were noted as having influence on staff retention within the INGDOs sector in a conflict setting, in particular South Sudan. The following comments made by the employee participants exemplify these viewpoints:

I think there are some national cultures that are bothersome for expats in South Sudan as it’s not a typically an African country, but a country that just recently broke away from a Muslim country [Sudan] and is still maintaining some of the Islamic values, beliefs and traditions (EM20).

You know, I think national culture affects and influences an employee’s commitment and level of job satisfaction. National culture has a direct influence on organization’s culture. Cultures are quite stronger here [South Sudan] and are much harder on expatriates in particular. There is a high rate of turnover for expats than for local staff due to cultural barrier and a number of other external factors (EM02).

While supporting the earlier findings from management and employee participants, expert practitioners who participated in this study suggested that it is necessary for INGDOs to comprise cultural awareness and training as well as organizational appraisal and control within their management approaches. In particular, expert practitioners pointed out that cultural issue surely affect staff retention. These experts also suggested that a global standardization of retention strategies may generate several problems for organizations operating in the conflict settings, due to the lack of attention towards cultural diversity. Therefore, organizational leaders who are responsible for staff training programs in the sector should carefully consider cultural issues. Most of the interviewed managers and employees explicitly explained that a better comprehension of South Sudanese culture can allow INGDOs operating in the conflict settings, South Sudan in particular, to implement training and development techniques able to enhance staff retention and productivity.

As stated by the majority of research participants, cultural training is a crucial factor in order to improve relationships within the organizational team and to develop their results. Nonetheless, INGDOs’ strategies in the South Sudan context are often characterized by a lack
of attention towards cross cultural management themes. Due to their limited knowledge of local cultural backgrounds and to their small scale, that often does not allow them to afford cultural training costs, international NGOs do not adequately evaluate and implement cross cultural policies and practices. Furthermore, this cultural blindness is believed to progressively increase organizations’ costs and raise higher entry barriers. Expert participants also discussed the notion that expatriates may also find themselves working with minority groups such as local or regional workers, disadvantaged or community groups where they are considered outsiders. These groups may be culturally and linguistically different, thus posing difficulties with intercultural communication and trust. With regards to socio-cultural factors affecting retention of skilled workers working in the INGDOs sector in South Sudan, expert practitioners spoke of the need for organizations to understand the complexities of the cultural and language barriers.

Culturally, South Sudan very isolated, there’s nowhere to get out. You know in the Western countries you can go to the city or whatever, you can find a hotel. There is nowhere in this country to go so the best you can hope for is to stay in your house, keeping the world outside….what it has is that you develop local expectations, which is not necessarily appropriate for someone who is not from here (EXP07).

I think cultural barrier is affecting staff retention. They [INGDOs managers] need to undertake cultural training methods to improve cultural empathy, interpersonal problem-solving techniques. The ability of expatriates to integrate with locals is also another good examples of ways in which feelings of loneliness and isolation can be improved in the sector (EXP03).

In summary, the findings from the interviews, as discussed in section 5.5 above, indicated that traditional values and socio-cultural factors have put strains on the effective and efficient performance of the roles of INGDOs managers in South Sudan. Managers interviewed shared that there are situations in South Sudan where they feel like they are bending the rules in order to satisfy the demands of beneficiaries at the expense of established organizational objectives and goals. A look at the South Sudanese society reveals that although South Sudan has undergone rapid changes as a result of influence of Christianity, Islam, and colonialism, South Sudan still remains committed to its old traditional norms that have been passing from generation to another. These traditional norms include strong passion for shared responsibility for extended family members, lateness inherent in the concept of time and many other concepts. Findings from the interviews with managers indicated that experiences such as living in another culture and language set up and stress related to the security situation are some of the contributing factors for turnover in the sector in South Sudan.
In support of the above findings, skilled workers reported that cultural factors affect and influence the decisions of expatriates and regional workers to leave the sector. Experts concurred with these findings suggesting that, culturally and linguistically, differences pose difficulties with intercultural communication and trust. In the view of interviewed employee participants, differences in national cultures exist, thus contributing to differences in the views on the management. From the perspective of experts interviewed, differences between national cultures are deep rooted in the respective culture, and that these cultural values can shape how people expect organizations to be run, and how relationship between expatriate managers and local staff should be resulting to differences between the managers and the employees on expectations. National cultures, based on findings from the three interviewed groups, were also found to have influence in organizations preferences to develop appropriate structure and methods for retaining staff effectively. A lack of language skills has also been identified to be the main challenge when it comes to socio-cultural factors influencing the decisions of skilled workers, particularly expatriates, to leave an organization, in addition, to cross-cultural adjustment. Previous overseas experience has also been identified by management participants as a major factor in terms of the ability to cross-culturally adjust as well as an aspect linked to the expatriate’s willingness to remain with an organization. Additionally, findings from management participants have revealed that people with overseas experience are able to draw from their previous experience into a new situation, thereby able to cope well with workplace stress.

The findings from section 5.2.7 present important implications for INGDOs managers to implement more effective staff retention in the sector. From a wider point of view, it is believed that the current finding has great potential for providing INGDOs with a more adequate perspective of cultural issues in the South Sudanese labor environment. In particular, the context of the analysis has potential to be incorporated in the formulation and management of sound retention strategies and policies in the conflict settings in South Sudan. Finally, a better understanding and comprehension of South Sudanese cultural values, e.g. African traditional values, could provide a competitive strategic tool to INGDOs operating in South Sudan able to overcome cultural and language barriers, to improve attitude, retention and performance levels of both expatriates and local staff, as well as to boost organizations’ competitive advantage in the region. Section 5.3 below concludes the research and suggests the way forward.
5.3 CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this chapter brings to light many issues and challenges facing INGDOs operating in the conflict settings, South Sudan in particular, in regard to skills retention. It brings to surface the differences that are perceived between the three interviewed groups and also some similarities and shared concerns of all research participants, including employees. The findings revealed that security situation, poor living and working conditions, short-term contracts resulting from lack of financial resources and donor funding conditionalities, family pressures, and burnout due to nature of work, socio-cultural factors, and technological factors are the challenges influencing staff retention and due to which the employees leave the sector. Poor housing and the absence of basic amenities such as water and electricity, distance from home, lack of better schools for the kids, lack of healthcare and sanitation were also considered to negatively affect staff retention, expatriates in particular, in South Sudan.

Despite these challenges discussed throughout this chapter, results indicated that organizational managers are somewhat in control of some of the underlying causes behind staff turnover within the INGDOs sector in South Sudan. There was also an agreement among the study participants that unplanned staff turnover due to project closure and short-term employment contract is problematic and expensive, affecting not only learning and efficiency, but also the capacity of organizations to response to new emergencies, or even sometimes just to continue existing development programs. The next chapter discusses how INGDOs go about acquiring and retaining skills in the conflict settings, South Sudan in particular, from the perspective of managers, skilled workers, and expert practitioners.
CHAPTER SIX
HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT APPROACHES FOR RETAINING SKILLED WORKERS IN A CONFLICT SETTING

6.1 INTRODUCTION
The purpose of this chapter is to understand HRM approaches to retain skilled workers in South Sudan. In order to understand what management was actually doing to retain staff, small group and semi-structured interviews were conducted with managers and skilled workers within the INGDOs sector, as well as expert practitioners from the variety of organizations, academia, and government in South Sudan regarding their perspectives on INGDOs’ HR management approaches for retaining skilled workers in South Sudan. While skilled workers were asked to discuss factors influencing their decisions to stay in the sector, managers were asked to share their experiences with regards to what their organizations were doing to keep their skilled workers retained in the sector. The information provided by the three interviewed groups has been used to develop the analysis presented in this chapter.

Research results revealed different categories of human resource management approaches influencing employee retention within the INGDOs sector. These were the management techniques deployed to cope with the challenges discussed in the previous chapter, represented by the competitive salaries, medical benefits and time paid off, training and professional development opportunities, career progression opportunities, performance feedback, effective communication channels between staff and the management, and employee empowerment opportunities.
6.2 HR MANAGEMENT APPROACHES AND STAFF RETENTION

Based on the data analysis, the HR management approaches for attracting and retaining skilled workers in the INGDOs sector, particularly in a conflict setting like South Sudan, have been grouped into six categories. These categories are:

- Competitive Salaries and Medical Benefits
- Training and Professional Development
- Performance Feedback
- Career Progression Opportunities
- Effective Communication Channels between Staff and the Management
- Employee Empowerment Practices

6.2.1 Competitive Salaries and Medical Benefits

This section presents findings which can be categorized under the broader term, attractive salaries and benefits. These are findings representing the viewpoints of managers, staff, and expert practitioners from the variety of organizations, academia, and government in South Sudan. Findings from all three interviewed groups were mixed regarding the effective use of monetary incentives and medical benefits to influence skilled workers’ retention, with some respondents being in favor of rewards and benefits, while others felt they were not as productive as they would like them to be. While management and employee participants mostly agreed that these retention practices had influenced some professional workers to stay, the important issue was whether they could attract and retain employees without investing heavily on recruitment and advertising strategies; whether these practices would still be relevant and contribute to employee satisfaction in their role and make them to stay in a conflict environment.

Interviewed expert practitioners for this study identified the importance of monetary and non-monetary rewards in order to increase staff retention. Monetary rewards were mainly competitive salaries and performance bonuses. Non-Monetary rewards included extended leave, promotions and creating facilities for recreation activities. All three interviewed groups viewed competitive rewards and benefits as the primary source of job satisfaction among skilled workers, and also did not think that messages of encouragement and congratulation recognizing good performance alone would make any difference to influence skilled workers’ decisions to remain. In regard to rewards and benefits, some managers, employees, and
expert practitioners shared similarities that keeping employees in the sector has several potential benefits for the organization and that better pay and benefits bring stability.

I think by South Sudan’s standard, more and more workers working with INGOs, whether humanitarian or development NGOs, are satisfied with pay. I believe it is better pay and benefits that any employee would be critical of, so a better pay leads to a longer stay (EXP01).

I think most of the people that we have employed over time in various positions across the organization have been moving on and up. Promotion and salary structure of our staff are constantly reviewed. We have done everything in our capacity to improve our staff salaries in order to keep them (MNGT02).

I believe I am being paid well and in line with the level of my educational qualifications and experience. In terms of salaries and health insurance I think what we are getting out here is substantial to make one continue working (EM07).

The management participants also noted that they provide their staff with supplementary benefit packages, such as housing, communication, and transportation allowances. Based on these findings, an organization can adjust its benefit plans to meet employees’ needs. In consideration that the basic medical insurance cannot satisfy local workers’ needs, organization offers the additional medical insurance for them. In addition, the organization provides the workers with limited assistance for career enrichment. Organizations reimburse employees for their learning and skills development opportunities. But other education assistances are not institutionalized and the organization deals with them case by case. Organizations have more institutionalized approaches by providing the Education Assistance Program. If workers want to be sponsored by an organization for their career enrichment, they have to apply for this program first and the organization needs to select qualified employees to get this assistance. One manager reflected that:

Good rewards and benefits including extended leave, promotions and creating facilities for recreation activities are vital parts of an employee’s compensation package in our organization. Well-rewarded staffs generally remain with the organization for a longer period, and by reducing the attrition of staff, we can make sure that the organization’s resources are dedicated to the projects and betterment of the poor communities (MNGT08).

Although organizations are struggling in securing enough financial resources from donors, many staff are satisfied and expressed their desire to continue working for their current organizations primarily because they felt that INGDOs are among the best organizations to work for in South Sudan and they have a sense of pride working for such organizations. Participants strongly agreed that their medical benefits guarantees them easy access to quality health care so they can focus on their assignments, particularly in such difficult work
environment as South Sudan and that they will continue to pursue such strategies. In terms of incentives to staff’s personal growth, organizational leaders see that this can be done successfully by organizations if they should be able to provide opportunities for staff to move up in their career ladder. Although employees in the sector had to wait for a long-time to be eligible for promotion, they still maintained that their expectations have been met by their managers. Aligning the employees’ expectations with the organizational requirements is critical to establishing a good and pleasant work environment. In their opinion, mature employment relationships, reliability, and trust are other key positive outcomes of good long-term relationships and are highly beneficial for the organization, efficient organizational management and longer stay. Following on from the above discussion, there are similarities between managers and experts in regard to rewards and benefits in the sector.

Better pay is the number one cause of many people’s dissatisfaction with the government careers, and the number one reason why people decided to decide to work for INGOs. In addition to good salaries, INGDOs staffs are compensated for earning advanced graduate degrees, and those who earn other relevant qualification or experience are rewarded as well (EXP03).

Our staffs receive the amount of pay that commensurate the work they do. Better pay has been one of the strategies in which we retained our staff. Many of these programs are highly valued by our staff (MNGT06).

My salaries and benefits are suitable for my needs and are accessible to me and my family. I feel like I am being paid a fair salary for what I do. I could be paid more somewhere else but considering my duties and responsibilities, I feel the total package of my medical benefits is fair (EM21).

Nevertheless, some participants disagreed with the notion that rewards and benefits make people stay in the organization by stating that they have had a different career pathway in the sector and have slightly different opinions about other management retention approaches such as compensation and benefits, but not training and professional development. Although living and working conditions are poor in South Sudan, some participants think there are pros and cons about long-term relationships but they recognize that people need to stay for a while in the organizations to have opportunities to learn, take advantage of competitive remuneration packages available. Employee participants noted that it was difficult for them to get a clear picture of exactly what the numeration package includes and the size of the various component of it. Apart from end of contract, donor funding conditionalities were repeatedly and consistently throughout the interviews mentioned as another motivating factor influencing the decisions of skilled workers to leave the development aid sector. They mentioned that their salary was quite poor and did not enable them to meet their individual
and family needs. The top-up allowance did not translate into increase in take-home pay because of the tax structure in South Sudan. Statements by participants who were not satisfied with the current rewards and benefits system included the followings.

It is really difficult to survive with this salary especially with our society whereby people depend on each other very much. Suppose I am the only one working in the family that means the extended family relies on my income (EM03).

The salary that I am paid is too small for me to sustain my family. I have been a field coordinator for many years here and I earn the same salary as those who just joined this organization yesterday (EM19).

I would want to see these organizations constantly reviewing their promotion and salary structures to keep up with new trends. The salary of field workers does not compare to other organizations workers in the region with a similar number of years in the field, training and qualification (EM01).

There exist few opportunities for personal advancement and the salary is not relevant compared to the pressure of work their workers do. Organizations need to focus on salary reviews to ensure that there is wage equity among comparable jobs and qualifications and between locals and expatriates...and context-specific initiatives to make sure that there is a locally-rooted skills retention solution (EXP05).

Responding to the above findings, some organizational managers and employees reported that a lack of financial resources to retain staff would be a primary antecedent of voluntary employee turnover in the sector. Organizational managers reflected that pay rises were difficult to justify due to scare resources and uncertainty in funding arrangements. Field notes also captured actual account of some staff seeking alternative employment because they were dissatisfied with pay rates and increment in the sector. Both managers and employees simultaneously acknowledged that dissatisfaction with pay rate and lack of financial flexibility on behalf of the organization would trigger perceptions of lack of appreciation and prompt staff to search for alternative jobs that offer a higher wage. These quotes below from the two cohorts support these points:

We are not going to pay them [skilled workers] what they are asking for based on their skills and qualifications because of resource scarcity and uncertainty in funding from donors. We paid our staff and offer employment contracts to them on the basis of financial resources we received from international donors (MNGT09).

Although security is the problem in this setting, I think [some] people left basically because of money issue and the attitude that the other international agencies paid well. My pay is generally below the pay of similar jobs in other organizations of the same nature and UN agencies in the region. I think pay and benefits have got to improve in the development sector in order to keep people working (EM21).
While there were differences of opinion, many managers, skilled workers, and expert practitioners agreed that rewards and benefits could play a role in staff retention. In particular, expert practitioners believed that organizational managers offered various alternatives for changes that could be made in the workplace to accommodate varying interests and demands from skilled workers. From the perspective of organizational managers, as well as field notes, building a strong relationship with their employees and paying attention to the demands of their employees is fundamental to keeping talented people in their jobs. While concurring with organizational managers, expert practitioners noted that employees value the feeling of being fairly rewarded for the work they do and that organizational managers need to pay their employees well above the award as a way to acknowledge their value for the organization and help boost morale. The observation made during the interviews also revealed that although some employees are satisfied with their current rewards and benefits, some believed that organizational managers should put themselves in employees’ shoes when it comes to pay and medical benefits in order to understand, improve and do more.

*Kë piath ye yien kœc, yenne kee kœc cœk tœ areet ne luɔɔyic, [the good rewards given to people is what compels people to stay longer in the job] (EM18).*

These different opinions in regard to rewards and benefits are explained by one employee participant (EM03) who stated that she was working in the government sector before, and then came a point of time when she had to make a decision on her financial stability as she was not making enough income. A close friend of hers, who had been working for development NGOs for long time, heard of her plan and asked her to come in to work with them and she promptly agreed as she was “desperately looking for better job” and had time to do that job. This employee participant concluded that she was, in a way, led to come to the sector by good pay and benefits. Concurring with the above finding, an expert practitioner (EXP01), a well-known University Professor and author of several books on organizational management, including HRM, agreed that salaries and benefits play an integral role in employee retention and that due to shortage of skilled workers in developing countries, which has occurred since 1980s, organizations sought ways to get around the wage controls in order to attract scarce workers, and offering competitive pay and medical benefits is one option. This expert practitioner concluded that, in today’s workforce, many attraction and retention programs are common, but cutting-edge programs like attractive medical plans can be the differentiator that gives an organization the advantage in the war for talent. Also, based on
field notes information and the interviews, skilled workers feel that they get an inadequate remuneration and that transportation costs to come to work are high, and in some cases are reported to make up about one-third of the basic salary. One employee participant shared his experience as illustrated in the following quote:

My salary is 2500 South Sudanese Pounds per a month and I spend nearly 50 South Sudanese pounds per a day on transport to come to work and back to home. With high cost of transport and expensive living I cannot sustain myself and my family with such incomes I received from my work. I think more need to be done (EM11).

In summary, although some employees and expert practitioners argued that salaries and benefits practices were not enough singly-handily to attract people to stay, overall the finding from management participants reveals that the traditional HRM approaches of rewards and benefits influenced retention of skilled workers in the conflict settings in some ways. The research finding also revealed that if the staffs are given the compensation and rewards and their efforts are recognized by the top management and the salary paid to them is sufficient and congruent with their job duties then reward and compensation would increase the level of staff retention. Employees, however, on their part reported mix reactions with regards to salaries and medical benefits with some employees arguing that they were in favor of financial incentives in the sector, while others felt they were not effective and adequate as they would like them to be. The next section looks at training and professional development opportunities as another HRM tool for attracting and retaining skilled workers in the sector.

6.2.2 Training and Professional Development Opportunities
This section presents findings which can be categorized under the broader term, training and professional development opportunities. These are findings representing the viewpoints of managers, staff, and experts practitioners from the variety of organizations, academia, and government in South Sudan. Emerging from war in 2005 and plunged into civil war again in late 2013, South Sudan is struggling with the largest capacity gap in Africa. Every single ministry, every single state government and every single spending agency suffers from a chronic lack of qualified and competent workers. Nearly half of all civil servants in South Sudan have only a primary school education (Johnson 2014). This capacity gap is reflected in international NGOs at all levels, including INGDOs. The number of INGOs in South Sudan has almost doubled to more 200 since independence in 2011 (SSNBS 2015). This is proved to be a challenge for those INGOs who are interested in competent and qualified workers. In terms of staffing numbers, the South Sudan NGO Forum estimates that there are some 10,000 national aid workers and 2,000 expatriates and regional workers in South Sudan (SSNF
2012). These figures exclude the UN staff in the country. With a high level of staff turnover, many expatriates remain for only twelve months, the relatively inexperienced nature of humanitarian and development operations in South Sudan and the identified capacity gap, the requirement for humanitarian and development NGOs training is clear.

Training priorities are based on needs assessment to be undertaken in the coming months or years, and on expressed needs from the communities being served. From the interview results, it was clear that some INGDOs provide training as needed for their staff, especially national staff to ensure that the benefit to development organizations is sustainable and lasting. In South Sudan, INGDOs were focusing on providing training in staff security and safety, staff well-being, logistics and operational support and development work practices. INGDOs also offer tailor-made training in water, sanitation and hygiene, facilitation, management, and needs. However, responses from participants were mixed regarding the effective use of training and development, as a management strategy, to influence staff retention in a conflict setting. Some employees were in favor of training and professional development opportunities undertaken in the sector suggesting that the provision of training and development opportunities is a key factor in attracting and maintaining people but also for the smooth running of the organization, while others felt that they were not as significant as they would like them to be. The following quotes support these views:

I like the safety and human relations trainings which are provided in my organization. I have received some training here in this agency on how I can work with heavy equipment and in a conflict environment. I believe these safety trainings and others are critical in our current setting and context (EM09).

My experience here is that the safety and learning and development trainings they [INGDOs] promised to offer at the beginning of your contract is not what you ended up with when you started the employment with them...Training is not up to date and there are instances where you ended up in the field not knowing what to do (EM12).

On their side, management participants felt that training and development of staff are essential in the conflict settings, as many of their staff do not have either the experience or learning to handle the difficult challenging circumstances. Many of interviewed managers report a high level of satisfaction with training provided in the workplace, leading to more efficient, effective and sustainable development and retention outcomes. In addition, they indicated that their goal is to have many of their skilled workers indicating a significant improvement in skills, knowledge or confidence immediately after the training event. Gender and equality is also mainstreamed in their training modules and is an important component of
their training philosophy in South Sudan. Expert practitioners, on the other hand, stated that awareness programs, for example, teaching or training about the nature of illness and symptoms also helped staff to overcome the problem although INGDOs are seen to be lagging behind in pre-deployment training and follow-up.

Furthermore, training and development in the conflict settings, as a function of HRM, is concerned with organizational activity aimed at bettering the performance of individual and groups in organizational settings, and helped managers to regain confidence and motivation in dealing with their sensitive subjects. Management participants also stated that their organizations provided orientation covering knowledge related to the organization, context and programs as well as handovers when taking over an existing position. Employees and expert practitioners agreed in part with the earlier view from managers, suggesting that induction, orientation and handover are critically important, as they influence both the speed with which staffs become productive and the quality of their work. A structured process enables staff to quickly form successful teams, to understand the expectations of their roles and the context in which they operate in. A well-managed induction process makes staff feel welcome, and leads to increased commitment, loyalty and intention to stay. Overall, in regard to training and development, managers, employees, and experts shared these views:

Our staffs are being given chances to develop themselves through a range of activities [e.g. on internal learning activities on marketing strategies in the job market]. We have increased retention through training and development opportunities such as allowing workers to further their education and reimbursing tuition for workers who remain with the organization for more than two years. (MNGT09).

We managed staff turnover by providing training relevant to the field and the nature of the work each person is going to do. Our approach to employment and the retention of skilled workers focuses on providing opportunities for personal growth and keeping them as long as they are happy with the job and constantly learning. We encourage and help them to think about their career and where they are heading and we are always more than happy to help them move on to other organizations if we cannot offer them what they are looking for (MNGT06).

In support of the above discussion, one expert argued that the success of INGDOs program related to training and professional development was its emphasis on aligning interests to the organization’s mission and activities. The program had a transparent and documented approval procedure for a range of development options, from training to job exchange, which had to be instigated by the employee to ensure commitment:

I think training and development—which is a process of making sure that those who don’t have terminal qualifications are sat for further studies—is the key factor
influencing staff to stick with the organizations. It is an important component of HR development in an organization and for retaining staff in conflict environments. By developing the capacities of human resources, the organizations as well as the employees make progress (EXP02).

Another expert practitioner explained that INGDOs promoted personal growth and professional training and development opportunities throughout the sector. The organizations sponsored a number of professional courses to help the staff improve their knowledge and skills. Internal staff training and development programs were also conducted:

I think the extent to which these organizations [INGDOs] see staff as central to their mission is often reflect in the management practices related to staff care. Pre-deployment preparation including security training and information on how to take care of people go a long way towards keeping staff fit and healthy (EXP06).

One employee participant did not report any problem of retention and indicated that their organization maintained positive employee retention by providing opportunities for training and development. He said that that his organization focuses on training and development of its personnel and exposing them to challenging situations and by helping them to achieve success; therefore, making development work a fulfilling experience for their staff:

We received necessary training to perform our jobs well. The training here focused on security and safety and making staff aware on the mission of organization, which helps staff to increase their involvement. I believe the training and professional development opportunities provided by INGDOs make people aware that people come first, not personal interests in reaching organizational goal (EM13).

Although the majority of participants in this study had training from human resource management department on how to cope with challenges presented by the physical environment, there were concerns about areas of training and professional development where some felt they lacked skills. The overall feeling was that in-service training was insufficient to provide management skills required in the current work environment, and that the content of skilled workers management programs and in-service training might be outdated and irrelevant. Lack of knowledge on labor issues, financial and conflict managers were expressed. The changing humanitarian and development aid industry has put remarkable challenge on the organizational managers. Expert practitioners see organizational managers as vital in effecting skilled workers retention and subsequently the success of any humanitarian and development NGO, and if organizations want to keep highly competent workers, it is essential that they train excellent employees, both at the field and headquarters levels. In opposing the earlier findings related to training and professional development, some
participants broadly noted that skills development opportunities were often deliberately disregarded in the sector.

I have not been given the opportunity to be involved in activities that promote my professional development. I am not happy to stay here for another year or so. I am waiting for my contract to end and will leave for another organization. A lot of what I have learnt here has been off my current role-related or responsibility (EM03).

There was a general feeling among some management participants that it is difficult for organizations to manage in the South Sudan’s current situation. Limited training and professional development opportunities in the sector were other constraints leading to turnover. From the observation with expert practitioners, the process of selection for continuous education was considered unfair by them. They indicated that opportunities were limited and coordination was also lacking. Skilled workers also said that they tended to be in service for between three to five years before having access to training and skills development opportunities. The situation was reported worse for some staffs, especially field staff. Workers in the headquarters were the only ones who indicated that they had obtained training normally within a reasonable timeframe, at least within one year. Expert practitioners also mentioned the lack of rewards for staff who had gained additional qualifications or training as demotivation.

Training is often overlooked or not afforded a priority by International NGOs. However, the insecure nature of the environment means that serious incidents do happen. Staff can find themselves in very difficult situations or may be involved in critical incidents such as a robbery, violent attack, kidnap, serious sickness or injury. Staffs need training to cope with these challenges (EXP04).

Training and skills development opportunities are lacking, mainly for the newly recruited qualified workers who are not experienced. They do not feel safe with conditions they have never worked in before (EXP08).

Other group of participants gave reasons why the management approaches of training and professional development opportunities didn’t do much in the sector. Employee participants mentioned that since they completed a diploma more than a year ago, they had not had any promotion or bonus. The in-service training which represents training on specific topics to improve performance and retention is organized within the headquarters. Training needs are identified by HR department or program managers and proposals are made to the country representative in Juba for approval. Such trainings are often organized to fill identified gaps in knowledge in fulfilling beneficiaries’ needs. From the skilled workers’ perspective, in-service training improved their job performance but they mentioned that new skills acquired by staff were sometime not used. Skilled workers also indicated that they feel their
opportunities and choices for in-service training in their workplaces are being denied by the training coordinators, both in the field and headquarters levels, but mainly at the field sites. They believed that favorism and nepotism seemed also to exist with regard to both continuous education and in-service training. Three employee participants shared similarities, noting that:

Our managers can even conceal information on training from staff. They like to give out the information about training to people they like. Because of such practices, sometimes only those workers with good relationship with managers are the ones receiving most of the training (EM07).

With such a working environment based on projects, proper training and long-term staff training and development opportunities are lacking because organizations could not afford the costs for staff training and development due to lack of funding (EM15).

We have a qualification, but humanitarian and development work changes. Our role also changes as we are always expected to work in remote locations. In many time, training courses did not teach us about security, safety and coping strategies. Managers never talked about a number of issues and how to deal with them (EM20).

As in the case of training and professional development opportunities in the sector, one expert practitioner felt that staff had to wait for a long period of time to be eligible for promotion. There was also a perceived lack of career structures in the sector.

The work environment is not good. Staffs wait for long time before being sent for training. Staffs within aid arena need to be taught how to deal with security and labor issues without depending on the human resource management (EXP09).

Staffs training at the level of certificate, diploma or degree is operated by the head offices. The head offices have developed plans for continuous education, but these plans are not always fully funded, due to budget constraints. Recommendation and selection for training is done by field managers for those in the field and ratified by the head offices. All the interviewed managers in the sector agreed that continuous education did not necessarily follow development or aid industry needs but was project or program driven. This was captured in an observation from one of the management participants based in Juba. One of the interviewed management participants (MGNT05) explained that training and development opportunities needs are on individual or organizational basis in nature and that it is like if his organization is training and preparing employees for exists from this organization to another. Based on field notes and interviews information, one employee participant accused the INGDOs managers of being reluctant to provide them with good training and professional development opportunities, remarking that:
Akuc kee pïöc e weu nyaï, yin cië leeu ba kòc bëëi ku cïk ca tï te cin yen ke piëëth yi luู้ëi keek [They [INGDOs managers] don’t know training costs money...You cannot attract and retain key people without proper opportunities for future advancement in place] (EM16).

On the positive side, it was also observed that training and development can make employees feel valued, allowing them to use their skills and knowledge at work, whether directly in their jobs or through work on committees or as team members in the organization. With different life and work experiences, participants hold different views about training and professional development opportunities as a retention tool and their willingness to stay in the organization and in conflict settings in general. The work set up, the compensation, including health benefits, and training and professional development opportunities have been the most critical things impacting intentions of staffs to stay. People need to see a future in the organization they are in and get those opportunities. Having people sent overseas for further training, and having helpful and approachable managers, makes things easier and more enjoyable. The following observation from one manager in the field is what was made regarding training and professional development:

I think dissatisfaction with potential compensation and personal development is one of the main factors workers often feel inclined to look elsewhere. Competitive salaries and training opportunities are always there for our staff, both in headquarters and in the field offices. Our training program focused on continuing and expanding focus on managerial, governance, safety or security training and supporting qualification for staff involved in designing and delivering services to poor communities (MGNT02).

Another observation from other organizational manager indicated that basically the main reason why people stay is because they are interested in staff development opportunities. So, those people who are interested to go back to school stay in the organization waiting for a chance to upgrade themselves. During the interview, one organizational manager (MGNT05) explained that his organization offers plenty of stuff to make their staff competitive not only in their job roles but also in the labor market. He also says that, besides money, they know that many of their staffs come to the INGDOs sector to gain relevant work experience, particularly in development. This participant also maintains that they train their staff to get along well with authority and with people who entertain diverse points of view, particularly expatriates, which is one of the guarantees of long-term success. This management participant concluded that talent, knowledge and skills alone won’t compensate for a sour relationship with a superior, peer, or beneficiary. Another observation from an employee participant in the field indicated that, apart from competitive salaries and medical benefits,
opportunities to upgrade knowledge and skills have helped in changing people attitudes toward organization and influenced intention to leave.

From the perspective of one employee participant (EM04), he is given opportunities to upgrade knowledge and skills and to improve his performance through continuous training. He was sent to Ethiopia for training and workshop last year while some of his colleagues have been sent as far as Germany and Malaysia the year before. He stated that his organization was very helpful as well as coaching and training received from field office. He concluded that his boss gave him some chances to master his job and that his manager and staff also helped him to master computer. It was also observed that, apart from trainings on personal conduct, staff rights and responsibilities, the organization’s values and mandate, personal security awareness and stress, personal objectives and reporting lines, the decisions of skilled workers to stay have been fuelled by management approaches such as internal and external training opportunities. Another employee participant (EM13) agreed with the above suggestion, saying that there are better opportunities to get scholarships for further studies within the development sector than anywhere else and that his organization sent him overseas for training and workshops, sometimes, outside South Sudan and Africa as a whole. In addition to numerous travelling to Tanzania and South Africa, he just came recently from a visit to Japan and United States and there are chances that he will be travelling soon to U.K. to attend some training and workshops related to his job roles.

In summary, training and professional development is one of those double-edged swords HR management approaches for retaining skilled workers. In accordance with the findings from managers and experts, staffs were reported to stay in the development sector to gain access to training and capacity development opportunities. The findings also revealed that staffs expressed intention to leave once they had finished this training. In contrast, training and professional development was found to be an influencing factor which could make skilled workers stay or return to the development sector. Therefore, the potential for training professional development to retain skilled workers in the conflict settings and even make them return is important, although some employees disputed this claim. Moreover, it was reported by the managers interviewed that training and development, in combination with adequate and well-imbedded salary and benefits, would increase the level of employees’ retention. However, for employees who participated in this study, staff development opportunities were not effective means for retaining key people in the conflict context as
some staff members were selected for training and others left out through a process which was not transparent. Section 6.2.3 below looks at career development opportunities as another important management approach for attracting and retaining skilled workers.

6.2.3 Career Progression Opportunities

This section looks at the extent to which skilled workers are exposed to management approaches such as opportunities for career and continue professional development, for example, sponsorship to attend both short and advanced courses in their areas of specialization, and how these practices influenced them to stay. Findings from research participants were mixed regarding the effective use of career development opportunities in the conflict settings to influence staff retention. While some participants were in favor of career development opportunities believing that the practice enables skilled workers to cope better with the requirements of their job, enable them to take up more challenging roles, and also enable them to achieve personal goals of professional development. Others were of a feeling that opportunities for career development and further training are currently structured to favor those working in Juba or headquarters, and to hinder those who work in the field locations. Skilled workers interviewed described Juba or headquarters as the best place to access specialist training, study leave or overseas opportunities, and the places where one has the best chance to receive mentoring by specialists and senior HR managers.

On the positive side, the Christian-faith-based INGDOs could generate high motivation among their local staff due to their Christian identity as South Sudan remained long dominated by Christianity and African Traditional Religion. Practicing both Christian and African values of helping others kept the morale and loyalty high in the conflicting settings. Due to constant conflict and emergency responses to conflict in South Sudan, staff had to respond to emergency situations and many staff had to be transferred according to the need, causing some dissatisfaction among the staff. The organization tackled the issues by creating opportunities for promotion, providing timely HR support, fostering effective communication and creating a good working environment. Some of the organizations interviewed reported that they did not have any particular problem in retaining their skilled workers. They had, however, a concern that developing the various systems to work better in all their field offices, and spread over the country, could be a challenge in keeping talented staff. They feared that the expansion of their programs could potentially hamper staff retention as it could disturb values of the organizations such as family atmosphere, caring attitude and trust.
As a preventive strategy, managers have developed career development plans with clear objectives and encouraged staff to move toward a personally determined and evolving preferred future. As part of lifelong process of managing learning, work, leisure, and transitions towards personal development, interviewed managers said that they provide the ground of making succession planning possible within most of their positions. Skilled workers are given the opportunity to work in other regions for their career development. Some of the managers interviewed indicated that they believe in recruiting long-term workers rather than fixed-term project type recruitment in order to build loyalty and generated better motivation. Other organizational managers reported that the presence of armed militias in many parts of South Sudan instigated higher turnover of staff due to the increased demand of experienced and trained staff by other international NGOs engaging in development, emergency, and relief operations. Because of these challenges, many learning programs and other management approaches were introduced by organizations to influence staff to continue working for them. In regard to this, there were similarities among research participants that career development opportunities influences skilled workers to stay in the sector:

I understand my career path with the organization and they motivated me to remain in the organization and to achieve my personal career goals. Through surveys and discussions, my managers are always able to understand my goals for personal development (EM18).

Management approaches such as succession planning, inductions, internal promotion are adequately implemented. Job rotation is another important element of career development. This is good for regularly providing new opportunities (MNGT03).

My manager and I discussed my career development opportunities and I like the career development opportunities being offered in my organization, which is also why I continue to work here (EM01).

The results of the interviews with expert practitioners suggest that managers should be equipped as coaches in order to have meaningful career conversation with staff, and help facilitate career plans. Expert practitioners also argued that the key to strategic career development is aligning the employee’s value proposition and its needs and demands with those of the employees. It is also clear from the findings that the managers were able to advocate for staff based in the field on issues that include terms, conditions, fair chance and career development. Following on from this discussion, the organizations require experienced technical staff and senior managers in the field locations than any time before. Committed to developing their staff and internal promotion the managers also provide global exchange
programs for their employees. Employees are alternated from their national program and sent to headquarters or to other regions and therefore experience the wider organizational context and culture. While acknowledging that employees in conflict settings struggled with finding good working and living conditions and balance between work and family life more than their counterparts in other settings, expert practitioners felt that INGDOs were able to give their workers more career development opportunities than any other groups in South Sudan. Many of the expert practitioners shared similar views to that of managers and employees suggesting that having better career development opportunities in place was one of the most critical factors leading to staff retention:

I think staff usually received verbal praise from supervisor and other managers, salary increases, and skills development opportunities overseas. The salary increases reflected their performance over the year, successfully completing a project, or taking on additional responsibilities (EXP01).

I think those working with international NGOs have received sufficient career development opportunities to do their job effectively. Staffs are trained on human rights, equality, democracy, and in quality improvement skills. This is something they would not find anywhere else in South Sudan (EXP06).

Contrary to the advantageous of career development opportunities discussed earlier by management participant and expert practitioners, lack of a clear career structure was also mentioned by the employee participants as an impacting factor. This signifies that skilled workers’ decisions to stay is not only influenced by the presence of meaningful work, opportunities to upgrade their capability as well as promotion opportunities, but such practices such as job security, which guarantees long-term employment relationships. Even though many management participants highly regarded this HRM approach, reflecting that career development opportunities were working well in keeping talented workers, some expert practitioners regarded this practice as having no impact of skilled workers’ intention to continue working in their current role, organization or the sector as a whole. The findings from the interviews with managers and skilled workers revealed that younger employees are more flexible compared to older workers.

Expert practitioners, on the other hand, noted that workers below forty years are more likely to leave for a greener pastures if they are given the opportunity to do so. From the management perspective, experience is considered more important in a conflict environment than educational qualification, thus candidates often started from entry-level positions despite having higher qualifications and are promoted based on their performance. On a similar
ground, the majority of the interviewed skilled workers acknowledged that the INGDOs workforce is young and more adaptable compared to any other workforce in South Sudan. In regard to career development opportunities as a management approach for retaining skilled workers, there were similarities between some managers, employees, and expert practitioners that some staffs were frustrated with criteria for promotion in the sector.

There are practical limitations to career development in some situations because many positions are in location where staff would not want to operate on a permanent basis. Barriers to these factors include local languages and ethnicity, remoteness, and accommodation (EXP08).

Lack of opportunity for promotion to higher levels demotivated a number of staffs with experience and skills. Employee salary is also an issue. Once the salary is increased for a section of the experienced staff, the other employees got demotivated. As a result, individual attention is given on a case by case basis and counselling services are provided to employees to control damages (MNGT09).

The absence of salary scale and lack of adherence to qualifications framework and experience influenced negatively on staff planning to remain in the organization for longer period... Absence of these makes workers to look to other organizations for career development opportunities (EM22).

From the interviews with the three cohorts, it was found that the nature of the sector’s work creates many challenges for skilled workers such as geography, security, short-term contracts, and extreme emergencies. The observation highlighted the role of challenges in South Sudan when employees decide to leave. It is true that organizations are not always able to mitigate through challenges presented to them by the external environment because of limited funding and limited career development opportunities. However, as much as organizations are concerned with their staff well-being, organizational managers feel that they are ultimately in control of some turnover problems through a range of management approaches. Workers in remote posting were very conscious of their disadvantage when it comes to mentoring and moving up the career ladder, and this was a major source of frustration. Even those who had come to work in South Sudan with strong Christian or ideological motives felt that they have now been forgotten by their organizations, and are at risk of falling off the career ladder.

Overall, there were mixed feelings with expert practitioners agreeing that career development opportunities serve to develop and promote junior staff into senior management positions to the benefit of both the organization and the employee while some employee participants express different opinion saying that they were not happy with career development, particularly the way people were promoted. One management participant (MGNT06)
described his experience that developing staff skills and supporting their career is one way of retaining their staff and that making sure that their staffs are gaining innovative skills and getting benefits of many diverse systems of learning in the organization is what they considered as career development opportunity. Concurring with this is an employee participant, who stated that:

I believe [some] people are given ample opportunities for advancement on the job while others are not. Only those who are working in the HQs have access to the scholarships; if you are in the remote area it becomes difficult. Rather it should be that when you are in remote posting you deserve to be given priority than those at the headquarters, but things are not done that way here (EM12).

Resources scarcity and lack of persistent funding from donors in combination with organization structure were also identified as barriers to career development opportunities in the sector. Some participants reflected on the inability to advance professionally within the sector. In regard to financial scarcity, one management participant (MGNT07) explained that, if the goal an employee is to increase his/her responsibility or get better at his/her job and therefore require more income for that, then that cannot happen unless there is continuous funding from donors. In addition to what is explained by one of the management participants above, one of the interviewed employee participants noted that:

I have been expecting promotion to a management post since I started here 4 years ago, as I performed well in my evaluations. But when I didn’t get promoted for such a long time, it made me feel like there was no future opportunity to move up. If I can find another INGO with more opportunities to move up I will definitely go (EM05).

Similarly, in response to whether or not resources scarcity and lack of persistent funding from donors in combination with organization structure were barriers to career development opportunities in the sector, an expert practitioner, a prominent University lecturer of economics and organizational planning in South Sudan, agreed with what was described earlier by one of the management participants, saying that:

I think if someone wants to grow or improve their position in the organization they would have to go because there is nowhere to move up. Chances of career progression are very much determined by the financial resources from donors...Limited financial resources from donors mean limited career progression for employees in the development sector (EXP09).

In summary, the results from section 6.2.3 indicated that organizations have initiated a more formalized system of addressing career development and planning with their recently revised employee performance reviews. Annual performance reviews now involve the setting of goals in two areas: organization or department goals and individual goals. The review
provides an opportunity for employees to discuss where they see themselves in the organization, the things they might like to do differently, positions they might be interested in, and the types of job specific training that might be pursued. The interviewed INGDOs were careful to note that not all employees are necessarily interested in taking training or pursuing a particular career path. Some employees are satisfied in their current roles, and are happy to continue to do their jobs well while others are not.

Some differences and similarities were found between the three cohorts in terms of their opinions on career development and staff retention. On the negative side, it emerged in the discussion that some workers were not happy with the way people were promoted in the sector. These were all field workers with territory education who were at least 30s years of age and many of them were local workers. This possibly suggests that the INGDOs operating in South Sudan might have problems in managing the expectations of their workers in career development. Some staff members, especially in remote areas expected to be promoted but some external candidates, expatriates and regional workers in particular, fill the vacancies. However, from managers’ perspectives, there is nothing wrong with employees making a decision to stay in the job that they are happy with, but it does provide opportunities for those who want to take them. This study revealed that the perception that staff had opportunities for personal growth and development influenced feelings of intention to stay for others while the opposite perception influenced feelings of intention to leave for others. Provision of opportunities for personal growth and development demonstrate an organization’s commitment towards improving employees’ knowledge and skills. It is through such activities that people are able to acquire and develop relevant new knowledge, skills, capabilities, behaviors and attitudes that prepare them for higher level responsibilities in the future. However for several employees and some experts, Section 6.2.4 below examines the extent to which staffs are exposed to other retention practices such as performance feedback.

6.2.4 Performance Feedback
This section examines the characteristics, elements, assessment approach and methods of performance feedback, and methods of appraisal interview within the INGDOs sector in South Sudan. This discussion is followed by a critical assessment that identifies both the effectiveness and ineffectiveness of current performance feedback practices from the perspective of three research cohorts. As service providing organizations, INGDOs’ performance are dependent on their human resources as retaining high quality human
resources has become a challenge in South Sudan. Responses from research participants were mixed regarding the effective use of performance feedback in the conflict settings to influence staff retention. Some participants were in favor of performance feedback remarking that the provision of performance feedback not only improve employee performance but also apply as a motivating tool, while others felt that the concept is relatively a new human resource practice in South Sudan and that very few organizations are putting increased emphasize on performance feedback to identify the strengths and weaknesses of their employees to improve their productivity.

In regard to how INGDOs managers are trying to make performance feedback in the sector, interviewed managers reported that within their organizations, all the individuals’ and teams’ performance are evaluated on a regular interval. Managers have also reported core employees are evaluated once in a year while the project based employees are evaluated quarterly. They further acknowledged that different methods are applied to evaluate individual and team performance in the organizations. Among these, graphic rating scale is the most common and widely used performance feedback method. In support of managers’ efforts, expert practitioners, appreciate the methods undertaken by organizational managers, saying that it is advantageous to evaluate an individual as it has the focus on the duties and responsibilities of a job though it can be ambiguous for the evaluator in terms of rating factors or traits, their measurement, and the interpretation of the measurement.

Ranking methods is also utilized in the sector for performance feedback. Though ranking provides the opportunity to directly compare one employee with other, managers discussed that it can be difficult to apply the size of the differences among individuals is not well defined. Besides these techniques, some INGDOs were found to be using other methods, for example, essay method, which is a free-form writing that provides flexibility, and which its effectiveness depends on evaluator’s writing skills and expressiveness. Although managers consider this approach as an effective mean of carrying out appraisal in the sector, employees consider it at the same time as also corrupted and ineffective. In regard to this discussion above, one manager and an employee shared their experiences as illustrated in the following quotes below:

Our appraisal process, mainly the essay technique, is used as a formal program in which our staffs are required to write a series of questions designed to elicit information about their past performance, strengths and weakness, promotion potential, and training and development needs. It’s not only for communicating expectations but also for rating staff on how well they have met expectations in the
workplace. We used this appraisal method as a mean of supporting HR decisions, including promotions, termination, training, and merit pay increases (MGNT03).

I think the appraisals system in our organization is based on a traditional method, where a manager reviews a staff’s performance during a set period. Although we have seen the other methods of appraisals as management’s ways of telling staff what is expected of them in their jobs and how well they are meeting those expectations, we generally find written appraisals [essay] as easy to understand and helpful. This method makes it easy for us to know what is expected of us and against what standards we will be judged by HR managers (EM16).

Interview data also revealed that INGDOs were using different types of appraisal interview techniques in the sector. While the first approach is definitely useful and involves persuading the employees for new behaviors along with emphasize on skilful use of motivational incentives, the second approach provides an opportunity for the employees to express their feelings regarding the appraisal, which can in turn reduce the feeling of dissatisfaction and frustration. A third approach of conducting appraisal interview in the sector was performance management process, broadly for all categories of workers and specifically for field workers. This process allows the staff to communication intensively, face-to-face and in private, with their managers in order to review work accomplishment of the previous year, plan future performance objectives to remedy deficiencies and reinforce strengths, and address development opportunities.

Concurrently, interviewed expert practitioners stated that this approach is particularly advantageous as it seeks growth and development of employee by discussing the needs and problems. In regard to whether or not employees are finding the appraisal system useful in the sector and whether or not employees feel like they are getting proper feedback, some employee participants reported that the top management sits with the project directors, project coordinators, and team leaders to discuss about their performance along with overall performance of the project. The organizational managers communicate the evaluation information to employees and also listen from the employees to know their perception and opinion about their performance and the effectiveness of the project. Hence, it becomes a two way communication for the employees and managers. INGDOs managers follow these approaches discussed above for communicating the appraisal information with managers and core employees as well. In regard to growing prominence of performance appraisal, particularly written appraisals in the INGDOs sector, one expert practitioner commented that:

I think the disadvantage of this kind of [performance] appraisal is that staff’s evaluation can be harmed by the appraiser’s writing ability and style. In addition,
comparisons of staff performance are difficult to substantiate because the contexts of one essay are not likely to correspond to points emphasized in another one’s review. However, I still do believe that written appraisals generally are based on certain traits or characteristics and have advantages over other appraisal methods because its format is open-ended, and staff can expand on areas that cannot be explicitly explained by other formats (EXP02).

As stated earlier, there were mixed feelings in regard to performance feedback in the sector. On the positive side, management and employee participants realized that a well-developed performance feedback process can be useful for assessment of staff training needs, employee merit appraisal, determining of staff salary, feedback and suggestion for performance development. The extent to which an employee or team meets the performance was typically evaluated or assessed by using different types of documentation systems. Such as in the headquarters the skilled workers’ entrance and exit time was recorded in a register book. In projects a separate file was maintained for each project staff member to record daily activities and daily improvement information of the project were reported by the field coordinators and project managers at the headquarter of the organization. All information about the projects were then stored in the headquarters. Findings from interviews with INGDOs managers revealed that the purpose of performance feedback in the sector was to communicate the manager’s perception of the staff’s strengths and weaknesses, and to let the staff respond to these feedbacks. In regard to performance feedback as an effective approach for retaining skilled workers in the conflict settings, several management participants shared these views:

Generally, we give and receive feedback well. This varies on person and style of the field manager. We do get cases where there are clashes. However we also give training every year on the process. We view the appraisal system as a development tool, not punishing tools. We make sure that every manager uses these strategies as learning tools. They are becoming learning tools for success (MNGT07).

Our staffs are given informal feedback on their performance. Our appraisal system focuses on developing our staff to help them succeed and stay aligned with the goals of the organization. Our staffs have access to training, resources, and tools to improve their performance and reach their career goals and are happier, more engaged and more empowered to become champions for this organization (MNGT08).

I think one of the reasons why people continue working with us is because of the good performance feedback they received each year; although moving to another sector is still positive for many workers. Our appraisals are often associated with pay increases and promotions; hence, a good review can boost morale and confidence, which in turn can positively affect productivity (MNGT07).

Following on from the discussions with managers about the nature of performance feedback in the INGDOs sector, one expert practitioner further suggests that successful performance
feedback and planning systems help improve staff’s perception toward justice and fairness at workplace:

I believe workers are regularly given feedback on their job performance and their performance ratings are done periodically. In terms of promotion, there is a database that tracks the career path of all staffs, and notifies all staffs that are coming up for promotion. Relevant documents e.g., appointment and promotion guidelines, are also made accessible via organizational websites in a very organized manner (EXP07).

Information obtained in the form of field notes also revealed that, in essence, staffs who feel that they are being treated fairly through effective performance feedback system would be more likely to retain in their jobs, compared to those who perceived otherwise. Furthermore, one of the interviewed expert practitioners (EXP02), a director and HR practitioner in the South Sudanese National Government in Juba, mentioned that performance feedback in the INGDOs sector is fair and enables staff to understand their job responsibilities and show them the path towards individual growth and promotion. Appraisal system should continue to be transparent in nature. He further suggested that managers should continue to conduct the process and make sure intention to stay is instilled among workers. According to this expert practitioner, the process should be well established and straightforward to avoid any kind of doubt. He concluded that this will make the professional aid workers accept feedback on their work with an open mind.

From the perspective of skilled workers interviewed, the top level management sits with projects directors, project coordinators, and team leaders to discuss about their performance along with the overall performance of the project. The organizational managers communicate with the evaluation information and also listen from the project related employees to know their perception and opinion about their performances and the project. Therefore it becomes a two-way communication for the employees and the evaluators. HR department follows this approach for communicating the appraisal information with managers and skilled workers as well. In regard to performance feedback, there were similarities between employees, with many agreeing that appraisal interviews give them the opportunity to discuss performance record with their managers and explore areas of possible improvements and growth.

We are evaluated fairly based on our performance ratings, which are done periodically. We are given feedback on our job performance in a timely fashion. The quality and the nature of our employment contract is an important factor in deciding whether to stay or leave (EM19).

Supporting the notion that formal performance feedback is an excellent opportunity to ensure talent is engaged, and that performance feedback is an ongoing process where the
management and employees work together to plan, monitor and review an employee’s work objectives or goals and overall contribution to the organization is one employee participant who explained:

Our field managers and HR department support and encourage us by providing regular feedback on our performance. I think performance feedback plays a key role in providing career and promotion opportunities and in our decisions to remain in the sector... it also helps in managing and aligning with organization goals and in measuring our success (EM09).

In support of the above assertion, another employee explained that positive feedback is a precursor to the feeling of recognition and acts as a spur for people to repeat the behavior which generated the feedback. Positive feedback, in his view, creates a positive reinforcing cycle that makes it attractive to come to work each day. Positive feedback adds also to the sense of individual purpose. Constructive feedback, in his view, may have a positive impact on some people who have performed poor, however, it also always has a positive impact on those who performed well to know that there is differentiation between good and poor performance review:

In my organization, a review looks at how an employee performed their work over the past year. I feel good performance is acknowledged and rewarded by my organization. I have the opportunity to do what I do best every day and I have the materials and equipment I need to do my work right (EM06).

Although the assertion that performance feedback is an effective HRM strategy for retaining skilled workers in a conflict setting hold true for interviewed management participants in this study, majority of employees and expert practitioners believed it is the combination of paying a comparative wage, providing flexibility and some control over decision making in the workplace as well as having a good work arrangements that are responsible for retaining good people in development organizations today. Even though effective performance feedback was in place, this management approach failed to bring about positive impact on skilled workers’ decisions to stay. One possible explanation for this is staff did not see the importance of performance feedback in relation to their current employment. They perhaps had no intention whatsoever to remain in the present employment. As the field observation is concerned, the majority of the interviewed employee participants in the sector were below 40 years old. It is possible that staffs of this age group are in the stage of exploring opportunities and challenges offered to them at work. Having discussed these traits, it is possible that participants in this study did not see themselves to be in same employment for a longer period of time. Instead, they would leave for better employment opportunities if they have the
chance to do so. Furthermore, performance feedback, which in most cases was conducted annually, did not provide immediate result to staff. Thus, this might explains why performance feedback practice had no influence on some of the employees’ intention to stay in the sector in South Sudan. In support of this, three employees stated that:

I think there are instances were performance feedback was simply applied as a tool of measurement and mentoring, which has resulted in problems and tensions overwhelming both managers and employees (EM18).

Field offices and headquarters are not aligned and we don’t get a sense of accomplishment from the job we do. Our organization doesn’t understand what we need to achieve and help us. Everyone doesn’t have the same opportunities to develop their career (EM02).

The promotion opportunities are not well explained and are very limited to better oneself...Our managers don’t really think about our performance management. Even if they have some, they don’t provide them in a caring way. They don’t give people good suggestions for doing better (EM13).

Other factors affecting performance appraisal system are tribalism and favorism among local and regional managers. Local workers hold that in South Sudan, favorable performance feedback is linked more to establishing a shared workforce understanding about what is to be achieved at an organization level, as well as aligning the organizational objectives with the staffs’ agreed measures, skills, competency requirements, development plans and the delivery of results. The emphasis is on improvement, learning and development in order to achieve the overall organizational retention strategy and to create a high performance workforce. For example, an appraiser may have close ethnic or kinship relations, thereby resulting in unequal treatment whereby one set of standards, procedure or facilities are used for a particular group and another for others. Management participants noted that tribalism is motivated by a number of factors which in various combinations determine attitudes and behavior towards members of one group of the other. Expert practitioners, on the other hand, argued that discrimination and tribalism, as chronic problems in the South Sudanese social structure have contributed negatively to the effectiveness of the role of managers in retaining staff in both public and private sector organizations. Interviewed employee participants, particularly field workers, alleged that many local and regional managers of those INGDOs operating in South Sudan ignore the criteria set forth for the appointment of candidates to vacant positions so that they can employ their tribesmen, Hence, the appointment is not based upon competences or merit and the job may not be offered to the best person. While supporting this finding, expert practitioners agreed that these practices in the sector, mainly from local and regional
managers, contributed to the reasons why it is difficult to retain skilled workers in the sector, especially in remote areas.

Although many participants specified that recruitment into the workplace had been fair, some were of the view that people who spoke a common language were recruited and female workers were discriminated against. The effects were enormous and very often the person who was offered the job could not cope with the tasks involved, resulting in incompetence and in most cases the collapse of the project. Such interferences conflicted with the job of the HR managers in regards to the appropriateness and selection procedures for candidates who were looking for jobs. Managers interviewed mentioned that they had written standards of feedback performance, but that these did not cover all categories of employees. The managers mentioned that those standards of feedback performance were issued and administered from the headquarters. During the interview, skilled workers expressed dissatisfaction with the supervision they received from management. In general, skilled workers felt that management did not give appreciation or recognition for the job they were doing, and this demotivated them. They perceive their organizations as not being effective in promoting and advancing their interests.

Our organization is just consuming our resources but not protecting our interest. They [expatriate managers] are there as watchdogs looking out for mistakes and to terminate our employment with the organization (EM14).

They also complained of not receiving any feedback from managerial visits. When this was discussed with management, the managers agreed that supervision received by staff was often inadequate. The managers felt they were hampered in providing adequate supervision because of the workload. They also evoked their lack of autonomy in creating and following their own supervision standards. Some management participants expressed this as follow:

In our organization, we do supervise and monitor, but most of the standards need to be updated... some items are missing in our program checklist (MGNT05).

We are limited in this task because of our workload. We do not have any way of recognizing good performance sometimes. We give our staff feedback on their work and discuss with those not performing well (MNGT02).

Although many of the organizational managers and expert practitioners indicated that the INGDOs operating in South Sudan have some forms of performance appraisal system in place for retaining all categories of their employees, some of the staffs were of the opinion that appraising skilled workers did not make any significant impact on their performance or motivation. Discussion with staff suggested limited career progression opportunities. They
related this to the absence of a performance appraisal system and a good career structure within the sector. Skilled workers were also of the opinion that the introduction an appraisal system would aid managers in making decisions on their career progress. Two field staff members said:

I have been in this position for the past 5 years without promotion or increment. People that went for their diploma after me now earn more salary than I do. I am so frustrated by this and can resign from this post at any time now (EM03).

Although I have been in this position for the past 3 years; it seems I have been forgotten by the organization. The worst of all is that I do not have any opportunity for further training and education (EM21).

Staff expressed concern that promotion opportunities were based on educational qualification only and not on experience. Employee Participants also expressed their unhappiness with the current organizational policy of calling staff for promotion interviews very infrequently and then basing promotion solely on the staffs’ performance at the promotion interview, with no account taken of performance on the job. Sometimes when staffs were promoted they were asked to resume the new post in another area, thus forcing people to relocate. Employee participants also indicated that this relocation was not specified in the job descriptions and one was usually told only after being offered the new position. This had resulted in some people’s having to live without their families or to forfeit the promotion. One employee participant expressed this as follow:

Basing promotion on qualification is very wrong. Sometimes you have to wait for more than 6 years to get further education; that means you remain in the same position for about 6 years or more (EM10).

In summary, the findings from section 6.2.4 revealed that although the evidence from this study suggests that performance feedback is able to influence employee retention, findings from the three interviewed cohorts were mixed regarding the effective use of feedback performance to influence skilled workers’ retention in a conflict setting, with some interviewees being in favor of feedback performance, while others felt it was not as productive as they would like it to be. Positively, findings from the interviews with managers indicated that performance feedback that provide good feedback to employees and give them a view of their long-term progress within the sector was important ways of improving employee retention. In other words, the INGDOs management was actively involved in helping to develop their skilled workers on a number of fronts, and particularly proud of the quality of their informal mentoring culture. Decisions about providing salaried or hourly wages with formal training rest with field managers, who base their decisions on the result of
performance evaluations and other factors such as performance appraisals and internal promotions. In the case of salaried workers within the sector, training and development decisions were tied not only to performance appraisal and performance management but also career development plans provided by the organizational managers at the head office in Juba.

For programs management positions, the organization had designed a year-long trainee program that takes new hires with limited experience through all of the fundamental elements of community development and culture within the organization. Such strategies were closely tied to well-defined career paths that see skilled workers going from field work positions, to head office positions and then into higher managerial posts. Skilled workers who happen to fall short of getting a promotion were evaluated for further training and were provided with information about further skills development that was tied to performance goals targets.

Some of the employees who were unwilling to continue working for their current organizations cited lack effective performance feedback and being a relatively new concept in South Sudan as being their reasons for dissatisfaction with the development sector. In principle, the findings from experts indicated that fairness and openness about the evaluation process were of paramount important in the INGDOs sector, particularly when performance management was tied to specific rewards or training for professional advancement, an areas in which they want INGDOs managers to do more. Section 6.2.5 below looks at clear communication channels between staff and the management, as another HR management strategy for retaining skilled workers in a conflict setting in South Sudan.

### 6.2.5 Clear Communication Channels between Staff and the Management

This section examines the extent to which skilled workers are exposed to HR management approaches such as effective communication system. Effective and on-going communication channels between staff and the management was raised by a number of participants as a cornerstone for employee retention. Management participants saw the need to facilitate effective communications, open, responsive, two-way communications as vital to good employee retention, and as the basic building blocks of any effective HRM approaches for retaining skilled workers in a conflict setting. On the other hand, expert practitioner further argued that retention strategies in the sector fundamentally depend on a sound approach to communicating with employees and that without effective communications, many of these practices and strategies would be impossible to implement in any effective way.
Although there were mixed feelings about communication in the sector, results of the finding with expert practitioners revealed that managers had good communication with their employees, and opportunities for employees development, good leadership, and consistent mechanism to address employees issues were clear and available in the sector. Many of the interviewed organizational managers claimed that their terms of engaging employees were absolutely clear. They provide financial benefits such as transport bonuses, pension scheme, and medical insurance for the employees and their families. They had clear communication channels between staff and the management. The staff in the sector felt more empowered through timely dissemination of information. There was periodic communication by the manager whenever an issue arise or whenever major decisions were made at the head office on issues that may have a direct impact on the staff and their work. Such information was shared openly between the two sets. The following comments made by the management and employee participants exemplify these view points, supporting the existence of clear communication channels between staff and the management in the INGDOs sector.

I think that part of our effort to engage in effective communications with our staff was to form an employee advisory committee, which is composed of management and employees from all departments. The committee meets regularly to share information about the organization and to discuss a range of issues such as compensation and other workplace policies and practices and most of the recommendations are written directly to Country’s Director and HR department for implementation…I think making sure that employees have a voice in the decision-making process help too in addressing the issue of staff turnover (MNGT03).

I think it’s relatively easy to communicate with our managers to understand our ideas and opinions. In the organization, if someone says “I don’t think it should be done that way” there’s no fear, hopefully of that person saying ‘well no I don’t agree’. And there’s always the ability for people to raise that or to challenge it or try something different (EM19).

Our organization communicates regularly with us. They conducted internal surveys and focus groups to support change and employee communications is effective. Security issues are also communicated effectively to us [staff] in the field (EM15).

In support of the above findings from two employees and one management participant, three other organizational managers described how their organizations had undertaken communication as a retention tool and stated that employees in their organizations are given the opportunity to provide meaningful input in how the work gets done, in decision that affects them, and in organization’s activities and changes. Several managers explained:

An employee advisory committee, which is composed of management and employees from all departments, meets regularly to share information about the organization and to discuss a range of issues such as compensation and other workplace policies and
practices. Most of the recommendations for these meetings are written recommendations that go directly to Country Directors and a response is made within a reasonable timeframe (MNGT05).

Our staffs are given the opportunity to provide meaningful input in how the work gets done. They are given the opportunity to provide meaningful input in decision that affects them. They are given the chance to provide meaningful input in organization’s programs and changes, and in how particular programs are run (MNGT01).

Our organization prides itself on its “open door” communication policy, in which employees are free to talk [directly] with managers at all levels. Communications activities take several forms. Surveys are used to gauge satisfaction within the organization and with more specific issues such as compensation and benefits. This provides us with valuable input on areas that might be improved (MNGT08).

I think training employees well and with respect means building relationships through effective communications. You can never over-communicate an issue. Even when communications are good, there is always room for improvement. Most of the time when you get into trouble it’s because someone hasn’t effectively communicated with you. Getting [back] to basics, quality and timelines of feedback to employees is the hallmark of our organization (MNGT04).

Following on from the above discussions with organizational managers, employee participants and expert practitioners agreed that effective and open-communication is another influencing factor behind skilled workers’ retention or attrition in the sector, as well as building a strong and supportive environment, responsive to work-life balance policies for the individual in an organization, and for enabling employees to feel that it is a supportive and encouraging workplace. In addition to what is discussed earlier, some participants raised the point that while they believe that effective communication policies and programs allow employees to talk freely and directly with managers at all levels of organization, they found that it is hard in some instances to retain talented people due to difficulty in working conditions in fledgling nation. Although communications activities take several forms in the sector, they expressed that it was easier to gauge satisfaction with the organization as a whole and with more specific issues such as compensation and communications than with other factors such as intention to leave or stay in the long term.

On the negative side of communication, organizational managers, expatriates in particular, recognize the absence of effective communication systems in South Sudan. The majority of INGOs have little or no access to reliable email and internet connections; they receive almost no literature on development issues and are generally out of touch with issues of global, regional and national importance. Lack of understanding of the difference between the
headquarters and field offices is just one example of the communication problem that exists in the sector. Negatively, management participants reported issues with regard to employee retention. Employee participants also reported issues related to working relationship and information exchange with organizational managers in the sector. The contributing factors reportedly had been lack of communication, lack of clear decision making process, lack of adequate resources, unfinished activities and training and professional development concerns. Without access to adequate communications, INGDOs departments are barely able to function. They can neither communicate with the field sites and facilitates that they are nominally responsible for, nor report upwards to state level authorities. Similarly, without access to IT equipment and the necessary skills to use it, staffs are left relying on cumbersome and inefficient paper-based processes, which would require even greater numbers of staff in order to be effective. Hence, two of expert practitioners and one employee participant noted:

I don’t believe there is clear and effective communication between managers and staff and particularly between head offices and field offices. This issue is of central importance to employee retention and high productivity (EXP03).

I believe every staff member in the organization should feel valued and appreciated for what they do, and their individual achievements must always be communicated to them, but I think it is not happening (EXP08).

Lack of communication to build a relationship based on trust and paying attention to the needs of the individual is one of the things that have caused low morale and intention to leave…Sometime they don’t share information or listen to us (EM05).

In summary, the findings from section 6.2.5 revealed that good communication between the organizational managers and their employees is important to the success of any retention strategy. The old tradition of ‘tell them only what they need to know’ is no longer acceptable in today’s work environment (Bowen & Ostroff 2004). In an economically and politically unstable environment such as South Sudan, it is vital for management, the workforce and other stakeholders involved, such as unions and federal and state governments, to work together to ensure required retention approach happens as appropriately and smoothly as possible. Results of prior studies in both conflict and non-conflict contexts (Ghazali et al. 2013; Malunga 2009; Ugboro 2006; Arnold 2005) indicated that effective and on-going communication is among the strongest elements of employee retention practices in all settings, thus implying its importance and essentiality in the INGDOs sector in South Sudan.
The findings from INGDOs managers revealed considerable efforts to communicate with employees, through a variety of approaches including employee surveys, regularly scheduled committee meetings, formal postings and newsletters, and personal discussions. However, for employees who perceived communication not to be effective in influencing their decisions to stay in a conflict setting, there were communication breakdowns between field workers and headquarters and between local workers, regional workers, and expatriates. Further, findings representing experts’ views suggested that communications between the organizations and their employees are quite open and that a high level of trust exists between the two parties, although they dislike the notion that local workers are the last to know about important changes within their organizations. Section 6.2.6 below presents employee empowerment as another significant factor in staff retention within the INGDOs sector in South Sudan.

6.2.6 Employee Empowerment Practices

This section discusses employee empowerment as another HRM approach for retaining skilled workers in the conflict settings and its real benefits for development NGOs operating in South Sudan. This discussion is followed by a critical assessment that identifies both the empowerment underlying principle of giving employees the freedom, flexibility, and power to make decisions and solve problems from the perspective of managers, employees, and expert practitioners. For all three interviewed groups, they felt that the empowerment practices increase quality of work, retention, collaboration, productivity while decreasing organizational costs or budget. A common theme from the discussion with management and employee participants across the sector was the importance of employee empowerment in sharing information with everyone organization-wide, creating autonomy through boundaries, and replacing the old hierarchy with self-managed teams. Expert practitioners also believe the philosophy of empowering employees improves productivity and provides other benefits. This philosophy is based on the theory that as employees are empowered to take control and make decisions, they feel more confident, capable, and determined to work more effectively and efficiently. However, one organizational manager stressed that while they understand the importance of employee empowerment in the sector, they felt that due to the position and responsibility they held in the organization, taking a listening position was something that just had to be done in order to stay abreast of the demands of the job and of the employees.

The interviewed managers, on their sides, stated that they gave equal attention to all categories of workers, locals and expatriates alike, permanent and causal workers alike. This
ensured a sense of fairness and empowerment of all staff. The same approach was used to create a sense of balanced attention between the national and the regional staff at the remote offices. In part, many of the interviewed expert practitioners and employee participants broadly disagreed with this assertion, saying that they have not been able to see enough in regard to equal treatment in the sector between locals and expatriates, especially when it comes to offer of employment contracts, and that many local workers are working on short-term basis in the sector compared to their expatriates counterparts who are working full-time and permanently. One of the expert practitioners, a director-general in the South Sudanese Public Service Ministry, accused international INGOs of allegedly failing to observe egalitarian employment practices in South Sudan. This expert practitioner, however, said her ministry was concerned that many United Nations agencies, as well as other international NGOs allegedly preferred “expatriates” to South Sudanese nationals, remarking that she was proposing labor bill that will ensure that government officials are included on selection for board for enrolling employees, INGOs, and other private sector organizations:

We [South Sudanese] have qualified people. If they want a degree holder, we have them. If they want PhD holders, we have them. I don’t know what sort of skills and qualifications international NGOs are looking for. No one likes the inequality that is taking place within these organizations and our government is now working out solutions because such practices must stop (EXP03).

In regard to lack of equality in the sector, one employee participant stated that although South Sudan has no reliable data on unemployment rates in the world, more than fifty percent of its youth have reportedly not acquired basic skills and education to make them work. He also stated that inequality in the workplace, both through wage disparity and a lack of higher-level representation, forces staff to choose between a profession and a family, creating a double standard scenario.

Truly speaking, there is lack of equality going on in the development sector. The practice that is happening in some of the organizations is that managers employ many messengers, drivers, and cleaners and say we have already employed local staff in key managerial positions, but if you come and makes analyses, you will find that at the managerial level, it might be one percent that they have employed in key positions or none (EM14).

As seen above, the interviewed employee participants and expert practitioners reflected on the role that employee empowerment plays in employee retention approaches. Managers in particular commented on the importance of setting employees up to succeed in their job roles and identified a number of ways in which this could be achieved. They also reflected that they offer paid training opportunities to skilled workers to develop their competencies and
that they assign workers roles that they enjoy doing and avoid micro-managing their performance and progress. The management participants also noted that they encourage employee involvement in the decision making process to increase their interest in and commitment to the organization. The expert practitioners concluded that while it was all good for an organization to be seen to have policies on employee empowerment, every employee should take ownership in the organization by identifying quality defects and ways to improve efficiency, for example, making their own decisions and decide how they want to organize their work. In regard to employee empowerment, there are both similarities and differences between all the three interviewed groups. However, despite all these findings, one management participant and an expert practitioner agreed, as illustrated in the quotes below, that appropriate levels of authority to make decisions that directly affect employees’ work as well as constructive criticism on how to improve the quality of their work have been given to skilled workers in the sector:

We provide our staffs with the freedom and flexibility to make a difference, which often make us see higher quality work in return from our staffs. You know as part of our medical package, typically, our staffs are allowed to use defined contribution to reimburse themselves for medical expenses such as doctor visits and medicines. They are allowed to choose the individual plan that works best for themselves and their families (MNGT05).

I think they [INGDOs managers] have been exceedingly respectful of all their staffs and have been going out of their ways to better the organization (EXP07).

International development NGOs’ programs in South Sudan include both relief and development intervention and many categories of employees, especially this the headquarters and those working in low risk areas are engaged in employee empowerment practices; thus, staff retention. Interviews with organizational managers indicated that, despite the programmatic challenges, coupled with hard living and working conditions and a lack of facilities and services in South Sudan, many of their employees have performed well and continue to work for them. This is due to a participatory management approach, frequent dialogue, clearly articulated objectives and support mechanisms to staff coupled with open communication with managers and colleagues. Briefing sessions are conducted for all categories of staff, but mainly for international staff in order to introduce them to changes in policies affecting them such as hazard pay and rest and repercussion policies in the field locations. Rest and repercussion programs that provided staff with the opportunity to remove themselves from the stressful environment of their work were cited by employee participants
both in the interviews data and field notes as being helpful to their wellness and their ability to cope with the stress of work.

Although a much common practice with those working in the headquarters and less with field staff, my organization did provide us with rest and repercussion leave on a regular basis. Many of our local, regional and expatriate staffs in this organization balance their wellness by trying to keep in touch with their families. It is very important for us and it is good that our managers are willing to support us in this endeavor (EM13).

One management participant agreed with the above finding, suggesting that:

Even though I have not personally heard concerns coming out from the field workers in regard to the issue of rest and relaxation, I am aware that more could be done to address this issue but financial resources are limited. It is hard to talk about staff well-being when you don’t have a lot of financial resources to work with. As an empowerment approach, it is also an access issue for field workers and should be taken that way (MGNG07).

Key issues related to rest and repercussion that staff highlighted, however, included difference in the policies between different organizations, and inconsistencies between policies for nationals and expatriates. For example, in some NGOs, national staffs are required to utilize annual leave days for rest and repercussion, whereas expatriates are provided extra rest and repercussion days in addition to their annual leave allowance. Field staff generally felt that rest and repercussion policies should be reviewed and adjusted to accommodate for travel time to and from home location for nationals wishing to visit their families, and that rest and repercussion destinations should be evaluated in terms of whether they are meeting the objectives of providing an escape from the pressure of work and the ability to temporarily relax and unwind. Both field and headquarters staff also felt that the opportunity for staff to debrief before and after the rest and repercussion would be helpful. When asked whether they provided extra rest and repercussion leave for those stationed in extreme conditions, one organizational manager reported that their organization did provide rest and repercussion leave and that the organization was providing supportive programs and opportunities than field workers reported. This view is represented in the quote below:

In terms of strategies or approaches specific to retaining skilled workers in a conflict setting, South Sudan in particular, our organization does pay its staff hardship pay. We also have a specific policy within our HR department for field staff working in this country [South Sudan] with rest and repercussion entitlement (MGNT01).

Employee participants also suggested that empowered employees take personal pride in their work and responsibility for doing a good job. Some employees discussed their feelings toward the benefits of empowerment, commenting that organizations reap the benefits of
empowered employees by delivering high quality services, particularly development programs. They also commented that when employees are empowered and treated as vital components of the organization, they gain self-confidence in their abilities to positively influence the organization. While others spoke of INGDOs reminding them that they still had to prove themselves and to do that they needed to work hard and show them they were serious and needed to be empowered, others felt the policies around employee empowerment make employees feel comfortable exchanging ideas and collaborating with others in an honest and open manner; hence, allowing for an organization to achieve so much more than any one individual can achieve on his or her own. Employee participants also reflected on their close involvement in the decision making process with some employee participants commenting that the ability to influence organizational outcomes strengthens their connection to the organization and enhances their sense of responsibility:

I think empowerment comes from the managers, and to some extent that is true. I do also believe that true workplace empowerment comes from the staff and management working in cooperation and understanding. The staffs have to be willing to show initiative and take control of their work, but the management teams has to be in a position to encourage and allow empowerment to take place or else it will never happen. I can say we have been empowered in this organization by being actively involved in the day-to-day running of our organization (EM21).

Another employee participant explained that he thoroughly understands her current roles and responsibility and that her work provides a feeling of personal accomplishment:

I believe that our managers have been willing to give of themselves, particularly in the sense that they provide assistance that is appropriate to the problems we faced in the field. At some point, we have experienced empowerment because once trained in the sector; managers start delegating tasks to us and make us aware that it is up to us to get the job done in the communities we are posted in. You see, responsibility over the field locations is also in our hands (EM14).

Concurring with the above discussion, another employee participant explained that he believes he has been empowered by being actively involved in the day-to-day running of his organization:

I think some managers are good in empowering workers while others are not. In my organization, our managers explain to us their vision and organization’s future plans, as part of their empowerment strategy, in a simple and straightforward manner. I think many people continue to feel empowered in this organization because we are rewarded based on our productivity and we [all] understand our current roles, responsibilities, and personal accomplishments in the organization (EM04).

From the perspective of another employee participant, employees operating in the development sector in South Sudan have appropriate level of authority to make decisions that
directly affect their work. This employee participant further argued that skilled workers in the sector are excited about how their work contributes to the goals of their organizations and that, generally, their managers and team leaders give them constructive criticism on how to improve the quality of their work. He concluded that their contributions are recognized by both their organizations and colleagues in the sector:

Our managers make sure they set goals and deadlines for us....Making people responsible of their tasks is one way of empowering people to succeed in our organization. The goals are reasonable, though they might be a bit difficult to achieve sometimes; as a result; we have to stretch, which result in increased confidence and, ideally, a heightened sense of personal empowerment (EM12).

While some of the employee participants agreed that having empowerment opportunities in their work tends to make them remain in the organization in the foreseeable future; however, other groups of employee participants disagreed—suggesting that it is now a struggle for organizations operating in conflict zones, with limited financial resources, to provide empowerment opportunities for all categories of employees, but specifically for skilled workers. However, unlike those workers working at the headquarters, employees working in the field reported that they had little autonomy to fulfil their management roles, especially during the crisis or emergency operation. Despite agreeing that they had powers to perform certain functions independently, they perceived their position as lacking authority and were expected to consult field managers, program managers or country representatives before they could act on matters which they could actually handle themselves. Lack of or limited communication between the field offices and headquarters limits their ability to contribute meaningfully when issues relating to their well-being or wellness are being discussed and addressed. Decisions involving skilled workers and management approaches for developing and retaining workers were taken by top managers at the headquarters without field workers’ knowledge. This influenced negatively on skilled workers’ motivation and retention level, particularly in a conflict setting.

Managers do not communicate their frustration with donors to us. They [managers] resort to use of short-term contracts instead. By the time we learn about their frustration, it is already too late to do something about it (EM11).

Another employee stated that:

Our managers are at times helpless. We are not allowed by organizational policy to make certain decisions. We always have to wait for permission from the headquarters...How can there be empowerment when decision making authority is centralized in the headquarters and in the hand of expatriate managers (EM07).
In summary, the findings from section 6.2.6 showed that employee empowerment, as an approach for retaining skilled workers in a conflict-infested environment like South Sudan, is an important retention strategy in the development sector. Although not all participants among the three interviewed groups had agreed that there is a relationship between employee empowerment and decision to remain, managers of INGDOs believed that their employees were given empowerment by allowing them to contribute in the process of decision-making, to locate and solve their problem and look over their own jobs. Supporting this strategy, many of interviewed expert practitioners maintained that empowerment approaches undertaken such as allowing workers to have input and control over their work, and the ability to openly share suggestions and ideas about their work and the organization as a whole in the sector have improved the level of retention in the conflict setting. Findings from employees, on the other hand, revealed that there is a limited relationship between employee empowerment and an individual’s decision to stay, and that there was not much of empowerment seen in the INGDOs sector. In conclusion, experts recommended that staff should be empowered in the conflict context, especially the field workers, to cope with the unexpected service conditions and the donor requirements, while the managers play the role of authorization and also provide training for the staffs. Section 6.3 below concludes the chapter and discusses the way forward for this study.

6.3 CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this chapter discusses HRM approaches for retaining skilled workers within the INGDOs sector in a conflict setting from the perspectives of managers, employees, and expert practitioners from a variety of organizations, academia, and government in South Sudan. It also brings to surface the differences that are perceived between the three interviewed cohorts and also some similarities and shared concerns of all research participants, including employees. The findings of this study produced mixed results with managers tending to believe that conventional HRM retention approaches such as salaries and medical benefits, training and education, career progression opportunities, performance feedback, effective communications, and employee empowerment were effective mechanisms for retaining key people in the development sector in South Sudan. In contrast, while some of employees perceived these traditional retention approaches to be working in retaining people in conflict contexts, others felt that they were not enough to influence decision to remain in high-risk settings such as South Sudan. Despite these differing views and expectations from employees and managers, the findings from expert practitioners
indicated that the more INGDOs workers (especially local staff) were happy with many of these conventional human resource retention approaches, especially salaries and health insurance, the higher their intention to remain and attachment to the development sector. The next chapter concludes the thesis by discussing retention approaches used to retain professional workers in relations to skills retention challenges identified in Chapter Five and human resource management approaches for retaining skilled workers in the conflict settings presented in Chapter Six, and discusses the findings of the study in the light of the reviewed literature and the context.
CHAPTER SEVEN
DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

7.1 INTRODUCTION
This research explored the retention challenges and HRM approaches for retaining skilled workers among International Non-Governmental Development Organizations (INGDOs) operating in the conflict setting of South Sudan. The rationale for the study was the negligible management literature on factors contributing to staff turnover and HRM approaches for retaining skilled workers in the INGDOs sector in conflict settings. The findings of the study has achieved this by identifying sectorial and contextual factors contributing to staff turnover and HRM approaches influencing retention in this conflict setting. The purpose of this concluding chapter is to bring together the findings and literature and provide a more conceptual and theoretically informed understanding of INGDOs managers’ and employees’ behaviors with regards to sectoral and societal contexts. The way sector influences the behaviors of managers and employees provided an understanding of why people are leaving or staying in the sector. The way societal context influences the behaviors of managers and employees also provided a deep understanding of the difficulties faced by INGDOs in retaining skilled workers in this conflict setting. The prerequisite for getting to the positive retention outcome is garnering a thorough understanding of the sectoral and societal settings factors influencing the behaviors of organizational managers (Caligiuri 2014; Bakuwa et al. 2013; Sutherland & Jordaan 2004). This allows appropriate policies to be designed and implemented that assist HRM practitioners in reducing the negative impact of a conflict setting through their operations and HR retention strategies and initiatives.

The chapter begins by outlining the sectoral and societal factors influencing retention or attrition. This is followed by explanations of the management perspectives and practices, explorations of the perceptions of skilled workers with regards to management activities to attract and retain workers in a conflict setting, revisiting the conceptual model related to factors influencing staff retention in both conflict and non-conflict environments (Figure 7.4), and a discussion of the implications for theory and practices, as well as theoretical and
methodological contributions of the study. The chapter concludes by considering the recommendations for managers and recommendations for future studies.

7.2 SECTORAL FACTORS INFLUENCING EMPLOYEE RETENTION
A number of INGDOs factors related to the way an organization in that sector in particular is structured and managed can have implications for staff turnover. Some of these issues can be traced back to other aspects of people management, for example, organizational culture, and others to workforce planning and HR recruitment practices. In South Sudan, there are sectoral setting factors which present a particular set of employment characteristics in the INGDOs sector. Some of the INGDOs factors which influence attrition or retention in a particular way, based on this thesis and other research findings, include end of employment contracts due to lack of financial resources and limited donor funding, high workload due to staff shortages, lack of equipment and supplies, and the divisions between locals and expatriates with respect to career planning and leadership styles. Figure 7.1 below shows some of the sectoral factors influencing retention or attrition in the INGDOs sector in South Sudan.

Figure 7.1 Sectoral Factors Influencing Retention of both Expatriates and Local Skilled Workers in South Sudan

The primary key sectoral factor that influences skilled worker retention, according to the findings, is the donor funding conditions. The literature reviewed refers to lack of donor funding as an absence of adequate financial resources which restricts the organization’s ability to achieve their objectives in whatever ways they think is best (Lewis & Kanji 2009;
Based upon the data collected and the findings, limited financial resources and tougher donor requirements are the realities INGDOs operating in conflict-ridden South Sudan have to live with, and which make it difficult for managers to provide fixed-term employment contracts and retain workers. This finding is in line with prior studies in the field, in particular, the work of Tulloch et al. (2011) which found that the implementation of recruitment and retention strategies within aid organizations in developing countries is effectively influenced by donors funding. Supporting this is Lewis and Sobhan (1999) who reported that due to a heavy dependence on donor funding in the nonprofit sectors in emerging countries, employees are often provided with short-term employment opportunities; therefore, heightening the prospects of leaving the organization. Thus, the role of donor funds becomes very important in staff retention and operational effectiveness in developing countries. However, in order to retain workers and survive, organizations operating in war-torn societies, will also need to find other avenues of raising stable and continuing funds to finance projects, operations, salaries and other overhead costs, for example, private donations.

The second sectoral factor that influences skilled worker retention, according to the findings, is fixed and short-term contract. This second factor is a direct outcome and is interrelated to donor funding conditions. While fixed-term employment contract is an employment contract by which an organization recruits an employee for a limited period of time (Davidson & Raynard 2007), short-term employment contract generally refers to limited career prospects or job insecurity in the organization (Bidwell 2013), or a casual employment with no guarantee of ongoing work (Parker et al. 2002). Although short-term contract was revealed by the literature not to be an issue for expatriates, most of which worked in developing countries on short-term basis, for example, three months or twelve months, it was identified in this study to be a problem for local employees. The reason why many of the contracts ended up not being renewed in the sector is to correspond to the end of the implemented program or end of funding for a particular intervention. Those employees that the organizations want to keep always had their contracts renewed and served the organization as long as they want (Debebe 2007). However, for interviewed managers, the provision of short-term contracts in the sector, which resulted in retention difficulties, is attributable to lack of funding from donors. This means that the provision of short-term contracts in the sector may force local employees to look for an alternative job and leave the present organization at the end of employment contract. Other studies in the humanitarian and development arena
(Tekleab et al. 2005; Hilhorst & Schmiemann 2002) have found that the practice of short-term contract does not provide a sense of job security, accommodate employee requests for leave and decrease employee loyalty and therefore makes the decision to leave among employees far more easy and uncontrollable for managers. The very nature of employment contract in the humanitarian and development sectors can increase demotivation and lack of commitment on the part of local staff who are professional aid workers, especially given the political uncertainty they operate in (Loquercio et al. 2006). With high levels of job insecurity in the humanitarian and development sector, some local aid workers treat humanitarian aid and development assistance work, especially in conflict societies like South Sudan, as a one-time activity (De Costa 2012). In an effort to address these potential detrimental retention problems, INGDOs managers need to identify factors influencing skilled workers’ job exits as a basis to develop potential retention strategies and initiatives.

The third sectoral factor that influences skilled worker retention, according to the findings, is the perceived differences with respect to aspects of career planning between local employees and expatriates. While local aid workers are defined as the locally-recruited employees and associated personnel of international NGOs and UN agencies that provide material and technical assistance in humanitarian and development contexts (Aid Worker Security Report 2014, P. 11), expatriates are referred to as managerial, professional, and technical staff who live and work in a foreign country on a temporary basis but normally for more than one year (Maude 2011, p. 171). INGOs and MNCs may use expatriates in the absence of qualified and effective local staff, and to develop high-potential managers by means of international experience (Ritchie et al. 2015). Although expatriates, as independent and outsiders, may be able to provide humanitarian aid and development assistance in situations where local staff are not allowed to operate by the warring parties, in particular the government and opposition forces, their presence in South Sudan is sometimes questioned by local employees in terms of efficiency. In terms of efficiency, local employees who speak the language, understand the political system and, often enough, are members of the local elites, may be considered to be more efficient than expatriate managers (Waxin & Bateman 2009). For locals, cultural adjustment is not an issue. Training also seems simpler for locals than for expatriates from the organization’s country of origin with whom the organization spend enormous resources on them in order to adjust to the host country’s environment. This suggests that the presence of expatriates in developing countries may be negative in terms of efficiency on one side, but positive on the other side, especially when it comes to the needed skills that they bring and
their usefulness in certain localities where ‘locals’ are not allowed to work by the humanitarian and development INGOS. For example, one of the employees based in Juba mentioned that they perceived lack of promotional opportunities to the presence of expatriates in more senior or key roles within the sector. These relationships problems between expatriates and locals have implications for the INGDOs’ operations, their principles and efforts to alleviate poverty, and their organizational practices to attract and retain workers in South Sudan. These findings are also found in similar studies. A study conducted in Jordan by Syed et al. (2014, p. 228) on the local employees’ views on expatriate managers found that pay differences have significant consequences, as higher salaries indicate ability and worth, while receiving a lower salary can result in a sense of injustice which ultimately leads to demotivation, mobility and, therefore, higher staff turnover.

Moreover, Okpara and Kabongo (2011), in their study of Western expatriates in Nigeria, found that the presence of expatriates in aid agencies may bring relatively high costs compared to local employees, which can be controversial, particularly if their contribution is set according to donor needs rather than organizational or host-country needs. The literature reviewed and the findings point to the fact that it is not simply an issue of whether or not expatriates are utilized by aid organizations in developing countries, particularly conflict societies, but how they are used. Given this, aid organizations operating in less-developed countries need to scrutinize closely the power given to expatriates in relation to local employees. If they are to improve their effectiveness in skills retention, they will need to address this power imbalance in their internal organizational structures and address unequal relationships which may be created by the use of expatriates within their humanitarian and development aid operations. In the continuing search to find a new solution, INGDOs operating in developing countries, particularly war-torn societies like South Sudan, cannot afford to ignore this issue. To make the needed changes happen in the sector, careful attention needs to be given by INGDOs to the management of expatriate staff. The findings and the literature therefore suggested that for maximum operational and staff retention effectiveness in humanitarian and development sectors in South Sudan, aid agencies need to have a staffing policy which is consistent, transparent and easy to be assessed.

The fourth sectoral factor that influences performance in skilled worker retention, according to the findings, is the lack of adequate equipment and supplies due to both the failure of organizations to provide equipment and poor local infrastructure which is beyond the
organization’s capacity to resolve. In some situations the lack of equipment and supplies may not be directly under the control of the INGDOs and have more to do with the socio-economic conditions which contribute to a poor quality of work environment; thus, contributing to dissatisfaction and stress in the workplace and staff turnover (Dieleman et al. 2008). The data collected and research findings revealed that the absence of essential equipment and supplies in the field, for example, medical and transportation facilities, recycling equipment, computers, and first aid kits, leads to the decision of both locals and expatriates aid workers to leave the sector in South Sudan. Prior studies in other developing countries, in particular Ecuador, North Vietnam and Zimbabwe (Chiboiwa et al. 2010; Dieleman & Harnmeijer 2006) also found similar finding, especially the fact that limited working equipment, supplies and systems cause staff turnover among workers, particularly field workers whom their work is primarily based in the remote locations outside headquarters. The findings and the literature point out that improving basic and necessities for work and life/living such as equipment and supplies in humanitarian and development sectors could benefit organizations operating in conflict societies, not only through reducing staff turnover, but also through improving staff working conditions in the field locations.

The fifth sectoral setting factor which influences attrition or retention in a particular way in South Sudan, based on the data collected and research findings, relates to the excessive workload which staff are expected to perform. The data collected and research findings revealed that even though the challenges related to workload may potentially be controlled by the organisations unlike security concerns and other environmental factors in South Sudan which cannot be influenced positively, high workload resulting from lack of sufficient staff as well as resources was found to be one of the sectoral influences pushing workers to leave earlier than their employment contract had specified. This finding was particularly true for field offices, most of which workloads were high and more understaffed, in part owing to the scale and context of the humanitarian and development projects and their fixed deadlines. Similarly to the research findings, Lehmann et al. (2008) and El-Jardali et al. (2007) found that high workload, originating from role overload, especially in conflict and post-conflict environments, resulted in disengagement among employees, low team atmosphere, low level of organizational performance, and employee turnover. There are a number of ways to address this problem including reviewing job description, revising team priorities, adapting effective work plans, ensuring employee rotation, and redeploying employees. Although rotation is often used to enhance skills of employees and to reduce monotony in daily work, it
can also be used as a means to alternate between different types of workloads or alternatives between high and low energetic different jobs such as field office and headquarters or different field offices which can contribute to higher rates of employee retention.

### 7.3 SOCIETAL FACTORS INFLUENCING EMPLOYEE RETENTION

This section focuses on societal factors influencing staff retention. Societal factors are synonymous with external environmental factors and can be defined as facts and experiences that influence individuals’ personality, attitudes and lifestyles in an organizational setting (Waxin & Bateman 2009). A number of societal factors related to the organizational context can impact on the decision of skilled workers to leave. Some of these factors can be traced back to elements consisting of security concerns and working conditions. In South Sudan, there are societal factors which influence the operations of INGDOs that in turn affect their recruitment and employment practices. Some of the factors of the societal environment which influence attrition or retention in a particular way, according to the research findings, include security conditions, poor living/working conditions, lack of basic social amenities, difficulties with cultural adjustment, and poor and inadequate housing. The diagram below (figure 7.2) points out some of the societal environmental factors that influence staff recruitment and retention in the South Sudan context.

**Figure 7.2 Societal Factors Influencing Retention or attrition in South Sudan**

- **Societal Environment**
  - 2. Poor Working/Living Conditions
    Unsatisfactory physical state of work environment contributed to the intention of professional staff to leave their organization
  - 3. Absence of Basic Amenities
    Poor availability and access to basic social amenities such as clean drinking water, sanitation, roads, schools and telecommunications impacted the decision of staff to stay.
  - 4. Poor and inadequate housing
    Lack of facilities like housing and running hot or cold water limit professional workers' prospects for remaining longer in the organization.
  - 5. Cultural Factors
    National culture influences organization’s policies pertaining to recruitment and retention of skilled workers

**Task Environment**
- STAFF WHO ARE DECIDING TO STAY OR LEAVE
- 1. Security Concerns
  Extreme security conditions impacted on the ability of organization to recruit and retain skilled workers
As seen in the diagram above, the first societal factor that influences staff retention is security concerns. As the humanitarian and development NGOs look towards achieving their humanitarian and development goal, conflict societies are seen as particularly difficult contexts in which to realize better management outcomes, such as improved staff recruitment and retention. Based upon the findings, this thesis reveals that South Sudan has experienced a continuous state of political and social instability for many years that has impacted on the ability of INGDOs to retain skilled workers. Working in such environments poses serious challenges and stress factors not commonly considered in turnover research in non-conflict settings. Some of the key factors, related to this situation, which influence staff retention or attrition in South Sudan, include political instability. Political instability is defined as the propensity of a government collapse or the likelihood of having forms of violence, or the possibility of a coup d’état (Tulloch et al. 2011). Political instability in South Sudan has both direct and indirect consequences for INGDOs operations and their employee retention strategies and initiatives. Direct consequences, for example, allude to death of aid workers in the sector during the conflict. On the other hand, the indirect consequences refer to unforeseen repercussions such as the flight of human capital and higher spending on recruitment and training of new staff (Loquercio et al. 2006).

Furthermore, violence from the ongoing Second South Sudanese civil war, based on data collected through field notes, is a constant and dynamic factor in decision-making for all INGDOs in South Sudan and is not one of the factors that INGDOs managers have control over. Violence against INGDOs workers, assets and premises, especially theft and looting also remain a major challenge for those working outside the capital, Juba. Economically motivated attacks on INGOs convoys carrying goods threaten staff care activities, particularly during the dry seasons when roads are accessible and busy. An employee’s decision to leave for contextual risk factors such as insecurity in a country, rather than organizational factors such as monetary compensation, can therefore be interpreted as indicative of an employee experiencing stressful situations in their humanitarian aid and development assistance work. In such a context, pressure to restore and repair services delivery to meet emergency needs redirects attention from management practices such as staff retention and capacity building. This indicates that when organization’s attention shifted from ‘staff retention and capacity building’ to ‘emergency services delivery mode’ as a result of conflict, professional aid workers will leave the sector if they have somewhere to go and find alternative employment.
Similarly to the findings, Loquercio et al. (2006) suggested that professional aid workers can be exposed to a variety of societal factors such as security and political developments upon which the management have no influence and that can affect their health, wellbeing and safety levels. From the perspective of Powell and DiMaggio (1991), the societal factors negatively influence staff recruitment and retention, especially in politically unstable context. This perception of societal factors may have a strong influence on the level of intention to remain for employees, and the needs to continue to operate in the field, especially in a conflict setting. The influence of these factors on professional workers depends in the overall context: the political, socio-economic and cultural environment. The above-mentioned factors are also likely to be interrelated. For instance, poor and remote areas often lack infrastructure such as road, schools and electricity, which has an impact on employees’ decisions to leave such locations, whereas health care facilities in these areas often are poorly managed and lack equipment and supplies, which then has an impact of work-related factors for departure. There is considerable literature available on the reasons for leaving, but it focuses exclusively on non-conflict settings.

The second societal factor which influenced the decisions of skilled workers to leave, based on the research findings, is poor living and working conditions in the young nation of South Sudan. Staff shortages with resultant heavy workloads, excessive mandatory overtime, the unsatisfactory physical state of work environment—without basic resources and equipment—and demands by beneficiaries such as members of the local community and relevant South Sudanese government line ministries may also contributed to staff turnover. This was evident in the findings from employees. Security conditions have deteriorated and working conditions have been difficult. With so many communities to serve, some of them very, very poor, INGDOs staffs feel they are not really giving good quality care. They are discouraged and therefore some feel they would rather leave. Although some workers in this sector were familiar with these sorts of conditions and knew what to expect in the field, poor living and working conditions in South Sudan may have greater impacts on some skilled workers’ decision to remain longer in the sector. Evidence from the literature suggests that when living and working conditions are extremely difficult, the decisions of skilled workers to stay longer in the humanitarian and development sectors reduced (Lehmann et al. 2008). For instance, poor and remote areas often lack infrastructure such as roads, schools and health care facilities, which has an implication on personal decisions to stay in such locations. On the other hand, satisfactory physical state of work environment have a strong influence on job
satisfaction and motivation and ultimately on employee retention. Herzberg’s definition of poor working conditions captures well the aspects highlighted by the research findings, namely all existing circumstances affecting labor in the workplace. To link this study with the Herzberg’s studies, we investigated working conditions and skilled workers’ recruitment and retention and found that working conditions have both positive and negative impact on productivity, recruitment and retention. In organizations where staffs are exposed to stressful working conditions, recruitment and retention are negatively influenced and there is a negative impact on the delivery of basic services.

Conversely, if working conditions are good, staff recruitment and retention increase and there is a positive impact on the delivery of service (Mokoka et al. 2011), however, poor working conditions may contribute to work-related stress among aid workers (Cunningham 2016). South Sudan’s physical environment and lack of infrastructure continue to pose significant challenges for INGDOs strategies, including retention strategies. With the size of about 644,329 square kilometres and only 363 kilometres of paved road in a country approximately the size of France, reaching communities in need by land can be a lengthy process, especially during the rainy seasons when 80 percent of the roads become impassable. This means that attracting workers and retaining them in such areas is nearly impossible. Existing research presents similar findings on the impacts of working conditions on which an individual employee makes decision to stay or go. Davidson and Raynard (2007, p. 33) in their empirical study of staff turnover and HR retention strategies in Kenya, Honduras, India and Pakistan, identify the importance of living and working conditions in developing countries as a push or pull factor influencing skilled and experienced workers’ retention rates. Mokoka et al. (2011, p. 117) in their study of INGOs in Southern Africa found that skilled and qualified workers who left particularly the humanitarian and development sector to work in other sectors cited difficult living and working conditions as their major concerns for leaving their organizations. A poor work environment may cause discomfort to some employees who may end up being attracted to other organizations with more pleasant working conditions. Good performance by staff is enabled via a supportive working environment (El-Jardali et al. 2007). The findings and the literature point out that for conditions to be adjudged satisfactory, they should meet the subjective expectations of the individual workers. Evidence has been adduced in HRM literature (Songstad et al. 2011; Albrecht et al. 2009) linking better living and working conditions with improved employee retention for skilled workers, and poor
living and working conditions with problems of low morale, low motivation and employees’ decisions to separate from their employers.

The third societal factor that contributes to staff turnover and which is also part of the system contributing to poor working conditions, based upon the data collected and research findings, is lack of basic social amenities. Remote areas, especially in conflict and post-conflict environments, are often associated with poor availability and access to basic amenities such as clean drinking water, sanitation, telecommunications, roads, schools and financial institutions like banks (Lehmann et al. 2008). Basic amenities such as telephone and internet connectivity are essential for staff development and staff retention, particularly field workers, who often rely on the internet to keep up to date with the latest security-related information from the national authorities and from the locations where most of the important functions of an organization are coordinated (headquarters). Kagunyi (2009) in her study of societal factors affecting recruitment and retention of qualified national staff in aid organizations working in Juba, the capital of the conflict-ridden South Sudan, found that other amenities such as lack of schools for children influence some professional aid workers’ decision to leave; thus, increasing turnover in the organization. Therefore, while the presence of all needed basic social amenities are considered important in employee’s decision to remain longer in the organization, the absence of all or some of the basic amenities could result in high staff turnover. This evidence is an addition to the findings of previous studies in Sub-Saharan Africa (Namakula & Witter 2014), which considered lack of availability of basic amenities like education and effective health care system to mean insecurity and powerlessness to individual employees, organizations and stakeholders. Powerlessness in this context refers to the inability of an individual to influence challenges that are affecting his quality of life and career. It also means vulnerability to violence, and it often implies living on marginal or fragile environments (Kayuni & Tambulasi 2007). These findings from the data collected and literature reviewed could then be used in understanding that lack of availability and access to basic social amenities such as running water, sanitation, telecommunications, roads, schools, and health care could be contributing to high staff turnover of aid workers in conflict settings.

The fourth societal factor which influences employee retention in South Sudan, according to the findings, is poor and inadequate housing. Poor and inadequate housing is defined as an occupied housing unit that has physical problems in a unit including two or more breakdowns
of the toilets that lasted more than six months, lack of running hot or cold water, unvented primary heating equipment or lack of a complete kitchen facility in the unit (CDC 2011, p. 21). In South Sudan, aid workers live in inadequate housing, severely limiting prospects for remaining longer in the organization. This includes lack of a house or accommodation, which is very important consideration when employee is making a decision whether to stay or leave their current job. As the findings from the field notes revealed, housing in South Sudan is often poor and inadequate. This suggests that poor housing and inappropriate accommodation is also an enduring problem that prevents aid workers from staying longer in remote places along with other societal setting influences. This is in line with the findings of prior studies on how poor housing and its provision in less financially and politically stable countries can contribute to professional staff turnover (Lehmann et al. 2008; Davidson & Raynard 2007; Ongori 2007). Supporting this finding also is Chani and Cassim (2014) who, in their study of challenges influencing staff retention in remote communities in Namibia, identified poor housing and lack of infrastructure as having significant influence on people’s decision to leave prematurely.

Moreover, better housing and appropriate accommodations and other resources such as good infrastructure, adequate equipment, sufficient number of trained staff, and steady funding arrangements that are critical for the liveability and performance of aid workers, particularly field workers, are critical for staff retention and longevity in unstable environments. It is clear from the findings and the literature that the way in which humanitarian and development NGOs provided housing and accommodation remains the cause of concern for aid workers, and particularly for field-based workers who often work in remote communities, especially in conflict and post-conflict societies. Davidson and Raynard (2007, p. 45) advised that aid organizations in politically fragile contexts need to place their work and overall effectiveness within a wider framework of appropriate housing and reasonable accommodation, so that skilled and qualified aid workers are attracted and retained for the achievement of goals and objectives and sustainability of rural development projects. While the absence of good housing and reasonable accommodation leads to high staff turnover among aid workers, the decisions that the organization takes are more crucial in staff retention practices. For example, one of the interviewed experts mentioned that while it is realistic that both locals and expatriates leave due to poor housing in South Sudan, an effort by the INGDOs managers, especially when they have the capacity or resources to do so, to ensure availability
of basic amenities such as water and electricity may positively influence some aid workers’ intention to stay in the sector.

The fifth and final societal factor that influences management approaches and therefore staff turnover, based on the findings, are socio-cultural factors. Socio-cultural factors refer to the ethnic backgrounds, beliefs, values, relationships and behaviors of the people of a particular area or region (Kane & Palmer 1995). On the basis of the field notes and the interviews with INGDOs managers, this study noted that cultural issues were at times very difficult to navigate through in South Sudan. An understanding and appreciation of such values was vital if an organization hoped to engage in humanitarian and development work productively. In addition, it may be important to understand the cultural diversity of working environment (Roth 2004; Foster 2000) as it is one of the factors affecting the operations of international aid workers and which contributes to staff turnover. Aid workers in South Sudan will necessarily have to learn the principal languages and dialects to effectively communicate with the poorest and least educated segment of society who most need their help. Nevertheless, aside from the expected language barrier, a more difficult situation would be the socio-cultural element of religion. Based upon the data collected and the literature reviewed, the impact of socio-cultural factors on employee retention is not only relevant in the case of INGOs in the selection of employees for international assignments, but also in the more common case of employees in local NGOs with elements of diverse cultural backgrounds.

Finally, although some INGDOs factors discussed in section 7.2, for example, tensions between locals and expatriates, may be influenced positively by the INGDOs managers, the societal factors depicted in figure 7.3 above may not be influenced by them in a favorable way. In South Sudan, the main reasons are that people leave due to political instability, poor living and working conditions, socio-cultural factors, and poor housing and lack of basic social amenities such as electricity and running water. By contrast to sectoral influences discussed in section 7.2, in particular short-term employment contracts due to stringent donor funding requirements, the findings suggest that, in South Sudan, several factors explain why some local employees may leave or stay in the sector. Sometimes it is the attraction of a new job which ‘pulls’ them, while on other occasions they are ‘pushed’ due to dissatisfaction in their present jobs to seek alternative employment. Sometimes it is the mixture of both pulls and push factors. Other reasons for leaving are entirely explained by domestic circumstances.
outside the control of an organization, as is the case when local aid workers are subjected to ethnically-motivated violence by the warring parties in the country.

On the other hand, the reasons for staying include an offer by the employer of attractive salaries and medical benefits, plus opportunities for professional training and development. In addition, some local aid workers continue to work in the humanitarian and development sectors simply because they need the job and income and have nowhere else to go. This finding is particularly true for those national aid workers whom their desires for financial freedom and support for extended family members make them more likely to take security risks or more likely to be the target of violence. According to Deng (2010), South Sudanese still maintain adequate links and provide a certain level of support to extended family members. This is particularly so because the current state of affairs in the country (e.g., political turmoil, competition over scarce resources, and high unemployment) places serious constraints not only on the extent to which relatives can find work and support themselves, but also on the extent to which government can provide services to the people. In South Sudan, people are dependent on a subsistence economy characterized by self-sufficiency and joint family organization. Several family members who are related to one another by blood, marriage, or adoption lived together in the same compound or part of the village and their needs (e.g., financial) are provided for by the working member of the family as a unit (Deng 2010). When situations such as armed conflict and death occurred, orphaned children are absorbed into their kinship group or self-sufficient family organization and are taken good care of by their relatives. This implies that the need for employment to support one’s self and the extended family members may make local employees feel they have no choice but to work in the INGDOs sector in South Sudan even if they are not comfortable with the operational difficulties caused by political instability. This gives weight to Rizwan et al. (2014) and Khan et al. (2011) views that, national aid workers who are familiar with the locality and have developed certain coping strategies in conflict settings may less likely be influenced by the external environmental factors in comparison with expatriates from either Western or other countries. National aid workers, in particular, possibly anticipated the security risks and challenges involved in the work and do not perceive them as particularly negative and restricting to their work.

While INGDOs workers are determined to work in South Sudan, the continued insecurity and fighting have impacts on their ability to operate and on their decision to remain longer in the
humanitarian and development sector. This also has a great impact on the ability of INGDOs, as lives changing agents, to ensure that people in need of their basic social services receive the assistance they require, particularly in areas of ongoing armed conflict. On the other hand, some expatriates’ decisions to ‘stick’ around were influenced by the opportunities to make a difference in conflict-affected communities and poor people’s lives. There is always an inclination among aid workers in INGOs that what they are doing in developing countries is contributing to making the world a better place; hence, their decision to stay longer in the humanitarian and development sectors even when the security situation is quite challenging for them (Mukasa 1999). Other reasons that have emerged from the literature and which encourage expatriate aid workers to work in the humanitarian and development sectors are the opportunities to see the world and experience different cultures. Living and working in cultures other than their own can be fascinating and very rewarding (Beugré & Offodile 2001; Carr et al. 1998). Living and working in culturally and politically different environments is quite different from tourism, and allows expatriates to get to know a society and understand more about it than other type of travel (Okpara & Kabongo 2011). There are few other careers that give expatriate aid workers opportunities to experience a range of different countries than humanitarian and development work. Although not all the things they see may be good, they may sometimes see things that are fascinating, challenging and exciting.

7.4 WHAT MANAGEMENT IS DOING TO RETAIN SKILLED WORKERS
This section looks at what INGDOs managers are doing to address those sectoral and societal settings factors discussed earlier in sections 7.2 and 7.3, and to retain workers in a conflict setting. The findings, including anecdotal evidence from the field revealed that INGDOs managers working in South Sudan are doing their best for sustainability of their projects and human resources in order to be responsive to humanitarian and development needs of poor communities. In conflict operational environment, it is necessary to retain skilled workers. However, Ramlall (2004) in his qualitative study analyzing theories of employee motivation and retention in non-profit sectors in conflict environments found turnover of skilled workers to be a serious threat to the existence and sustainability of the humanitarian and development NGOs in conflict settings. There is a significant economic impact on organizations losing (one or more of its) skilled workers, especially given the knowledge that is lost with employee departure in a conflict setting (Mwangi 2017; Ehrenreich & Elliott 2004). In the face of continued employee turnover, an organization’s ability to function effectively will be
reduced and its capacity to establish functioning humanitarian and development services in poor communities will be impacted (Tulloch et al. 2011).

One of the solutions to attract and retain skilled workers in conflict contexts is improved security and working conditions. Eckroth (2010), based on his exploratory study examining the changing nature of armed conflict and its resulting impacts on humanitarian and development personnel, points out that personal experience from Darfur has shown that extreme insecurity and poor working conditions could lead to difficulties in retaining skilled workers in INGDOs, and consequently, affecting the operations. It is true, he argues, that donors want their money to be used efficiently and to reach the target beneficiaries; however, it is more difficult to recruit, develop and retain good staff in any conflict setting compared to non-conflict settings. It should be noted that the goal of recruiting and retaining skilled workers and empowering poor communities cannot be achieved in any conflict environment “if the INGDOs managers, as change agents, are themselves powerless or dispossessed, especially in influencing retention challenges” (Eckroth 2010, p. 20). Powerlessness in the context of INGDOs refers to a state of relative helplessness in which aid organizations are denied the ability to control crucial aspects of their operations, a sense of frustration, exhaustion, and a lack of access to sustainable financial system and other sources of official support (Lewis & Opoku-Mensah 2006, p. 82). Perhaps, the greatest potential INGDOs have is to generate self-help solutions to these pervasive problems of powerlessness in the humanitarian and development sectors, especially in South Sudan. This is based on the view of INGDOs as independent, efficient, less bureaucratic, grassroots oriented, participatory and contributing to sustainable development in grassroots communities (Sheehan 1998).

After the civil war broke out in December 2013, the majority of INGDOs left South Sudan. Those aid organizations who had decided to remain behind were forced by the rapidly deteriorating security situation in the country to manage their staff from alternative bases in South Sudan’s capital, Juba, and in neighboring Eastern African countries (Korff et al. 2015). According to observations of the UNOCHA (2014), between 2013 and 2014, the conflict in South Sudan is likely to drag on for long time simply because it has taken a tribal dimension. From the UNOCHA’s finding, the problem of staff retention, operation and services delivery is a problem for INGDOs managers managing staff from across borders and within South Sudan. This was consistent with qualitative studies released by De Costa (2012) and the NGOs Coordination Forum in South Sudan in July 2015 which also suggested those
factors to be detrimental in locals’ and other workers’ recruitment and retention processes. In addition, these findings suggest that INGDOs managers may have limited influence over many of the environmental factors that are leading to staff turnover, for example, societal factors related to the South Sudanese environments which are beyond their control (Kagunyi 2009). Certain sectoral and societal settings factors are out of their control, for example, INGDOs managers cannot do anything about civil war and cannot control the funding from donors. In the case of civil war, the only thing they can do is to ‘pull’ workers out from the frontline and limit the scope of their projects and the number of expatriates, who may be particularly vulnerable to abductions, and who might be kidnapped and used for ransoms. INGDOs may also ‘pull’ local aid workers out in situations where the conflict takes place on the ethnic lines. Some INGDOs may continue to maintain their presence using locals from that particular region who might not be a target of ethnic conflict. The choice to limit the scope of their projects and the number of expatriates and provide support mainly in government-controlled areas also reduces the movement of aid workers, and their exposure to security risk, but has affected civilian who heavily relied on their humanitarian and development work, according to the findings. In the case of lack of financial resources and limited donor funding, the only thing they can do is to offer short-term employment contracts to employees even when it is not always in their best interest.

The diagram below (figure 7.3) identifies management approaches which INGDOs managers tend to say they utilized to attract and retain skilled workers in the INGDOs sector in a conflict setting, South Sudan in particular. The understanding of these approaches provides useful logic for assessing the extent to which effective people retention strategies create true competitive advantage in any given context. This model is composed of six management approaches: The first approach is reward and benefit, which is a stimulus given to individuals to alter their behaviors. The second one is training and skills development, which focuses on ensuring workers are acculturated to the concept of life-long learning so that their skills are continuously upgraded to meet current and emerging organizational requirements. The third one is career development opportunity, which is not related to the specific job a person holds today, to the jobs that a person expects to advance to over the course of this/her entire career. Career development opportunities often include getting a promotion, but they can include other specific career-related outcomes. These may include having the opportunity to do the kind of work that you really want to do, receiving career-related experiences and training, and getting exposure to people who can help you to advance in your career. The fourth one is
communication which is a process by which meaning is assigned and conveyed in an attempt to create shared understanding. The fifth one is performance feedback which is a systematic and periodic process that assesses an employee’s job performance and productivity in relation to certain pre-established criteria and organizational objectives. The sixth one is employee empowerment which is about providing workers with opportunities to make their own decisions with regards to their task.

**Figure 7.3 Management Approaches for retaining skilled workers in South Sudan**

Given those sectoral and societal settings factors discussed earlier in sections 7.2 and 7.3, and which interact with each other and influence employee recruitment and retention strategies in South Sudan, the above diagram (figure 7.3) identifies the approaches employed by INGDOs managers in the INGDOs sector to attract and retain skilled workers in a conflict setting, South Sudan in particular. As shown in the diagram above, INGDOs managers, in their effort to overcome operational problems and increase staff retention in a conflict setting, tend to say that they focus on HR skills retention strategies and initiatives such as employee empowerment, training and development, competitive salaries and medical benefits, and performance feedback, career progression and effective communication channels between staff and the management. However, these management retention strategies were received by the interviewed employees with mixed feelings. For some employees, these approaches were successful in keeping them in the sector, while for others these approaches had limited success in retaining them in a conflict setting. The reasons why these standard HRM
approaches scored mixed reactions from employees working in the INGDOs sector is related to the difficulty and complexity of the operating environment and security concerns. The changing patterns of politics such as prolonged economic crisis and the widespread resort to violence and arms in managing domestic political conflicts in South Sudan affect management approaches to recruit and retain competent workforce. Given this scenario, many INGDOs managers also face the challenge of having to address retention problems in the context of increasing uncertainty in South Sudan.

There is abundance of reasons why retention techniques from the West such as monetary incentives may not materialize in Sub-Saharan Africa, especially politically unstable environments like South Sudan. Many aid organizations and MNCs, according to Webster and Wood (2005), tend to believe that the same recruitment and retention strategies that have been successful in the West will also translate to the African market but this is often not the case. Drawing a distinction between “an instrumental view of people in organizations in the West, and a humanistic view of people in organizations in Africa”, Horwitz et al. (2004, p. 118) argue that while the Western approach to management focuses on instrumental view of man (perceiving human beings as resources) the African perception focuses on attention on human being as having values in their own right. From this perspective, management practices in Sub-Saharan Africa may be described as predominately humanistic with an emphasis on sharing, deference to rank, sanctity of commitment, regard for compromise and consensus, and good social and personal relations. Even within Sub-Saharan Africa, with over 800 ethnic groups and people with varying levels of affluence, particular industry demands and people management practices, including employee recruitment and retention strategies, differ from country to country. This compliments Beugré and Offodile’s (2001) ‘culture-fit model’, which concludes that attracting and retaining professional workers in Africa requires reconceptualization of HRD, expanding the concept to include an array of learning activities and not based on only formal classroom activities. Edoho (2001) in his study on ‘management challenges for Africa in the twenty-first century’ emphasizes two reasons for re-engaging with indigenous practice. The two reasons include first, to draw attention to neglect of the long and rich history of the people management practices in African continent, noting that the present day Africa is deeply rooted in its past which has close link with its present and future. Second, to raise development question of how Africa can learn from its better past—before colonization destroyed the indigenous administrative
system—which can assist in the design, implementation and evaluation of effective people management approaches for the continent.

To address employee turnover issues and retain competent workforce, INGOs and MNCs managers cannot limit themselves to management and administration approaches that do not cover and appreciate the diverse and complex Africa, its people and social organizations (Edoho 2001). This idea could be used to suggest that the effective organization should be able to modify its resources and HRM approaches as the circumstances changes, and this can lead to flexible operations processes, achieves objectives and attract and retain talent. This is confirmed by Horwitz et al. (2009) on their qualitative study examining the appropriateness of Western management principles and practices in Sub-Saharan Africa who argued that to be successful at retaining skilled workers in Sub-Saharan Africa, organizations need to refine ‘Western-sourced’ approaches to the local context by rethinking them and applying them with flexibility to meet the needs of local workforce. This suggests that due to different cultural contexts (e.g. values systems, different laws and regulations and different economic conditions) INGOs working in developing countries like South Sudan need to put more emphasis on local responsiveness and adjust their practices to suit the distinctive needs and conditions of the operating context. For example, they need to adapt to local working hours’ requirements, language, culture and regulation. This perspective is also supported by the findings of Horwitz (2015, p. 2792) who maintains that ‘while expansions of Western INGOs and MNCs have highlighted the questions of centrally planned and coordinated strategic actions, the contextual realities of intensified political uncertainty and global competition in Sub-Saharan Africa have required increased adaptation and responsiveness to local practices, regulatory and cultural conditions. Horwitz el al. (2004) also argued that INGOs and MNCs operating in Sub-Saharan Africa, high-risk settings in particular, need to avoid blindly importing wholesale management practices from their home countries to hosting countries if they want to see qualified and experienced employees being attracted and retained. Case study research on the transfer and diffusion of management practices in international organizations, including development NGOs, in war-ridden Eritrea (Tessema & Ng’oma 2009), finds that Chinese and Western-based organizations remain embedded in their home-country policies, given the often global agenda of these organizations.
7.5 SKILLED WORKERS’ PERCEPTIONS OF MANAGEMENT APPROACHES
This section looks at how skilled workers perceived INGDOs managers’ activities pertaining to staff retention in a conflict setting context, as discussed in section 7.5 above. Another goal is to explore the perceptions of local workers on the type of threat and level of risk they face in their work and whether they perceive these security threats and risks differently than their international staff and regional counterparts. The data collected and findings from employees suggest that, there were mixed reactions as to why people stay or leave in the INGDOs sector in South Sudan. While some employees were in favor of both financial and non-financial HR retention approaches employed in the sector, others felt they were not as effective and adequate as they would like them to be. Local employees who perceived HR retention strategies to be working well argued that their decision to remain in the sector was attributable to the presence of attractive salaries and medical benefits, meaningful work, opportunities to upgrade their capability, as well as career progression opportunities. From the views of those local employees who choose to remain, these financial and non-financial monetary benefits offered by INGDOs may entice them to continue working in the sector even if they are not comfortable with the security situation simply because they have nowhere to go and would rather not want to remain unemployed as people with shared responsibility for extended family members.

On the other hand, local employees who were not happy to continue working in South Sudan cited extreme insecurity, poor working conditions and lack of staff development and having not seen much of longer-term employment opportunities in the INGDOs sector. Lack of long-term employment opportunities in the INGDOs sector is spurred by budgetary constraints arising from donor dependency and an ambiguous financial situation (Tulloch et al. 2011; Makoba 2002). Indeed, limited financial resources and substantial donor requirements are almost the realities for humanitarian and development aid work, especially in the situations of large-scale emergencies such as South Sudan (Mathauer & Imhoff 2006). However, although the INGDOs managers in this study and the literature agreed that financial constraints are realities aid agencies have to live with in emergency and conflict environments, most of employees believed that the issue of limited donor funding should not be used as an obstacle to staff retention by INGDOs; in many cases, employee retention could most likely be improved without considerable additional financial resources by improving the working environment to protect workers’ safety and health. From the views of these employees, sufficient donor funding plays a crucial role but of much more importance in recruiting and
retaining a highly technical and experienced staff members in a conflict context is improved living and working conditions and safety at work, presence of work contract that clearly defines each employee’s roles and responsibilities, and availability of greater flexibility in terms of job assignments. Living/working conditions, if poor in term of health and safety, do encourage aid workers to leave humanitarian and development NGOs and sectors earlier than they would have if conditions were better (Albrecht et al. 2009).

Other employees highlighted that some of them were selected for professional development training meant for providing the knowledge and facilitating the teaching of the skills necessary to perform a job well and others left out through a process which was not transparent. In addition, some argued that career development opportunities were very small and with very limited career progression paths. It also emerges from the finding that some employees were not happy with the way people were promoted in the sector. These were both field and head office workers with territory education and many of them were local workers. This possibly suggests that managers of INGDOs in South Sudan might have problems in attracting and retaining qualified and experienced employees through financial and non-financial packages. Some local employees expected to be promoted to the managerial roles but often external candidates, especially regional workers from Eastern Africa, fill the vacancies. For example, one local employee based in Jonglei State commented that his decision to leave his previous employment with an INGDO was triggered when the HR department recruited a less qualified Ugandan to occupy a post he was acting in for three years. This was also confirmed with some of the semi-structured interviews with managers who admitted that they were happy to see new ideas coming into the sector through recruitment of “outsiders” to make their humanitarian and development projects more effective and sustainable. This is line with the needs of international donors for a diversified workforce in humanitarian and development sectors (Lewis & Sobhan 1999).

In order to be adaptable in the way they work and to meet the needs of targeted beneficiaries such as poor rural communities, donors encouraged humanitarian and development NGOs to maintain a diverse workforce (Hunt 2008; Kiraka 2003). However, anecdotal evidence obtained from managers in the field suggests that one potential reason for the recruitment of “outsiders” in the INGDOs sector might be a fear of nepotism, for example, if the HR departments allow local workers to dominate the workforce, nepotism will kick in because the locals will try to hire their relatives and friends every time there is a vacancy in the
organization irrespective of whether they are qualified or not. These reactions from employees were contrary to the opinions of the INGDOs managers interviewed, which suggested that their terms of engaging professional aid workers in South Sudan were absolutely clear and working well. These contrasting views, however, give an instructive glimpse that what works in other societal settings, especially in Western countries, may not work in war-torn societies like South Sudan. The converse here is that ineffective organizational retention strategies lead to an increase in staff turnover. However, according to Hughes and Rog (2008) whenever an employee perceived organizational recruitment and retention strategies positively, the likelihood of decision to leave is dramatically minimized.

In regard to their perceptions concerning security situation in South Sudan, international and regional aid workers were more likely to perceive humanitarian and development access as declining, as opposed to improving or staying the same, because of extreme insecurity and restricted movement of aid workers by government and opposition forces in the country. The findings revealed that some local employees do indeed perceive security risk differently than their expatriate counterparts. Some locals felt that expatriates tended to overestimate the risk in the local security environment (Syed et al. 2014). The reason why expatriates may overestimates security risk is because they are not used to insecurity situation in South Sudan. For expatriates operating in South Sudan; anything they hear is considered as threat to their lives (Kagunyi 2009). Another practical reason, which has financial aspects involved, is that expatriates are always insured. If they ignored the security risk and something happens to them, for example, injury or death, the insurance company will refuse to pay for their life insurance owing to the fact that the security procedures were not carefully followed. As a result, aid organizations always enforced strict policies on expatriates so as not to underestimate security risk (Darby & Williamson 2012). Length of time in the operational context can partly explain this. Local aid workers generally have more longevity in their positions in rural and remotes areas in South Sudan, compared with expatriates, who typically rotate in and out of insecure areas in a 2-3 months short-period of time (Varma et al. 2011; Mukasa 1999). This experience combined with having a better understanding of the local context, language and culture, so crucial for informing an organization’s security, recruitment and retention strategy, may also account in part for local employees’ relatively more optimistic outlook on security and access conditions in South Sudan. Expatriate managers acknowledge that a gap exists between them and their local staff counterparts in how they perceive security risks. They refer to the ‘frog-in-boiling-water’ situation, where people
become used to chronic violence and instability in their living and working environment and come to view it as normal (Fawcett 2011). Many expatriates also cite the related tendency for some local employees to take a more passive and fatalistic approach to their own safety and security. With specific reference to South Sudan, studies released by UNOCHA (2014) and Da Costa (2012) show that expatriates are overly sensitive when it comes to security and safety and that attacks against expatriates has increased in the field in specific and in South Sudan as a whole.

Findings stressed the need for INGDOs to address these concerns, primarily by providing pre-deployment training to staff. INGDOs managers can also establish formal and mandatory training and post-mission follow-up which ultimately may save the humanitarian and development aid programs and, therefore, reduced staff turnover in the sector. Taken together, for local aid workers from South Sudan who have never been abroad, the working conditions offered by humanitarian and development NGOs in South Sudan, which tend to resemble Western working and employment conditions, are apparently more attractive than the employment alternatives available elsewhere in the national labor markets in South Sudan. The opposite can be expected for local aid workers with Western passports. For these individuals, there are often more attractive employment opportunities and better living/working conditions available in the West, making the option to remain employed by INGDOs in a conflict setting, South Sudan in particular, less attractive.

7.6 REVISITING CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

This model (diagram 7.4) is comparing literature findings (from non-conflict settings) with this study’s findings in conflict setting in South Sudan. There are similarities in what is found in the literature and what is found in the findings with regards to what management is doing to retain workers. However, the reasons for these similarities may be the result of management practices in humanitarian and development NGOs becoming similar due to the influence of globalization (Hunt 2008; Doh & Teegen 2003; Kiraka 2003). This finding illustrates that management ‘enact’ a particular practice which may be conditioned by a Western viewpoint and experience which contributes to certain failings in addressing staff retention in this context—sector and societal. In this case, the subjective experience INGDOs managers draw upon is not the one in which they are embedded, for example, the sector or South Sudan context, but the one they have experienced working in stable societies in the West or been taught from reading Western management and administration textbooks.
7.7 IMPLICATIONS FOR THEORY AND PRACTICE

Findings of this thesis come from a multiple sources of data. It is envisaged that the conceptual model presented in figure 7.4 will be useful to INGDOs and other stakeholders in understanding why people stay or leave in conflict settings. This research raises issues for investigators interested in staff retention approaches, apart from serving as a practical guide for INGDOs operating in a conflict context. Five major implications emerged from this thesis for people trying to manage INGDOs. First, as long as the perception about working environment in South Sudan continue to be negative, skilled workers, expatriates in particular, will leave the sector and INGDOs will not be able to continue pursuing activities to relieve suffering, promote the interests of the poor, protect the environment, provide basic social services, or undertake community development. This thesis emphasised the need to consider both personal and environmental factors when assessing the risk to skilled workers’ health, safety and security from working in a conflict environment, and to properly maintain the work environment by adopting progressive people management strategies such as strategic planning so as to retain workers. Concurring with this, Tulloch et al. (2011) argue that the nature of the operating environment such as its instability or peacefulness determines
whether people can stick around or go and that organizational managers need to address the influences of the work environment by adopting proactive people management strategies before they can expect aid workers to reciprocate by offering their loyalty to the organization.

Second, the dependence on financial resources from external donors has implications for attraction and for retention of skilled workers in the INGDOs sector regardless of societal setting. Funding sources for humanitarian and development NGOs tend to be complex, including sources such as private donations or government project funding (Lewis & Sobhan 1999). According to Smillie and Minear (2003), a dependence on external source of revenue decreases the ability of aid organizations to recruit and retain professional aid workers in uncertain political and economic environments. This thesis suggests that in order to address the problem of over-reliance on external funding sources and retain skilled workers, INGDOs need to better balance the levels and types of funds obtained from different sources, for example, block grants, and they should evaluate the service-delivery commitments they make to their beneficiaries such as employees and poor communities on the basis of donor financing. The defining feature of block grants, according to Salm (1999), is that funds are provided over a longer period to cover a donor’s portion of co-financing for several projects of an organization. In doing so, organizations will be able to balance different stakeholders’ expectations and engage in advocacy, which in turn increases their ability to influence their operating environment, and retain qualified staff. According to Merlot et al. (2006), the composition of INGOs funding sources in developing countries influences the level and type of organization investment in people management and the use of HRM approaches to attract and retain skilled workers. This suggests that INGDOs operating in conflict-ridden countries need to be conscious of the problem of dependence upon external funding and its implications, and that in order to reduce high dependence on donor funds aid agencies need to solicit donations from individuals and groups on a global scale, rather than just in the wealthiest countries. However, although widespread coverage may benefit aid collections, it may also endanger aid workers who wish to remain not noticeable in conflict-ridden zones. Donors’ funding, in most cases, tends to give a ‘false start’ that was never there and ultimately leads to staff turnover and ineffectiveness of retention strategies (Dichter 2009, p. 45). Humanitarian and development NGOs could fail when they are not conceived or designed to be sustainable. The findings of this study have implications for how international donors engage with the INGOs in various people management initiatives aimed at attracting and retaining competent and skilled human capital in developing countries, South Sudan in
particular. Engagement and involvement of donors in the general management of the organization matters as it creates a sense of ‘belonging’ necessary for promoting cohesion within the organization. It can also significantly change how INGOs’ resources are managed for their sustainability, poor communities’ outreach, and employee retention. In the case of INGDOs in South Sudan, it was not clear as to how donors coordinate and engage with organizations in terms of resources management, staff development and staff retention.

Third, findings also indicate that international staff, often occupied the key leadership positions in the INGDOs sector, and were typically paid higher than local employees, often despite equal levels of education and job experience. Division and mistrust between locals and international staff lead to staff turnover and poor performance within the humanitarian and development aid organizations (Carr et al. 2010; Hilhorst & Schmiemann 2002). These relationships problems between locals and international aid workers have implications for the INGDOs’ operations, their principles and efforts to alleviate poverty, and their organizational practices to attract and retain workers in developing countries. This thesis suggests that to address power differentials within the sector, INGDOs should develop a system where the number of Western expatriates and others who are not local workers working in the sector are reduced through an increase and more visible involvement of local workers in humanitarian and development aid works as well as in managerial roles. Owing to the complexities and the problems associated with skill shortages in South Sudan as discussed earlier, INGDOs managers need to start investing in comprehensive training program for local staff. Comprehensive training programs for local staff and rewards packages that fit well with characteristics and preferences of employees can result in increasing motivation and, ultimately, improved performance. For example, flexible benefits and rewards packages allow employees to tailor their packages to suit their motivation, work and leisure interests, career stage and domestic circumstances (Ugboro 2006). Indeed, rewarding contribution leads to staff retention but the main purpose may be to ensure that staff’s contribution is commensurate with their reward. The South Sudanese traditional approach reinforces this. The South Sudanese context however adds that any such reward is identified prior to one’s contribution which usually results from contest among people in pursuit of community projects such as who kills a wild animal threatening the community or who retrieves the body of a drowned community member from the Nile river bed. According to some research, these management approaches have encouraged the local aid workers in South Sudanese context to be competitive, improve performance and remain longer in the organization (Kagunyi 2009).
Fourth, because of ongoing political and ethnic conflicts, and the difficulty and complexity of the working environment which are obstacles to retention of staff in South Sudan, INGDOs managers should not rely only on standard Western management practices to influence staff retention; rather, an alternative model of knowledge transfer such as social construction, knowledge-sharing, participation in social networks, and interaction between local citizens and Western ideas and people should be considered as an effective retention mechanism in emerging countries like South Sudan. Social technologies like HRM tools are less codified and even more interdependent with the social context than physical technologies. Knowledge has to be continually ‘reinterpreted’, ‘created’, or ‘re-constituted’ rather than ‘transferred’ to ‘create a unique bundle of people management knowledge, deeply embedded in the unique social, political and economic context of South Sudan (Davis & Luiz 2015, p. 290). Western management also have much to learn from South Sudan in terms of its emphasis on networks and stakeholders: knowledge flows are not simply one-way, from the Western source to other destinations. There have been concerns in the literature over whether ‘knowledge’ of Western management practices can be unproblematically ‘transferred’ in the way suggested by many proponents of ‘technology transfer’. Supporting this assertion is Holden (2002, p. 244) who has tried to explore culture and cross-cultural management from a knowledge perspective, proposing that retention strategies seemed to be successful in the West may not work in other settings because of the differences in culture and operating contexts. Indeed, what may be perceived to be working in non-conflict societies, Western settings in particular, may not be explicitly working in non-Western settings, conflict societies in particular. For example, traditional HR management approaches such as employee involvement, which are often cited as key retention strategies in non-conflict settings, are not as relevant for skilled workers operating in a conflict setting, South Sudan in particular, who are influenced by things like political stability, better working and living conditions, and long-term employment contracts. In relation to the financial aspects of their job, many interviewed employees did not make any particular suggestion apart from sensitizing their managers to be aware of the societal influences and competition between INGDOs, corporate sector, and UN agencies in the region. This suggests that the problem of staff retention in South Sudan does not depend on the standard management practices such as monetary and non-monetary benefits presented in figure 7.3 which employees have mixed impression, but on the sectoral and societal setting factors such as political instability in the country and donor funding constraints which INGDOs managers may not have influence over them.
Overall, this finding challenges the findings of Loquercio et al. (2006) in the Horn of Africa, which presented absence of performance-related pay systems and merit promotion as the dominant factors for employee turnover in the humanitarian and development NGOs. However, while Loquercio et al.’s analysis focused on all categories of aid workers including non-skilled workers, contractors, volunteers and national staff in a post-conflict environment, the findings of this study suggest that when engaging particularly with professional aid workers, including Western expatriates and regional workers, in a conflict setting, monetary incentives and merit promotion alone may not be good factors for staff attraction and retention. Rather, the level of safety and better working conditions that a person experiences from the context in which a person works can play a very critical role. Thus better working conditions and improved security situation are salient. According to Songstad et al. (2011, p. 34), based on their quality study exploring the perceived unfairness in working conditions in the public and private sectors in Tanzania, better working and living conditions and improved security situation can help deliver a positive psychological contract which can serve as a differentiator in the recruitment market which is much more difficult to replicate than individual pay practices such that the organization can become an “employer of choice” and “a great place to work” hence attracting and retaining skilled workers it needs. Another important employee retention element identified in this study was job security through fixed term employment contracts. Staff expressed dissatisfaction with studied INGDOs’ employment contract conditions and hence their decision to leave because they felt that their careers were not safe and good in the sector.

According to Samuel and Chipunza (2009), professional workers in Sub-Saharan Africa place great importance on permanent employment because it provides them with a guaranteed source of income with which socio-economic stability are achieve which are critical issues in developing economies with high incidence of poverty. These findings seem to corroborate the claim by Herzberg’s two factor theory that while the lack of money can cause staff turnover, its provision does not result in employee retention, hence the factors that make people remain longer on the job can be different from the factors that make them leave (Dockel & Coetzee 2006). In other words, monetary incentives cannot be ignored, but it should not be the primary strategy in attracting and retaining skilled workers in a conflict setting because people who come for money will leave for money. Of particular relevance in the context of this study are findings by Glen (2006), who advise that if humanitarian and development aid
agencies operating in conflict settings relied only on employee retention strategies deemed successful in non-conflict societies, the West in particular, they will be losing retention battle because strategies such as pre-deployment training and follow-up, political neutrality, and employee rotation are central to staff attraction and retention in conflict and post-conflict societies, Sub-Saharan Africa in particular, because they help to keep workers motivated and prevent burnout.

Therefore, the argument of this thesis is that many of the existing traditional HR management practices or Western assumptions pertaining to employee retention in the sector need some changes and modifications, or comprehensively redesigned or ‘recontextualized’ to suit local conditions since South Sudan is a different environment to INGDOs. In South Sudan no single strategy or direct activity, used in isolation, is likely to constitute an adequate approach for retaining people effectively. What may be needed is a careful selection of initiatives such as comprehensive training programs adapted to people’s needs, tied to organizational goals, and used strategically in an ongoing manner. Issues of managing workforce need to work their way through the strategic planning process of the organization. Horwitz et al. (2015) stated that retention approaches should not be fixed and should be modified over time as people’s needs and personal circumstances change. This means that an organization’ retention strategies need to be assessed and reassessed on an ongoing basis. Consistent with Davis and Luiz (2015), organizations wanting to attract and retain highly skilled workers in unstable context will not be successful if they rely on only one retention approach or solution such as empowerment. Single-approach HRM practices such as empowering every employee in terms of decision-making authority do not create lasting retention solution in conflict societies (Analoui & Samour 2012). Bringing about the HRM approaches needed to retain talented staff in conflict societies requires commitment from the national government, the donors, and the INGDOs to improve working conditions through investing in better amenities such as basic supplies such as clean water, essential medicines, working and relatively modern equipment which determines the quality of life, improving security situations through more effective coordination and increased synergy among organizations and their partners, improving employment contracts through continual renewal of contracts and long tenure, and ensuring long-term employment opportunities (Tessema & Ng'oma 2009).
7.8 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR MANAGERS AND POLICY-MAKERS OF INGDOs

While there is little INGDOs managers can do to influence the geopolitical context in South Sudan, some improvements are called for. First, effective HRM practices in this sector and this societal context must take a different approach which involves a better understanding of both sectoral and societal setting influences, willingness to take into account and adapt to local contextual factors (flexibility), and motivating workers by fulfilling at a minimum their safety and security needs as advocated by Herzberg et al. (2011). It is therefore in the best interest of INGDOs operating in South Sudan to integrate security management across the organization, and not treat it as an ‘add-on’ strategy as reported in other studies of skills retention in Sub-Saharan African (Kiggundu 2016; Ugboro 2006). While this is not a new topic, only in recent years have INGOs begun to realize that developing a security culture poses one of the most significant challenges (Stoddard et al. 2009). Much of the focus in security management tends to be on specific operational needs, such as security policies and plans (Da Costa 2012; De Torrente 2004). Proper security rules, evacuation plans and effective communication systems have to be defined and implemented, and basic safety measures need to be in place. It is also important to ensure that appropriate health care and medical insurance is available for staff.

In addition, INGDOs managers need to ensure the existence of acceptable housing or accommodation, whereby many aid workers, particularly field staff, can find it easy to continue to live and work in what are often difficult environmental conditions. HR departments also need to provide basic resources and equipment and there should be proper planning when it comes to houses and accommodations allocation throughout the organizations. Anecdotal evidence collected in the field suggests that INGDOs have to be concerned about the small amount of time and resources dedicated to pre-deployment training and follow-up to equip skilled workers for the contexts in which they would be working. This is consistent with the work of Darby and Williamson (2012) in Darfur Sudan and Haiti which reported that if INGOs are deploying professional staff in developing countries without comprehensively understanding the pre-deployment stage of the employment cycle, than it is likely that they are not having the necessary resources or qualities for ‘push-pull’ factors.

Leaving professional staff who do not have the necessary resources or skills to make decisions that could compromise their safety and that of the colleagues, according to Birt and Winternitz (2004), is an act of negligence. This strategy to fully understand the pre-
deployment stage of the employment cycle would reinforce the mutual beliefs, perceptions, and obligations between the INGDOs, as employers, and their employees in South Sudan by creating a sense of loyalty toward the organization, and by motivating employees to fulfil commitments made to the local stakeholders such as poor communities. These obligations will often be informal and imprecise, for example, they may be inferred from actions or from what has happened in the past, as well as from statements made by the organization during the recruitment process or in performance appraisals. Some obligations may be seen as ‘promises’ and others as ‘expectations’. The significant thing is that they are believed by the skilled workers to be part of the relation with the employing organization. On the other hand, in using the mutual beliefs, perceptions, and obligations, INGDOs, as employers, should be aware that they are relying on ‘soft factors’ such as management and leadership style and effective communication and are therefore dependent on the ability of the HR managers to strengthen the relationship. If breached, it can have a ‘negative’ effect on employee recruitment and retention strategies and the relationship between the staff and the organization (Aggarwal & Bhargava 2009).

Second, alongside maximizing the safety and security of workers, INGDOs managers can increase retention in a conflict setting by addressing the issue of job security through absorbing the temporary staff to permanent positions, especially if their funding model can allow it to happen; providing effective induction programs about cultural adjustment, particularly for international staff; enhanced levels of housing and social amenities, flexible work arrangements, and equipment and tools. This will require significant thought and planning on the part of INGDOs managers and recognition that improving staff well-being may add to organizational expenditures. While maintaining staff well-being is paramount, cost must also be considered, but the primary objective must be ensuring that skilled workers are able to continue to work helping the poor and vulnerable communities. It is also clear from the findings that success in addressing the challenges presented by the working and living conditions is to a large extent contingent on understanding that leaving people in the same location for very long time is also likely to affect their health and well-being. Rotating skilled workers around frequently is therefore recommended as a way to alternate tougher and easier assignments and minimize the risk of staff turnover (Stoddard et al. 2006). Exposing employees to different conditions allows them to develop new skills and put what they have learnt into perspective. This provides workers more depth to their analysis of the situation and fosters a better understanding of regional issues (Curling & Simmons 2010).
In addition, rotating employees enables them to gain a range of experience and allows knowledge to be transferred and shared with other employees (Martins & Coetzee 2007), especially between those at the field locations and headquarters. The disadvantages of employee rotation are that the aid workers need to be trained to do the different task (Jaturanonda et al. 2006), and the employee will have to be taken away from their duty to get trained and also the costs could be quite high (Musa & Hamid 2008). Although employee rotation has obvious disadvantages in some important aspects, it is noted for its benefits from positive effects on career development, motivation and renovations, flexibility, and reduction in working stresses (Kinyili et al. 2015; Bakuwa et al. 2013). When choosing between two organizational schemes of job specialization, for example, specific assignment jobs and rotation, there would be usually trade-offs between advantages and disadvantages of these schemes that need to be seriously considered. Generally, employee rotation is supposed to be a superior choice in cases where work requires broad experiences. On the other hand, redeploying employees also increases returns on skills investment as it reduces the tendency of becoming redundant if trained for only one job and the job ceases to exist. Redeployment in the humanitarian and development context can be broadly defined as the transfer of an employee to another job within the same organization or an ‘associated entity’ (Baker 2014, p. 89). The process involves assigning an employee to other roles within the organization; to another site of the branch within South Sudan; or to a branch abroad, including headquarters in Nairobi, Geneva or New York.

Third, to lessen the dependence on international funds, INGDOs need to work more on identifying the less effective and impactful projects and redirect resources from those projects to other programs which are more of priority needs, and the South Sudanese government needs to permit such development. This commitment will require sophisticated political and economic analysis and judgments based on the objectives each organization is seeking to achieve. However, this does not mean abandoning the core principle of humanitarian and development aid works in conflict environments. As Contu and Girei (2014, p. 206) suggest, ‘in conflict situations the best “navigation”, “accessibility” and “retention” strategy may well be to assert, as loudly and persistently as possible, that an organization is totally politically neutral’. In addition, if aid organizations fail to engage effectively with both armed and non-state armed opposition groups, relationships are likely to deteriorate and regulatory restraints are likely to increase staff turnover. Personal experiences suggest that the relationship
between aid actors and the South Sudanese government is at a turning point, and it will be crucial over the coming years if the conflict intensifies. Given this situation, INGDOs managers may need to increase their connections and ties with the community and state authorities and subsequent retention by recruiting and hiring from communities close to their facilities and avoiding relocating workers whenever possible. According to De Torrente (2004), development aid organizations operating in developing countries should recruit locally, whenever possible, in order to improve community perception about their humanitarian and development activities and projects, and to provide existing staff with a career path, as well as to maintain a good cultural fit. However, if no suitable internal candidate available, the HR department can recruit externally using the social media and other directories of non-governmental organizations such as Reliefweb.

Fourth, a solid foundation of context-specific refined or adapted HR practices is essential if retention approaches of INGDOs are to be successful in South Sudan. Apart from environmental challenges, INGOs whether large or small are competing against their peers for talent and if organizations in specific circumstances are equally attractive to an employee it is safe to assume the employers that have better understanding of talent development have competitive advantage over those who have none in place. This thesis encourages INGDOs managers to move beyond using standard HRM procedures and policies to localize Western concepts of management development to be consistent with principles of attracting and retaining local workers in the Western dominated humanitarian and development sectors. Flexible solutions and a clear understanding of case specific mutual obligations can improve retention in a conflict setting and in indigenous societies. Local practices such as adherence to sanctity of reciprocity and good social and personal relations might also be relevant in retaining professional workers in a climate of civil war and in indigenous societies (Somasundaram et al. 2007). African ‘Ubuntu’ or humanism may arguably reflects a conceptual proximity to Western instrumentalism and Confucian humanism, but a realistic, idealized or indeed romanticized conception may not have significant empirical or management support. There is also a latent assumption of both homogeneity and unique distinctiveness, which bewilder the reality of inter-regional, inter-country and inter-ethnic diversity. Ager (1999), in his work on organizational culture in the humanitarian and development sectors in the Gambia, notes differences in people management between African and Western organizations in that their competencies are developed in countries that have distinct set-up due to differences in economic, political and domestic investment in
infrastructure, including physical and human capital. In countries like South Sudan, where the regulatory and institutional framework for employment relations remains strong, this together with local cultural factors may mitigate against unchanged adoption and development of employee retention strategies in emerging humanitarian and development sectors.

Additionally, other studies of HRM in INGOs and MNCs in Africa (Cooke et al. 2015; Horwitz 2015; Khan & Ackers 2004) have found a ‘tendency’ for expatriate managers to ‘lump African countries together’ as relatively similar and interrelated in terms of cultural values, which have an effect on how adoption of staff recruitment and retention policies and practices occurs. Given this scenario, it is not appropriate for INGOs and MNCs expatriate managers to generalize about employee recruitment and retention practices in African countries, given that they are not organizationally monolithic, and the complexity and diversity of their home cultures and institutions. For example, what works in South Africa with regards to staff recruitment and retention might not be applicable in South Sudan not only because they are different countries with varying regulations and political systems but also with different contextual perspectives. Context perspectives have, therefore, become more important in people management and ‘progressive’ HRM policies such as employee rotation, improved workloads, and organization’s responsiveness and adaptability to change in local setting remain the key staff retention success factors in developing countries. In spite of the above findings from the literature, anecdotal evidence from the field suggests that the potential reasons why INGDOs managers may have utilized Western-sourced skill retention strategies in a politically and culturally different environment like South Sudan was first to conform to donor requirements which entailed aid organizations working in developing countries to operate in a way that doesn’t compromise Western values, a finding also reported in other studies (Aladwan & Fish 2013; Chiboïwa et al. 2010), and their reluctance to modify management and leadership styles as a result of their willingness to remain embedded in their home country management practices, as it is also noted to be the case with many INGOs and MNCs in Sub-Saharan Africa (Davis & Luiz 2015; Horwitz et al. 2009). Evidence from examining employee recruitment and retention strategies in international NGOs in Zimbabwe (Chakawarika 2011; Chiboïwa et al. 2010) and Iraq (Eriksson et al. 2013; Hassin 2009) — other countries where the operational contexts for aid agencies are very difficult and complex—have shown that the humanitarian and development NGOs focused on meeting the demands of their donors such as annual reports and co-funding of projects, and subsequently have had limited capacity to meet their growing needs in regard to human resources and
organizational developments. This thesis suggests that in order to respond to retention challenges and better fulfill stakeholder expectations, INGDOs need to enhance their internal integration by restructuring to cross-functional teams; thus, blurring the task definition of classical functional departments. Adoption of a cross-functional structure along with the creation of a culture that allows initiative attempts to reduce the gaps among the functions of an organization and enhance creativity and supportiveness to thrive throughout the complex emergencies. In the organization that applies this approach, the assumption is that each branch of an organization should develop locally appropriate management strategies under the supervision of local stakeholders, for example, government and community members. In addition, a local staff member manages a branch or field site because expatriates from the West are considered to have less knowledge of the local context (Cooke et al. 2015).

7.9 LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER STUDIES
Several limitations need to be recognized in this study. The entire interview sample was drawn from eight INGDOs in South Sudan, but mainly in Jonglei and Central Equatoria states. This means that the findings may not be transferable to employees in other organizations in different parts of South Sudan. A qualitative study covering all ten states of South Sudan would have allowed more generalized findings. Second, employees’ views may differ broadly from those of top management and expert practitioners, particularly in respect to HRM approaches for retaining skilled workers. Third, because this was a study undertaken in the INGDOs sector in South Sudan, it focused on understanding the ‘push’ and ‘pull’ factors contributing to the decision of professional aid workers to either leave their organization or remain involved in their organization. This was a deliberate choice, partly due to lack of research on retention challenges and HRM approaches for retaining skilled workers in the humanitarian and development sector in the newly created Republic of South Sudan. However, while this study contributes new knowledge, it cannot be assumed that its findings can be generalized, even to other African countries. It is therefore important to recognize the political and cultural differences which help form people’s attitudes, for example, differences between countries in implementing employee retention policies and practices, differing local traditions, and the diverse economic and political contexts of any country will shape the nature of the workplace (Cooke et al. 2015; Nyambege et al. 2000). Fourth, this research was limited to skilled workers, for example, operation managers, field coordinators, projects directors, and team leaders, and those factors revealed in the research to be influencing their decisions to stay or leave. It does not provide an explanation with regards to factors
influencing decisions of unskilled workers to stay or leave in South Sudan. Fifth, the findings may not be applicable to other international NGOs if researchers consider differences in political and cultural contexts but this is an area for future research.

The limitations and strengths of this study can offer guidelines for future research efforts in this or related study. It may also be useful to consider aspects of HRM approaches such as competitive salaries, medical insurance and paid leave, flexible and responsive decision-making arrangements, culture of sharing information about security incidents, and training and life-long learning opportunities. With regards to contributions and limitations discussed throughout this study, this thesis highlighted several areas in need of further research. In addition, the development of a conceptual framework, a framework which provides an understanding of factors contributing to staff turnover and HRM approaches for retaining skilled workers in both conflict and non-conflict societies, may add to the current body of knowledge about why people stay or leave in South Sudan in general. Examining societal and sectoral influences and HRM approaches seemed to be worthwhile as this study focused on understanding why people stay or leave in the sector. Exploring the relationship between these influencing factors in different sectors and societal contexts is very important in identifying which factors may be applicable for consideration in a different context. This could be carried out in other professions, and cross-organizational comparisons are also recommended for future research in South Sudan and Sub-Saharan Africa.

Additionally, exploring and comparing any differences between nonprofit organizations operating in non-conflict societies, the West in particular, and those operating in conflict and post-conflict societies, particularly Sub-Saharan Africa, would also be of interest in future studies. This is because retention challenges and opportunities available in the nonprofit sectors in the West are of contrary kinds to those available in the nonprofit sectors in Sub-Saharan Africa. Although commonalities exist between nonprofit organizations in the West and those in Sub-Saharan Africa, the nonprofit organizations in Sub-Saharan Africa do have their own unique challenges. Akingbola (2013, p. 73) sums up this challenging role when he writes about a “social welfare vacuum” created by a lack of alignment between the real needs of the people in developing countries, Sub-Saharan Africa in particular, and the support of the government. Nonprofit organizations like INGOs, Akingbola explains, have the unique challenging role of fulfilling this gap with programming and education. It is believe this need will continue to grow as public sector continue to grow weaker and poor communities
continue to rely heavily on nonprofit organizations and depending on nonprofit organizations to provide needed social services. As a result, it is hoped future researchers will explore these findings and encourage careful consideration of sectoral and contextual factors to assess their influences on employee retention. Future studies exploring these elements alongside other retention challenges such as difficulties with obtaining working visas and travel permits would be valuable in understanding why professional aid workers leave or stay in the humanitarian and development sectors. It is also the author’s strong hope that this research will yield a better contribution to knowledge beyond the previous proposals and explanations offered by past researchers, and will create a new understanding of factors contributing to staff turnover and HRM approaches in INGDOs and conflict settings for managing these factors more effectively, thus creating new directions for future research.

First, in the future, the study may be carried out over a longer period of time and include the people who have left the sector. For example, the information on exit interviews was not available when required and it is not clear as to whether or not they are conducted with a follow-up to the employees over a long period of time after the employees have left the sector. It may be appropriate in the future to extend research to former employees as this could allow the organization to gain valuable insight into the workplace experience. Exit interviews allow the organization to understand the triggers of the employee’s desire to leave as well as the aspects of their work that they enjoyed. The organization can then use this information to make necessary changes to their HRM policies to retain top talent, improve operations, and provide effective service for the beneficiaries. Although anecdotal evidence suggests that staff turnover is higher among international staff as opposed to local and regional aid workers combined, this study indicated that staff turnover is a problem for all categories of staff, but higher among expatriates, regional workers and nationals with Western passports anytime of armed conflict. The availability of research explaining the basis for leaving/staying in a conflict setting in South Sudan may provide more insight on the extent of staff retention/staff turnover literature or debate for future studies in the humanitarian and development NGOs in conflict settings.

Second, this study needs to be extended to include skilled workers working with UN agencies and other international organizations and MNCs operating in the region such as USAID, DFID, and Oil and Mining Multinational Corporations (MNCs). It has been realized from the field notes and personal experience that most of the employees within the INGDOs sector, at
the end of their employment contracts, prefer to work for UN agencies, USAID, DFID, CAFOD, ADB and Oil and Mining Multinational Corporations (MNCs) as opposed to government or local NGOs. Perhaps there are advantages such as better working conditions and long-term employment opportunities to work for these other organizations.

Third, future research should investigate factors influencing decisions of unskilled workers to stay or leave within the organizations operating in South Sudan. This will help researchers to discover whether or not there are differences and similarities in terms of influencing factors, perceptions and coping strategies in a conflict setting. In other words, this will help researchers in understanding whether or not the same issues affecting skilled workers are also applying to unskilled workers in South Sudan, most of which are local employees without any formal education.

Fourth, future studies should concentrate on inquiring ways in which the South Sudanese Government, however fractured, can help strengthen, broaden, and deepen the role of the INGDO sector in the country as part of a multipronged strategy towards poverty alleviation, especially in rural areas where the majority of South Sudanese live. The coordination of development aid by an institutionalized government body, with clearly defined mandates, roles and representation, is vital for so many reasons, including the need to ensure that development is evenly spread across the country, and not limited to one particular ethnic group and particular ethnic group-leaning areas, states or administrative areas of South Sudan. Evidence from other emerging countries emphasized profoundly on the importance of development coordination and argued that enhancing development coordination represents a “new strategy” for both development organizations and governments and, if not appropriately undertaken, it will not impact negatively only on development aid provision, but also on how professional aid workers are recruited and retained in the development sectors. Future studies need to stress on the importance of setting up development coordination around a sector-specific or national plan, including a framework for poverty reduction and monitoring and reviewing development aid effectiveness. This means replacing existing community development aid coordination units with sector-specific coordination units with integrated links to key planning practices as well as lining up development assistance and government resources to an overall development partners-national government agreed strategy.

Fifth, although studies on INGDOs behaviors are growing, knowledge of the former in conflict setting remains significantly limited. In South Sudan and other war-torn societies,
there is a tendency among research scholars and policy-makers to view INGDOs as only social and welfare services delivery organizations. This promotes the belief that the behavior of INGDOs in the same industry is influenced by exactly the same factors. Future studies need to encourage forming a better understanding of the behavior of INGDOs in South Sudan in specific and Sub-Saharan Africa in general by providing a better understanding to how each individual organization uniquely operate. Each organization has specific consideration that must be taken into account when considering its strategic behavior. INGDOs held varying intentions for becoming engaged in South Sudan, as well as different structural compositions that framed their decision-making. The size of the organization and the extent of its international activities spell out the capacity it has to develop and retain professional staff as well as other options it might lean towards when circumstances in a conflict-affected country become over demanding.

Sixth, future research should focus on studying the differences between professional aid workers in humanitarian and development NGOs and those employees working for UN agencies in South Sudan to examine different views and perceptions in relation to factors contributing to decision to stay or leave. In particular, UN aid workers have longer-term employment opportunities in comparison to humanitarian and development NGOs’ employees owing to the fact that UN agencies have steady flow of funding. In addition, UN aid workers mostly work in less insecure environments as their work is mostly concentrated in urban areas and thus need to be further explored in terms of their contentment with human resource retention strategies and operating environment.
REFERENCES


263


Chakawarika, B. (2011). Challenges faced by NGOs in the political harsh climate of Zimbabwe: Analyzing the factors contributing to ‘skills drain’ of professional worker. School of Global Studies, University of Gothenburg.


APPENDIX A – ETHICS APPROVAL LETTER

Notice of Approval

Date: 18 July 2013

Project number: 1000529

Project title: Retaining Skilled Workers in Post-Conflict Settings: A Study of HRM Policies and Practices in International Non-Governmental Development Organizations in South Sudan

Risk classification: Low Risk

Principal Investigator: Associate Professor Rosalie Holian
Student Investigator: Mr Akim Ajieh Bunny

Project Approved: From: 17 July 2013 To: 18 July 2015

Terms of approval:

1. Responsibilities of the principal investigator
   It is the responsibility of the principal investigator to ensure that all other investigators and staff on the project are aware of the terms of approval and to ensure that the project is conducted as approved by BCHEAN. Approval is only valid while the investigator holds a position at RMIT University.

2. Amendments
   Approval must be sought from BCHEAN to amend any aspect of a project including approved documents. To apply for an amendment submit a request for amendment form to the BCHEAN secretary. This form is available on the Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC) website. Amendments must not be implemented without first gaining approval from BCHEAN.

3. Adverse events
   You should notify BCHEAN immediately of any serious or unexpected adverse effects on participants or unforeseen events affecting the ethical acceptability of the project.

4. Participant Information and Consent Form (PICF)
   The PICF must be distributed to all research participants, where relevant, and the consent form is to be retained and stored by the investigator. The PICF must contain the RMIT University logo and a complaints clause including the above project number.

5. Annual reports
   Continued approval of this project is dependent on the submission of an annual report.

6. Final report
   A final report must be provided at the conclusion of the project. BCHEAN must be notified if the project is discontinued before the expected date of completion.

7. Monitoring
   Projects may be subject to an audit or any other form of monitoring by BCHEAN at any time.

8. Retention and storage of data
   The investigator is responsible for the storage and retention of original data pertaining to a project for a minimum period of five years.

Remarks

Chairperson
RMIT BCHEAN
APPENDIX B – INVITATION LETTER TO RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS

22 April 2013

Dear …<< Research Participant’s Name >>………..

I am a candidate for a PhD at RMIT University in Australia. My PhD research is currently investigating the nature of employee turnover and effectiveness of HRM policies and practices for retaining and engaging workers within the INGDOs sector in South Sudan. I am currently conducting qualitative research within the INGDOs sector in South Sudan in the form of in-depth interviews with expert practitioners, in-depth interviews with workers, and in-depth interviews with sectorial managers. I would like to invite you to represent the in-depth interviews with expert practitioners section in my research. I am offering a choice to do it individually or in a small group. In some cases I may be following-up with you by phone or email.

My research aims to identify the nature of employee turnover and effectiveness of HRM policies and practices for retaining and engaging workers within the INGDOs sector in S. Sudan. The purpose in pursuing this study is to contribute to a better understanding of HRM policies and practices for retaining and engaging workers within INGDOs sector and help address questions of retention of workers in a developing country perspective, in particular S. Sudan. The data gathered from employees will assist INGDOs managers working in S. Sudan in better managing their workforce. With the increased external environmental factors such as government regulations, security and economic conditions, funding resources limitations and donor conditionalities, the need for the INGDOs sector to be competitive and provide its workforce with the working environment that enables them to remain within the sector is paramount.

I am inviting you as an <<title and position>> working at <<institution name insert>> to participate in my research. Your participation will involve approximately 40-60 minutes in-depth interview with me, at a time and location that is appropriate for you. The purpose of this interview is to seek your opinions and views on staff turnover and how workers are being retained within the INGDOs sector in S. Sudan. As there are no right or wrong answers you do not need to prepare for these meetings in advance.

If you are interested and would like me to meet with you, to discuss my proposal further, I would greatly appreciate your time and effort. If you have any queries regarding this project in the meantime please don’t hesitate contacting me on phone (+614 1373 9597), or email akim.bunny@rmit.edu.au. Alternatively, you can contact my PhD supervisors as follow: Associate Professor Rosalie Holian (Rosalie.holian@rmit.edu.au), Dr. Darryn Snell (Darryn.snell@rmit.edu.au).

Thank you in advance for your anticipated consideration. Eagerly awaiting your kind response!

Yours faithfully,

Akim Ajieth Bunny
PhD Candidate
APPENDIX C – INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

GROUP 1: INTERVIEWS WITH INGDOs MANAGERS
In-depth interviews will be conducted with managers in the INGDOs in South Sudan to discuss their specific experiences with regards to staff turnover and staff retention. In other word, managers will be asked to share their experiences with regards to staff turnover, its consequences and what their organizations are doing to retain skilled workers. This research defines managers as those responsible for HR management policies and practices, recruitment and selection, organizational planning and leadership. The interviews will be conducted at appropriate locations, depending upon the preference of the respondent. The following indicative interview topics will be used:

1. Staff Turnover in the Organization
   - Workforce characteristics
   - Is staff turnover an issue?
   - Nature of staff turnover? Is it getting better or worse?
   - Are there departments with higher turnover than others? (field sites vs HQs)
   - Is turnover higher among nationals or expatriates?
   - Any challenges associated with differing forms of employment contracts?

2. Recruitment of Staff
   - Processes and procedures for hiring staff
   - Challenges hiring skilled staff in South Sudan?

3. Key Factors influencing workers’ decisions to stay or leave the organization
   - In your opinion, what are personal factors influencing workers’ decisions to leave?
   - In your opinion, what are organizational factors influencing workers’ decisions to stay?
   - In your opinion, what are the external factors giving rise to staff turnover

4. Which HRM policies and practices most influence the decisions of skilled workers to stay?
5. How are these influencing factors managed in your organization?
6. Are there strategies employed by your organization to retain staff, and for addressing problem of staff turnover?
7. Do you have some strategies successful than others in retaining staff?

GROUP 2: INTERVIEWS WITH SKILLED WORKERS
Throughout the approximately 40-60 minutes in-depth interviews with skilled workers, the research participants will have conversation with the researcher based on the following indicative interview topics. Skilled workers will be asked to discuss factors influencing their decisions to stay or leave the organization. This research refers to skilled workers as individuals who have a specialized field of work, and a defined training path in order to be able to work in that specialty. The following indicative interview topics will be used:

1. Do you think staff turnover is an issue?
2. Do you have particular view as to why staff leaves?
3. How is it that you come and work here?
4. How were you recruited for this job?
5. Do you see yourself working in this organization next year? (Can you explain why or why not?).
6. In your opinion, are there organizational policies and practices or issues that are influencing your decision to stay or leave?
7. In your opinion, is there anything that can be done to retain staff in INGOs sector in South Sudan?

**GROUP 3: INTERVIEWS WITH EXPERT PRACTITIONERS**

In-depth interviews with experts related to INGDOs and its employment. In-depth Interviews will be conducted with experts from the local universities and the Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs regarding their perspective on staff turnover and internal policies and practices for retaining skilled workers in INGDOs sector in South Sudan. These experts have specialized knowledge, which may be tied to workplace knowledge or personal knowledge based on experience. The interviews will be conducted at appropriate locations, depending upon the preference of the respondent. The followings are indicative interview topics to be used.

1. In your opinion, is staff turnover an issue for INGDOs in South Sudan?
2. Main challenges facing INGDOs Sector in South Sudan in relation to Staff Turnover.
   - Processes and procedures for hiring staff
   - Challenges hiring skilled staff?
   - Staff turnover problems. Are these problems short or long term, in nature?
   - Nature of employment and contracts of employment

3. Key Factors influencing workers’ decisions to stay or leave the sector
   - In your own view, which personal factors influence workers’ decisions to leave?
   - In your own view, which organizational factors influence workers’ decisions to stay?
   - In your own view, what are the external factors giving rise to staff turnover?

4. Is there anything that the organizations are doing that influencing the decisions of skilled workers to stay?
5. Are there strategies that are more successful than others in retaining staff in the INGDOs sector?
6. Do you think the INGDOs’ managers are doing enough to retain skilled workers?
7. In your opinion, is there anything that can be done to retain skilled workers in INGDOs sector?

Thank you!
RMIT University Human Ethics Advisory Committee
Prescribed Consent Form for Persons Participating In Research Projects Involving Interviews, Questionnaires, Focus Groups or Disclosure of Personal Information

APPENDIX D – INFORMED CONSENT

COLLEGE OF
SCHOOL/CENTRE
Business Management
Name of Participant:

Project Title: Retaining Skilled Workers in a Conflict Setting: A Study of HR Management Approaches in International Non-Governmental Development Organizations in South Sudan

Name(s) of Investigators: (1) Akim Ajieth Bunny Phone: + (613) 9925 1679

(2) Assoc. Prof Rosalie Holian Phone: + (613) 9925 5943

1. I have received a statement explaining the interview/questionnaire involved in this project.
2. I consent to participate in the above project, the particulars of which - including details of the interviews or questionnaires - have been explained to me.
3. I authorize the investigator or his or her assistant to interview me or administer a questionnaire.
4. I give my permission to be audio taped: □ Yes □ No
5. I give my permission for my name or identity to be used: □ Yes □ No
6. I acknowledge that:
   (a) Having read the Plain Language Statement, I agree to the general purpose, methods and demands of the study.
   (b) I have been informed that I am free to withdraw from the project at any time and to withdraw any unprocessed data previously supplied.
   (c) The project is for the purpose of research and/or teaching. It may not be of direct benefit to me.
   (d) The privacy of the information I provide will be safeguarded. However should information of a private nature need to be disclosed for moral, clinical or legal reasons, I will be given an opportunity to negotiate the terms of this disclosure.
   (e) The security of the research data is assured during and after completion of the study. The data collected during the study may be published, and a report of the project outcomes will be provided to participants/co-investigators. Any information which may be used to identify me will not be used unless I have given my permission (see point 5)

Participant’s Consent

Name: ____________________________________________

( Participant) ___________________________ Date

Any complaints about your participation in this project may be directed to the Chair, Business College Human Ethics Advisory Network, College of Business, RMIT, GPO Box 2476V, Melbourne, 3001. The telephone number is (03) 9925 5596 or email address bro@rmit.edu.au. Details of the complaints procedure are available from http://www.rmit.edu.au/browse;ID=2jqmrb7hnpyo

COLLEGE OF
BUSINESS
SCHOOL/CENTRE
Management
Name of Participant:

Project Title: Retaining Skilled Workers in a Conflict Setting: A Study of HR Management Approaches in International Non-Governmental Development Organizations in South Sudan

Name(s) of Investigators: (1) Akim Ajieth Bunny Phone: + (613) 9925 1679

(2) Assoc. Prof Rosalie Holian Phone: + (613) 9925 5943

1. I have received a statement explaining the interview/questionnaire involved in this project.
2. I consent to participate in the above project, the particulars of which - including details of the interviews or questionnaires - have been explained to me.
3. I authorize the investigator or his or her assistant to interview me or administer a questionnaire.
4. I give my permission to be audio taped: □ Yes □ No
5. I give my permission for my name or identity to be used: □ Yes □ No
6. I acknowledge that:
   (a) Having read the Plain Language Statement, I agree to the general purpose, methods and demands of the study.
   (b) I have been informed that I am free to withdraw from the project at any time and to withdraw any unprocessed data previously supplied.
   (c) The project is for the purpose of research and/or teaching. It may not be of direct benefit to me.
   (d) The privacy of the information I provide will be safeguarded. However should information of a private nature need to be disclosed for moral, clinical or legal reasons, I will be given an opportunity to negotiate the terms of this disclosure.
   (e) The security of the research data is assured during and after completion of the study. The data collected during the study may be published, and a report of the project outcomes will be provided to participants/co-investigators. Any information which may be used to identify me will not be used unless I have given my permission (see point 5)

Participant’s Consent

Name: ____________________________________________

( Participant) ___________________________ Date

Any complaints about your participation in this project may be directed to the Chair, Business College Human Ethics Advisory Network, College of Business, RMIT, GPO Box 2476V, Melbourne, 3001. The telephone number is (03) 9925 5596 or email address bro@rmit.edu.au. Details of the complaints procedure are available from http://www.rmit.edu.au/browse;ID=2jqmrb7hnpyo

COLLEGE OF
BUSINESS
SCHOOL/CENTRE
Management
Name of Participant:

Project Title: Retaining Skilled Workers in a Conflict Setting: A Study of HR Management Approaches in International Non-Governmental Development Organizations in South Sudan

Name(s) of Investigators: (1) Akim Ajieth Bunny Phone: + (613) 9925 1679

(2) Assoc. Prof Rosalie Holian Phone: + (613) 9925 5943

1. I have received a statement explaining the interview/questionnaire involved in this project.
2. I consent to participate in the above project, the particulars of which - including details of the interviews or questionnaires - have been explained to me.
3. I authorize the investigator or his or her assistant to interview me or administer a questionnaire.
4. I give my permission to be audio taped: □ Yes □ No
5. I give my permission for my name or identity to be used: □ Yes □ No
6. I acknowledge that:
   (a) Having read the Plain Language Statement, I agree to the general purpose, methods and demands of the study.
   (b) I have been informed that I am free to withdraw from the project at any time and to withdraw any unprocessed data previously supplied.
   (c) The project is for the purpose of research and/or teaching. It may not be of direct benefit to me.
   (d) The privacy of the information I provide will be safeguarded. However should information of a private nature need to be disclosed for moral, clinical or legal reasons, I will be given an opportunity to negotiate the terms of this disclosure.
   (e) The security of the research data is assured during and after completion of the study. The data collected during the study may be published, and a report of the project outcomes will be provided to participants/co-investigators. Any information which may be used to identify me will not be used unless I have given my permission (see point 5)

Participant’s Consent

Name: ____________________________________________

( Participant) ___________________________ Date

Any complaints about your participation in this project may be directed to the Chair, Business College Human Ethics Advisory Network, College of Business, RMIT, GPO Box 2476V, Melbourne, 3001. The telephone number is (03) 9925 5596 or email address bro@rmit.edu.au. Details of the complaints procedure are available from http://www.rmit.edu.au/browse;ID=2jqmrb7hnpyo

COLLEGE OF
BUSINESS
SCHOOL/CENTRE
Management
Name of Participant:

Project Title: Retaining Skilled Workers in a Conflict Setting: A Study of HR Management Approaches in International Non-Governmental Development Organizations in South Sudan

Name(s) of Investigators: (1) Akim Ajieth Bunny Phone: + (613) 9925 1679

(2) Assoc. Prof Rosalie Holian Phone: + (613) 9925 5943

1. I have received a statement explaining the interview/questionnaire involved in this project.
2. I consent to participate in the above project, the particulars of which - including details of the interviews or questionnaires - have been explained to me.
3. I authorize the investigator or his or her assistant to interview me or administer a questionnaire.
4. I give my permission to be audio taped: □ Yes □ No
5. I give my permission for my name or identity to be used: □ Yes □ No
6. I acknowledge that:
   (a) Having read the Plain Language Statement, I agree to the general purpose, methods and demands of the study.
   (b) I have been informed that I am free to withdraw from the project at any time and to withdraw any unprocessed data previously supplied.
   (c) The project is for the purpose of research and/or teaching. It may not be of direct benefit to me.
   (d) The privacy of the information I provide will be safeguarded. However should information of a private nature need to be disclosed for moral, clinical or legal reasons, I will be given an opportunity to negotiate the terms of this disclosure.
   (e) The security of the research data is assured during and after completion of the study. The data collected during the study may be published, and a report of the project outcomes will be provided to participants/co-investigators. Any information which may be used to identify me will not be used unless I have given my permission (see point 5)

Participant’s Consent

Name: ____________________________________________

( Participant) ___________________________ Date

Any complaints about your participation in this project may be directed to the Chair, Business College Human Ethics Advisory Network, College of Business, RMIT, GPO Box 2476V, Melbourne, 3001. The telephone number is (03) 9925 5596 or email address bro@rmit.edu.au. Details of the complaints procedure are available from http://www.rmit.edu.au/browse;ID=2jqmrb7hnpyo
**APPENDIX E – INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE IN A RESEARCH PROJECT**

**PARTICIPANT INFORMATION**

**COLLEGE OF BUSINESS**

---

**Project Title:** Retaining Skilled Workers in a Conflict Setting: A Study of HR Management Approaches in International Non-Governmental Development Organizations in South Sudan

**Investigators:**
1) Akim Bunny, PhD Candidate,
   Email akim.bunny@rmit.edu.au, Phone: +61 3 9925 1679
2) Assoc. Prof. Rosalie Holian, (Senior Supervisor)
   Email Rosalie.holian@rmit.edu.au Phone: +61 3 9925 5943
3) Dr. Darryn Snell, (Second Supervisor)
   Email Darryn.snell@rmit.edu.au, Phone: +61 3 9925 1426

Dear ………<< Individual’s Name >>……………………………….

You are invited to participate in a research project being conducted by RMIT University in Australia. This information sheet describes the project in straightforward language. Please read this sheet carefully and be confident that you understand its contents before deciding whether to participate or not. If you have any questions about the project, please contact one of the investigators.

**Who is involved in this research project? Why is it being conducted?**
Exploring how INGDOs working in South Sudan are addressing the problem of staff turnover is an RMIT Research thesis being undertaken by Akim Bunny as part of his PhD research studies in the School of Management at RMIT University in Australia. As part of this project I am contacting experts from local Universities and the Ministry of Humanitarian and NGOs Affairs in South Sudan to explore the policies and practices used by INGDOs to retain skilled workers.

**Why have you been approached?**
I have selected the organization you work for because I believe it has considerable experience in the area of retention of workers, as well as in the area of development. I would like to invite you to participate in an interview to talk about how your organization addresses the issues of staff retention and turnover of skilled workers.

**What is the project about? What are the questions being addressed?**
This study seeks to identify HRM policies and practices for retaining skilled workers within INGDOs in South Sudan and to explore both research and practical implications. It aims to contribute to a better understanding of HRM policies and practices within the INGDO sector and help address questions of retention of skilled workers in a post-conflict setting, in particular South Sudan. It is expected that approximately 24-36 participants will discuss a range of issues, including personal, internal and external factors influencing the retention of skilled workers within the INGDO sector; implications for organizational HRM policies and practices, steps and approaches managers can take to promote staff retention; and how these may be perceived by skilled workers.

**If I agree to participate, what will I be required to do?**
I would like you to talk to me about your views on these issues so that I can gain valuable insight from your experience. I anticipate that the interview will take between 40- 60 minutes
and will take place during work hours either in your place of work or at another appropriate location.

**What are the risks or disadvantages associated with participation?**
There are no risks beyond every day in participating in this research project. The researcher will audio-record and take notes during the interview however you may request at any stage that your comments are not recorded or written down. If you are concerned with any aspect of the interview please contact Mr. Akim Bunny, Assoc. Prof. Rosalie Holian or Dr. Darryn Snell, as soon as convenient to discuss your concerns confidentially and suggest appropriate follow-up, if necessary.

**What are the benefits associated with participation?**
This study explores an important and somewhat under researched area in the INGDOs sector in South Sudan. It is hoped that the study will contribute positively to a better understanding of HRM policies and practices for retaining skilled workers within INGDOs and help address questions of retention of skilled workers in a post-conflict setting, in particular South Sudan. There may be no personal benefit to you, however participants may benefit from the knowledge created and insight gained from the research. A summary report will be made available to participants.

**What will happen to the information I provide?**
The information provided by you will be used to understand how retention of workers is undertaken in the INGDOs sector in South Sudan. The information collected in the interviews will be used to write reports, conference papers and academic publications. In any reports or publications your identity will be kept confidential. The interview audio-records and notes will be kept securely at RMIT University for a period of 5 years, upon completion of the project. However, you should be aware that it may be disclosed if (1) it is to protect you or others from harm, or (2) if a court order is produced or (3) you provide the researchers with written permission.

**What are my rights as a participant?**
As a participant, you have the right to:
- Withdraw from the project at any time
- Have the audio-recorder turned off at any time
- Have any unprocessed data withdrawn and destroyed, provided it can be reliably identified, and provided that so doing does not increase the risk for the participant
- Have any questions/concerns answered and addressed at any time

**Whom should I contact if I have any questions or concerns?**
In the first instance please contact the PhD student researcher: Mr. Akim Bunny
Mr. Akim Bunny, Email akim.bunny@rmit.edu.au
Phone: (+613) 9925 51679

Yours faithfully,

.....................
Mr. Akim Ajieth Bunny

Any complaints about your participation in this project may be directed to the Executive Officer, RMIT Human Research Ethics Committee, Research & Innovation, RMIT, GPO Box 2476V, Melbourne, Victoria 3001, Australia. Details of the complaints procedure are available at: http://www.rmit.edu.au/rd/hrec_complaints