

The Somalia Famine 2011: *The case for Community Risk Assessment in Famine Early Warning Systems*

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GFDRR
Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery



Cooperative Governance
Traditional Affairs

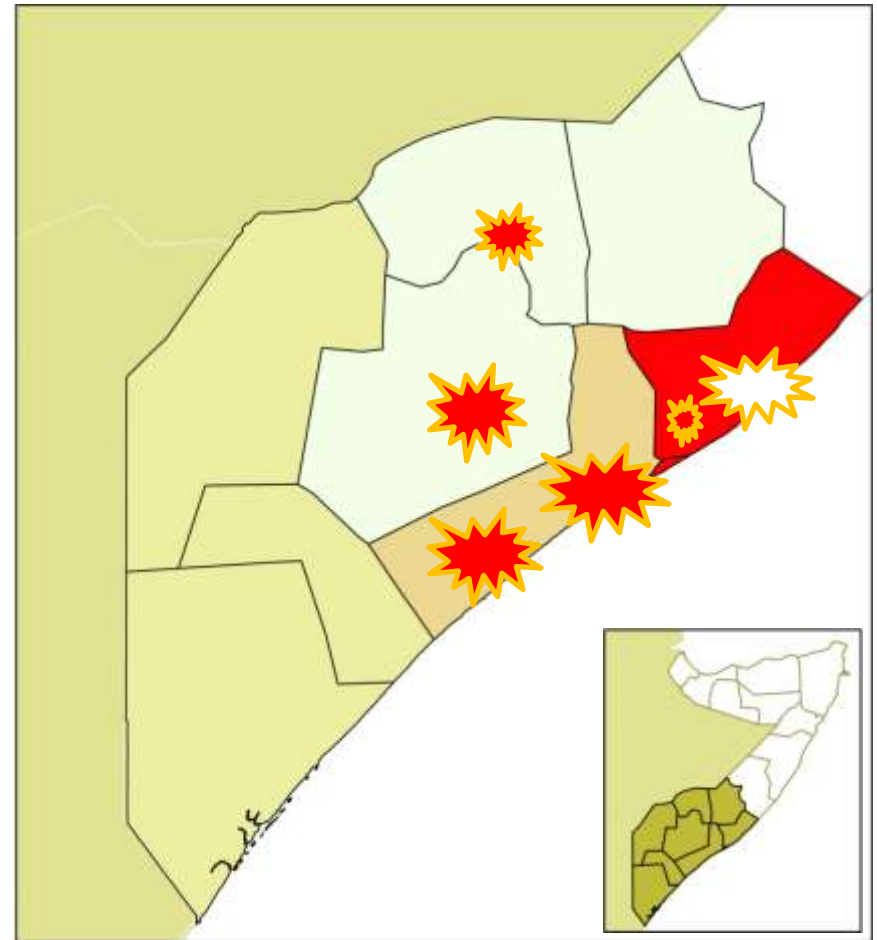


ISDR



Not on the radar

- Prior the famine, populations were classified in *humanitarian emergency* (i.e. The phase immediately before famine) largely as a result insecurity
- The actual famine occurred in areas with much fewer people in humanitarian emergency.
- The assumed cause of the famine was a combination of drought impacts (loss of crops and animals) combined with diminished coping (due to the war)
- The actual famine risk proved to be a function of loss of agricultural labour opportunities



Red indicates regions with most numbers of people in Humanitarian Emergency 2006 -11. White indicates the least.

Community Risk Assessment Tools Themselves : *Constraints to Assess and Quantify Risk*

Operational Challenges

- Operational environment
- Tools developed for natural hazards
- Bias, (Livelihoods, implications for drought risk)
- poor understanding of risk, risk reduction ie. Needs, *community development vs risk reduction*

Contextual Challenges

- Political, economic, social/cultural/ethnicity factors
- Changing definitions of community
- Trans-national issues

There is a case for it:

- Possibly 100,000 people died of famine in south Somalia in 2011.
- Large proportions of rural communities in East Africa depend on precarious, subsistence income sources – similar to the poor *Bantu* and *Reewin*

We must better Assess and Measure Risk :

- Internal: our capacity, tools (i.e. HEA) or analytical approaches (i.e. Political economy)

More Fundamentally:

- Early warning for whom?
- Early warning – in the absence of the resources/ability to take early action?