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LESSONS LEARNED FROM THE SOMALIA FAMINE AND THE GREATER HORN OF AFRICA CRISIS 2011–2012

Desk Review of Literature

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Somali women with camels.

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Executive Summary

On July 20, 2011, the Food Security and Nutrition Analysis Unit for Somalia (FSNAU) declared a famine in several areas of the South Central part of the country. The crisis affected the entire Greater Horn of Africa, but only Somalia was declared to have reached famine levels. The whole region was affected with differing degrees of mortality and morbidity. But, the main impact in terms of mortality was limited to the famine in Somalia, which killed some 260,000 people (Checchi and Robinson 2013).

This desk review is one output from a study entitled, “Lessons Learned from the 2011–2012 Horn Of Africa Crisis,” funded in part by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and in part by the USAID Office of Foreign Assistance (OFDA). The authors gratefully acknowledge the generous support of both donors. The purpose of the desk review is to summarize as succinctly as possible the available literature that addresses the areas outlined above, which summarize the key research questions of the study. In addition, an Annotated Bibliography summarizes individual papers, reports, assessments, and evaluations reviewed. Together, they form the background to the field research being conducted by the research team.

This review covers the contents of some 180 documents: reports, evaluations, assessments, and in some cases, peer-reviewed journal articles and books. Roughly three times that number of documents were reviewed by the research team, but many were deemed either not useful or irrelevant, or insufficiently credible. The weighting of this review is generally towards Somalia, given the severity of the crisis there, and the overall level of funding for the response. The available literature is much more substantial for Somalia than for the Somali National Regional State (SNRS) in Ethiopia or for Northeastern Kenya. This executive summary outlines major conclusions for each section; a separate chapter is devoted to each in the main review.

History and Political Economy of Aid

In Somalia, humanitarian (and development) aid has long been subject to various forms of manipulation, both as a political tool and as an opportunity for personal profiteering. During the response to the famine in 2011–12, some evaluations identified international and national implementing agencies that had been subjected to diversion, corruption, and fraud; in the context of counter-terrorism legislation, both donors and agencies became much more risk averse regarding the diversion of resources. Somalia is not the only country where fraud and corruption are issues within the humanitarian aid system; food assistance programs, the dominant form of humanitarian response in Kenya, has several vulnerable areas at risk for corruption – including targeting, procurement, distribution, and transport (Harmer et al. 2012). Unlike Somalia and Kenya, research on politics and the history of aid is relatively limited in Ethiopia in general and within Somali National Regional State of Ethiopia in particular due to official sensitivities.

Political Constraints, Access, and Humanitarian Space

In Somalia, given the impact of the attacks of September 11, 2011, and a shift towards a “security” imperative (away from a humanitarian one), it was inevitable that aid in Somalia would be used increasingly for political ends. The run-up to the famine was characterized by increasingly difficult humanitarian access, declining capacity and credibility on the part of both Al-Shabaab and the UN to negotiate access, and increased use of humanitarian assistance for political ends. Major food aid agencies CARE International and the World Food Programme were both absent from Somalia, and in 2011 Al-Shabaab banned sixteen additional agencies from operating in its territory.

While not unique to Somalia, humanitarian agencies have become increasingly “distant” – physically as well as psychologically, socially, and emotionally – from emergency-affected populations. Risks of

remote management to humanitarian programming include the quality of information and the credibility of reporting; impartiality of assistance; quality of programming; ethics or risk-transfer; and taxation, diversion and fraud. While some efforts have been made to reduce such risks, such as the by the Cash and Voucher Monitoring Group (CVMG), these have been deemed at best to be a “second-best” solution or a “least-worst” solution (Donini and Maxwell 2013).

In Ethiopia, tight control over numbers of people in need, results of assessments, and allocation of aid by the government made it more difficult for humanitarian agencies to independently ensure the impartial allocation of resources. However, the system was generally deemed to have responded reasonably rapidly and was credited for keeping the crisis under control—at least for Ethiopian citizens affected by the crisis. The plight of Somali refugees was substantially more dire (Sida et al. 2012). In Kenya, humanitarian space was much less constrained compared to Ethiopia and Somalia; access is driven by general security factors rather than government control or targeted attacks. While few accusations were made of the politicization of aid, donors made accusations of corruption within the main response mechanism—the Arid Lands Resource Management Project (ARLMP)—as a result of which, the system responded more slowly than in Ethiopia, and access was limited in some of the areas along the Somalia border (Paul et al. 2012).

Early Warning and Response

The crisis of 2012 had multiple causes, some of which were very straightforward to predict (the *El Nino*-related drought in the Horn of Africa), some of them less so (food price volatility, the course of the fighting between the Transitional Federal Government (TFG)/African Union Mission to Somalia (AMISOM) and Al-Shabaab). While, in retrospect, early warning messages were considered sufficient, at the time, some observers believed it to be a bad year, but not out of “normal” range. Major donors suggested contradictory information was part of the problem (ICAI 2012). These “early warnings” were being raised in the midst of already extremely low levels for humanitarian indicators

in many parts of southern Somalia, where malnutrition was already beyond accepted “emergency” thresholds. In terms of early warning and its relation to activating a response, Somalia—like many parts of the Horn of Africa—presents a classic case of the “normalization of crisis” (Bradbury 1998) where information on humanitarian indicators are routinely collected and presented through the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) framework, and frequently exceed humanitarian-emergency thresholds. It is not clear to what extent exceeding these thresholds actually triggers a response—and indeed developing “trigger” indicators linking specific conditions or thresholds to specific actions is one of the recommendations growing out of the crisis (ICAI 2012).

In Somalia, the humanitarian response was driven by the declaration of the famine on July 20, 2011 with external humanitarian responses reaching a scale proportional to the problem by September or October 2011 (Darcy et al. 2012). However, mortality in Somalia began to increase in late 2010 and had already peaked in June-July 2011 (Checchi and Robinson 2013). By October 2011, mortality rates were declining rapidly. In Kenya, the response was driven more by the media. Media coverage became nationally prominent in July 2013, in part linked to large movements of people from Somalia into Kenya. In Ethiopia, the established seasonal early warning and needs assessment process incorporated the response into its usual timeframe (Slim 2012). Responses to the 2011 Horn of Africa crisis were considered very late in the case of both Somalia and Kenya. The significance of timing is less clear in the case of Ethiopia.

The most-important factors determining the success or failure of early warning *and* early response remain the institutional and political contexts within which decisions are made (Buchanan-Smith and Davies, 1995). In the case of Somalia, political risk preferences, donor geopolitical concerns, and domestic political concerns appear to have outweighed humanitarian concerns, until the declaration of famine forced a response. Given the difficulty of operating in South Central Somalia and the likelihood of aid “leakage,” the risk of indirectly supporting Al-Shabaab was weighed

against the potential humanitarian costs of the unfolding disaster—and until the famine declaration, the counter-terrorism objective was judged by many donor governments to be the greater priority. However, Hillbruner and Moloney (2012) point out that the response was also late in Ethiopia and Kenya where the counter-terrorism objective was less important.

Impact of the Famine and Regional Crisis

Of the 13 million people affected by the food security crisis in the Horn of Africa in 2010–11, 4.3 million were in Kenya. The counties of Wajir and Turkana were among the region's most heavily affected. In Ethiopia, while the crisis affected many people, the number of 4.9 million was considered not significantly different from the average number affected by the recurring drought at other times in the country (Bhattacharjee 2012). Strong state-sponsored safety net programs helped to mitigate the detrimental effect of the drought (Sida et al. 2012). Pre-positioned food supplies within the country allowed authorities to respond quickly once the drought conditions became severe; the first distribution began in February 2011 and continued in the worst affected regions of the country.

Somalia was the worst hit country, with pastoralist, agro-pastoralist, and especially IDP populations being the most affected (Slim 2012). Shortages in food crops, particularly maize and sorghum, led to record high cereal prices with low livestock and wage prices (*ibid*). As a result, large numbers of children were malnourished, livelihoods were disrupted or destroyed, and a disturbingly high number of people lost their lives. More than half of the entire country's population was affected by the crisis. This included 750,000 famine-affected, 3.3 million in need of immediate life-saving assistance, and a total 4 million in crisis (OCHA 2011). In Somalia, the crisis resulted in excess mortality of approximately 260,000 people between October 2010 and April 2012 (Checchi and Robinson 2013). IDP movements spiked during the “famine” period between May and July 2011 (Bhattacharjee 2012). Between June and September 2011, 44,900

displaced people arrived in Mogadishu, creating 226 IDP shelter concentrations in the city (OCHA 2011). The hardest hit areas (Lower and Upper Shabelle, Bay, and Bakool) also had the most restricted access for humanitarian assistance.

The relative impact among different livelihood groups and social groups remains largely under-explored. The levels of asset loss and the vulnerability or resilience of those who were not displaced are also not known and difficult to calculate. Relatively little analysis has been done of why some people and social groups survived and others did not, or how some social groups or livelihood groups coped where others did not.

Humanitarian Response and Impact

At the broadest level of humanitarian impact for 2011 and 2012, several meta-reviews and evaluations highlight the “life saving” rather than “livelihood saving” nature of the response, consistent with its late start. In Somalia, the famine response, although late, was “proportionate and appropriate . . . mitigating the scale and intensity of the famine and preventing its spread to Gedo region” (Darcy et al. 2012: 9). In Kenya, the response helped to “save lives and reduce suffering” (Paul et al. 2012: 17). The same pattern occurred in Ethiopia (Sida et al. 2012). Given the regional nature of the crisis, little regional-level analysis, planning, or resource mobilization was done (Slim 2012).

In Kenya, much of the literature points to a lack of leadership—from both the Government of Kenya and the international community—to proactively and decisively address the crisis, until media coverage ultimately triggered it. One major challenge to disaster management in Kenya has to do with a “bifurcated aid management structure” and the lack of a single authority for disaster management response (Harmer, Harvey, and Odhiambo 2012: 12). This lack of a coordinated legal and constitutional framework, standard procedures, or disaster operational plan led to a duplication of efforts and inefficient use of resources (Valid International 2012). As a result, there was a heavy focus on emergency response, especially with food distribution, water trucking, and destocking of livestock

with minimal efforts and funds for longer-term projects to recover and build resilience (ibid).

Generally speaking, the literature described program quality as quite good in Ethiopia. National partner organizations appeared to be well established and NGOs provided training on standards and conduct to staff and partners. Some concerns that arose were large numbers of newly recruited staff (including many who were new to humanitarian work); unreliability of training; lack of coordination among IGOs; lack of transparent coordination contributing to “turf wars”; and lack of clarity around partnerships, future intentions, and program duration (Sida et al. 2012). Most international standards for quality of programming were met. One major area of needed improvement noted in the literature was the lack of engagement with affected populations (HAP 2012).

In 2011, the overall level of aid to Somalia alone was an estimated \$1.3 billion.

Furthermore, given the lack of specific needs assessments, program decision-making relied heavily on FSNAU data, leaving much debate around appropriate responses. Most agencies implemented through local partners and various forms of remote management in the south and central regions through cash-based interventions. In-kind food aid was a common response in Mogadishu, particularly by the “non-traditional” or “emerging” humanitarian agencies and in the border areas where WFP was able to operate. Many agencies used community-based targeting or scaled up previously existing therapeutic and supplemental feeding programs.

One of the clear messages heard from the crisis is that market-based interventions (cash and vouchers in particular) were shown to have worked reasonably well—once donors gave clearance to address the crisis at scale *and* after a relatively heated debate about the appropriateness of cash responses was resolved. In 2011, opposition to cash interventions was strong from some quarters—a fear that in the context of high food-price inflation, stimulating demand (through cash or vouchers) without equally stimulating supply could lead to further inflation. In fact, this did not happen. With champions for the idea of market-based programming in the

NGO community, and the leadership of a couple of large agencies, cash and voucher operations were rapidly scaled up after the declaration of famine; end use was tracked reasonably well given the constraints; and impact was shown to be significant. This is not to say that cash and voucher programs were immune to the problems that accompanied in-kind assistance—indeed they were not. But they were certainly scaled up more quickly, offered greater choice to the end recipient, and delivered a much greater proportion of the total value of project budgets to the final recipients.

Community Responses and Diaspora

Within the Somali context, local communities, diaspora groups, and local organizations (including clan structures, religious organizations, businesses, community-based organizations or CBOs, and local authorities) are typically the first responders in crises (Darcy et al. 2012). This extends nationally and internationally within the wider Somali ethnic population. Financial contributions measurable in the millions of dollars came from these sources; for example, the Somaliland public donated \$700 thousand to the famine-affected areas (Darcy et al. 2012). The Somali diaspora is estimated to contribute well over 50 percent of Somalia’s GDP (Hammond et al. 2011; UNDP 2001). Yet, specific examples of humanitarian assistance by any of these actors are scant.

IDP and refugee camps, as new “urban” settings, appear to stimulate adapted governance systems and mobilize new actors, including those in the private sector. As such, they might be described as “community responses” in the host locations, the actions of “gatekeepers” suggests that what may have begun as an attempt to assist fellow citizens rapidly became a lucrative money-making venture (Bryld et al. 2013). The processes and significance associated with these kinds of “community responses” are not well understood, yet they are arguably more meaningful and significant to people on the ground and determine who gets what type of assistance (and who does not). The level of displacement and therefore of transformed livelihoods requires further research.

“Emerging” or “Non-Traditional” Humanitarian Actors

In response to the deteriorating situation and the declaration of famine in July, non-traditional donors contributed at unprecedented speed and volume (OCHA 2011). These new and non-traditional donors’ contributions represented nearly 30 percent of aid committed for the famine response (IRIN 2011). In Somalia, while many Western donors cut budgets in fear of another recession, Muslim and Arab donors took center stage both in financial contributions and humanitarian activities on the ground (IRIN 2011). The Muslim identity of many of these non-traditional donors and agencies led to greater humanitarian access, while traditional humanitarian agencies were turned away on grounds of suspicion and mistrust (Simonow 2013).

Turkish agencies were major players in the 2011–12 famine in Somalia; their visible presence on the ground was in stark contrast to other donors and NGOs who operated remotely from Nairobi (Buston and Smith 2013). It brought into question the “no-go” designation that other organizations had put on Somalia (ICG 2012). In providing its assistance largely without conditions, Turkey’s humanitarian aid bolstered the Transitional Federal Government (TFG), which was growing increasingly unpopular, and ran counter to the growing push for its reform (International Crisis Group 2012). However, some within the TFG have criticized Turkish organizations’ and diplomats’ tendency to work directly with the president, bypassing the government and civil society (ICG 2010).

There is a growing sentiment that UN agencies have compromised their neutrality (IRIN 2011). In turn, non-traditional donors and actors have expressed hesitation about working too closely with the UN system. The history of lack of mutual trust and understanding on both sides contributes to non-traditional donors and actors’ skepticism about the West’s desire to collaborate with them. Perceiving the UN to have the upper hand and experience, some Muslim and Arab NGOs also expressed fear of being “swallowed up” by the enormous system and of being unable to interact with it on equal footing. Published details regarding non-traditional

actors’ activities are scant. Often, they are available only as excerpts in an organization’s annual reports or fundraising materials. The nature of these non-traditional actors’ activities needs to be better documented and disseminated.

The Role of Al-Shabaab

Al-Shabaab is the armed non-state group that controlled most of South Central Somalia and indeed controlled almost all of the area affected by the actual famine. While Al-Shabaab was not the only reason for the 2011 famine, its policies and actions leading up to and during the crisis certainly exacerbated its consequences and substantially complicated the response. Limiting humanitarian access was seen as part of its “propaganda campaign against the West” and reflected Al-Shabaab’s deeply held suspicion of aid agencies as spies or as the enemies’ conspirators (Seal and Bailey 2013: 3). When the famine spread to six regions of Somalia controlled by Al-Shabaab in mid-2011, the group expressed outright hostility towards aid agencies. It routinely expelled, attacked, extorted, and harassed aid workers (Jackson and Aynte 2014). While some permits were granted to agencies to work in areas under their control, access was granted only through direct negotiation with Al-Shabaab.

Counter-terrorism restrictions introduced by major Western donors limited the pool of humanitarian funds available during the crisis and discouraged organizations from operating in the area (Hammond and Vaughan-Lee 2012). Seal and Bailey (2013) note that both inadequate funding and counter-terror policies were strategic maneuvers to “undermine” Al-Shabaab. These efforts to weaken Al-Shabaab are likely to have made the famine conditions worse in parts of Somalia. Seal and Bailey (2013: 1) go as far as to refer to the Western donors as “belligerents” that helped turn the “drought-related food crisis into a famine.”

The Post-Crisis Policy Agenda and Resilience

Even before the famine was over, donors, NGOs, state governments, and the UN began calling loudly for building the resilience of communities

regularly affected by crisis. The theme certainly dominates current discussion about international engagement, with not only Somalia and drought-prone areas of the Greater Horn of Africa, but also the Sahel, and other areas caught in protracted or repeated crisis. All the main donor agencies have developed resilience strategies (DFID 2011; European Commission 2013; USAID 2012). There is no universally agreed-upon definition for resilience as it applies to humanitarian action or development. Given some of its roots in Disaster Risk Reduction or other forms of risk management, sometimes resilience is framed largely in humanitarian terms (DFID 2011; USAID 2012), but largely draws on development for much of its theoretical underpinnings and methodology (Barrett and Constanas 2013).

In Kenya, the “Ending Drought Emergencies” strategy emerged out of the 2011 drought in the context of a regional approach led by the Inter Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD). Kenya’s strategy is two pronged: First, it attempts to make all sectors more “drought-proof,” and to strengthen people’s resilience to drought. Second, it seeks to improve drought monitoring, and especially the needs emerging from drought, to ensure early action to mitigate the impact of drought.

In Ethiopia, the response to the 2011 drought seemed to confirm that the already in-place strategy of relying on the Productive Safety Net System worked well for a scaled-up response to a particularly bad drought shock. A National Disaster Management policy was put in place in 2010; its overall objective was to reduce the risk and impact of disasters through establishing a compressive disaster-risk management system within the context of sustainable development—a shift in emphasis from “disaster response” to “disaster risk management” (Government of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia 2010).

In Somalia, the three major operational UN Agencies (the Food and Agriculture Organization, the World Food Programme, and UNICEF) devised a joint strategy for building resilience.

Levine et al. (2012) argue that, even if the concept of resilience was defined well enough to be univer-

sally applicable and implemented, an over-reliance on resilience and an unrealistic perspective on what is possible in the aftermath of the crisis can lead to poor response. They also ask whether humanitarians should be concerned with resilience building at all, considering that scarce humanitarian resources are never sufficient to meet immediate causes, let alone address chronic, underlying causes (Levine et al. 2012). This debate highlights a key concern brought out in the literature: does the introduction of the concept of resilience add value to the humanitarian/development sphere?

Moving Forward

One paradox of the 2011 crisis is that an enormous amount of data was collected and an enormous amount of documentation was produced, and yet in many ways fundamental questions remain unanswered. The literature is abundant, particularly on the early warning/early response topic and on programs and program evaluation, and literature analyzing the role of Al-Shabaab is growing. But, there is very little on the role of community-led or diaspora responses or the Somali private sector—and not very much on the role of so-called new or “emerging” humanitarian actors. This is slowly changing—and exploring those topics through interviews and fieldwork is a major theme of the current study.

While there is much to be learned in the technical, programmatic sense, some of the biggest constraints in 2011 were to be found in the political realm. Many of the technical problems have been identified and are being addressed, but it is less clear from the literature reviewed that humanitarian actors are particularly eager to take on the realm of political constraints.

The literature summarized in this Desk Review tells only one part of the story of the crisis of 2011 in the Greater Horn of Africa and the famine in Somalia. The remainder will follow in the reports of the field research.

1. Introduction and Background

On July 20, 2011, the Food Security and Nutrition Analysis Unit for Somalia declared a famine in several areas of the South Central part of the country. The crisis affected the entire Greater Horn of Africa, but only Somalia reached the level of a famine. The whole region was affected with differing degrees of mortality and morbidity, but the main impact in terms of mortality was limited to the famine in Somalia, which killed some 260,000 people (Checchi and Robinson 2013). Though the crisis was well predicted, the response was late, and restricted access meant that some areas were hardly reached at all. Governments, donors, and agencies working in the Greater Horn are now rightly focused on recovery and resilience. But, questions remain about the overall response; about how local communities coped with the crisis, particularly in areas not reached by the conventional response; about the respective roles of traditional and non-traditional humanitarian actors; and about learning from the crisis in terms of improved famine prevention, mitigation, and response.

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The organization of this report is as follows: After this brief introduction section, the Chapter 2 is on the history and political economy of aid in the Greater Horn of Africa region, focusing especially

on Somalia, examining the literature on the long history of humanitarian assistance in a resource-constrained and often conflict-affected environment. Chapter 3 is on humanitarian access and humanitarian “space,” and the political constraints to access in 2011 and the period leading up to it. Chapter 4 recounts the early warning and explores the reasons for the late response. Chapter 5 reviews the impact of the famine. Chapter 6 reviews the humanitarian response and its impact.

Chapter 7 reviews the limited literature on local, community-level responses, diaspora-led responses and private sector responses. This touches on areas where the conventional response was constrained, but considers the issue of these responses wherever they occurred. Chapter 8 reviews the (again, somewhat limited) literature on new, “emerging,” or “non-traditional” humanitarian actors that played a significant role in the response to the crisis, focusing in particular on donors and agencies from Turkey, the Middle East and the Gulf States, but also reviewing the role of non-OECD/DAC donors and agencies more broadly. Chapter 9 reviews the literature on the role of Al-Shabaab, the armed non-state group that controlled most of South Central Somalia, and indeed controlled almost all of the area affected by the actual famine. The role of Al-Shabaab, and the role of policies intended to counter Al-Shabaab, or counter-terrorism policies in general, were some of the major constraints to an early response in 2011, and hence important to understand, quite apart from whatever technical or bureaucratic issues may have also been partly responsible for the delayed response. Finally, Chapter 10 considers the post-crisis policy agenda, and in particular, attempts to unpack the notion of resilience and see how it offers an alternative way forward for Somalia and other countries chronically risk-prone countries. Chapter 11 briefly notes some key themes arising in the desk review, but does not intend to be a summary analysis. Such an analysis will be part of the final reporting of the study.

The weighting of this review is generally towards Somalia, given the severity of the crisis there, and the overall balance of funding for the response. The available literature is much more substantial for Somalia than the Somali National Regional State in

Ethiopia or Northeastern Kenya. All these areas are included in the overall study, and hence in the desk review although in some of these areas the existing literature for review is less.

This review covers the contents of some 180 documents: reports, evaluations, assessments, and in some cases, peer-reviewed journal articles and books. Roughly three times that number of documents were reviewed by the research team, but many were deemed either not useful or relevant, or not sufficiently credible to be included. One paradox of the 2011 crisis is that an enormous amount of data was collected and an enormous amount of documentation was produced, and yet in many ways fundamental questions remain unanswered. It is toward addressing the most salient of those questions that the rest of this research is oriented. This review summarizes what is known from that enormous mountain of data and documentation.

2. The History and Political Economy of Aid

Humanitarian (and development) aid has been part of the political economy of Somalia, Ethiopia, and Kenya for several decades. This section examines these dynamics on a country-by-country basis, putting these issues into historical perspective (focusing on the Somali-populated sub-regions in the case of Ethiopia and Kenya).

Somalia

Humanitarian aid to Somalia has long been subject to various forms of manipulation, both as a political tool and as an opportunity for personal profiteering. This has contributed to a somewhat jaded atmosphere that surrounds interventions of various kinds in the Somali context. It is important to put the 2011–12 crisis in the perspective of the 30-plus years of the history of aid in Somalia before addressing the specifics of the recent crisis.

The Somali historian Lee Cassanelli (2000) has described foreign aid, in its various forms—refugee

relief, development aid, and military assistance—as being a target of Somalia’s power seekers since the 1970s. Bradbury and Maletta (2012) point out that humanitarian aid in particular has been instrumentalized by various Somali actors, foreign governments, aid agencies and non-state actors for the last twenty years. It has in fact been manipulated by a wide range of Somali actors, from the Siad Barre government, to warlords, business people, various local authorities and Somali NGOs, for the purposes of either projecting their authority or enriching themselves (Bradbury and Maletta 2012). The jaded atmosphere that continues to plague Somalia today is not a new phenomenon; it brings to the forefront concerns about accountability, transparency, and (ironically) both the independence of aid and aid dependency, that have been raised many times during the past twenty years.

The refugee influx from Ethiopia to Somalia, a result of the *Ogaden* war in the late 1970s, is usually referred to as the starting point in this process, generating an “avalanche of aid” from the late 1970s to the late 1980s (Simons 1995). Somalia itself was one of the largest per capita recipients of international aid in the Cold War era, feeding the government’s patronage networks and contributing to a bloated civil service (*ibid.*). The Somali government and many thousands of Somalis employed within the aid system were said to depend on the refugees for income, with all enterprising Somalis, refugees included, exploiting the aid system (*ibid.*). In short, from at least the 1970s onward, foreign aid performed different functions in Somalia, including effectively funding the running of the state and, in doing so, creating opportunities for both personal profiteering and the feeding of political networks and influence.

Following the dissolution of the state and the famine and civil war of the early 1990s, the United Nations Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM) program, heavily supported by the US, generated another huge inflow of resources between 1992 and 1995. In 1993 alone, the budget for UNOSOM II was \$1.5 billion (Bradbury 2008). From the early to mid-1990s, food aid and the various humanitarian actors and infrastructure became part of the war economy (de Waal 1994; Gundel 2006). Among

its unintended impacts was the provision of private capital that regenerated the economy (UNDP 2001; Bradbury 2008). Gundel describes UNOSOM II as producing “a new class of businesspeople (the warlords) enriched by war-related criminal activities such as weapons sales, drug production, land conquest and the diversion of food aid and exploitation of aid resources” (2006: 5). Menkhaus et al. (2010) point out that UNOSOM—and its resources—played an important role in stimulating the NGO sector itself in Somalia where there had been little such activity under Siad Barre’s government.

The mid-1990s to the mid-2000s is recognized as a relatively benign period in Somalia’s recent history that included relatively limited amounts of aid. However, the rise of the Union of Islamic Courts in 2005, which briefly controlled large parts of southern Somalia, and the subsequent invasion by Ethiopia, incorporated Somalia firmly into the “war-on-terror” discourse and policy framework, and changed the Somalia landscape to this day (discussed further in section below on “Political Constraints, Access, and Humanitarian Space”). Humanitarian resources dramatically increased, from \$36 million in 2000 to \$500 million in 2009, the majority of which was food aid (Bradbury 2010).¹ This increase in resources took place as humanitarian access to crisis-affected populations deteriorated—which in turn led to the rise in the remote management of assistance (see next section). By 2009 for example, the World Food Programme (WFP), as the largest humanitarian actor, was reported to be working with 181 NGOs in Somalia (Nicholson et al. 2012).²

The relative abundance of aid resources in recent years, along with the remote management of these resources in some parts of the country, has again created a climate attractive to both power-seekers as well as profiteering opportunists. This has most clearly been highlighted in the United Nations Monitoring Group (UNMG) reports. For example, the UNMG (2010) noted the existence of

a “cartel” of Somali contractors linking aid flows and military groups in recent years, exemplifying the profiteering from aid. The UNMG Report in 2010 explains that for more than 12 years, food aid delivery had been dominated by three individuals and their families. In 2009, they represented 80 percent of the WFP delivery contracts that were a part of WFP’s transportation \$200 million budget. Not only was the delivery of aid “bundled” with security contracts for transporting food aid, but clear conflicts of interest existed between the transporters and the agencies that signed off on the delivery of aid. This led to classic “gatekeeping” in which a small handful of powerful individuals controlled not only access to aid, but the access of aid agencies to vulnerable populations. This led to a variety of opportunities for diversion. In a region where aid agencies “routinely pay off local authorities” for security and at checkpoints, a certain level of loss or diversion became accepted as “the cost of doing business” (UNMG 2010: 59). However, as Bradbury and Maletta point out, while WFP was singled out, the Monitoring Group report “raised questions about the entire humanitarian system in Somalia” and illustrated how resource-capture could also compromise humanitarian space (2012: 131). This coincided with deteriorating security for humanitarian workers, a decline in the ability to monitor, and the search for new ways to remotely manage aid (Donini and Maxwell 2013).

During the response to the famine in 2011–12, some evaluations identified international and national implementing agencies that were subject to diversion, corruption, and fraud—though not on the scale of the 2010 UNMG report (Hedlund et al. 2013). In the context of counter-terrorism legislation, both donors and agencies became much more risk averse regarding the diversion of resources (see following sections).

In addition to “gatekeepers”—who are recognized for the diversion of aid—there are also local community members who own land and establish IDP sites. These individuals are often seen as the “private sector” stepping into to provide services to IDPs, helping with funerals, assisting new arrivals, providing security, and resolving conflicts, to name a few examples. However, as Bryld et al. state,

¹ Food aid is typically the dominant resource in humanitarian contexts; this figure does not include direct political and military funding.

² The World Food Programme accounted for 60% of the entire United Nations budget in Somalia in 2009 (Nicholson et al. 2012: iii)

“what started as an attempt . . . to assist fellow human beings who had fallen on difficult times, has evolved into a lucrative economic opportunity for individuals with equally limited avenues for making a living” (2013: 12).

The instrumental use of aid over the years, whether for political or personal-enrichment purposes (or both), is felt to be “normal” by Somali people and communities who sometimes receive a portion of this aid and witness the activities of those who control its use. According to Hammond and Vaughan-Lee, Somalis have long understood aid actors in these terms, pointing out the “lack of trust between the international community and Somalis” (2012: 14). In terms of direct assistance, foreign aid (in particular food aid, the dominant humanitarian intervention) is perceived in terms that are very different from local forms of charitable support. Here *zakat*, for example, is a religious obligation of the wealthy in a community to the poor, and widely practiced in the country; food aid, on the other hand, is perceived as a free resource to be shared equally within the community (Jaspars and Maxwell 2009).

The scale of aid-related resources fluctuates over time and, at its maximum, is measurable in many hundreds of millions—and often billions—of dollars, over a short period of several years. This raises questions about dependency on aid, whether at the state or community level. Food aid is sometimes argued to be part of the dependency phenomena, contributing to the structural food deficit of the country. Concrete answers and evidence to this is difficult to ascertain. But the role of food aid diminished sharply in the run-up to the famine of 2011.

Northeastern Kenya

Somalia is not the only country with issues of fraud and corruption within the humanitarian aid system. Food assistance programs have a long history in Kenya and are often the most popular option among donors. Although it remains the dominant form of humanitarian response, food aid has been identified as one of the most at-risk sectors for corruption and diversion. An evaluation of Kenya’s food assistance programs identified several areas at risk for

corruption—specific modalities as well as general operations—including targeting, procurement, distribution, and transport (Harmer et al. 2012).

The government is required by law to maintain at least 720,000 metric tons of grain in stock with the aim of providing enough food for the country during times of crisis. The National Cereals and Produce Board (NCPB) within the Ministry of Agriculture maintains the stocks and manages the storage and distribution of cereals. Leading up to the 2011 crisis, the NCPB produced many contradictory statements regarding stock levels, ranging from having “enough food” to a quick turn around in three months’ time declaring a national disaster, ultimately accompanied by the need to import maize and a government-issued waiver on the import duty on maize. Harmer et al. (2012) concluded that the cause of such inconsistent information was a combination of corruption and mismanagement of the grain reserve. The evaluation also cited many claims of maize “cartels” attempting to create an artificial maize shortage in order to induce duty-free imports.

The Kenyan government was reluctant to recognize the emergency. The Arid Lands Resource Management Programme (ALRMP) produces a Drought Monitoring Bulletin, which gives detailed information on factors that impact food security. ALRMP predicted a serious drought as early as November 2010; however there was no immediate response from the government or donors. This lack of action in response to early warning had devastating consequences, and it soon became necessary to manage the crisis and not the risk. Furthermore, population figures for the national needs assessments are highly political and based on the contested 2009 census. In northern Kenya, population numbers vary (due to the mobility of pastoralists communities), leaving the numbers in need “prone to distortions” in the fight over resources (Harmer et al. 2012: 20).

The ALRMP, a multi-year, multi-million dollar program funded by the World Bank, had its funds frozen in July 2010, just prior to the 2010–11 regional drought, as a result of the preliminary findings of a forensic audit. The project was officially closed in December 2010 with \$4 million returned to the World Bank in November 2011 (Africog

2012). The audit covered Phase II of the program, which ran from 2003–10, and was due to continue into its third phase from 2010 with a multi-year budget of \$145 million. While the government returned \$4 million, the minister concerned denied evidence of misappropriation and many of the senior staff have since obtained other senior positions in government. Africog raised questions about the lack of independent monitoring of such World Bank funded projects.

Somali National Regional State, Ethiopia

The history of aid in Ethiopia is usefully understood through the famines of the 1970s and 1980s, which have since generated very large flows of food aid, primarily to the highland areas of the country, and been associated with tensions between international actors and the Government of Ethiopia (see Lautze et al. 2009). In effect, food aid has been the major instrument through which the Government of Ethiopia and aid actors have negotiated their relationships; a massive food aid infrastructure has developed over many years to enable distribution and which is largely controlled and has been institutionalized by the government (Haan and Majid 2005). Aid presence in the Somalia National Regional State (SNRS) by contrast is a much more recent phenomenon, with the 1999–2000 drought and famine marking a significant increase in humanitarian presence (Devereux 2006b). If food needs/aid are taken as an indicator of humanitarian presence, very small tonnages in the 1990s were replaced by very large tonnages year on year following the 1999–2000 famine, which also invited the ongoing presence of UN agencies, the ICRC, and various NGOs (Devereux 2006b). As recognized in other parts of the country, aid and food aid in particular, has become part of the local political economy.

Unlike Somalia and Kenya, research on this subject is very limited in Ethiopia in general, and SNRS in particular, due to official sensitivities (see section on humanitarian space). Academic research in general in the SNRS is considered as neglected within Ethiopian and Somali studies (Hagmann 2005).

The US State Department noted the use of humanitarian aid for political purposes in the SNRS and elsewhere (US Bureau of Democracy Human Rights and Labor 2008). In terms of personal profiteering and corruption, little direct research is available. In contrast to Somalia, the Government of Ethiopia authorities (in their various forms) are considered to be the relevant actors, rather than the (staff of) NGOs themselves.

3. Political Constraints, Access, and Humanitarian Space

The wider political context within which access and humanitarian space is negotiated is discussed in the following section, again on a country-by-country basis.

Somalia

One of the impacts of the attacks of September 11, 2001, was to shift the logic of international engagement on Somalia away from a humanitarian imperative and more towards a “security” imperative (Bradbury 2010). With increased concerns about counter-terrorism at a time of rising levels of humanitarian assistance, it was inevitable that aid would be increasingly used for political ends. Somalia was viewed as an “ungoverned space,” with Islamist groups active from as early as the 1980s—leading to both Ethiopian concerns about an Islamic regime in Somalia, and American and Western concerns about transnational terrorism (Hammond and Vaughan-Lee 2012). Somalia had presented security challenges to humanitarian actors since the time of “Operation Restore Hope”—the ill-fated US intervention in Somalia that resulted in the “Black Hawk down” incident. But particularly since the Ethiopian invasion of Somalia in late 2006, the ability of humanitarian agencies to respond had declined even as humanitarian needs increased (Bradbury 2010). One of the key factors underlying the famine of 2011–12

was the conjunction of drought and food price shocks with the absence of key humanitarian actors and extremely constrained access of those actors who remained. This section briefly reviews those constraints and the responses to them.

While constraints have become more severe, the politicization of humanitarian aid is not new. As explored above, emergency or development assistance has long been captured by both economic and political interests in Somalia. The politicization of aid, the conjunction of aid and counter-terrorism policy, and an increasingly hardline policy towards humanitarian engagement by outsiders on the part of Al-Shabaab, all led to increasingly difficult humanitarian access over the period between the rise of the Islamic Courts in 2005–06 and the famine of 2011–12. Over this time, humanitarian needs rose steadily, even as access became more restricted (Hammond and Vaughan-Lee 2012). This culminated first in a nasty crisis in 2008–09, triggered by high food prices and erratic rainfall. This crisis prompted a major food aid response—on the level of the response to the 1992 famine (Maxwell and Fitzpatrick 2012).

The changing politics of aid shifted quickly in the aftermath of the 2008 crisis. The US shut down its food aid pipeline to Somalia in November 2009, complying with the regulations of the Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) that forbids assistance of any kind from falling into the hands of terrorist groups. At the time, the WFP was investigating its transportation contractors on charges of corruption and diversion of aid—providing some legitimacy to US fears that aid ran the risk of falling into the wrong hands (UNMG 2010). But several factors appeared to make the cessation of aid to South Central Somalia as much a political calculation as a decision simply to comply with OFAC regulations (Maxwell 2012). First, Al-Shabaab had been on the OFAC list for nearly two years by the time the food aid was shut off. Second, while the proportion of lost food aid was very high (UNMG reports as much as half), the diversion of food aid in Somalia was not new. Third, this cut-off of aid coincided with a planned offensive by the Transitional Federal Government (TFG), and there was at least a hint that providing humanitar-

ian support to civilians in areas retaken during the offensive could bolster the legitimacy of the TFG. In the end, the TFG offensive did not materialize. But in early 2010, WFP had to pull out of southern and central Somalia due to increased threats from Al-Shabaab and a general lack of international support. WFP downplayed the significance of the cut-off of funding from its major donor, but the UN Humanitarian Coordinator for Somalia accused the US of politicizing food assistance, leading to the further deterioration of humanitarian access (Gettleman 2010).

This incident was not isolated—the impact of counter-terrorism legislation has been significant in Somalia (Pantuliano et al. 2011). The move towards an integrated UN strategy and the prioritization of counter-terrorist and state-building policy objectives have subjugated humanitarian priorities to the political objectives of the UN (Collinson and Elhawary 2012). A subsequent evaluation of the WFP in Somalia noted the impact of this and noted that WFP was not able to separate its humanitarian mandate from the political mandate of the UN Political Office for Somalia (UNPOS) and the broader role of the UN in Somalia (Nicholson et al. 2012).

As militant Islamist movements and the politicization of foreign assistance have grown, humanitarian access has declined and humanitarian “space” has been eroded (Bradbury 2010; Hammond and Vaughan-Lee 2012). Hammond and Vaughan-Lee (2012) stress that humanitarian space can only be enlarged—and aid made more effective—by minimizing the deliberate use of humanitarian aid for political purposes. The implications of this situation were highly significant for the evolution of the famine in Somalia, as Al-Shabaab had taken control of large parts of the south between 2008 and 2011.

International actors were not the only parties engaged in the politicization of aid. Throughout this period, the actions of Al-Shabaab regarding taxation and restriction on movement were making the humanitarian situation worse inside the territory they controlled, and they were increasingly preventing access by aid agencies to that territory. This period coincided with a major internal power

struggle within Al-Shabaab that resulted in weakening the centralization of power within it, which in turn made it more difficult to negotiate access on anything but a very localized basis (Hanson 2013). (See section below on Al-Shabaab for greater detail.)

The manifestations of these constraints on the ground included violence or threats against aid workers, restrictions on operations, diversion of aid and taxation of recipients, threats to the security of aid recipients, and failure to recognize International Humanitarian Law (IHL) as well as increasingly difficult access nearly everywhere (Bradbury 2010). Manifestations of the constraints from donors included much tighter regulation, more stringent licensing, and, over time, reduced funding despite increased need. It also led to increasing self-censorship by agencies on the ground, lest they be expelled by Al-Shabaab (Hammond and Vaughan-Lee 2012). Only a relatively small handful of humanitarian agencies actively advocated a principled approach based on IHL. Over this time, Somalia became the second-most-dangerous place in the world for humanitarian aid workers—trailing only Afghanistan (Hedlund et al. 2013). Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF), in a report issued after the famine, noted additional outcomes, including diminished control over humanitarian resources, declining quality of medical care, limited or no ability to expand or adapt programs in response to worsening conditions, heightened risk to staff (especially national staff), compromised principles, and limited ability to speak out on behalf of crisis-affected populations (Belliveau 2013). When the extent of the crisis was fully apparent in mid-2011, Al-Shabaab originally welcomed humanitarian assistance with “no string attached” but later overturned that stating that no aid from the US or WFP was considered neutral. NGOs tried to distance themselves from UN agencies that had committed to a humanitarian and politically integrated mission. This all led to the increasingly important roles of non-traditional actors, including Saudi Arabia, Brazil, Turkey, and others from the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (Hammond and Vaughan-Lee 2012).

The run-up to the famine was thus characterized by increasingly difficult humanitarian access, declining capacity and credibility (on the part of both Al-Shabaab and the UN) to negotiate access, and increased use of humanitarian assistance for political ends. The major food aid agencies were absent—CARE International having withdrawn from South Central Somalia in 2009 after direct threats from Al-Shabaab to its staff. US funding for all areas controlled by Al-Shabaab came to a complete halt in October 2010—at face value still as a result of OFAC compliance requirements, though many observers suggest at least a convenient convergence of political interests and regulatory compliance, if not the outright trumping of the latter by the former (Menkhaus 2008). As noted, Al-Shabaab briefly opened a window for international assistance in July 2011, but closed it rapidly when it learned that WFP was planning to return (BBC 2011). Later in 2011, it banned sixteen additional agencies from operating in territory it controlled. This made scaling up the famine response much more difficult, as all assistance had to be funneled through local NGOs—many of whom were also on very doubtful terms with Al-Shabaab and had to tread very carefully.

The response of humanitarian agencies to this situation in Somalia evolved over time, but broadly speaking can be summed up under the rubric of “remote management.” Remote management is defined in various ways, but can be summarized as “the withdrawal of senior international or national humanitarian managers from the location of the provision of assistance or other humanitarian action—an adaptation to insecurity and a deviation from ‘normal’ practice” (Donini and Maxwell 2013: 3). Remote management approaches are not unique to Somalia and indeed are an increasingly frequent phenomenon in many complex emergencies. They are motivated by a number of considerations: the sense that humanitarian aid operations have become increasingly risky for international staff; the risk-averse management style of many agencies; the collapse of system-wide means of negotiating access to affected populations in contested areas; the breakdown in acceptance of humanitarian principles; the advent of UN integrated missions; and the introduction of specific

counter-terrorism laws (Donini and Maxwell 2013; Pantuliano et al. 2011).

But remote management has also been facilitated as a practice by the development of certain technologies—web-based technologies, remote sensing that can track specific groups or even projects, cellphone/GPS technology, “big data,” and even the use of drones. The result has been an increasing “distance”—physical as well as psychological, social, and emotional—between humanitarian workers and emergency-affected populations (Duffield 2012). Remote management has another side: a proportional increase in the risks faced by national staff or local partners who are left to make complex choices on their own when senior managers withdraw. Remote management thus has the advantage of enabling operations to continue in contested areas—moving from the question of “when to go?” to the question of “how to stay?” (Egeland, Harmer, and Stoddard 2011). But it also entails disadvantages or risks. Besides the security of staff, these risks include lower quality of service; the steady degradation of respect for humanitarian principles; difficulty in monitoring; and increased risk of the capture, manipulation, diversion and taxation of assistance.

Country office headquarters for agencies had moved from Mogadishu to Nairobi in the mid-1990s, but senior international staff continued to be based inside Somalia. This changed gradually after 2006, more rapidly after 2008, and eventually reached its logical conclusion—the almost complete absence of international or senior staff stationed inside Somalia—at the time of the famine. Almost none of the senior humanitarian decision-makers involved in the response to the famine had any access to the famine-affected population (except in Mogadishu after August of 2011). Some had no experience in Somalia whatsoever. According to Bradbury (2010) some forty international NGOs with senior and international staff were present in South Central Somalia in 1995; this number dropped to 27 by 1997 and to nearly zero by 2010.

The aspects of remote management imposed further complications in an already uniquely complex situation. Furthermore, the risks involved

in remote management fostered mistrust between donors and implementing agencies in Somalia in the context of an already-fragile relationship. The situation at the time of the famine involved a number of risks to humanitarian programming. Some of these risks included:

- The quality of information and the credibility of reporting, given the difficulty in cross-checking monitoring reports of other information sources.
- The impartiality of assistance. Almost by definition, Somali partner organizations were embedded in some particular group or clan, and therefore were not necessarily impartial to all needs in the areas where they operated.
- The quality of programming. Programming often had to be left in the hands of junior or inexperienced staff.
- The ethics of risk transfer. Out-sourcing the provision of humanitarian assistance to local groups effectively out-sourced most of the risk to these groups as well. While local organizations may have been less subject to attack or kidnapping than international staff and agencies, this still carried a high level of risk
- Taxation, diversion, and fraud. Even with international staff present, there were long-standing accusations—and a fair amount of evidence—of large-scale diversion of aid (Donini and Maxwell 2013).

To mitigate these risks, several remote management adaptations had become routinized by 2011. Data collection, under the auspices of the Food Security and Nutrition Analysis Unit for Somalia (FSNAU) had long been a major source of information for the humanitarian community. Al-Shabaab was extremely suspicious of any data gathering and eventually put a stop to most of FSNAU’s activities in areas it controlled. Third-party monitoring and reporting became the norm—often in a surreptitious or semi-surreptitious manner to avoid rousing suspicion. During the famine, other practices became more prominent. Following a handful of fraud scandals, agencies implemented much stricter reviews and criteria for their partnership arrange-

ments (again, with the result of forcing out many smaller local NGOs, some of whom may have been genuinely corrupt, but others may have simply lacked the capacity to meet higher standards). The UN set up a Risk Management Unit that helped to conduct risk assessments, and offered advice to UN agencies and International NGOs (Donini and Maxwell 2013). During the famine itself, the use of call centers became prominent. Innovative use of cellphone technology enabled not only complaints mechanisms where members of recipient communities could call in, but cell phones were also used proactively to contact key informants—sometimes via diaspora networks—to gather information remotely (Hedlund et al. 2013).

Several consortia emerged to try to jointly monitor similar activities—the most notable of which was the Cash and Voucher Monitoring Group (CVMG) set up by agencies engaged in the unconditional cash transfer program, with monitoring outsourced to the Overseas Development Institute and field work conducted by a number of Somali consulting agencies (Longley, Dunn, and Brewin 2012). Some of these innovations helped reduce the risks associated with remote management, but they all came with costs. These procedures were portrayed as important—and perhaps even unproblematic—innovations that ultimately helped to save the day in Somalia (Belliveau 2013), but most observers felt these were at most a “second-best” solution—and perhaps a “least-worst” solution (Donini and Maxwell 2013).

Somali National Regional State, Ethiopia

Constricted humanitarian space and remote management issues have achieved a prominent place with regard to Somalia. In Ethiopia, the 2005 national elections as well as the April 2007 *Ogaden* National Liberation Front (ONLF) attacks in the SNRS mark two critical events that narrowed the space within which aid actors operate in Ethiopia and in its Somali sub-region. The highly contentious 2005 election results led to a dramatic shift in national policy through increasingly authoritarian controls and the implementation of repressive legis-

lation (see Aalen and Tronvoll 2009). Limiting the influence of external actors—including Ethiopian diaspora and international organizations—in relation to civil society and governance was a primary motivation.

Policies in SNRS have long been driven by security concerns (Hagmann 2005); however, the ONLF attack on a Chinese oil exploration mission in 2007 resulted in major reprisals by the Government of Ethiopia, which were brought to international attention by Human Rights Watch (HRW 2008). HRW allege that counter-insurgency measures implemented since 2007 have created a culture of fear, in which arbitrary detentions, killings, and various human rights abuses take place (HRW 2008). These measures reached a peak in 2007 with “severe restrictions on movement and commercial trade, minimal access to independent relief assistance, a worsening drought, and rising food prices to create a highly vulnerable population at risk of humanitarian disaster” (HRW 2008: 3). ICRC was expelled in July 2007, accused of “collaborating with the ONLF” and “spreading baseless lies against the Government of Ethiopia” (HRW 2008: 89). “Since December 2007, at least 25 aid workers, including some international staff, have been detained without charge for varying periods of time” (HRW 2008: 91). While the almost total obstruction of humanitarian aid in mid-2007 was softened, “humanitarian operations remain tightly controlled” (HRW 2008: 32). While these reports pre-date the 2011–12 crisis, they continue to reflect the nature of humanitarian space in SNRS.

In Ethiopia, tight control over numbers of people in need, results of assessments, and allocation of aid by the government made it difficult for humanitarian agencies to ensure the impartial allocation of resources. However, the system was generally deemed to have responded reasonably rapidly and was credited for keeping the crisis under control—at least for Ethiopian citizens affected by the crisis. The plight of Somali refugees was substantially more dire (Sida et al. 2012).

Northeastern Kenya

The pastoral, border areas of Kenya, including the Somali-populated areas, have been characterized for their “state failure, lawlessness and communal violence,” often referred to as in a state of “not peace not war” (Menkhaus 2005: i). In recent years, while Somalia has been the focus of the “war on terror,” Allouche and Lind (2013) point out how neighboring countries, including Kenya, have been incorporated in counter-terrorism measures. They suggest that the US and UK “quietly pressurized Kenya to enforce a range of counter terrorism measures, that they argue prioritize Western security interests, at the expense of local security priorities” (2013: 21). In 2010, communities interviewed in northeastern Kenya indicated that they felt security had worsened in the preceding three years, in part as a result of increasing US military presence (and associated humanitarian and development activities) (see Bradbury and Kleinman 2010).

While acknowledging this uncertain and volatile context is important, there is much less constraint on humanitarian space in comparison to Ethiopia and Somalia; access is driven by general security factors rather than government repression or targeted attacks. In Kenya, there were few accusations of the politicization of aid, but simultaneous accusations of corruption within the main response mechanism: the Arid Lands Resource Management Project (ARLMP) and as a result, the system responded more slowly than in Ethiopia, and access was limited in some of the areas along the Somalia border (Paul et al. 2012).

4. Early Warning and Response

The crisis of 2012 had multiple causes, some of which were very straightforward to predict (the *El Nino*-related drought in the Horn of Africa), some of them less so (food price volatility, the course of the fighting between the TFG/African Union Mission to Somalia (AMISOM) and Al-Shabaab). Some of the main complicating factors were well known well in advance of the crisis and in fact did

not vary in the run-up to the crisis (the absence of WFP and other major food aid actors, the counter-terrorism restrictions). In retrospect, early warning (EW) indicators—and EW organizations—were generally considered “accurate and timely” across the region (Slim 2012). The main sources of this information were FEWSNET (regional and national), FSNAU for Somalia, and the Ethiopian Department of Disaster Risk Management/ Food Security Sector (the early warning/ needs assessment system for Ethiopia). In Kenya, only “local assessments” were mentioned (Paul et al. 2012), as the established early warning or food-security information system (ALRMP) was in a state of transition. The initial early warnings were primarily based on the severity of the short season (*deyr*) rain failure (September-December 2010), in the Somali-populated areas of the Horn of Africa, although some warnings were raised as early as August 2010 in Somalia (Darcy, Bonard, and Dini 2012; Hillbruner and Moloney 2012). However, at this time in Somalia, the epicenter of the evolving crisis was in the central regions, rather than the riverine and inter-riverine areas in South Central Somalia that were ultimately worst hit by the famine (FSNAU 2011a).

For Somalia in particular, with its well-funded and long-established food security information system, Hillbruner and Moloney (2012) argue that the early warning process worked well. It began with probability-based climate predictions as early as August 2010 (indicating a relatively high likelihood of individual and consecutive poor seasons) and progressed through increasingly dire scenarios and situation analyses over the following months. Hillbruner and Moloney (2012) explain where early warning worked well and which areas need improvement, but suggest that the critical issue was not the quality of the information and analysis but rather poor response. They identify five reasons for this:

1. Poor donor response, which, in Somalia, was influenced strongly by Al-Shabaab’s presence and strong counter-terrorism policies—and by competing political and humanitarian agendas (however, these constraints were not present in Ethiopia and Kenya, where response was late nevertheless).

2. Donor discomfort with planning on probabilistic forecasts (although this was not new or different from previous crises in the Greater Horn of Africa).
3. Poor advocacy by the UN and NGOs.
4. The lack of contingency planning and response analysis given the absence of major food aid agencies, that is in turn associated with poor leadership within the humanitarian system.
5. The slow speed at which governments recognized the problem and declared states of emergency in Kenya and Ethiopia.

While, in retrospect, early warning messages were considered sufficient, at the time, some observers believed it to be a bad year, but not out of “normal” range. Major donors such as UK Department for International Development (DFID) claim contradictory information was part of the problem (ICAI 2012). These “early warnings” were being raised in the midst of already extremely low levels for humanitarian indicators in many parts of southern Somalia, where malnutrition was already beyond accepted “emergency” thresholds. In terms of early warning and its relation to activating a response, Somalia—like many parts of the Horn of Africa—presents a classic case of the “normalization of crisis” (Bradbury 1998) where information on humanitarian indicators are routinely collected and presented through the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) framework, and frequently exceed humanitarian-emergency thresholds. It is not clear to what extent exceeding these thresholds actually trigger responses—and indeed developing “trigger” indicators linking specific conditions or thresholds to specific actions is one of the recommendations growing out of the crisis (ICAI 2012).

Hillbruner and Moloney (2012) note that individual agency evaluations clearly highlighted the lack of preparedness and contingency planning throughout the humanitarian system. An evaluation of CARE programs read, “while the 2011 famine in Somalia could have been mitigated and its effects on the vulnerable groups alleviated through early planning and responses . . . intervention in

South/Central even in Puntland came too late” (Haider and Dini 2012: 7–8). An evaluation of ACF stated, “ACF appears to be less able to trigger an appropriate and timely response in the challenging context of a slow-onset emergency than in sudden crises. . . . Initiatives focused on preparedness, including emergency planning, are still underdeveloped within ACF International in this region” (Martinez-Piqueras and Bascaran 2012: 45).

From Early Warning to Assessment and Analysis

While early warning signals were evident (although contested) from the major information units, Darcy et al. (2012) identify a “huge gap” in needs assessments following up on early warning in Somalia. This is a slightly confusing issue, because the semi-annual seasonal assessments are conducted by FSNAU. While these highlight general needs, they do not necessarily provide specific details about the level of need in any given location. This lack of location-specific needs assessment is further compounded by access problems because of Al-Shabaab’s presence. However, it also highlights a difference between the functions of different early warning and information institutions in the region.

In Ethiopia, while FEWSNET provides early warning-related information in coordination with the Government of Ethiopia, the government leads a well-established, bi-annual, seasonal assessment process in all vulnerable areas. This process is linked to response decision-making by the government and other international actors. Kenya has had in previous years a long-established early warning *and* assessment system that had the funds and capacity to undertake early interventions (the ALRMP project—see 1 on these comparisons).

In relation to this issue of assessment and locally specific analysis, Levine et al. (2011), referring to the region-wide USAID PACAPS project, point out that early warning signals must be linked to livelihoods analysis, with a predictive capacity, which in turn are linked to early interventions. They suggest that early warning messages can be distrusted and do not always provide the necessary information to enable an early response. They sug-

gest that even where the PACAPS project provided locally appropriate livelihood-based analyses to inform early response, no corresponding contingency planning resulted. They call for a comprehensive level of analysis involving all relevant stakeholders, including government, scientists, NGOs, and rural populations. A major humanitarian sector evaluation for Somalia, covering the period 2005–10, indicates that needs assessments have been problematic in Somalia for years, suggesting a lack of joint assessments resulting in over-assessment in some areas (by different agencies) and none in others (Polastro et al. 2011).

Early Response?

In Somalia, the humanitarian response was driven by the declaration of the famine. Famine was first declared on July 20, 2011; external humanitarian responses reached a scale proportional to the problem by September or October 2011 (Darcy et al. 2012). However, increased mortality in Somalia began in late 2010 and peaked in June–July 2011 (Checchi and Robinson 2013). By October 2011, mortality rates were declining rapidly.

In Kenya, the response was driven by the media. Media coverage became nationally prominent in July 2013, in part linked to large movements of people from Somalia into Kenya. In Ethiopia, the established seasonal early warning and needs assessment process incorporated the response into its usual timeframe (Slim 2012). Responses to the 2011 Horn of Africa crisis were considered significantly late in the case of both Somalia and Kenya. The significance of timing is less clear in the case of Ethiopia.

While questions of trust over early warning information and a lack of assessments (for Somalia and Kenya) provide part of the delayed-response picture, a range of other factors have been identified, from the “wider decision-making system” to more specific country-, organizational-, and individual-level factors. These are discussed below.

Institutional Dynamics and the Wider Decision-Making System

The most-important factors determining the success or failure of early warning *and* early response remain the institutional and political contexts within which decisions are made (Buchanan-Smith

Box 1. Early Warning and Response: Comparison between Somalia, Ethiopia, and Kenya

According to the literature reviewed, Ethiopia provides useful lessons. In particular, it has the most systematic process for linking information to response (based around the national seasonal assessment process), and an institutional framework (the Productive Safety Net Programme or PSNP) through which resources can flow. However, the extent to which this generates an early response or one that works well in pastoral and marginal areas is unclear. Sida et al. (2012) suggest that there is a considerable lack of trust between the Government of Ethiopia and the international system over manipulation or suppression of data. Ethiopia’s response to the refugee influx was also inadequate and late.

In Kenya, the ALRMP project, existed for many years within the Office of the President, funded by the World Bank. Under ALRMP, Kenya had a large-scale and institutionally embedded system, with early warning, assessment, and response capacity, based on drought-cycle management principles. This program is considered to have had strong leadership historically, particularly prior to 2004. However, World Bank funding was suspended in July 2010 following a “forensic audit” and then ended in December 2010 with no renewal (Africa Center for Open Governance 2012). The project was therefore not functional during the period of the crisis. A National Drought Management Authority was set up in its stead, but it was not yet fully functional when the crisis emerged in early 2011.

In Somalia, with no effective government, the “international community” is the de facto highest authority for famine prevention—this community was fragmented and suffered from lack of senior leadership in recent years. Somalia has a well-established and respected food-security information system, but it is not linked to needs assessments or directly to response. Perhaps more important in Somalia is that political interests (including state building and anti-terrorism) have been prioritized above humanitarian ones.

and Davies, 1995). Bailey (2013) identifies issues at the national level in affected countries as well as at the donor level. At the national level, in the Horn of Africa and the Sahel, early warning capacities are said to be low, and they are not embedded in strong bureaucracies and decision-making processes that have evolved over time. Ethiopia and Kenya have received both considerable international support and investment in this area over many years, within and in partnership with government structures. Bailey (2013) identifies political determinants as strongly influencing the willingness to respond early; for example whether the populations concerned are marginal or if declaring a “famine” or other crisis has political risks.

In terms of donors, Bailey (2013: 39) notes, “political risk preferences are the primary determinants of early action,” and the accountability frameworks and “incentives are skewed towards delay.” One of the implications is that decision-makers tend to focus on (or have incentives to see) the downside of early action rather than on the opportunity for early action. Early action often has considerable cost benefits where, in the case of the famine for example, a failure to act early contributes to the creation of extremely large displaced and refugee populations, which donor governments will continue to support at great cost for years to come (Bailey 2013).

In Somalia, behind all the institutional constraints lurked the question of counter-terrorism. Throughout the run-up to the famine in 2010 and 2011, major donor support to mitigate or prevent a crisis was very low (Maxwell and Fitzpatrick 2012) and indeed it was zero for South Central Somalia in the case of the US donor agency, USAID (OCHA FTS 2013). In the case of Somalia, political risk preferences, donor geopolitical, and domestic political concerns appear to have outweighed humanitarian concerns, until the declaration of famine forced a response. Given the difficulty of operating in South Central Somalia and the likelihood of aid “leakage,” the risk of indirectly supporting Al-Shabaab was weighed against the potential humanitarian costs of the unfolding disaster—and until the famine declaration was judged by many donor governments to be the greater priority. However,

Hillbruner and Moloney (2012) point out that the response was also late in Ethiopia and Kenya where the counter-terrorism objective was less important.

5. Impact of the Famine and Regional Crisis

Kenya

Of the 13 million people affected by the food security crisis in the Horn of Africa in 2010–11, 4.3 million were in Kenya. The counties of Wajir and Turkana were among the regions most heavily affected. Rainfall data obtained in mid-2011 showed that these areas had gone over five years without good rain. The failure of good rain between 2010 and 2011 (along with high fuel prices, high food prices, poor governance, conflict, and lack of political commitment) caused severe deterioration of livelihoods. Normally, the failure of two consecutive rainy seasons constitutes a drought; in this case, there had been three. The May 2011 FEWS NET food security outlook indicated that 2.4 million people were classified at Stressed or Crisis levels and required immediate food and non-food assistance to mitigate further decline. Malnutrition rates among children were generally above emergency threshold levels; the district of Marsabit reported 22 percent prevalence of global acute malnutrition (GAM) and 4.1 percent severe acute malnutrition (SAM).

Good rains in late 2011 mitigated the situation to some extent; however, for many the rains came too late. Many families lost livestock and moved to start new villages along the main road networks, with the hope of receiving assistance. Households used a number of coping strategies, including food aid and remittances from relatives. Livestock plays an important role in the livelihood of many arid and semi-arid lands (ASAL) households in Kenya; yet, livestock vary in their contribution to drought coping strategies from one county to the next. For example, in the seven counties affected by drought in northern Kenya, half of the households did not

own livestock (Wekesa 2012). Among pastoral households, losses of livestock ranged from 50–70 percent, particularly in sheep and cattle, in 2011. It is estimated that during this time, 21 percent of mobile pastoral households dropped out of pastoralism. Furthermore, cereals and grains were available on the market, but at higher prices—limiting people’s access (ibid).

Ethiopia

After two consecutive seasonal rain failures, Ethiopia experienced severe drought in the southern and eastern parts of the country. In July 2011, an estimated 4.5 million people were affected by an acute livelihood/food security crisis. The most severely affected regions were Oromia (1.8 million affected) and Somali region (1.4 million affected) (Oxfam 2012). The drought led to a severe depletion in pasture and traditional water sources. During the crisis, in addition to water sources being depleted, many motorized water supplies were already non-functional. These conditions resulted in a decline in animal body composition (resulting in lower livestock prices at market and eventually causing mortality rates for livestock to reach 60–80 percent in localized areas (Oxfam 2012). Impacts were exacerbated by resource-based conflict and high food price inflation. Prices were 50–170 percent higher than prices recorded in October 2010 (Save the Children 2011). All of these factors led to food and nutrition insecurity, distress migration, dependence on water trucking, increasing livestock deaths, and a heightened risk of disease outbreak. By the middle of 2011, there were 20,000 additional Somali refugees in the Gode and Afder zone camps and an incredible influx of 100,000 refugees into Dollo Ado. Those arriving in the camps near Dollo Ado—Bokolmayo and Melkadida, and the newly opened Kobe camp—had a prevalence of GAM 33.4–47.0 percent (Bhattacharjee 2012). Mortality in these camps was difficult to estimate because of a lack of data, but reported estimates ran as high as 7,000—out of an influx of some 150,000 refugees (Cecchi and Robinson 2013). While conditions in the camps—and particularly in the transit center in Dollo Ado—were not good, external observers

applauded the Ethiopian authorities for their “open door” policy.

Although many people were affected by the crisis, the number of 4.9 million was considered not significantly different from the average number affected by the recurring drought at other times in the country (Bhattacharjee 2012). The strong state-sponsored safety net programs helped to mitigate the detrimental effect of the drought (Sida et al. 2012). Pre-positioned food supplies within the country allowed authorities to respond quickly once the drought conditions became severe; the first distribution began in February 2011 and continued in the worst-affected regions of the country.

Somalia

In the East Africa region, Somalia was the worst hit country, with pastoralist, agro-pastoralist and especially IDP populations being the most affected communities (Slim 2012). In Somalia, the failed *Deyr* rains in late 2010 in combination with the poor performance of the April-June 2011 *Gu* rains caused a widespread shortage of water and, subsequently, the worst annual crop production in the previous 17 years (FSNAU 2011b). The shortages in crops, particularly maize and sorghum, led to record high cereal prices with low livestock and wage prices (ibid). As a result, large numbers of children were malnourished, livelihoods were disrupted or destroyed, and a disturbingly high number of people lost their lives. More than half of the entire country’s population was affected by the crisis. This included 750,000 famine-affected, 3.3 million in need of immediate life-saving assistance, and a total 4 million in crisis (OCHA 2011).

In Somalia, the crisis is estimated to have resulted in excess mortality of approximately 250,000 people between October 2010 and April 2012 (Cecchi and Robinson 2013). This overall mortality includes 133,000 children under the age of 5 years old (ibid). Excess mortality began in late 2010 and peaked in May-September 2011. The largest death tolls are estimated to have been in Bakool, Banadir, Bay, Lower Shabelle and Middle Shabelle regions (ibid). These “excess” mortality figures are *in addition* to the underlying “baseline” mortality for any

given year. For example, the *baseline* crude death rate (CDR) was estimated to be between 0.5 and 0.8 per 10,000 persons per day in southern and central Somalia, while the 2010 sub-Saharan Africa average was 0.37 (Checchi and Robinson 2013) and baseline mortality in Somali-speaking areas of Kenya and Ethiopia ranged in the same area (UNICEF Kenya 2014). However, from July–October 2011 in southern and central Somalia, the CDR reached an astounding 2.5 and over 5.0 in some areas. The populations with the highest CDRs were Bakool agro-pastoralists, Bay agro-pastoralists, Afgooye IDPs and Mogadishu IDPs with 2.11, 2.15, 4.02, and 5.68 per 10,000 per day respectively (FSNAU 2011b). These rates, far surpassing the IPC famine threshold of 2 deaths per 10,000 per day, along with other indicators, led to the famine declaration. These very generalized depictions do not reveal the social identities and concentrations of mortality and destitution, which preliminary findings suggest were amongst the *Rahanweyn*, and particular sub-clans of the *Rahanweyn*. An FSNAU report suggests that the most vulnerable population in Lower Shabelle may have not been the resident population but those who arrived from Bay region.

By mid-2011, at a national level, 450,000 Somali children were acutely malnourished, with nearly 200,000 of these portraying severe acute malnutrition (SAM)—not counting those who had already died from complications related to malnutrition. The southern regions of the country were hit the hardest, containing 74 percent of all the malnourished children (FSNAU 2011b). By July 2011, GAM rates (which include both severe and moderate malnutrition) were averaging over 40 percent in southern regions, with SAM at nearly 20 percent (ibid)—indicators surpassing the necessary criteria for famine declaration.

Displacement

The population of Somalia has been in flight, both internally and externally, for the past two decades. But during late 2010 and early 2011 after two failed rainy seasons and the worst harvest since the 1992–1993 famine, food insecurity and conflict led to another large-scale incident of population displacement. During what Robinson and his col-

leagues (2014) refer to as the “pre-famine” period during August to December 2010, a majority of the internal displacement occurred either from or within the urban areas and food insecurity accounted for three quarters of the displacement. During this period there were also huge increases in movement, with 4,000–7,700 refugees arriving every month in Ethiopia and Kenya, respectively (ibid). In Kenya alone, as of end of May 2012, there are reports of nearly 480,000 Somali refugees (Bhattacharjee 2012). Some 150,000 new refugees arrived in Ethiopia over the course of the crisis, peaking at nearly 30,000 new arrivals in July 2011 (UNHCR n.d.). Most of those who fled in search of humanitarian assistance were women and children, while men often remained behind to care for any remaining herds or assets. Those who arrived at their destination were in poor health, dehydrated, and malnourished after several days or weeks in transit (Bhattacharjee 2012).

IDP movements spiked during the “famine” period between May and July 2011 (Bhattacharjee 2012). Between the months of June and September 2011, 44,900 displaced people arrived in Mogadishu, creating a total of 226 IDP shelter concentrations in the city (OCHA 2011). It is no surprise that the hardest hit areas (Lower and Upper Shabelle, Bay and Bakool) also had the most restricted access for humanitarian assistance. Most of the assistance available was concentrated in Mogadishu, creating a pull factor. Monthly refugee arrivals to Ethiopia increased three fold in May to July 2011 from 9,000 to 27,000. In a six-month period, over 100,000 refugees arrived in Kenya, forcing Dadaab camp to suspend registration of new arrivals in October 2011 (Robinson et al. 2014).

Following the declaration of famine, displacement initially declined in Somalia but spiked again in 2012. Robinson and colleagues propose that these movements were largely motivated by insecurity, especially in the Banadir region but also as a result of Al-Shabaab’s mandatory immobility policy (ibid).

In Ethiopia, stable numbers of Somali refugees had been present since the 1980s and 1990s in Jijiga and Gode zones. However in 2011, approximately 20,000 additional Somali refugees arrived to

camps in Gode and Afder zones, with an influx of 100,000 to camps in Dollo Ado (Sida et al. 2012). Dollo Ado was already host to some 40,000 refugees in two camps (Bokolmayo and Melkadida). Although the stream of incoming refugees was fairly steady during the beginning of 2011—with new arrivals averaging about 5,000 per month from January to April—basic services were completely overwhelmed with a five-fold increase in new arrivals during the months of June and July. Unfortunately, despite attempts to meet needs (including developing two additional camps), the situation in Dollo Ado remained bleak following the influx of new arrivals, with mortality and malnutrition rates remaining “unacceptably” high for several months into the end of 2011 (Sida et al. 2012).

Dadaab, a semi-arid town in the North Eastern Province of Kenya, since 2011 has been host to the world’s largest refugee camp, first constructed during the 1990s. Most who seek refuge there are Somali, fleeing the long-standing conflict in Somalia. In 2011, an additional 152,000 Somalis fled to Dadaab, pushing the refugee population over 443,000 (519,000 in all of Kenya). Just as in Dollo Ado, Dadaab experienced an unexpected influx of new arrivals in July. From January to June, new arrivals averaged 9,500 per month, yet the

number jumped to 26,000 new arrivals in July—an almost three-fold increase in one month (UNHCR 2011a).

Historically, Dadaab has been predominantly composed of *Darod/Ogaden* clans from the Somalia/Kenya border area (Horst, 2006). In both Dollo Ado and Dadaab, the agro-pastoral *Rahanweyn* now form a significant population (if not the majority); they were severely impacted by the famine but were not traditionally displaced internationally. This group of refugees’ origins, social identity, and livelihood base which they have left (and therefore may want to return to), are significantly different from other Somalis.

The prevalence of malnutrition among refugees arriving at Dadaab in Kenya and particularly at Dollo Ado in Ethiopia was very high, revealing some of the most devastating effects of the famine. In 2011, new arrivals in Dollo Ado showed a prevalence of GAM around 50 percent and a prevalence of SAM of about 23 percent, higher than other areas of the country. The mortality rate for children was 4 deaths per 10,000 per day, double the emergency thresholds. Such high rates of death and malnutrition were attributed to the dire state in which the refugees arrived at the camps. As one

Box 2. History of Dadaab Refugee Camp

Dadaab refugee camp was initially created in the early 1990s as a result of the civil war in Somalia. This had a powerful impact on local populations, with environmental damage caused by the increased need for firewood, high levels of crime due to local militias, and resentment caused by the food rations and services received by refugees. Over time however, the camp became integrated into the local and regional economy, with remittances and food aid stimulating trade and exchange. Menkhaus reported families being kept in the camp to access food and services while men based in the Jubba valley, and traders benefited from the new “urban” market, and the “entire region exploits the availability of WFP food rations which are sold by refugees or diverted from them.” (Menkhaus 2005: 15).

Menkhaus also points out the social hierarchy within Somali society, a theme developed within this study, stating that “even in Kenyan refugee camps at Dadaab and Kakuuma, Somali Bantu are subject to abuse, ranging from appropriation of food rations by ethnic Somalis to rape of their women” (2005: 6), and that “collectively, these and other forms of discrimination and social hierarchy matter a great deal, as they impact communal security, economic rights, legal redress of crime’s committed, and access to humanitarian aid in times of crisis” (ibid).

These continuities over time are relevant to the study.

Source: Summarized from Menkhaus (2005).

report recounts, “the refugees arrived ‘at death’s door’” (Richardson, Bush, and Ambroso 2013: 8).

In these overcrowded camps, many anecdotal reports communicated that most people were arriving in dire health and nutrition conditions and many family members died during the journey (Sida et al. 2012). Measles, cholera, acute watery diarrhea, and other epidemics also affected displaced populations as they often do in overcrowded camps with unsanitary environmental conditions (FSNAU 2011b).

Livelihoods

The severity of the 2011 crisis has profound implications for the livelihoods of many tens of thousands of households, in addition to the impacts of mortality, malnutrition, and displacement.

For rural-based populations, the extraction of natural resources is both a normal, seasonal activity, as well as one that can intensify in times of extreme difficulty. This was the case in Lower Shabelle in 2011, where the cutting of trees for firewood, construction poles and charcoal production expanded as a distress coping strategy with a significant incoming population adding to the pressure on natural resources (FSNAU 2013). The impact of the lack of regulation on the environment in Somalia has been noted previously (IUCN 2006) but has not been analyzed since 2011; the implications for future local livelihoods therefore remain unknown.

The Shabelle and Juba rivers are critical natural resources in good years and bad in southern Somalia, mitigating the impact of unpredictable rainfall on agriculture and providing a permanent water source for humans and animals. Lower Shabelle in particular is a critical “safe haven” in terms of access to agricultural labor, water, and pasture for people and livestock from the immediate surroundings as well as a much larger catchment area across southern Somalia. In 2011, this was again the case. However, limited maintenance of canal irrigation infrastructure in recent years (due to decreased humanitarian space) as well as the construction of a dam upriver on the Shabelle, in Ethiopia, limited the potential of this area to absorb people and animals in 2011 (FSNAU 2013).

Livestock, probably the most important form of savings or assets in Somalia, took a huge hit in 2011, with levels of vulnerability varying by animal type. Camels are the least vulnerable to drought and also associated with particular clan identities or groups, whereas cattle are the most vulnerable. Differences in livestock ownership reflect different clans or social groups. While figures on livestock losses are extremely difficult to obtain with any accuracy, anecdotal reports suggest massive cattle deaths in Lower Shabelle, with very high concentrations of cattle being brought into the area. The drying up of the Lower Shabelle River meant the loss of a significant water source for thousands of cattle and other livestock (Sida et al. 2012). Livestock losses were estimated at 30–50 percent of

Box 3. Case Study Interview with Faamy Shoobay in an IDP Camp in Mogadishu

Faamay Shoobay, Aliyow Maamow Isaka (her husband) and their six children migrated to the IDP camp from Lower Shabelle region. They farmed a small area of land and obtained agricultural labor to meet their basic needs. The poor Deyr and *Gu* rains, as well as the delayed river cresting, experienced throughout Lower Shabelle, affected the family, who faced a serious crop failure. Adding to the stress at this time was an influx of people from Bay and Bakool, all competing for the same limited jobs and other resources. This was occurring while maize prices were rising due to the high demand from both humans and livestock, who had swelled in number in the area. Alimoy and her children moved to the IDP camps in Mogadishu on July 20, 2011, while her husband remained to look after the remaining crop (for its fodder value). Two of her youngest children contracted measles and diarrhea in the camps, with her youngest daughter dying soon thereafter. One of her older sons went back to help with harvesting and land preparation for the Deyr season.

Source: FSNAU 2013: 26

herd size in some locations, which has major implications for recovery (FSNAU 2011a, 2012).

Access to credit and increased debt is another important coping strategy for Somalis with implications for future livelihoods. Very little has been said about this in the literature on the famine, other than “increased seeking of loans and credit” as a distress coping strategy in Lower Shabelle (FSNAU 2013: 25).

The sale of land (or portions of land) or remortgaging of land has been identified in Bakool and Lower Shabelle (FSNAU 2013; Hedlund et al. 2013) respectively. The extent of land sales is not yet known.

Displacement itself may reflect changes in livelihood patterns over time. As mentioned above, severe droughts have historically been catalysts for local and international migration and, in turn, a diversification of income. In the short-term, the distribution of aid in between Mogadishu, Dollo Ado, Dadaab and areas of origin of affected populations, will have occurred within family groups, although is difficult to measure (Hedlund et al. 2013). For example, Horst has previously described Dadaab for its role connecting people through remittances (Horst 2006).

The relative impact among different livelihood and social groups remains largely under-explored. The levels of asset loss and the vulnerability or resilience of those who were not displaced are also not known and difficult to calculate. Relatively little analysis has been done of why some people and social groups survived and others did not, or how some social groups or livelihood groups coped where others did not. Majid and McDowell (2012) suggest that the major victims of the famine had particular livelihood and socio-political characteristics that were not well understood. Farmers and agro-pastoralists who rely heavily on crop production were significantly affected, as were cattle-rearing pastoralists who lost significant amounts of their herds due to lack of water.

6. Humanitarian Response and Impact

Humanitarian response is analyzed largely at the country level, with the national government taking the lead (if possible or capable) with the support of national and international agencies. A regional evaluation of the crisis noted that this country-specific focus and, in turn, the lack of a regional dimension was a shortcoming of not only the response to this crisis but others as well (Bhattacharjee 2012). Certainly there are mechanisms and agencies to facilitate a less fragmented humanitarian approach; they include Regional Humanitarian Partnership Teams that includes UN agencies, NGOs, and Red Cross/Crescent Movement as members who meet periodically in Nairobi. There is also an Inter-Agency Working Group (IAWG) with a mandate to bring together international NGOs for information sharing and deliberation on humanitarian issues.

Kenya

Much of the literature states there was a significant lack of leadership from the Government of Kenya and the international community to proactively and decisively address the crisis, until media coverage ultimately triggered it. Fortunately, the donor community responded with significant resources, with Kenya receiving \$73.8 million just four weeks after the appeal and another \$16.7 million through the CERF between July and August. By December 16, the amount had reached \$529.4 million, covering 71 percent of the appeal. Overall, the total humanitarian funding reached \$654.2 million for Kenya in 2011 (Paul et al. 2012).

One major challenge to disaster management in Kenya has to do with a “bifurcated aid management structure” and the lack of a single authority for disaster management response. (Harmer, Harvey, and Odhiambo 2012: 12). Six ministries share responsibility for disaster management, food security, and social protection. Generally speaking, the declaration of disaster, the architecture in place

for food assistance, and the coordination of food assistance at the local level are all complicated, fragmented systems and processes (ibid). This lack of a coordinated legal and constitutional framework, lack of standard procedures and disaster operational plan led to duplication of efforts and inefficient use of resources (Valid International 2012). As a result, there was a heavy focus on emergency response, especially with food distribution, water tracking, and destocking of livestock with minimal efforts and funds for longer-term projects for recovery and to build resilience (ibid).

With respect to the drought in 2011 and 2012, the Kenya Food Security Steering Group (KFSSG), part of ALRMP under the Ministry of North Kenya, acted as the main technical coordination body (Valid International 2012). The cluster system was not activated in Kenya as the Government contains its own sectoral working groups. Although quite a challenge, evaluations found that inter-sectoral coordination worked reasonably well, with some sectors performing better—namely Nutrition—than others (Paul 2012). The KFSSG is a team of experts whose membership include individuals from the government, UN, donors, NGOs and universities; it drew information from a variety of sources like the Meteorological Department, the Central Bureau of Statistics, and FEWS-NET. Findings were then presented to the Cabinet Committee on Food Security to release policy statements on the government's behalf. The Kenyan Red Cross Society also played a central role in the humanitarian response and acted as an implementing partner for the government and UN agencies.

A number of challenges made responding to the 2011–2012 crisis. There were varying levels of preparedness across agencies; some were able to intervene quickly and considered their emergency operations as rapidly “scalable” (Valid International 2012). However, most agencies were propelled into action following the July declaration of famine in Somalia and its media coverage.

Problems with the strategic grain reserves (or lack thereof) were realized early on, which might point to mismanagement. WFP attempted to source food regionally, but some opportunities failed due to concerns over GMOs, and long delays occurred

during transportation. There was also a contamination issue in which 362 tons of UNIMIX were recalled due to suspected aflatoxin contamination (Harmer et al. 2012).

During the response, there were two pipelines, one run by the government and one run by WFP, to respond to the caseload derived from the Long Rains Assessment. The decision for two pipelines was seen as somewhat political, as the Kenyan government wanted to deliver aid to its people for visibility, despite the logical ease of having only one pipeline. Both pipelines experienced significant delays and low coverage of targeted beneficiaries. Furthermore, there was little understanding on criteria for selecting beneficiaries. Tonnage reportedly varied from month to month without warning. Eventually, the Government of Kenya turned over its caseload to WFP, noting difficulties in targeting, monitoring, and management of risk (Paul et al. 2012).

Cash transfers and vouchers were increasingly used prior to the crisis, and cash and voucher programs were scaled up or developed as part of the 2011 response. For example, the Hunger Safety Net Program (HSNP), the dominant mechanism for unconditional cash transfer operating in Turkana, Marsabit, Wajir, and Mandera, was scaled up, doubling the cash grant distributed to beneficiaries for two months during the crisis (Harmer et al. 2012: 28). The EC Food Facility Program, the main voucher distribution program, increased its beneficiaries from 54,000 to approximately 79,000 beneficiaries (ibid). A number of other cash and voucher assistance programs were also implemented by NGOs such as Oxfam, Islamic Relief, and Mercy Corps.

Ethiopia

In Ethiopia, the Office of Disaster Risk Management/ Food Security Sector (DRM/FSS) created a strategic coordination body for multi-agency coordination (S-MAC) at the federal level and a technical equivalent (T-MAC) chaired by the state minister to facilitate coordination between the government system and international partners. The HCT met regularly, allowing for good interface between international and national systems. However,

“despite the generally well-functioning coordination, there remains a level of mistrust throughout the system,” (Sida et al. 2012: 12).

Needs assessments are routinely conducted twice a year by the DRM/FSS in collaboration with various NGOs. Despite a sophisticated and technically strong needs assessment system, political approval both delays the response and is often criticized for reduces the actual numbers to “unrealistically low levels” (Sida et al. 2012: 10). In 2011, the number of people in need, as declared in the Humanitarian Requirement Document (HRD), were revised and raised first in February and again in July, after a spike in enrollment in the therapeutic feeding program (TFP) admissions. Raising the numbers not only signified the severity of the crisis; it also demonstrated the delays in implementing actual emergency interventions.

The food response was generally described as successful due to the government’s sophisticated safety-net program, through which USAID could increase food aid prior to the “official call.” (Sida et al. 2012). In fact, US donors anticipated a need for increased food aid and planned for a pipeline increase before the appeal, which was key to keeping the Ethiopian Strategic Food Reserve from emptying completely. In an evaluation looking at the PSNP performance from 2010 through 2012, Hoddinott et al. stated that the “PSNP has significantly improved food security in all regions between 2010 and 2012” (2013: 6). However, some studies show mixed results regarding the impact of the PSNP in addressing the food security crisis in some areas of Ethiopia. An IFPRI evaluation conducted specifically in the in Afar and Somali Regions in Ethiopia found no impact of participation in public works on household food security, as measured by the size of the food gap (IFPRI 2013). The same study did find that receipt of payments for public works raised livestock holdings by a large amount in Afar—6.64 animals—but had no impact whatsoever in Somali (ibid). Another study explained that the lack of impact seen by the PSNP in the Afar and Somali areas could be due to poor targeting, with a high fraction of wealthy households included and poor households excluded. In some cases, those who are more likely to

receive public work employment have 100 times more livestock than poorer households (Lind et al. 2012). Other reasons may include poor access to payment sites, unpredictable payment dates, and participants’ lack of awareness of their entitlements. Furthermore, although risk financing funds were released in 2011, many official in *woredas* were unclear as to the purpose of these funds and were unsure if they had even been spent in 2011 (ibid).

Although cash-based programs were not the main modality of assistance, evaluations find that most were “well implemented” as well as “well received and highly appreciated within communities” (Truelove and Duncalf 2012: 12). Still, cash-based programming was particularly prone to bureaucratic delays in Ethiopia. Furthermore, cash-for-work programs seemed to be more successful in building community assets than providing basic needs (ibid).

The water response consisted of an “expensive” and “unreliable” water trucking operation, proving that a better system is needed in the future to tackle systemic issues of water access (Sida et al. 2012: 10). Although water trucking was inefficient, it was timely and saved human lives and livestock. There has been repeated criticism of the extent of water trucking in parts of Ethiopia, but every time a drought hits, there seem to be few alternatives once surface water catchments and underground storage systems are used up.

USAID’s crisis modifier funding mechanism in Ethiopia is innovative. It is designed to allow long-term programs to switch to humanitarian work in the hopes that the development gains will be less affected by the shock (USAID 2013). Under the Pastoral Livelihoods Initiative Phase II (PLI II), established in 2009, pre-approved emergency interventions that could draw on the contingency budget in a time of crisis included commercial and slaughter destocking, livestock vaccinations, supplementary animal food, and water point rehabilitation. The funding process is designed to take ten days or less from the time of proposal submission to the allocation of funds. Many of these were conducted by a consortium of NGOs led by Save the Children and including International Rescue Committee and CARE (USAID 2013). PLI II and the crisis modifier mechanism is frequently pointed

to as a success for facilitating faster implementation of emergency interventions proven to protect livelihoods in times of crisis. Still, it is unclear whether these interventions through this type of funding mechanism can be scaled up to meet the needs of larger populations in crisis. It is widely accepted that USAID's crisis modifier funding mechanism is a model for expediting the implementation of humanitarian relief as well as protecting development gains by integrating emergency and development funding.

Generally speaking, the literature described program quality as quite good in Ethiopia. National partner organizations appeared to be well established and NGOs provided training on standards and conduct to staff and partners. Some concerns that arose were large numbers of newly recruited staff (including many who were new to humanitarian work); unreliability of training; lack of coordination among IGOs; lack of transparent coordination contributing to "turf wars"; and lack of clarity around partnerships, future intentions, and program duration (Sida et al. 2012). Most international standards for quality of programming were met. However, it was agreed that the water trucking was not an efficient or sustainable solution for water scarcity in the future. To find a more efficient system, of course, earlier action will need to take place (Sida et al. 2012). One major area of needed improvement noted in the literature was the lack of engagement with affected populations (HAP 2012).

Somalia

In 2011, the overall level of aid to Somalia alone was an estimated \$1.3 billion. Given the specific challenges of delivering aid to the hardest-hit areas (absence of WFP and CARE, limited access, conflict, and drought), decision-makers needed to be innovative to enable affected populations to receive immediate assistance. Furthermore, given the lack of specific needs assessments, program decision-making relied heavily on FSNAU data, leaving much debate around appropriate responses. Most agencies implemented through local partners and various forms of remote management in south and central regions through cash-based interventions.

Others, operational in the north, implemented in the more traditional ways of direct distribution. In-kind food aid was a common response in Mogadishu, particularly by the "non-traditional" or "emerging" humanitarian agencies and in the border areas where WFP was able to operate. Many agencies used community-based targeting or scaled up previously existing therapeutic and supplemental feeding programs.

From Food Aid to Cash-Based Responses in Somalia

One of the defining features of the response to the famine in Somalia was the absence of WFP (and therefore, to a large degree, food aid). WFP is typically the major actor in humanitarian responses (Maxwell and Fitzpatrick 2012). Its absence had implications. In terms of food supply, for example, the food security analytical units underestimated consequences of the absence of WFP (Hillbruner and Moloney 2012). At the time, in the absence of the "usual" (food aid) response, the decision-making process associated with identifying response options—in particular, the possibility of cash effectively replacing food—was contested by different agencies. Prior to the famine, WFP food aid had been subject to serious criticism (Nicholson et al. 2012). The control and diversion of food aid by cartels and other groups were also criticized (UN Monitoring Group 2010). Some expectation (and hope) existed that cash would be less subject to these problems.

Out of this predicament, two of the major UN agencies, FAO and UNICEF, eventually provided an umbrella under which major conditional and unconditional cash-based interventions took place in Somalia. The Somalia Cash Consortium distributed six to nine months' worth of unconditional cash transfers to over 40,000 households in the regions of Hiran, Gedo, Lower Juba, and Mogadishu in South Central Somalia. The majority—nearly 80 percent of those targeted—were women under the belief that they were more likely to consider the food security situation of their families (Wasikowska 2013). The Somalia Cash Consortium commissioned a study to interview key informants between

October and November 2012 (Wasikowska 2013); it found that targeting women was widely accepted as they were recognized as household managers. Cash transfer programs allowed women to gain more control of household spending and were associated with an increase in women's social status within the community, with the greatest gains reported by the most vulnerable populations (ibid). These positive findings were tempered by others: women reported additional protection risks and fear of conflict as a result of the cash transfers; this was particularly the case in polygamous households (ibid).

In recent years, donors have indicated a particular interest in cash-based responses. DFID, for example, has started to see cash as better value for money (ICAI 2012), a point borne out by the evaluation of the Unconditional Cash Transfer response (Hedlund et al. 2013). Two major programs responding to the famine relied on cash transfers as the main modality of humanitarian assistance. One was FAO's cash-for-work program in Somalia; the other was the unconditional emergency cash and voucher program implemented under the umbrella of UNICEF (FAO 2013; Hedlund et al. 2013). International and national NGOs carried out both programs, encompassing a significant proportion of the cash-based response.

Nutrition Response

Parts of Somalia are known to have cyclically high rates of acute malnutrition, frequently surpassing the internationally established crisis thresholds (FSNAU 2010). Therefore, when the *Deyr* 2010–11 FSNAU nutrition assessment revealed high GAM rates of 25 to 30 percent, this was seemingly “normal” and did not automatically trigger a scaled response. Rebelo et al. describe how conflicting information from field NGOs and other nutrition information delayed the response:

Decision-makers were unable to clearly demand very large-scale early action due to the confusion and lack of clear nutrition surveillance data or information, or triggers for action between the *Deyr* and *Gu* FSNAU reports at a time when, in retrospect, it appears that nutrition status and food insecurity were deteriorating at an unprec-

edented rate in a very short period. . . . Given the uncertainty about the situation, the balance of risk versus needs often tipped in favor of the former for decision-making, delaying response (Rebelo et al. 2012: 66).

The scaling-up of nutrition programming was only possible with funds that became available after the famine declaration. Blanket supplementary feeding programs as well as a cash distribution were proposed in attempts to fill the gap in food security assistance created in the absence of WFP's distribution of food aid. Due to the stark increase in malnutrition and mortality, the majority of the nutrition response focused on preventing further deterioration of the nutrition status of vulnerable populations. Responses included scaling up targeted and blanket supplementary feeding programs for children under five years, aiming to reduce acute malnutrition. These responses also linked to other food assistance or cash and voucher programs. In the rural areas, humanitarian actors were significantly restricted due to security issues; still, 650 new sites for the management of severe and moderate acute malnutrition were added between July and November 2011 (Rebelo et al. 2012: 5). There were challenges that remained around the coverage and program quality within this expansion of integrated management of acute malnutrition (IMAM) due to the lack of technical expertise, third party implementers, and logistical problems due to a lack of access.

In Mogadishu, WFP and other implementing partners increased dry and wet feeding centers to address the increasing numbers of IDPs arriving in June and July. Al-Shabaab's withdrawal from Mogadishu in August 2011 further allowed the humanitarian response to increase throughout the city, expanding feeding programs as well as other maternal and child health nutrition programming, including mass screening, soup kitchens, family rations, and blanket feeding of older children. In rural areas of Somalia, nutrition programs increased some 81 percent between the second and third quarter of 2011 (Rebelo et al. 2012).

Challenges and the Reality of Implementation in Somalia

Most agency reports and meta-evaluations agree that the humanitarian community was unequivocally late in addressing the most acute needs of the people affected by the crisis (Darcy et al. 2012; Slim 2012). Although donors were quick to react to the famine declaration and to pledge funds towards the crisis, actual delivery of aid on the ground came later. Among the different types of programming, the fastest start-up time was among the voucher programs, mainly due to previous NGO experience implementing vouchers and difficulties establishing *hawala* contracts for cash distributions (Longley et al. 2012). Still other organizations were not able to begin implementation until well in 2012, when famine was officially declared to be over (Haider and Dini 2012). However, in many places malnutrition rates remained high for several months after the famine and indeed hundreds of thousands of people were still in need of assistance.

While food aid has long been associated with control and diversion by different actors, many of the agencies supporting cash expected that it would be less subject to these problems. In fact, the scrutiny of both the FAO and UNICEF programs revealed the same problems of diversion or capture—albeit at significantly lower levels. They might be described as the normal way of working in Somalia (as in many other countries), although generally under-reported and exacerbated under conditions of remote management and the rapid expansion of humanitarian resources that took place from 2006 and again during the famine itself (FAO 2013; Hedlund et al. 2013).

Targeting, in particular, was highly problematic, especially of minorities and women (FAO 2013; Hedlund et al. 2013). A serious lack of understanding existed around power issues related to clan relationships as well as between pastoralists and agro-pastoralists (Nicholson et al. 2012). It is important to note the main victims in this famine were the same social groups and victims of the famine of 1991–92 (Majid and McDowell 2012). As people moved to aid-concentration points, many of these

same minority groups moved to areas controlled by powerful clan-based groups. In addition to targeting problems, instances of elite capture, diversion, and corruption were identified by the two reports (FAO 2013; Hedlund et al. 2013). These are consistent with trends identified by the UN Monitoring Group (UNMG 2008 and 2010).

Menkhaus also points out the social hierarchy within Somali society, a theme developed within this study, stating that “Even in Kenyan refugee camps at Dadaab and Kakuuma, Somali Bantu are subject to abuse, ranging from appropriation of food rations by ethnic Somalis to rape of their women” (Menkhaus 2005: 6). Referring to intra-clan and inter-clan social hierarchies, Menkhaus states that “Collectively, these and other forms of discrimination and social hierarchy matter a great deal, as they impact communal security, economic rights, legal redress of crime’s committed, and access to humanitarian aid in times of crisis” (ibid).

Late but Appropriate and Relevant

Despite the obviously shortcomings mentioned above, a puzzling contrast is seen in the much more positive impression of organizational performance identified in individual-NGO evaluations. The following extracts from individual agency evaluations provide examples of these very positive impressions that stood in contrast to those of the real-time evaluations and the larger-scale and more-independent sources:

All aspects of the Save the Children, Oxfam, and CIDA-funded projects showed the hallmarks of extremely well planned, partner implemented responses (Truelove and Duncalf 2012: 3).

[The ACTED project was] known by the local community as one that averted massive displacement of agro-pastoralist communities to refugee camps in Kenya to seek food and water . . . and . . . the project methodology has been responsive to the changing context in the project and was able to adapt project activities to meet these changing dynamics whilst also utilizing data and information available to improve their methodology (Hassan 2011: ii-iii).

The NRC response at the onset of the crisis has been particularly efficient as it managed to distribute large quantities of food at short notice, without

facing major security incidents, and reached beneficiaries not only in Mogadishu but also in their places of origin prior to displacement, or closer to their place of origin in Lower Shabelle and Bay regions (Guillemois and Mohamed 2012: 4).

Despite much restricted access, DRC was accepted well in the local communities, particularly in Mogadishu. DRC provided a timely response by capitalizing on its strong operational presence on the ground. The combination of emergency response and long term activities was strong and should be emphasized in future programming; however, inputs did not do much to address root causes of vulnerability (Guillemois 2012: 50).

Throughout the literature, these positive reviews of individual projects are juxtaposed with other reports, often at a more macro level that are heavy in their criticisms: an extremely late response in spite of good early warning information, poor geographic targeting, failure to retarget even a year into the program, attempts by authorities and militia to influence the targeting or registration process; taxation of the implementing NGO by local authorities; taxation of beneficiaries by local authorities and gatekeepers; taxation of traders and *hawala* agents by local authorities; double registration; errors of inclusion, etc. (Darcy et al. 2012; Longley et al. 2012; Hedlund et al. 2013).

While this criticism is especially aimed at the response in Somalia, similar criticisms were made regarding Kenya and Ethiopia (Sida et al. 2012; Paul et al. 2012). Internal evaluations for the World Food Programme were reasonably positive on Kenya (WFP 2011), and on the refugee response in Kenya and Ethiopia (WFP 2012). But the internal evaluation on Somalia was much less positive, citing a number of problems with the response to the famine including insufficient attention to alternative modalities of food assistance, blurred boundaries between the UN's political and humanitarian mission (not WFP's fault), insufficient consideration of shifting donor policy and poor contingency planning (WFP 2012).

This apparent inconsistency between individual-agency (typically NGO) evaluations (including the CVMG monitoring system) on the one hand, and larger-scale meta-evaluations and independent moni-

toring processes raises questions about the conditions under which in-depth analysis and critical assessments are possible in a context such as Somalia. The implications of this apparent lack of consistency are yet to be fully explored, but likely to be significant in that they may suggest a lack of realistic appreciation of the place of the humanitarian sector in the political economy of Somalia (see below).

The Impact of the Humanitarian Response

At the broadest level of humanitarian impact for 2011 and 2012, several meta-reviews and evaluations highlight the “life saving” rather than “livelihood saving” nature of the response, consistent with its late start. In Somalia, the famine response, although late, was “proportionate and appropriate . . . mitigating the scale and intensity of the famine and preventing its spread to Gedo region” (Darcy et al. 2012: 9). In Kenya, the response helped to “save lives and reduce suffering” (Paul et al. 2012: 17). The same pattern occurred in Ethiopia (Sida et al. 2012). Given the regional nature of the crisis, little regional level analysis, planning, or resource mobilization was done (Slim 2012).

Ethiopia did not see rising malnutrition and mortality rates compared with previous crises. Sida et al. (2012) state that this is “a significant improvement on earlier years. . . . The main reason for this improvement is the work of the Government of Ethiopia and its partners to put in place long term, predictable systems to deal with both chronic and acute need” (p. 21). Furthermore, although still heavily relying on NGO support during times of high caseload and pipeline problems (p. 30), the Outpatient Therapeutic Programs (OTP) were considered a success as rates remained well above international standards.

In Somalia, ascertaining how well the humanitarian response actually saved lives, alleviated suffering, and restored livelihoods is quite difficult. In terms of recipient perceptions, beneficiaries greatly appreciated cash, in particular because of the flexibility with which it could be used. Both programs reported that cash was used to improve access to food, including more-preferred foods and more-

nutritious food. Cash was also used to repay debts (many of which had been incurred to buy food earlier) and for improving access to a wide variety of other consumption and investment items. Evaluations found that cash was an appropriate intervention, at scale, in the Somali context in terms of impact on the market—its use did not lead to any major bottlenecks or inflationary trends (Hedlund et al. 2013). According to the monitoring report for the unconditional cash and voucher program, it was associated with many positive indicators, including increased dietary diversity, increased number of meals, reduced use of coping strategies, repayment of debt, and the opening of new credit lines (Longley et al. 2012). The cash-for-work (CFW) program evaluation in Somalia noted, “communities were on the whole extremely positive about cash-based programming for the freedom of choice it offers. What respondents appreciated in particular about CFW is its capacity to grant both short and long-term benefits, and create durable assets” (FAO 2013: 21). Beneficiaries reported high agricultural production, mainly attributed to the irrigation from canals built through FAO’s previous intervention, and almost all indicated they avoided negative coping strategies. However, when the program ended, households inevitably reverted to previous coping strategies (FAO 2013).

Hedlund et al. (2013) reported that unconditional transfers were used primarily to purchase much needed basic foodstuffs, followed by repayment of debt (much of which had been incurred purchasing food before assistance became available). They also note a rapid improvement in food security status among recipients—an improvement that was statically significant even when controlling for the rapidly dropping price of food after the famine was declared. Although these positive impacts are seen throughout the literature, as Hedlund et al. (2013) highlight, it is extremely difficult to attribute direct causation to any specific assistance. Cash and voucher transfers were only two of the many types of resources entering Somalia, many of which were concentrated in the same geographic areas, and these various resources were widely shared. In addition, as noted the price of food began to decline rapidly in July and August 2011 and continued to drop throughout the remainder of the year and

into 2012; and climatic and agricultural conditions significantly improved as the humanitarian response was scaled up and economic activities in general improved, especially in aid hubs such as Mogadishu (Hedlund et al. 2013).

7. Community Responses and Diaspora

Background to the Somali Diaspora

The “Somali” diaspora includes people from all of Djibouti, Ethiopia (SNRS), northeastern Kenya as well as Somalia itself. The Ethiopian and Somalia diasporas are particularly closely enmeshed following the huge voluntary and forced displacement of Ethiopian Somalis to Somalia during the 1960s and 1970s (300–500,000 Ethiopian Somalis moved during the 1960s and 1970s, and a further 400–800,000 were displaced to Somalia as a result of the Ethiopia-Somalia War in 1977–78). Many of these Ethiopian Somalis were incorporated into Somalia’s pattern of migration, initially to the Middle East and then after the Somalia civil war, to Europe and North America (Menkhaus 2008).

There is very little research on the diaspora and remittances beyond Somalia itself. Clans that traverse the Somalia-Ethiopia border, particularly in the northern border areas will access remittances from the Somalia side, through family links. Majid (2013) refers to remittances in SNRS, including household-level, education-related, and aid-related, but does not provide any specific figures or case studies. Within Somalia, most of the available research has been conducted in Somaliland, and to a lesser extent, northern regions in general. Somaliland itself is thought to account for a disproportionate share of remittances.

The main constraint to receiving remittances in the SNRS has been the undeveloped telecommunications infrastructure, which has meant that remittances cannot be sent to many locations. They must be collected from further away or sent in person

through social networks (Majid 2013). However, in the last few years, telecommunications have improved and the Ethiopian Somali diaspora have returned in significant numbers.

With regard to Northeastern Kenya, Menkhaus (2005) contrasts the levels of remittances being received on either side of the Somalia-Kenya border, stating that they are much more significant on the Somalia side, highlighting towns such as Kismayo, Bardheere, and Bulo Hawa. He also points out that remittances to residents of growing towns such as Garissa, in Kenya, were increasing because Somalis displaced from Somalia were settling there.

The following section therefore draws entirely from research on Somalia (itself biased towards northern Somalia), reflecting the absence of such information in the Ethiopian and Kenyan (Somali) contexts.

Within the Somali context, local communities, diaspora groups and local organizations (including clan structures, religious organizations, businesses, community-based organizations or CBOs, and local authorities) are typically the first responders in crises (Darcy et al. 2012). This extends nationally and internationally within the wider Somali ethnic population. Financial contributions measurable in the millions of dollars came from these sources; for example, \$700 thousand were donated to the famine-affected areas by the Somaliland public alone (Darcy et al. 2012). The Somali diaspora is estimated to contribute well over 50 percent of Somalia's GDP (Hammond et al. 2011; UNDP 2001). Financial remittances are known to increase during times of crisis and reach Somalis in their homes, implying that for those who receive them, movement in times of crisis is not always necessary (Hammond et al. 2011). This generalized picture reflects a "powerful culture of obligation and rights" (Menkhaus 2008: 193) that does indeed describe Somalis, but also disguises the nuances and complexity of social relations, and the resulting implications for coping in difficult times—people are not covered equally by these mutual obligations.

One of the key strategies for risk management in Somalia is mobility; among pastoralists, dividing herds and family members during periods of drought is well known. Particularly severe droughts

are significant factors in stimulating urban and even international migration (Lindley 2006). Much of this movement and the underlying social networks that keep people connected, whether within the country or internationally, takes place within the extended family or clan structures. The following quote captures the extent of such networks for many households, over twenty years ago, prior to the civil war:

For example, it would not have been surprising to find that an extended family includes: a son who lives as a nomadic herder in the rural area taking care of the extended family livestock; a daughter who is also a pastoralist, living with her husband in the rural area; another son at university in the capital training to be an engineer; a son working in a Gulf country who send back money regularly to his relatives in Somalia; a daughter who trained as a teacher and is married to an army lieutenant; another son who runs a business in town using his brother's foreign currency to buy imported goods; an unmarried daughter who is a bank clerk; and a grandson studying computer sciences in the US. Within this web of livelihoods income or resources in-kind are transferred or negotiated between family members so as to support and maintain the whole (Gardner and El Bushra 2004: 100).

This quote captures a number of issues still relevant today: the history of Somali migration to the Gulf which (although less important today than North America and Europe) persisted in 2011 through household, business, Islamic/religious, and state-based connections; the extended family and clan as a functional unit of resource sharing, which may offer a very different analytical lens from the "livelihood group" as the predominant unit for analyzing food security in Somalia; and the importance of both national as well as international financial remittances. The above quote also disguises a geographical and social hierarchy of "diasporization" and remittance flows among Somalis, where particular clans and sub-clans have had privileged access to such resources. At the geographic level, northern and central regions and their associated clans have a stronger remittance economy and stronger "pastoral" clan identity, whereas some of the marginalized clans of the south have weaker connections (Hammond et al. 2011; Majid and McDowell 2012). However, the strength of such ties also varies within clans, at the sub-clan level (Majid 2013).

Hammond et al. (2011) identified nine types of diasporic providers of financial remittances: individual households, local NGOs, clan-based hometown associations, professional associations, transnational associations, mosques, private shareholders and investors in private businesses, members of boards of trustees, women's groups, and youth groups. These groups can inter-changeably be involved in relief, development, and political activities, according to the situation at the time (Hammond et al. 2011).

The majority of financial remittances referred to above comes from household, family-level transfers, where such flows are unequally distributed, increasing inequalities (UNDP 2001). For example, an estimated 25 to 40 percent of households in Somalia are thought to receive (international) remittances directly (Sorensen 2004) and 15 to 20 percent in Kenyan Somali refugee camps were also recipients of remittances (Horst 2009). These flows, however, cross many social boundaries, particularly in times of stress. Lindley notes that "not only are transfers made from the diaspora to Hargeisa, but also money and resources are transferred from the better-off to poorer households, and from urban to rural households. City dwellers that do receive remittances often are in a better position to help other relatives during periods of drought or an economic downturn" (Lindley 2006: 17). However, much of this evidence derives from northern Somalia where research has been easier to conduct.

While the volume of these remittances is worth noting, the "social function of remittances, and the rules of obligation that surround them, are not well understood" (Hammond et al. 2011: 127). These flows can be understood in context of their social content and aggregate value. But they may also disguise the strain on the resources of the sending households, as Somalis often occupy marginal positions in the labor market and welfare economy of the West or other locations of migration (Hammond et al. 2011; Lindley 2006). Cultural factors such as *Eid*, the changing household situation for recipients of remittances (such as local conflict, environmental shocks and exchange rate fluctuations), the impact of drought and cost-of-living increases, and personal crises (illness, death, or

livelihood collapse) all influence the demand for financial assistance (Lindley 2006).

Specific examples of humanitarian assistance by any of these actors are scant beyond the generalizations mentioned in the paragraph above. One example of note happened in response to the 2005–06 regional drought; "over \$230,000 was raised by Somali civic actors primarily in Mogadishu and the diaspora and distributed in various forms (water-tankering and food commodities) in the affected areas of Gedo, Bay, Bakool, Juba, Lower and Middle Shabelle" (Majid, Hussein, and Shuria 2007: 18). The major private-sector companies in Somalia are also known to provide significant amounts of development and humanitarian assistance with Dahabshil, for example, estimated to have an annual charitable fund of approximately \$1 million (Majid 2011).

A number of local religious and tradition-based social support mechanisms exist amongst Somalis. The most prominent religious obligation is *zakat*, which involves distribution of harvest, livestock and/or income from wealthy to poor and is commonly practiced among Somalis. Another common practice is *diya*, mobilized at the sub-clan level and typically used to compensate another sub-clan group as a result of conflict-related losses. *Qaraan* is another form of fund-raising, often based on common identity but extending to friends and the wider clan. This is often used to raise money to support a family or families who have experienced some kind of shock or loss. Clan elders usually manage *diya* and *qaraan*. While *diya* levels are general fixed, room for negotiation exists, and both *diya* and *qaraan* contributions can be sensitive to the wealth of those paying (Horst 2006). Other processes of fundraising have extended to the diaspora, such as providing money to support clan leaders in their political campaigns and projects and arming or defending the clan (Horst 2006). Somali businessmen commonly utilize a shareholding system to raise capital. This may be based on clan-related ties, religious integrity, or general credibility of the person or persons involved.

The displacement of people to IDP and refugee camps is one part of a process of mobility and has been occurring on a significant scale since the late 1980s. Because of the violence associated with the

“global war on terrorism” and the famine, the number of Somali people in IDP and refugee camps within the Horn has expanded dramatically since 2007. As a result, Dadaab refugee camp is now the second- or third-largest “urban center” in Kenya. However, these sites should also be acknowledged as hubs through which resources flow as part of transformed livelihood systems; in particular, many residents of such camps remain connected to core and extended family members in their original home areas and elsewhere. Dadaab has been recognized for many years for its links (through Somalis) to the global Somali diaspora as well as to Somalia itself (Horst 2006); telephone and money-transfer infrastructure operates in such places, enabling the flow of information and money.

The demographic composition of refugee camps has also changed because of recent events. Horst (2006) reports that the *Darod/Ogaden* clan comprised the majority of the residents in Dadaab at the time of her research (the clan identity in the Kenya-Somalia areas around Dadaab) but anecdotal sources strongly suggest that the *Rahanweyn*, from Bay and Bakool in Somalia—the primary victims of the famine—now comprise a significant proportion of the camp population. This has implications that are not yet well understood, but could be better understood through the study of this group’s area of origin, their livelihood base (the *Rahanweyn* are primarily agro-pastoral), political protection, and opportunities (the *Rahanweyn* are few in number in Kenya, whereas the *Ogaden* are well-established and connected).

Somalis, as a mobile and inter-connected ethnic population group defining a contiguous territory that links Somalia, Ethiopia, and Kenya, do not appear to be part of any systematic regional or cross-border analytical process when it comes to food security and vulnerability analysis (such work, where it exists, is sporadic at best). National borders offer opportunities and constraints that vary according to clan-based identities; these include accessing resources and gaining identity or citizenship rights. Once established, new “urban” settings like Dadaab, sometimes of considerable size, suggest transformed or modified livelihood patterns, where humanitarian (or other) resources will remain

important. The role of these camps and their “pull factor” in the uneven distribution of humanitarian aid was already well known prior to the famine (Polastro et al. 2011).

IDP and refugee camps, as new “urban” settings, appear to stimulate adapted governance systems and mobilize new actors, including those in the private sector. As such, they might be described as “community responses” in the host locations, as the description of “gatekeepers” noted above suggests: What may have begun as an attempt to assist fellow citizens rapidly became a lucrative money-making venture (Bryld et al. 2013). The processes and significance associated with these kinds of “community responses” are not well understood, yet they are arguably more meaningful and significant to people on the ground and determine who gets what type of assistance (and who does not). The level of displacement and therefore of transformed livelihoods requires further research. Key questions are identified below in relation to these local responses.

8. Emerging or Non-traditional Humanitarian Actors

Emergence of Non-traditional Donors and Actors in Humanitarian Aid

Over the span of the past decade, the humanitarian aid contributions made by “emerging powers” grew substantially, from about \$35 million in 2000 to over \$620 million in 2010 (Whiting 2012). Until recently, many of these emerging donors³ (such as China and India) were themselves recipients of

³ Preferences differ regarding the name for the category of humanitarian actors that were quite important in the response to the famine in 2011, but who hadn’t necessarily been active in humanitarian work in Somalia prior to that time. They are not “new” per se—some have been around for decades. They are mostly from Islamic countries but the name “Islamic” doesn’t necessarily capture the idea either—for example, Red Crescent Societies are secular agencies. So we have used the terms “non-traditional” or “emerging” here—although some agencies don’t like these terms either.

international aid but, with growing economies and political reach, they began to play an emergent role in the humanitarian aid system.

The reaction to the growing prominence of these new actors from Latin America, Middle East, Africa, and Asia has been mixed; some have expressed their suspicion of and concern about these new actors' motives and others have pointed to a lack of professionalism and coordination (Oxfam 2012). However, with a large imbalance between what the Western world is willing and/or able to contribute as humanitarian aid and as the current system reaches both its financial and response capacity, there is a need to scale up (Whiting 2012: 2). Oxfam (2012) has stated the increasing need for the United Nation and international NGOs to complement and support the efforts of these emerging donors and actors, the "future of humanitarian action will depend on [it]" (Oxfam 2012: 2).

However, Binder, Meier, and Steets (2010) have pointed to a serious imbalance in the current international humanitarian system; it is largely controlled by a small circle of Western humanitarian donors, such as those who sit on OECD's Development Assistance Committee (DAC). They also noted that the current system is largely dismissive of different approaches to or traditions in humanitarian aid, and this has led to "uncoordinated donorship that may lead to duplications, gaps, and other inefficiencies in humanitarian response" (Binder et al. 2010). As mentioned briefly below, both OCHA and WFP made efforts to better coordinate the activities of these non-traditional donors. Many are concerned that these new donors are repeating mistakes that traditional players have made.

Role of Non-traditional or Emerging Donors and Actors in Somali Crisis, 2010–11

In response to the deteriorating situation and the declaration of famine in July, non-traditional donors contributed at unprecedented speed and volume (OCHA 2011). In August 2011, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) pledged \$350 million for Somalia, with Turkey committing another \$280 million, Qatar donating \$6.8

million, the Islamic Charitable Organizations giving \$290,000 in cash, and United Arab Emirates collecting \$50 million through aid telethons (IRIN 2011). At the time of writing, however, much of the OIC's \$350 million remains under the "pledged" status (OCHA FTS 2014). These new and non-traditional donors' contributions represented nearly 30 percent of aid committed for the famine response (IRIN 2011). In Somalia, while many Western donors cut budgets in fear of another recession, Muslim and Arab donors took center stage both in financial contributions and humanitarian activities on the ground (IRIN 2011).

The Muslim identity of many of these non-traditional donors and agencies led to greater humanitarian access, while traditional humanitarian agencies were turned away on grounds of suspicion and mistrust (Simonow 2013). Weariness with the Western-led humanitarian system has been increasing, with some countries comparing humanitarian aid to imperialism (Whiting 2012). Non-traditional actors have the financial capacity to fill the significant funding gap but do not want to be seen as simply filling a gap. There is a perceived efficiency to staying outside of traditional funding mechanisms but this independence also raised concern about such donors' accountability and transparency. Non-DAC donors largely channeled their contributions through bilaterally, working directly with the affected governments. They were also more vocal in pushing for "horizontal" relationships with recipient governments; they did not want to play out historical power disparities between aid donors and recipients. In turn, they often did not attach conditions to their aid (Simonow 2013). On the other hand, working closely with government in Somalia soon cost them some gains in humanitarian access.

Published details regarding non-traditional actors' activities are scant. Often, they are available only as excerpts in an organization's annual reports or fundraising materials. The nature of these non-traditional actors' activities needs to be better documented and disseminated. In fact, this dearth of information is a major critique facing non-traditional actors. Below is an overview of the activities of a few actors and donors. Where information is avail-

able, a brief account is provided of the breadth of each actor's activities and humanitarian donations as well as its impact on politics. A brief overview follows with some challenges faced by these emerging actors and outlines some gaps in the literature that we hope to address through our interviews.

Turkey

Turkey has come to the fore as a major player in the humanitarian system. Between 2011 and 2012, its official development assistance doubled; it contributed nearly \$1 billion in 2012 alone and was the fourth largest donor that year (Buston and Smith 2013). Turkey has been referred to as an “animating force” in Somalia, and its humanitarian presence has garnered political and public support both in Somalia and in Turkey (Saferworld 2013; Whiting 2012). Motivated by its foreign policy agenda of “zero problems” to promote “peace at home and peace in the world,” and economic consideration for Turkish businesses that are looking to penetrate the Somali market to play a leading role in reconstruction and economic development, Turkey provided \$77.7 million in humanitarian assistance to Somalia in 2011 (Buston and Smith 2013). Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan was also the first non-African leader to visit Somalia in over 20 years (Buston and Smith 2013). At the end of 2013, however, Turkey stopped providing direct budgetary support—often provided in cash—to Somalia; it is reported that the aid was around \$4.5 million per month (Jorgic and Karadeniz 2014). Its humanitarian assistance remains unaffected by this budget aid cut; it will continue.

Turkish organizations' visible presence on the ground in Somalia was in stark contrast to other donors and NGOs who operated remotely from Nairobi (Buston and Smith 2013). It brought into question the “no-go” designation that other organizations had put on Somalia (ICG 2012). In providing its assistance largely without conditions, Turkey's humanitarian aid bolstered the Transitional Federal Government (TFG), who was growing increasingly unpopular, and ran counter to the growing push for its reform (International Crisis Group 2012). However, some voices within the TFG have criticized Turkish organizations'

and diplomats' tendency to work directly with the president, bypassing the government and civil society (ICG 2010). With Turkish aid focused largely on Mogadishu, leaders of other regions have raised concerns of TFG officials disproportionately allocating benefits (ICG 2012).

The most visible Turkish organization has been The Turkish Red Crescent, or Kızılayı, which has been implementing relief activities from its coordination office in Mogadishu since 2011. It has worked with the Somali Red Crescent Society, employing local staff and a few expatriates to assist in the restoration and reconstruction of health facilities and medical personnel training (ICG 2012). Aid is largely coordinated through the Turkish International Cooperation and Development Agency (TIKA) through which bilateral development agreements between the Somali and Turkish governments have been established (ICG 2012). Projects under TIKA's purview include drilling boreholes, fencing and rehabilitating Mogadishu airports, and restoring some government buildings. Turkish NGOs such as IHH Humanitarian Relief Foundation, Kimse Yok Mu, Helping Hands, and Nile Organization, have also been in Somalia providing cataract eye surgery, drilling water wells, rehabilitating mosques, and distributing emergency food aid, to name a few activities.

There are also reports that Turkish aid angered Al-Shabaab, who attacked and raided the Turkish embassy in Mogadishu (Jorgic and Karadeniz 2014). As Turkey continues its humanitarian role in Somalia, critics have warned of its need better account for the regional or clan dynamics and coordinate its efforts or otherwise face exploitation by Somali politicians (ICG 2012). Turkey also provided some assistance to local NGOs in Ethiopia and to some organizations in Kenya, but its main engagement—both during and after the famine—was in Somalia.

Saudi Arabia

Saudi Arabia has been a top non-DAC donor for the past decade, but much of its aid is unreported for many reasons, such as lack of familiarity with international reporting norms and lack of organizational capacity to track such data (Whiting 2012).

Saudi Arabia has also been critical of UN agencies' overhead and lack of capacity to quickly channel funds to organizations on the ground; it often contributes its first installment and disburses the rest only if the agency can show that it can disseminate the funds in an agreed upon time (Whiting 2012).

With a permanent office in Mogadishu, Saudi Arabia has provided humanitarian aid to Somali through international, regional, and bilateral agencies (WHO 2013). In July 2011, Saudi Arabia, in cooperation with WFP, pledged \$50 million in emergency humanitarian assistance for Somali refugees and an additional \$10 million for the WHO for vaccinations and medical supplies (Royal Embassy of Saudi Arabia 2011). In August 2011, the Saudi National Campaign for the Relief of the Somali People was launched "for the people of Somalia suffering from drought and famine"; King Abdulla made a \$5.3 million donation, Crown Prince Sultan bin Abdulaiziz contributed an additional \$2.7 million, and Second Deputy Prime Minister Prince Nayef bin Abdulaziz donating another \$1.3 million to the national campaign (Royal Embassy of Saudi Arabia 2011). Saudi Arabia reportedly contributed \$24 million for education, health, and agricultural sectors in addition to projects to rehabilitate displaced persons and cater for their social welfare (ReliefWeb 2013). During the famine, the Saudi national campaign provided more than 10,000 tons of relief (ReliefWeb 2013). Other projects included providing emergency health supplies, emergency vaccination campaigns, and consultancies at health facilities; according to Saudi Arabia, its support helped to reach millions in need (WHO 2013).

Islamic Organizations

The Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), Islamic Relief, and Humanitarian Forum are not new actors—they have been active members of the humanitarian system for some time. However, as they each played an important role, largely that of coordinator or liaison between the emerging Islamic or Somali actors and traditional actors, their activities are briefly noted below.

Organization of Islamic Cooperation. The Organization of Islamic Cooperation or OIC is

the second-largest intergovernmental organization after the UN (Islamic Relief 2012). The OIC asserts itself as the "collective voice of the Muslim world" and has a membership of 57 states from four continents (OIC 2014). The OIC has had an active role in providing and coordinating humanitarian aid during and in response to the crisis. In March of 2011, the OIC established a Humanitarian Coordination Office in Mogadishu. And in July of 2011, during an emergency meeting held in Istanbul by invitation of the Turkish government, the OIC announced the establishment of the OIC Alliance of Relief Organization. With a mandate to coordinate humanitarian activities, the Alliance was an umbrella of 32 non-governmental organizations, almost all based in Muslim countries. Oxfam (2012) estimates that the OIC's coordinated activities of Arabic and Muslim NGOs reached over 1.4 million people between April and October 2011.

The head of the OIC's Mogadishu office has stated that one of its aims is to fill the gaps left by the UN system, namely its inability to access certain areas (IRIN 2011). Under the purview of the Alliance of Relief Organization, the OIC designated five organizations, Turkish Red Crescent Society, Federation of Arab Doctors, Qatar Red Crescent, Islamic Relief, and Department of Humanitarian Affairs of the OIC, to lead activities in five broad areas: management of camps, health services, food and emergency needs, media and documentation, and mobilization of resources, respectively.

One member of the OIC distributed food and other aid in Al-Shabaab-controlled areas in Bay, Bakool, Gedo, and Lower Shabelle throughout August, September, and October, but then increasingly concentrated in Mogadishu (World Assembly of Muslim Youth 2012). This is broadly indicative of the narrative of Islamic agencies that began to address the famine in July 2011: for a time they did have much better access to Al-Shabaab-controlled territory—and indeed they continued to distribute some assistance in those areas throughout the crisis—but increasingly their work focused on Mogadishu IDPs after about October 2011.

OIC has signed Memorandum of Understandings (MOUs) with both WFP and OCHA to better coordinate food aid distribution in the Afgooye

corridor near Mogadishu and other humanitarian activities (OIC 2011). In an effort to coordinate more effectively with other international organizations working in the Horn, OIC is also in the process of setting up a liaison office in Nairobi (Oxfam 2012).

Islamic Relief. Islamic Relief began operating ad-hoc projects in Somalia in 1996 and now has five offices throughout Somalia—in Somaliland, Puntland, Mogadishu, and Baidoa (Islamic Relief 2012). It now provides year-round relief and development programs and is one of the few international aid agencies providing emergency aid on multiple sides of the conflict. In its reports, it estimates having reached over half a million people in a span of six months through its efforts to build latrines and rehabilitate a hospital in Mogadishu and its pilot of a “disaster risk reduction” strategy in Northern Somalia (Islamic Relief 2012).

Humanitarian Forum. Humanitarian Forum (HF)’s work in Somalia began in October 2009 with a roundtable to bring traditional humanitarian organizations and their counterparts from the Gulf, Turkey, and Somalia to discuss Somalia’s needs (Islamic Relief 2012). HF seeks to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of aid by addressing gaps left by humanitarian communities (Islamic Relief 2012). In 2011, in partnership with Muslim Charities Forum, HF helped to establish the Somali Relief and Development Forum (SRDF), bringing together NGOs based in the UK that operated in or with Somalia in response to the deteriorating conditions in Somalia (Islamic Relief 2012; SRDF 2012). In its first annual report, SRDF outlines both short-term emergency famine relief and long-term development projects in Somalia. In response to the crisis, it mobilized a program of emergency famine relief, delivered food packages in Kismayo, Benadir, and Bakool areas, and provided primary health care through mobile clinics in Bay and Lower Shabelle, Galmudug, and Afgooye areas (SRDF 2012). Under the purview of its long-term development projects, SRDF helped to build 38 groundwater wells, worked to establish an eye-care program, and established a university scholarship program in cooperation with other universities across the Horn of Africa (SRDF 2012).

Private Sector

In Kenya, the commercial sector is formal and well-regulated. The corporate social responsibility culture is strong and many firms have set up charitable foundations or departments at the national level. The vast majority of corporate responses to Kenya’s cyclical droughts have been philanthropic in nature. During the Horn of Africa Crisis, the Kenya Red Cross Society (KRCS) played a key role in leading the commercial-humanitarian collaboration largely due to its visibility and well-received role during the post-election violence that erupted in 2007–08 (Humanitarian Futures Programme 2012). KRCS collaborated with Safaricom Foundation, the Kenya Commercial Bank Foundation, Media Owners Association, and Gina Din Communications to fundraise from individual Kenyans and local corporate organizations for humanitarian relief in drought-affected areas of Kenya. Officially launched on July 27, 2011, the initiative exceeded its initial goal of Ksh. 500 million by raising over Ksh. 7.5 billion (or approximately \$8.5 million) in cash and over Ksh1 billion was raised as cash and in-kind contributions from individual Kenyan donors both at home and abroad. There was an enormous amount of support from both the Kenyan public as well as small and medium enterprises and corporations in Kenya. The money was used to supply food supplements for lactating mothers and children in the drought-affected regions of Kenya, and portion of the funds were reserved for more long-term projects to reduce the vulnerability of communities in areas that were prone to drought.

The funds were first targeted to the most vulnerable who included pregnant and lactating mothers, the sick, the elderly, and school-going children in Moyale, Marsabit, Turkana, Kwale, Kilifi, Ijara, Machakos, Pokot, Kitui, Garissa, Wajir, Mandera, Lamu, Isiolo, Kajiado, Mwingi, Taita Taveta, and Samburu regions (Kenya Red Cross n.d). Some funds were also allotted for longer-term projects to reduce the vulnerability of the communities in drought-prone areas (Humanitarian Futures Programme 2012).

In Somalia, the majority of the commercial sector–humanitarian agency partnerships and collaboration occurred in the form of sub-contracts or when

UN agencies or international NGOs contracted Somali businesses to procure goods and supplies or for logistics, transport, communications, or private-security services. Given the protracted conflict and the essential governance or authority vacuum, non-Somali businesses and private sector organizations have been hesitant to become involved. The Somali diaspora play a large role in providing relief and supporting development through private remittances. However, the recession and the fear of being accused of providing support for Al-Shabaab have tempered these financial and in-kind donations.

Challenges and Obstacles

The sentiment is growing that UN agencies have compromised their neutrality (IRIN 2011). In turn, non-traditional donors and actors have expressed hesitation to work too closely with the UN system. The history of the lack of mutual trust and understanding on the part of both sides contributes to the skepticism that non-traditional donors and actors have about the West's desire to collaborate with them. With the UN perceived to have the upper hand and experience, some Muslim and Arab NGOs also expressed fear of being "swallowed up" by the enormous system and of being unable to interact with it on equal footing (IRIN 2011).

The non-traditional actors' inexperience and relatively new forays into humanitarian assistance have led to concerns about adverse outcomes (Refugees International 2011). There were anecdotes of donors not knowing whether plane loads of food from the Gulf reached their intended beneficiaries and that, given the high value of many of the items (such as jam and cheese), some were sold on the open market (IRIN 2011). Non-traditional donors are learning lessons as they go, such as about safe delivery methods and basic minimum standards. Some agencies have pointed out inconsistent and unequal distribution of food aid across IDP camps; this practice, if continued, could lead to strife within IDP communities (Refugee International 2011). It is worth noting that all these are the same criticisms that plagued traditional actors' activities a decade or two ago.

UN officials are concerned that the OIC and other non-traditional actors are creating a parallel coordination structure. One of OIC's aims was to fill the gaps left by traditional actors, namely the UN, given the inaccessibility of many areas in Somalia due to security concerns (Islamic Relief 2012). While some members of the OIC attended UN-led cluster meetings, the parallel coordination structures between OIC and OCHA has made it difficult to gain a full picture of humanitarian activities on the ground, especially in areas outside Mogadishu (Oxfam 2012).

Further complicating the relationship between non-traditional actors and donors on the one hand and their traditional counterparts on the other is the stigma that followed 9/11: many Western agencies express their fear of affiliating with Muslim charities (IRIN 2011). Yet, it is acknowledged that the need to include these "non-traditional" (or perhaps better-named "non-OECD/DAC") actors and donors in future humanitarian action is increasing (Oxfam 2012). While the UN and international NGOs will remain at the center of the humanitarian system, "their contributions will be increasingly be measured by how well they complement and support the efforts of others, and encourage every humanitarian actor to uphold humanitarian principles" (Oxfam 2012: 1). The humanitarian world is at a crossroads, undergoing a profound change—there is a need for traditional actors and donors to better share their formative experiences. Efforts must be made to engage frameworks of humanitarian action that have taken shape outside of the European and North American traditions (ODI 2014; Oxfam 2012).

Drummond and Crawford (2014) refer to a convergence of interests among important private-sector actors and the humanitarian and development community, noting that Kenya's Equity Bank's desire to expand its client base in the Turkana region supported the humanitarian and development goal of making physical cash more available in remote and insecure areas (Drummond and Crawford 2014). While the aforementioned Kenyans for Kenya initiative is an example of a successful private-public humanitarian venture, few formal avenues exist for private and humanitarian-sector partnership. Tradi-

tionally, the humanitarian response is considered to be a “strictly public sector (government, U.N., and international and national NGO) response,” with the private sector being contracted out to transport and deliver food (ibid: 8). Interviews with business associations noted that they were often left out of government-led humanitarian responses and planning, and when they were involved they did not feel like partners but “a reluctant substitute for ineffectual government action” (ibid: 7). If Kenya seeks to play a bigger role in managing its own humanitarian crises, it must foster a larger and more-formalized role for the private sector in its humanitarian strategy and response.

Conversely, in Somalia, the informal and unregulated nature of the Somali private sector continues to make collaboration or partnership with humanitarian organizations difficult. Especially in the face of counter-terrorism laws, UN agencies and international organizations are hesitant to contract out to Somali businesses without being able to ensure their accountability and transparency (Humanitarian Futures Programme 2012). In response, the UN Country Team in Somalia has established a Risk Management Unit to develop a core database of Somali commercial actors with whom the UN has previously contracted out projects and to compile these businesses’ political and economic affiliations as well as their performance and security assessments. While individuals from UN agencies note that the onus is on Somali businesses to establish their accountability through business forums or associations to develop common standards for business practices, the Somali businesses note that there has been a dearth of support provided by the UN to them in their contracts.

There are some gaps in the current literature on these emerging actors. First, while there are snapshots or anecdotal accounts of different organizations and actors’ activities, their endeavors must be substantiated. There is also a great imbalance in the literature about non-traditional or emerging actors’ activities during the 2011 crisis; while substantial information is available for Turkish activities, literature is scant on agencies from Qatar or United Arab Emirates that are noted as having played substantial humanitarian roles in the crisis.

Interviews with contacts at international and local organizations as well as think tanks may help to complement the existing information.

Second, assessments of the impact or effectiveness of these actors’ activities are relatively rare in the literature. Where there are references to access and impact, they are largely self-reported. The perceived notion is that emerging actors are better equipped to mediate humanitarian access, however, it is not clear *how* or *why* this is the case. Their mobility may be due to their Muslim identity and their distance from UN agencies perceived as no longer impartial. This is worth exploring further. Moreover, there are differing accounts of the relationship between emerging actors and their traditional counterparts—there are references of distrust and suspicion but also notes of rapidly evolving partnerships. It is worthwhile to clarify the nuances of the relationships and recent efforts to better coordinate humanitarian activities, such as through the Memoranda of Understanding between WFP and OCHA with OIC.

9. The Role of Al-Shabaab

The *Harakat al-Shabaab al Mujahideen* (Movement of Warrior Youth, *Al-Shabaab*) grew out of multiple failings of different ideologies to make a viable Somali state, including the failure of democratic governance; of clanism; of Somalia nationalism, Marxism and wardlordism (Hanson 2013). Al-Shabaab had competing nationalist (as opposed to clan-based loyalties within Somalia) and internationalist (transnational jihadist agenda) objectives (Bruton and Pham 2012; Hanson 2013). These objectives correspond in some degree to the origins of the individual members—Al-Shabaab did and does have foreign fighters and foreign operatives, some of Somali origins, some not (Hanson 2013). The Ethiopian intervention in Somalia in December 2006 helped radicalize Al-Shabaab (Seal and Bailey 2013). Between 2006 and 2008, the group’s membership grew substantially from a few hundred to thousands and its links to al-Qaeda became more

prominent (although it did not formally declare its allegiance to al-Qaeda until February 2012).

In 2008, the US State Department designated Al-Shabaab as a “specially designated global terrorist” group and many other governments, such as the Australian, British, and Canadian followed suit (Masters 2013; Pham 2013). The UN Security Council has also taken direct action against Al-Shabaab, noting the group was a “threat to peace and security in Somalia” and designated it a sanctioned entity in April 2010 (UN Security Council 2010). In light of these sanctions and the historical role of the UN in the conflict, the humanitarian arm of the UN was deemed by Al-Shabaab as being political—i.e., not impartial (Jackson and Aynte 2013). Perceived breaches of impartiality made it more difficult for the UN to negotiate humanitarian access, and an Al-Shabaab informant noted that specific UN agencies were believed to be “most spy-friendly agencies” (Jackson and Aynte 2013: 7).

During the peak of the famine and thereafter, Al-Shabaab suffered military incursions from Ethiopian and Kenyan forces. Giving aid as an example, Seal and Bailey (2013) note that political motives underlie the membership of both Ethiopia and Kenya in the West’s “global war on terror.” They point to economic projects such as the development of the Lamu corridor (to run an oil pipeline from Lamu on the Kenyan coast to the oil fields in Southern Sudan); the resulting infrastructure and tourism that will also benefit Ethiopia. In October 2011, Kenyan troops invaded Al-Shabaab territory west of the Juba River in Somalia (Pham 2013). While the public objective of the incursion was to respond to the kidnapping of Western tourists, speculations were that Kenya wanted to create “an effective buffer territory” in pursuit of their economic goals (Seal and Baily 2013; Pham 2013). Shortly thereafter, Ethiopian forces invaded the Bay, Bakool, and Hiraan regions of Somalia. These military offensives allowed the African Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) to capture the territory near Mogadishu including the Afgooye Corridor, strategic in its link to the agricultural center of the Shabelle Valley (Pham 2013).

While Al-Shabaab was not the only culprit in the 2011 famine, its policies and activities leading up

to and during the crisis certainly exacerbated its consequences. Al-Shabaab has had a long-standing antipathy towards food aid, believing that it undermines Somali agriculture. This belief contributed to WFP being banned in 2010 (Maxwell 2012). Prior to the 2012 Security Council embargo, Al-Shabaab relied heavily on the export of charcoal extracted from southern Somalia; nearly two-thirds of forests (that had previously covered 15 percent of Somalia territory) were destroyed to ship charcoal to the Persian Gulf via the Kismayo port. This unsustainable practice, which has existed since the early 1990s, reportedly earned Al-Shabaab millions of dollars in profits (Pham 2013).

In addition to charcoal exports, the group relied on contraband trade with Kenya to supplement its revenue. Hammond and Vaughan-Lee (2012) suggest that with these revenue streams the organization was relatively less dependent on aid. But Al-Shabaab leaders, especially those not from the local area, wanted to personally profit from locally enforced “taxation” methods (Bryden 2011). A complex system of taxation was set up and locally administered to collect taxes or “jihad war contributions” from resident businesses, sales transactions, and arable land (Pham 2013). The farming community members had previously engaged mostly in subsistence farming, and grew just enough to feed themselves and their families and stored sorghum or maize in anticipation of hardship. But Al-Shabaab’s new taxation system forced farmers to grow cash crops such as sesame that could then be sold for export (usually to traders connected to the leadership of Al-Shabaab) to could get money to pay their taxes (Pham 2013). These extractive taxation practices by Al-Shabaab exacerbated the food insecurity experienced by these households as conditions worsened.

As part of these locally administered taxation systems, Al-Shabaab created a Drought Committee beginning in 2010. It was established largely to demonstrate the group’s responsiveness to the drought and its decision to expel humanitarian organizations in regions under their control (Marchal 2011). Marchal writes that Al-Shabaab was trying to “regain the sympathy of the population” (2011: 74). Taxes collected from salaries,

rented homes, and use of public properties were given to the Drought Committee who then distributed cash, food, or clothes to those affected by the drought. When these contributions were not enough, Al-Shabaab requested “voluntary contributions” from traders at the market place (Marchal 2011: 73). Al-Shabaab targeted assistance to the poorest regardless of clan identity, which (Western-funded) humanitarian actors were often unable to do (Hedlund et al. 2013). However, as noted below, these efforts appeared insufficient to appease the populace, which grew increasingly discontented with Al-Shabaab’s (lack of) response to deteriorating conditions.

Aid was previously considered an important and profitable resource, but in 2010, the group reorganized and extended its reach beyond major urban centers. Within southern Somalia, Al-Shabaab’s strategy reportedly changed in mid-2010. Then, Al-Shabaab regional coordinators began imposing strict controls and adopted aggressive fundraising efforts, including taxation of the humanitarian agencies. In response to these conditions—and to security threats after several aid workers were killed—major international agencies, such as the World Food Programme, and other NGOs were forced out of Al-Shabaab-controlled areas.

Al-Shabaab publicly framed engagement with aid agencies in terms of efficiency or security. The relationship may also be understood through the lens of the political economy of aid in Somalia, where many NGOs are seen to benefit those who work for them. It saw itself as a “government in waiting,” and co-opting aid agencies furthered its self-image and demonstrated that it had something positive to offer civilians (Jackson and Aynte 2013: 15). Limiting humanitarian access was seen as part of its “propaganda campaign against the West” and reflected Al-Shabaab’s deeply held suspicion of aid agencies as spies or as the enemies’ conspirators (Seal and Bailey 2013: 3). When the famine had spread to six regions of Somalia controlled by Al-Shabaab in mid-2011, the group expressed outright hostility towards aid agencies. It routinely expelled, attacked, extorted, and harassed aid workers (Jackson/Aynte). Pointing to “misconduct” and “illicit activities,” Al-Shabaab’s Office for Supervising

the Affairs of Foreign Agencies expelled most UN agencies (including UNHCR, WHO, and UNICEF) and other major international organizations on November 28, 2011 (Al-Shabaab 2011).

While some permits were granted to agencies to work in areas under their control, access was granted only through direct negotiation with Al-Shabaab. It established the Humanitarian Coordination Office (HCO) to govern its access policy under supervision of a senior leadership council (*shura*). As part of the access negotiations, aid agencies were required to complete registration forms, pay fees that were at times more than \$10,000, and sign off on other documentation that laid out general conditions for access, including pledges not to proselytize (Jackson and Aynte 2013). In some cases, additional “taxes” were demanded, based on project type or size, and Al-Shabaab attempted to co-opt or control the delivery of aid, especially if activities included distribution of goods. Agencies had to disclose project details (specific activities, budgets, and staff members’ names) and HCO monitored activities (at times, with the aid of civilians who were given the task of keeping tabs on agencies) to ensure that aid agencies complied with their conditions. Consequences of breaking rules included expulsion, additional taxes, and attacks on aid workers.

Al-Shabaab perceived UN agencies and international organizations to be partial and complicit in the “global war on terrorism” (Hammond and Vaughan-Lee 2012; Jackson and Aynte 2013). Counter-terrorism restrictions introduced by major Western donors limited the pool of humanitarian funds available during the crisis and discouraged organizations from operating in the area (Hammond and Vaughan-Lee 2012; Seal and Bailey 2013). Seal and Bailey (2013) note that both the inadequate funding and counter-terror policies were strategic maneuvers to “undermine” Al-Shabaab. These efforts to weaken Al-Shabaab are likely to have made the famine conditions worse in parts of Somalia; Seal and Bailey (2013: 1) go as far as to refer to the Western donors as “belligerents” that helped turn the “drought-related food crisis into a famine.” Jackson and Aynte (2013) note various missed opportunities that could have improved ne-

negotiation of humanitarian access during the crisis. Those in leadership positions within humanitarian community could have taken a principled stand on agencies' engagement with Al-Shabaab, in terms of dialogue and in their stance against the counter-terrorism restrictions (Jackson and Aynte 2013). Agencies could have collaborated and shared information to stand united in their negotiations for access. Lastly, Jackson and Aynte suggest that a greater role on the part of the Somali government could also have helped the humanitarian effort; the lack of national policies only compounded problems of access.

Majid and McDowell (2012) noted that significant numbers of people had been moving out of Al-Shabaab-controlled areas into Dadaab throughout 2010, prior to the famine, for a variety of reasons, including Al-Shabaab's taxation and recruitment, and people's low expectations for the future in terms of the economy and "opportunities." Following Al-Shabaab's expulsion of humanitarian agencies from Lower Shabelle, Middle Shabelle, Bay, and Bakool in southern Somalia, hundreds of internally displaced people reportedly tried to leave these areas to gain access to government and international aid agencies in Mogadishu (Jamestown Foundation 2011). Al-Shabaab limited the movement of people out of regions under their control through force or the threat of force (Hanson 2013; Pham 2013).

The 2011 crisis has been labeled a "major propaganda defeat" for Al-Shabaab (Hanson 2013). There are numerous reports that the famine and Al-Shabaab's "clumsy response" caused great damage to the group's "already questionable reputation for good governance" (Pham 2013: 44). As a result of its unsustainable agricultural policies, extractive taxation policies, restrictions on movement, and direct expulsion of humanitarian agencies, many blamed Al-Shabaab for the devastating effects of the famine (Jacinto 2012; Pham 2013). While Al-Shabaab's "anti-WFP discourse" was easier to accept during times of relative food security, support for the group dwindled as food insecurity worsened (Marchal 2011). There were reports of the populace staging "drought riots" or protests around Mogadishu, Lower and Middle Shabelle, as well as

parts of central Somalia (Jamestown Foundation 2011). Growing increasingly discontented with the group's handling of the deteriorating situation, the public's protests in areas that Al-Shabaab controlled reflected the group's "deteriorating relations" with its populace (Marchal 2011: 74). Some went as far as to say that the famine bankrupted Al-Shabaab of its political currency (Jacinto 2012).

The famine also exposed the fractured power configuration of Al-Shabaab (Jacinto 2012; Pham 2013). On a message broadcast on a public pro-Islamist radio station, leader Sheikh Ahmed Abdi Godane admitted that "the infighting between Al-Shabaab officers contributed to the group's recent losses" and accused other Al-Shabaab members of betrayal and acting as spies for the enemy (Jamestown Foundation 2011). There have been reports of Al-Shabaab trying to make amends for its mishaps during the famine by holding meetings with clan elders and admitting wrong-doing (Jamestown Foundation 2011). However, Al-Shabaab's efforts to rebuild its reputation and the public's confidence have been largely unsuccessful. Appeals from the populace for financial and military support have largely gone unmet; the group's future appears to be in jeopardy (Jamestown Foundation 2011).

10. The Post-Crisis Policy Agenda and Resilience

While the longer-term impacts of the crisis in the Greater Horn of Africa, and Somalia in particular, have been many, one clearly stands out is a pivot away from repeated attempts to address chronic problems through limited-duration humanitarian programs, and towards addressing what has universally come to be labeled "resilience." Donors, NGOs, state governments, and the UN have begun calling loudly for building the resilience of communities regularly affected by crisis. In the concept of resilience, there are many references to earlier efforts to reduce vulnerability, but its proponents argue the resilience is a new and separate phenomenon, and one that holds the key for getting out of

the cycle of recurrent crises and attendant humanitarian responses. The theme certainly dominates current discussion about international engagement not only with Somalia and drought-prone areas of the Greater Horn of Africa, but also the Sahel, and other areas caught in protracted or repeated crisis. All the main donor agencies have developed resilience strategies (DFID 2011; European Commission 2013; USAID 2012).

Although the impetus for the discussion about resilience grew out of the late response to the 2011 crisis in the Horn of Africa, elements of the theme has been around for a long time. This section reviews the theory of resilience, questions about how resilience can be understood and measured, what specifically has been proposed with regard to building or improving the resilience of chronically at-risk populations, and whether—and how—lessons learned from the crisis of 2011 are informing the resilience agenda in the Greater Horn of Africa.

What Is Resilience?

The concept of resilience comes from ecology, in which it refers to the ability of an ecosystem to absorb and recover from shocks and stresses (Levine et al. 2012). There is no universally agreed-upon definition for resilience as it applies to humanitarian action or development. Given some of its roots in Disaster Risk Reduction or other forms of risk management, sometimes resilience is framed largely in humanitarian terms (DFID 2011; USAID 2012), but largely draws on development for much of its theoretical underpinnings and methodology (Barrett and Conostas 2013).

All definitions of resilience focus on a unit's ability to withstand shocks and adapt to new situations without falling into poverty—whether that unit is an individual, a household or small social group, a community, or, at a slightly different level, an institution. Referring specifically to households and communities, IFPRI's definition notes three different kinds of capacity—absorptive, adaptive, and transformative—as requirements to achieve resilience (IFPRI 2013).

Box 4 lists the different definitions used by some of the major actors.

A number of features are common to these definitions. The first is the ability to absorb or withstand shocks and stresses. This latter point is critical: shocks are major events such as droughts or floods that affect people as an event—they happen at a point in time. Stressors on the other hand may be constant, if less-acutely noticed, factors that include chronic poverty, failing livelihood systems, or poor governance, to name a few. Being truly resilient means being able to overcome both shocks and stresses.

Second, these definitions emphasize being able to “bounce back” in the aftermath of a shock or stress. Third, there is an implied emphasis on both current and future timeframes, and on both status and capability (in both timeframes). Much of the learning about past crises stresses the trade-off between these two: consumption smoothing for example implied some amount of compromising future capacity to ensure current consumption; asset smoothing on the other hand implied some amount of current sacrifice in order to protect future capacity.

Framing Resilience

Barrett and Conostas offer “a theory of resilience as it applies to the challenges of international development, framed more specifically as the capacity to avoid and escape from unacceptable standards of living—‘poverty’ for short—over time and in the face of myriad stressors and shocks” (2013: 1). While some operating definitions focus on current status, Barrett and Conostas remain focused particularly on capacities or capabilities: “resilience is the capacity over time of a person, household or other aggregate unit to avoid poverty in the face of various stressors and in the wake of myriad shocks. If and only if that capacity remains high, then the unit is resilient” (2013: 3). They draw heavily on earlier work on poverty traps (Carter and Barrett 2006) to denote distinct categories, which they define simply as “poor” and “non-poor.” They note multiple equilibria (stable states) along a non-linear trajectory of wellbeing—drawing directly on the poverty traps analogy—and note that the aim is to avoid not only premature mortality, but especially being trapped in one of the low-level equilibria noted. While their paper is technical and requires

some knowledge of economic methodology to understand, it maps out a series of trajectories and points at which those trajectories are likely to be interrupted or blocked. In that sense, it provides a theoretical basis for understanding what prevents people or populations from being more resilient. The main takeaway message is that it is not a linear process and there are circumstances in which people get trapped. It is not just a matter of another shock or stressor striking—there are structural factors as well. Much of the rest of the literature focuses almost exclusively on covariate shocks.

Barrett and Conostas suggest three options for intervention. The first is to improve the current state through either short-term measures such as cash transfers, or longer-term measures such as education, healthcare, or other means that increase the recipient’s capabilities. The second is to change the level of exposure to risk, which might be through

changing behaviors or it might be by direct risk mitigation. The third is about changing the underlying cultural, economic, or sociopolitical institutions, or introducing new technologies or markets. These very roughly follow the different kinds of capacities that IFPRI (2013: 19) outlined, which include absorptive, adaptive, and transformative capacities:

1. **“Absorptive capacity** covers the coping strategies individuals, households, or communities use to moderate or buffer the impacts of shocks on their livelihoods and basic needs.
2. **Adaptive capacity** is the ability to learn from experience and adjust responses to changing external conditions, yet continue operating.
3. **Transformative capacity** is the capacity to create a fundamentally new system when eco-

Box 4. Definitions of Resilience	
DFID	“The ability of countries, communities and households to manage change, by maintaining or transforming living standards in the face of shocks or stresses—such as earthquakes, drought or violent conflict—without compromising their long-term prospects.” (DFID 2011: 6)
ECHO	“The ability of an individual, a household, a community, a country or a region to withstand, to adapt, and to quickly recover from stresses and shocks.” (European Commission 2012: 5)
USAID	“The ability of people, households, communities, countries, and systems to mitigate, adapt to, and recover from shocks and stresses in a manner that reduces chronic vulnerability and facilitates inclusive growth.” (USAID 2012: 5)
IFPRI	Resilience “consists of three capacities that respond to different degrees of change or shocks: “Absorptive capacity covers the coping strategies individuals, households. “Adaptive capacity is the ability to learn from experience and adjust responses to changing external conditions, yet continue operating. “Transformative capacity is the capacity to create a fundamentally new system when ecological, economic, or social structures make the existing system untenable.” (IFPRI 2013: 19)
FAO/ UNICEF/ WFP	“The ability of an individual/household/community to withstand shocks and stresses or to adapt to new options in a changing environment.” (FAO Somalia/UNICEF Somalia/WFP Somalia 2012: 3)
Barrett and Constas	“The capacity over time of a person, household or other aggregate unit to avoid poverty in the face of various stressors and in the wake of myriad shocks. If and only if that capacity remains high, then the unit is resilient.” (Barrett and Constas 2013: 3)

logical, economic, or social structures make the existing system untenable.”

At their core, these refer to the ability to protect current consumption without compromising future capacities, while being able to adapt to new or recurrent shocks or stressors and ultimately being able to transform the livelihood system from an untenable one to a tenable one. The actual implications of this for policy and programming have yet to be fully fleshed out, although there have been many attempts to operationalize these insights.

There were initially many questions about whether resilience is simply the obverse of vulnerability. There is a striking similarity in the definition of resilience and (sustainable) livelihoods, and several observers have noted that much of the content of resilience is to be found in the component parts of a good definition of vulnerability and risk. USAID (2013) argues that this is not the case; resilience provides a framework within which both risk and vulnerability may be understood, but it also offers multiple pathways for recovery and growth. It helps to explain how vulnerability shifts over time and space, and in the face of different shocks and stresses. This seems to represent the consensus view at the moment.

Resilience Measurement

Given the complex definition and operational implications of resilience, much effort has gone into thinking about how one operationalizes and measures resilience, and particularly how to measure changes in resilience over time. Vaitla et al. (2012) proposed a relatively simple model for capturing current status and future capabilities by measuring current food access status and household assets. This only captures a limited part of the full definition of resilience. Béné (2013) argues, it is necessary to develop independent indicators of resilience that are not derived from the households or communities being tested, and he identifies two major operational challenges of current resilience measurement: (1) most measures only operate on one level (i.e., the household), even though resilience operates across all levels of society; and (2) resilience is very context-specific, but resilience

measures must be generic enough to be scaled to different situations (Béné 2013).

Béné’s (2013: 12) recommended measurement framework uses the cost a household incurs as a result of a shock as a way to quantify resilience:

$$\text{resilience costs} = \text{anticipation costs} \\ + \text{impact costs} + \text{recovery costs}$$

According to this formula, the lower the resilience costs, the more resilient the system is to a given shock: a household/community/system that has developed resilience will face lower costs to survive and recover from a shock than a household/community/system that is not resilient. Béné’s work is one attempt to develop a reliable measurement framework for resilience that can be applied across all levels. It highlights the difficulties of measuring resilience, especially as it is multidimensional and contingent upon specific contexts.

USAID (2013) notes in its program documentation for the Feed the Future Program that, “[t]he main building blocks of community resilience include socioeconomic context, shocks, stresses, community livelihood assets, social capital, and community social dimensions” (USAID 2013: iii) and goes on to suggest ways in which all of these things can be measured. Clearly, measuring—and even subjectively ranking the severity of—shocks or stresses is straightforward. Measuring livelihood assets is also reasonably straightforward. Capturing community solidarity or social capital, on the other hand, relies on methods that may not be easily incorporated into the mathematical models that dominate most of the discussion about resilience measurement. USAID (2013) describes three types of social capital in community resilience: bonding social capital (bonds between community members based on trust, reciprocity, and cooperation), bridging social capital (connecting members of one community to members of another), and linking social capital (social networks between individuals and groups across formal social boundaries).

Much of the work on resilience measurement comes together under the rubric of the global Resilience Measurement Technical Working Group. Their work is not yet complete, but so far revolves around principles for measurement (rather than

specific protocols—which are still forthcoming) (RMTWG 2013). The ten agreed-upon principles include recognizing the following aspects of measurement:

1. Resilience as a Normatively Indexed Capacity
2. Subjective States and Qualitative Data
3. Systems and Complex Causality
4. Shock and Stressor Specificity
5. Desirable and Undesirable Equilibria
6. Inherent Volatility and Instability
7. Multiple Scales and Multi-Level Interactions
8. Rates of Change and Timing of Measurement
9. Resilience-Vulnerability Connections
10. Tool for Interpreting Heterogeneity

Resilience Strategies

Governments, donors, agencies, and a variety of consortia have all developed programmatic and policy frameworks for promoting resilience, and they bear some resemblance to each other. In Kenya, the “Ending Drought Emergencies” strategy emerged out of the 2011 drought in the context of a regional approach led by IGAD. Kenya’s strategy is two pronged: First, it attempts to make all sectors more “drought-proof” and to strengthen people’s resilience to drought. Second, it seeks to improve drought monitoring, and especially the needs emerging from drought, to ensure early action to mitigate the impact of drought. This second strategy will fall under the purview of the new National Drought Management Authority (NDMA), set up under a new Ministry of Devolution—following changes in the constitution that came into effect in 2012. In its overall scope, the strategy addresses sustainable livelihoods in the arid and semi-arid lands (ASALs), the mutually reinforcing relationship between drought and conflict, the need for climate-proofed infrastructure, human capital development through education and health, gender and social analysis, drought preparedness and response, and coordination of drought management.

In Ethiopia, the response to the 2011 drought seemed to confirm that the already in-place strategy of relying on the Productive Safety Net System worked well for a scaled up response to a particularly bad drought shock. A National Disaster Management policy was put in place in 2010, the overall objective of which was to reduce the risk and impact of disasters through establishing a comprehensive disaster-risk management system within the context of sustainable development—a shift in emphasis from “disaster response” to “disaster risk management” (Government of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia 2010). Disaster risk financing is the major mechanism of early response, triggered by indicators that track both major hazards (including rainfall, but also including measures of livelihood outcome). Responsibility for policy, management, and oversight rests primarily with government, but involves many partners, including donors, UN agencies, international and Ethiopian NGOs, and increasingly, local communities. Declaring an emergency is the responsibility of the Federal Disaster Risk Management Council. The Water Requirements Satisfaction Index (WRSI) and livelihoods outcomes indicators form the backbone of the Livelihoods, Early Assessment, and Protection (LEAP) index as the basis for triggering a contingency-risk financing fund. This system was deemed to have served well in the drought crisis of 2011 (Sida et al. 2012; Slim 2012).

In Somalia, the three major operational UN Agencies (the Food and Agriculture Organization, the World Food Programme, and UNICEF) devised a joint strategy for building resilience in Somalia. This was developed in coordination with governments in Somaliland and Puntland, and with the new government in Mogadishu after it was formed in 2012. The key tenets of the strategy include:

1. Strengthening productive sectors to enhance household income
2. Enhancing basic services to protect human capital
3. Promoting predictable safety nets to sustain basic needs of the chronically-at-risk/destitute (minimum social protection) (FAO/WFP/ UNICEF 2012)

The enabling environment includes improved knowledge management, a policy and regulatory framework for effective service delivery in each sector, crosscutting and supporting roles played by local governance, and local institutional development. Like the Ethiopian policy, this strategy represents a shift from crisis response to crisis prevention. This includes a long-term, developmental approach, conflict sensitive programming, and an emphasis on strengthening the capacity of Somali communities as “providers of first resort” in the event of a shock or crisis (FAO/WFP/UNICEF 2012). While there is no joint programming among the three agencies (i.e., each still implements its own program) there is greater emphasis of coordination and geographic targeting of interventions. So far, the implementation of the strategy has begun in areas of Somaliland and Puntland, as well as Gedo Region in South Central.

One of the innovations under discussion is the so-called “surge model” (Concern n.d.) This approach scales up existing social services and social protection, whether in the form of health and nutrition services, or as a basic social safety net in terms of food assistance, in the event of a shock or crisis. This builds on experiences both of the Productive Safety Net Programme (PSNP) in Ethiopia and the Hunger Safety Net Programme in Kenya, but extends the notion to other services and significantly increases linkages with early warning to predict the need for scalable services. In the longer term, increased access to education is viewed as the only viable alternative to improve livelihood options in chronically risk-prone areas (FSNWG 2013). However, a major question remains about the medium-term livelihood options for people for whom pastoralism is no longer viable.

Various NGO consortia have emerged to address the resilience agenda. So far, the major donors have called for proposals that include programming timeframes of up to three years. (Note that many of the components of these have already been discussed above under early response, but are combined with longer-term approaches in resilience strategies—particularly addressing the “absorptive” and “adaptive” capacity elements of the notion

of resilience.) It is too soon to have a sense of the impact of these programs.

However, according to some observers, if the humanitarian and development communities are really trying to address the issue of building resilience, they must tackle the sticky issues of land, power, governance, and basic service provision that aid organizations have traditionally steered clear of (Tilstone 2013). These are the issues that will truly build resilience, but as of yet the major humanitarian and development actors are not addressing them in Somalia on a large scale.

Learning from the Crisis of 2011

The major donor organizations, including DFID, ECHO, and USAID, have developed conceptual frameworks and programmatic approach papers to inform the shifting of all programs towards the notion of resilience. Most of these have been written since 2011. They are at least to some degree informed by the crises in the Greater Horn of Africa and the Sahel. National governments, UN agencies, and numerous NGOs have also implemented resilience frameworks and programming.

Levine et al. (2012) argue that, even if the concept of resilience was defined well enough to be universally applicable and implemented, an over-reliance on resilience and an unrealistic perspective of what is possible in the aftermath of the crisis can lead to poor response. They also ask whether humanitarians should be concerned with resilience building at all, considering that scarce humanitarian resources are never sufficient to meet immediate causes, let alone address chronic, underlying causes (Levine et al. 2012).

This debate highlights a key concern brought out in the literature: does the introduction of the concept of resilience add value to the humanitarian/development sphere? Many donors and agencies seem to be displacing the concept of vulnerability with resilience, and it is unclear that this is a switch that needs to be made. As Levine et al. (2012) argue, the concept of resilience may be helpful for organizing external support, but without a clearer understanding of what exactly resilience entails and why it is a useful operational concept, how it

can be measured, and whether it should serve as a bridge between relief and development, the sector's shift towards "resilience-building" activities may be premature or at a minimum over-optimistic.

11. Summary and Conclusion

Although a summary analysis of the learning from the 2011–12 famine in Somalia and the broader crisis in the Greater Horn of Africa will have to await the completion of field research, several points are worth underlining from this desk review. These begin to address questions about what the humanitarian community has learned growing out of the famine:

- The difference in both tone and content between evaluations or assessments of individual programs on the one hand and of the overall response on the other hand
- The difference in tone and perspective of written analyses of the crisis and the response to it on the one hand and of key informants on the other (this involves a comparison with the other deliverable—the interim report on progress with field interviews)
- The very limited literature on several key topics
- Learning and improvement with regard to technical, programming issues compared to learning with regard to political constraints
- Leadership and accountability

Great Interventions, Botched Response?

One of the inescapable observations from the overall desk review—particularly the review of evaluations and impact assessments—is that the evaluations of individual projects or programs (more than are individually mentioned in this review) generally paint a positive picture about the appropriateness of the intervention, about impact, and about learning. Yet virtually all the meta-evaluations of the overall response paint a relatively dismal picture

of ignored early warning, risk-averse actors, late responses, and, of course, a scandalous loss of human life in Somalia and among Somali refugee populations in Kenya and Ethiopia. The explanation for this isn't entirely known, but likely reflects the fact that authors of the individual project reports were consultants hired by the agency that implemented the project or program, so had strong incentives to portray the intervention in a positive light; whereas the authors of the real-time evaluations and other meta-analyses were responsible to other authorities and may have felt more leeway to be critical.

But it may also reflect another issue, which seems to have surfaced in the interviews as well: a certain sense that most respondents felt that while they (or their agency) had learned from the experience and worked hard to improve their own programming, they did not think the rest of the humanitarian community had—a kind of externalization of the problem that describes the limited extent to which humanitarian actors as a community of practice have really learned from the experience. This is a theme being explored in key informant interviews.

Written Expressions of Optimism, Oral Expressions of Doubt?

Again, to refer briefly to the comparison between the interviews and the review of documentation provided here, even the most critical literature reviewed here notes that while the overall crisis might have received inadequate attention until it was too late and that major mistakes may have been made, etc., nevertheless much learning resulted from the experience and there is now a commitment to change and ensure that the experiences of 2011 are never repeated. On the other hand, the tone of much of the interviews is much less optimistic: observers of the humanitarian effort in Somalia in particular from many different perspectives (humanitarian workers, donors, Somalis who have worked in or observed the international system for years as well as ordinary Somalis who suffered the effects of the crisis) all voiced in one way or another a belief that the system is "rotten," subject to abuse, and over-politicized—perhaps to the extent of

undermining rather than supporting the efforts of ordinary Somali communities or diaspora groups.

The fact that this theme isn't particularly dominant in the written reporting on the crisis, but is very apparent in the interviews, is striking and somewhat worrying. It implies a compartmentalization of learning and reporting. But given the relatively high turnover of staff in much of the conventional humanitarian endeavor, written reports are the main form of institutional memory. If the written reporting presents rather different conclusions than one gets from an honest discussion of issues in an interview, the institutional memory is going to present a misleading set of "learnings" to a new group of decision makers in the humanitarian community. Again, this is to stray a bit outside the narrow confines of the review of literature that is, strictly speaking, the output of this desk review, but the implications are...worrying.

What Worked Well?

One of the clear messages heard from the crisis is that market-based interventions (cash and vouchers in particular) were shown to have worked reasonably well—once there was clearance from donors to address the crisis at scale *and* after a relatively heated debate about the appropriateness of cash responses was resolved. In 2011, opposition to cash interventions was strong from some quarters—a fear that in the context of high food-price inflation, stimulating demand (through cash or vouchers) without equally stimulating supply could lead to further inflation. In fact, this did not happen. With champions of the notion of market-based programming in the NGO community, and the leadership of a couple of large agencies, cash and voucher operations were rapidly scaled up after the declaration of famine; end use was tracked reasonably well given the constraints; and impact was shown to be significant. This is not to say that cash and voucher programs were immune to some of the problems that accompanied in-kind assistance—indeed they were not. But they were certainly scaled up more quickly, offered greater choice to the end recipient, and delivered a much greater proportion of the total value of project budgets to the final recipients.

What's Missing?

As will be clear from a brief glance, there is a lot of literature on a number of themes, particularly the early warning/early response topic and on programs and program evaluation, and the literature analyzing the role of Al-Shabaab is growing. But as expected, there is very little on the role of community-led or diaspora responses, the Somali private sector, etc.—and not much on the role of the so-called new or "emerging" humanitarian actors. This is slowly changing—and exploring those topics through interviews and fieldwork is a major theme of the current study. But the relative dearth of written analysis on these topics is striking.

Lessons Learned? Political or Technical?

While there is much to be learned in the technical, programmatic sense, some of the biggest constraints in 2011 were to be found in the political realm. While myriad technical problems have been identified and are being addressed, it is less clear from the literature reviewed that humanitarian actors are particularly eager to take on the realm of political constraints—or, if it is, humanitarian actors are not particularly eager to share their analysis of it. Again, the implications of this may be debatable.

Leadership and Accountability

A major set of issues revolves around accountability, what leadership should be accountable, and to whom. Somalia provides a complex context, where accountability is dispersed among the multitude of actors, including donor countries and the UN, engaged with Somalia in different ways. In the absence of a functional central state, "failure of early action was as much a function of donor reluctance to fund as it was a failing of the UN-led humanitarian system" (Darcy et al. 2012: 10). In Somalia, the lack of strategic leadership of the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) has been particularly criticized, even while taking into account the complexity of the situation due to poor access, remote management, armed conflict, and politicization of aid.

Leadership and strategic direction were questioned at the collective as well as the individual organizational levels. The evaluation of WFP Somalia, for example (that predates the famine itself, but includes the period of the famine response), concluded, “WFP adopted a high-risk strategy from early 2009, when it became the only major food aid operator in Al-Shabaab-controlled areas and significantly scaled up levels of food aid, in conflict with Al-Shabaab’s agenda of agricultural self-sufficiency. There was no contingency planning for possible withdrawal, and insufficient consideration of the consequences of donor policy changes and the increased risks to vulnerable populations from the withdrawal of WFP food aid in southern Somalia in early 2010” (Nicholson et al. 2012: vii).

In the unusual case of Somalia, where does accountability lie for such a catastrophic loss of lives, given the diffusion of responsibility? Lautze et al. (2012) argue that an “accountable executive” should be appointed within each agency. The accountable executive would be responsible for demonstrating that, based on early warning and other information, all necessary actions have been taken to mobilize logistical, technical, political, and financial resources. This responsibility should include recourse to removal from office if necessary. Taking a broader view of famine in today’s globalized and interconnected world, Devereux (2006a) points to the complex—and frequently negative—synergies between natural, economic, and political factors.

In Kenya and Ethiopia, functioning national governments are primarily responsible for managing crises, although the argument of Devereux (2006a) for collective responsibility at a global level still applies given the varied factors, from donor and national development policies to global food prices. In Kenya in 2011, the UN HCT as well as the Government of Kenya were both criticized, the former for lack of analysis and decision-making, the latter for lack of capacity—as well as corruption and lack of transparency (Paul et al. 2012). The existing coordination forums in Kenya were considered relatively good at sharing information but not as good at decision-making.

This was complicated by a transition occurring in the structure that coordinated food security re-

sponse and drought management in Kenya: The Arid Lands Resource Management Project (ALRMP) ended and the National Drought Management Authority (NDMA) was put in place in late 2010 but the latter was only completely up and running in 2012. In Ethiopia, with its important geopolitical status, strong government, and history of (well-publicized) famines, humanitarian and political interests probably coincided. While the Government of Ethiopia is criticized for its human rights record and highly centralized management, donor governments consider it an important strategic ally and arguably will respond quickly if asked to. Political calculation may be very different when made for core areas compared with peripheral (e.g., Somali) areas. In Ethiopia, an existing needs assessment system, led by the government, does generate responses (although this follows the seasonal assessments and is not considered “early”). The enormous national safety net program (PSNP) also provides a pre-existing framework for scaling up. However, the efficiency and effectiveness of the PSNP system is unclear in peripheral, dryland areas, such as Somali National Regional State (SNRS).

While accountability has been discussed in relation to early warning and late response, it is also raised in relation to donor funds and “beneficiaries.” In Somalia, much has been made of the difficulties of being accountable to donors where much of a program is implemented “remotely.” This is a real problem where donors are themselves accountable to their tax-paying citizens, and where funds are distributed in highly politicized, conflict areas with a history of diversion, corruption, and proscribed organizations. As a result, significant investment and innovation has gone into developing remote monitoring and evaluation methods, although to what effect can be questioned (Hedlund et al. 2013; Belliveau 2013). Accountability to recipients of assistance has been particularly weak in the case of Somalia (Polastro et al. 2011).

Levine et al. (2011) emphasize “system-wide” problems, and identify the following challenges:

- achieving local consensus in relation to understanding livelihood issues in local areas;

- using early warning information for credible prediction based on a livelihood analysis;
- using “crisis” calendars which link likely scenarios with appropriate responses for different time periods;
- improving preparedness within individual agencies as well as across sectors and actors at local and national levels;
- designing and setting up funding mechanisms that are responsive and could provide fast, flexible support to livelihood protection;
- developing long-term strategies and programs that have incorporated within them “crisis” related responses (such as the PSNP in Ethiopia).

Bailey (2013: vii) also emphasizes “system wide” changes and makes the following recommendations:

- Build trust and consensus through engagement and dialogue with key stakeholders.
- Design early interventions to reduce crisis risks and mitigate impacts.
- Develop joint plans that are sensitive to donor-risk preferences. Plan interventions according to levels of uncertainty: Implement “no regret” options initially; transition to mitigation, preparedness, and emergency responses.
- In return, donors could sequence funding commitments to match the phase of the response plan. Future disbursements could

be linked to pre-agreed triggers and decision points.

- Address fundamental institutional and political constraints to ensure that this model of collective, risk-based decision-making will deliver early action.
- Identify decision-takers, and specify clear processes for triggering, escalating, recording, and justifying decisions. Reward early action better.
- Insulate funding decisions from political agendas, though donor governments are likely to resist attempts to do so because they stand to lose power in a depoliticized process. Opportunities include giving funding powers to national and regional offices, using pooled funds to underwrite early action, and creating innovative financing mechanisms that pay out according to pre-agreed, risk-based triggers.

This summary of the literature tells only one part of the story of the crisis of 2011 in the Greater Horn of Africa and the famine in Somalia. The remainder will follow in the report(s) of the field research

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