

Evolution of Humanitarian Aid in the Horn of Africa (or not?)



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Outline

Two Parts:

1. Principles of HA (looking at emergence of 'new humanitarianism' and what it looks like in HoA)
2. Practice of HA (food drops to resilience etc)

Principles of Humanitarian Aid

WHAT DOES 'NEW HUMANITARIANISM' LOOK LIKE
IN HOA?

Dunantist ethos



- Humanity
- Neutrality
- Independence
- Impartiality
- Universality
- Unity
- Voluntary Service

Humanitarianism today

How far has HA moved from adherence to core principles?

Neutrality

- Hugely compromised by the war on terror
- Willful 'blindness' of this principle in case of Somalia
- 'double hatting' of UN Resident/Humanitarian coordinator undermines concept of neutrality for the UN
- Expulsion of humanitarian actors by AS in 2009 and 2011 made them automatically partisan
- Clan and religious affiliations make neutrality a difficult concept for local NGOs
- Pragmatists would argue that strict neutrality prevents aid agencies from getting things done (e.g. use of military logistics)

Humanitarianism today

How far has HA moved from adherence to core principles?

Independence

- Foreign policy and specifically war on terror has manipulated and directed humanitarian aid agenda completely
- Donor insistence on visibility (e.g. ECHO) brands the actions of humanitarian agencies as part of that countries foreign policy
- No tolerance of independent action under Governments like Ethiopia and Eritrea

Humanitarianism today

How far has HA moved from adherence to core principles?

Impartiality

- Almost impossible within the culture and nature of conflict in Somalia
- Attempts at equitable distribution of aid often undermined by cultural/political need to distribute equally (redistribution within communities & between states)
- Faith-based organisations often more impartial than expected

Humanitarianism today

How far has HA moved from adherence to core principles?

Summary

- There is a tension between principals and pragmatism, between predominantly northern hemisphere cultural views of aid and the need for accountability and a more inclusive approach
- Fundamental contradiction between anti-terrorism (dividing the world into 'good guys' and 'bad guys') and humanitarianism (no distinction between people regardless of their governments political or military philosophy)
- Powerful western governments have lost their way in terms of using politics to further humanitarian aims rather than the other way round
- The context of humanitarian crisis in HoA is a long way from the 19th century battlefields. New Humanitarianism needs to be built on humanitarian principles but flexible, innovative and context specific



Humanitarian Practice

FROM FOOD DROPS TO RESILIENCE (AND BACK AGAIN?)

	Events and geopolitical Developments	Humanitarian System developments
1980-1989	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • African Food Crisis: famines in Mozambique (1984), Ethiopia (1984–85) and Sudan (1980s) • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BandAid/Live Aid fundraising phenomena (1984) • Launch of OLS (1989) • Life saving, emergency relief style operations
1990-2001	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Great Lakes crisis (1994-96): Rwanda genocide (1994), first Congo War (1996) • Bahr-el-Ghazal Famine in South Sudan (1998) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In Somalia, ICRC employs armed escorts • Repeated cycles of drought → drought cycle management approaches & DRR
2002-2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Darfur crisis (2003) • Haiti Earthquake (2010) • Kenya Post Election Violence • HoA food crisis & famine (2011) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WFP (& others) banned by AS(2009) • IASC Humanitarian Reform established CERF, stronger HC role and Cluster system (2005) • UNICEF (&others) banned by AS (2011) • Integrated mission in Somalia • Push for resilience based programming

Chronology of Humanitarian Events in HoA

Evolution of food aid from food drops to public works

- Massive food aid mobilised for 1984 Ethiopia famine (1984), US Intervention in Somalia (1993/4)
 - 'Truck it and chuck it' approach
- Monopoly of food aid and food security viewpoint in defining needs.
- New rhetoric – public works, food for assets, food incentives for health attendance
- Old Agenda- food distribution
- Food aid – an essential response or a chronic solution?
- Politics of food aid – 2011 Somalia Famine was not caused by absence of food aid

Local engagement

- The role of the red cross/red crescent societies
 - Controversial positioning of Kenya red cross
- Private sector involvement
- Accountability
- Tradition of Zakat and remittances

Military/ Civilian collaboration

- Complete mistrust and separation in principle
- Reality in complex humanitarian crisis in HoA is there needs to be collaboration
- But...close association has risks for humanitarian access
 - Integrated mission in Somalia & New Deal → loss of trust for UN to work in non FG areas

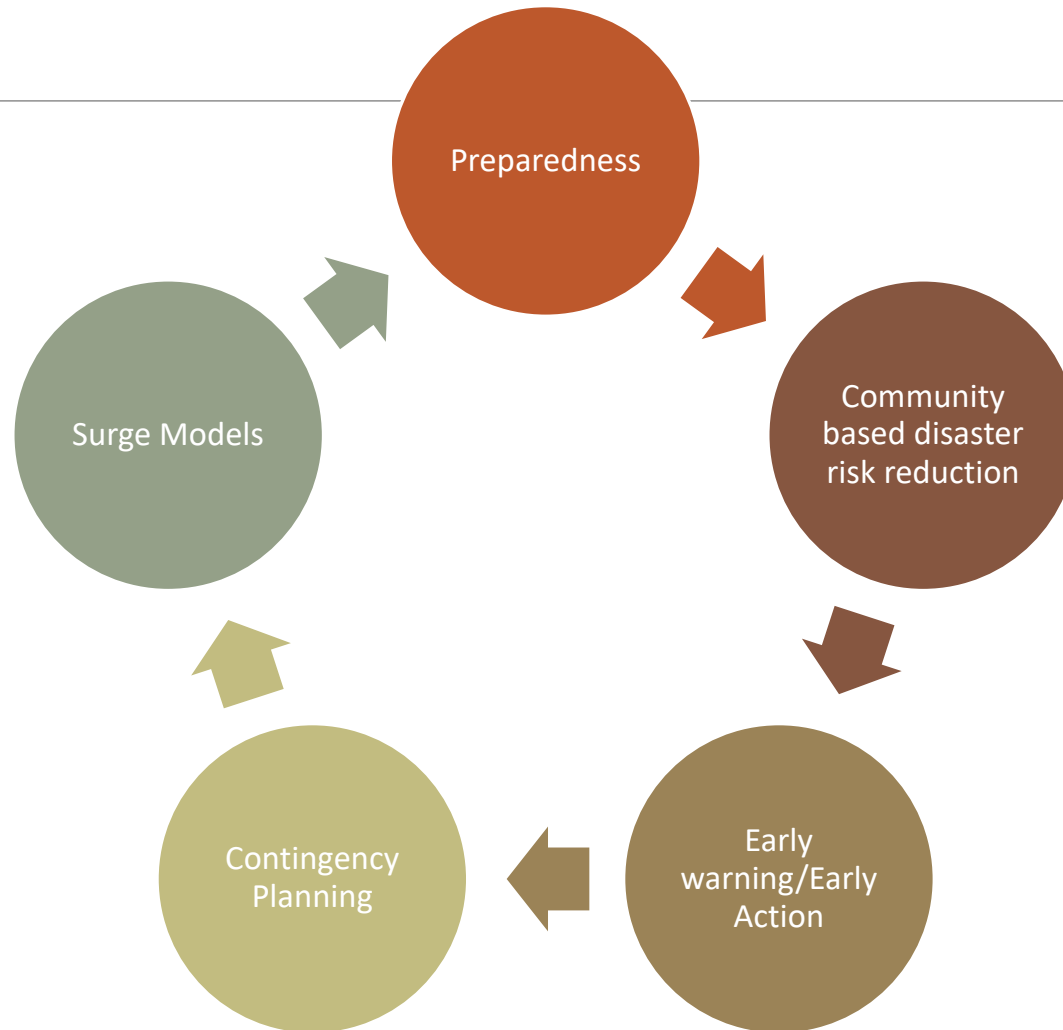
Emergence of cash programming

- First used in 1999/2000 drought but donors considered it highly risky
- Worked in Somalia (but with some problems)
- Few of anticipated negative effects seen in reality
- Now better criteria for deciding whether cash or food transfer will be most effective
- Emergency transfer evolved into more sophisticated programmes of social safety nets
- Promoters and detractors divided along cultural lines (European welfare v. US capitalism)

Filling the 'grey area'

- growing understanding that humanitarian aid and development cannot operate independently of each other in fragile areas.
- Most of the moves are being made by humanitarian partners, still waiting for significant moves by development.

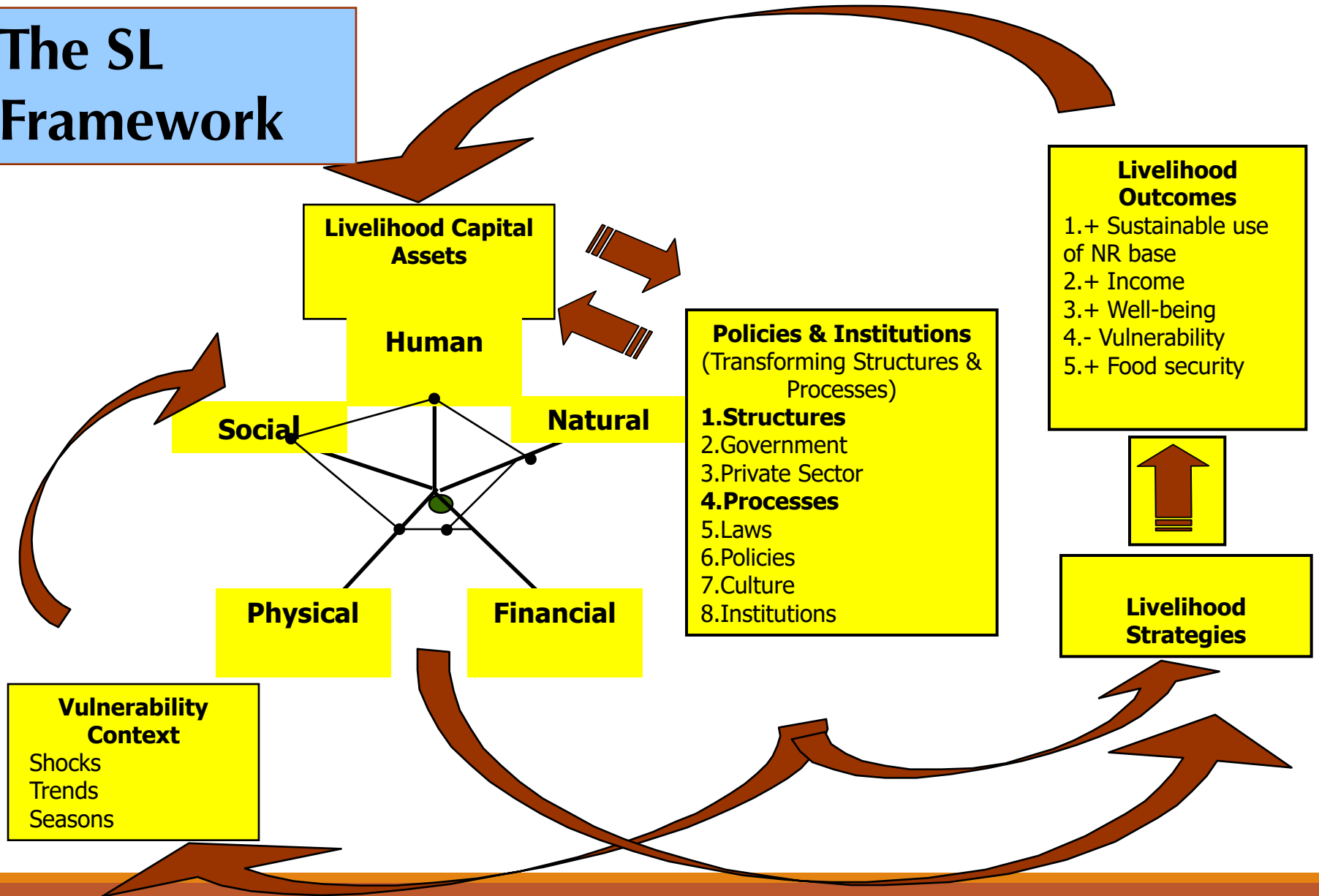
Evolving thinking in risk reduction (or back to the beginning again!)

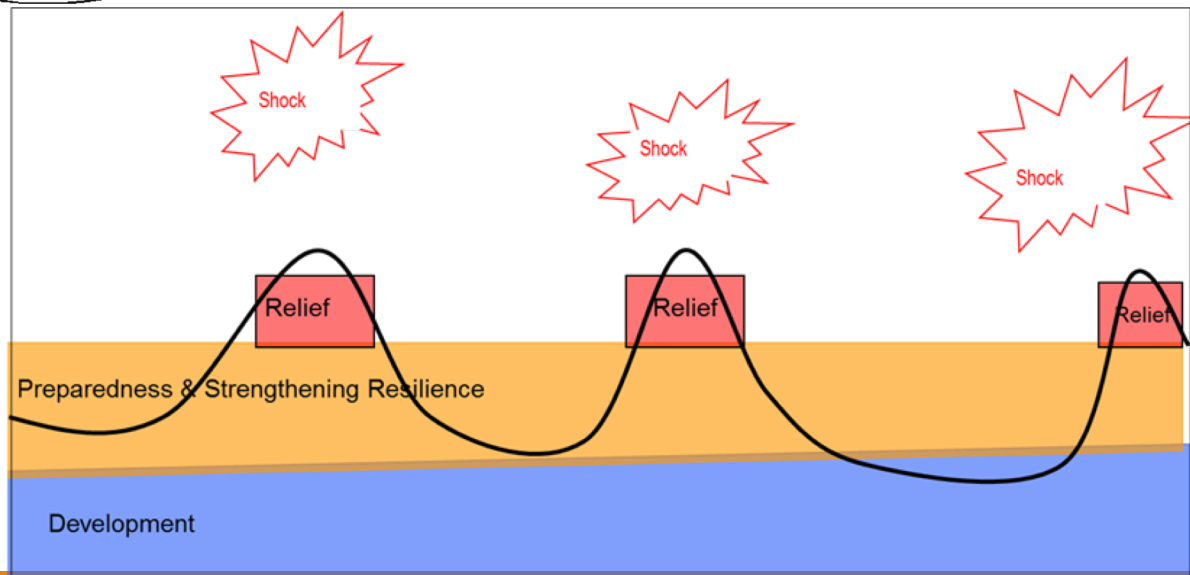
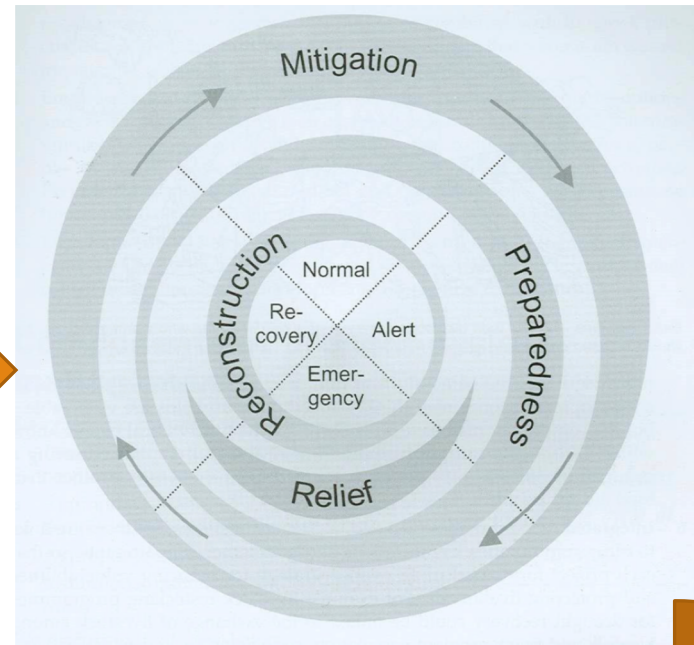
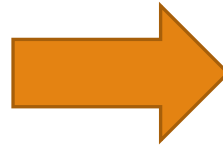


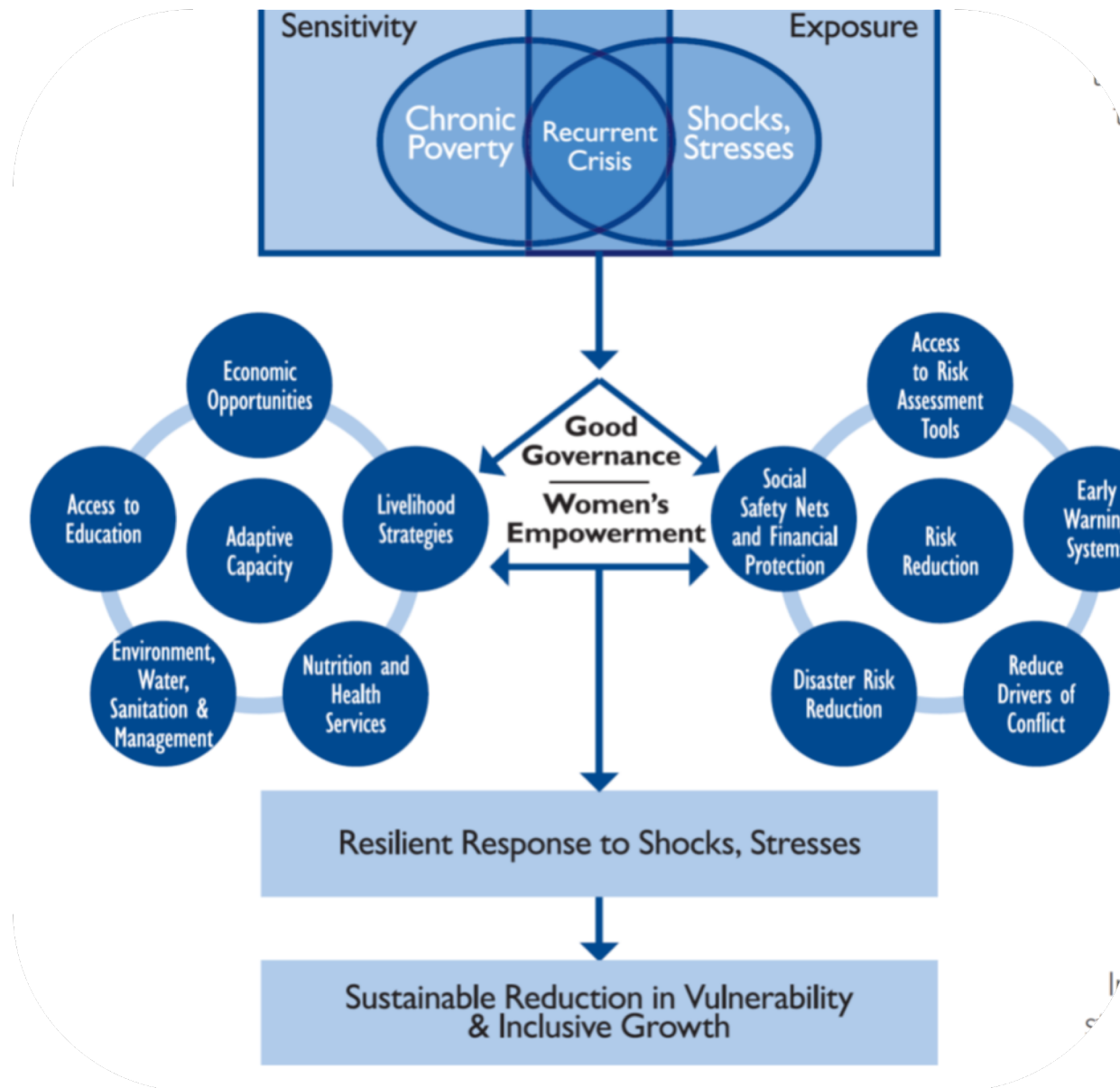
How new is
Resilience?



The SL Framework







2011 food crisis and famine

Watershed or Reminder?

- Triggering new thinking (resilience programming, addressing marginalization and vulnerability more systematically)
- Highlighted what wasn't working. Major failure in fundamental humanitarian action:
 - Early warning
 - Rapid response
 - Preventing loss of life
- Demonstrated (AGAIN!) that people survive because of their own coping mechanisms not because of external support
- After famine 'window of opportunity' to push for changes in approach and policies;
 - Programming focused on longer term resilience outcomes instead of short term relief
 - Closer collaboration between humanitarian and development donor strategies
 - More investment in remote monitoring systems
 - Action guided by socio-political analysis
 - Safety nets

But....Could
famine
happen
again?

YES!

- Retrospective analysis (RVI and Tufts University from 2012-2013)
- Many actors still don't understand the socio-political scenario and the multiple causes of famine
- Early warning but still hesitant to do early response ('no regrets response' hampered by need to show positive results)
- Weak leadership, mis-trust and poor coordination → fragmented and ineffective humanitarian community
- Ongoing role of Al Shabaab and failure to negotiate humanitarian access

Conclusion



- Emerging understanding of need for more context specific aid for HoA
- Alternative, flexible and adaptable aid model needed taking into account
 - Political realities (development state, stateless country, devolved democratic government)
 - Development pathways (downwards, upwards or fragile) and degree of vulnerability to shocks/stresses
- Humanitarian imperative calls for more risk tolerant (no regrets) approach to protect the most vulnerable (voiceless)

Introduction (or conclusion?)

- Humanitarianism has experienced constant change and evolution
- The scope and scale of what constitutes a humanitarian action has significantly expanded
- There is a tension between principals and pragmatism
- Political, economic and social agendas push, pull and distort expectations
- Increased institutionalization, professionalization and, lately, privatization
- In chronic crises and fragile areas the humanitarian system has been applied with limited adaption
- Recent famine and food insecurity emergency once again raised concerns about the limits and weaknesses of the system
- But ... humanitarian aid frequently leads the way in innovation and experimentation