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EARLY WARNING EARLY ACTION –UTILISING RESEARCH TO ENABLE ACTION THROUGH A RESILIENCE LENS

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In June and July 2014, a consortium of international non-government agencies (The Somalia Resilience Program) conducted pilot early warning assessments across three regions of Somalia. The scope of this assessment was to test existing early warning indicators and produce useable information to determine the need for early actions in response to the risk of drought with targeted livelihood groups. The pilot assessment examined the usefulness of each early warning indicator collected and the feasibility and importance of each in monitoring early warning at the project level.

Consistent with the consortiums approach to resilience, early actions are not simply intended to manage crisis in order to maintain a status quo, they are intended to be part of a process of transformation and long-term betterment. They seek to manage long-term risk, not only short term crisis. This transformative lens was a defining element in accessing the early warning indicators used and corresponding proposed early actions in order to distinguish the system from humanitarian or current disaster risk reduction work.

This paper details the rationale for this pilot, the methodology used during the pilot assessment and the recommendations made along with the new proposed indicators and thresholds for actions.

A number of learning points emerged from the pilot which bring into question how early actions contribute to resilience and transformative processes. Firstly, the need to clarify triggers for early action versus indicators that classify solely food & nutrition security phases. Early actions in the proposed early action activity matrix must be differentiated from normal development or humanitarian activities. A clear and emerging challenge to existing early warning systems in Somalia is a need for triggers for action that enhance information gleamed from existing outcome based ex post indicators such as the classification of food security phases .

The pilot assessment found that a number of important localized indicators were regularly omitted during their scale up to regional level warning systems or are not captured when they are inputted into traditional food security models which leaves local communities at risk of being overlooked when affected by localized shocks. Findings also indicate that changes to the system need to be designed to integrate existing community based disaster risk reduction activities and the integrated phase classification system while equally providing a developmental platform with which to integrate a system which can identify humanitarian crisis or potential famine conditions.

Lastly this paper details the updated thresholds for early warning and corresponding early action which emanate from the results of this study. The implications of these findings are considered from a wider policy and practice perspective and recommendations as regards the future directions of early warning early action programming are presented.

Keywords: Early Warning/Action, Drought, Somalia

Early Warning, Early Action failures in Somalia

Recent failures to respond sufficiently early to humanitarian food crisis in the Horn of Africa region by the international community have resulted in significantly preventable deaths and suffering. The crisis in 2011 - with 13 million people affected and up to 250,000 deaths - was the most severe crisis of its kind in 60 years (Famine Early Warning Systems Network (FEWS NET) 2013). Darcy et al. (2012) describes this as a failure both of preventive action and of early relief. These type of actions have been coined Early Warning Early Action (EWEA) with early warning systems being defined by the United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (2009, 1) as "The set of capacities needed to generate and disseminate timely and meaningful warning information to enable individuals, communities and organizations threatened by a hazard to prepare and to act appropriately and in sufficient time to reduce the possibility of harm or loss." Formal early warning systems are nothing new in the Horn of Africa. Bailey (2013) discussed that the first early warning systems were rolled out across the Sahel and the Horn of Africa in the 1980s noting that since then the capability of famine early warning systems has improved dramatically, yet this has not necessarily delivered a comparable improvement in early action. Drought early warning systems enable a shift from reactive to proactive hazard management and response, and a change of focus from disaster recovery to disaster reduction.

It is clear that droughts and the food insecurity they produce in the Horn of Africa are not 'blips' or temporary trends. Somalia now suffers from chronic, predictable annual droughts and is among the African countries hardest hit by climate change and slow onset disaster (Federal Republic of Somalia 2013). Compared with its neighbours like Kenya and Ethiopia, Somalia was most affected by the 2011 famine (Bailey 2012). The 2011 famine was a devastating event that affected much of the Horn of Africa region encompassing Somalia, Ethiopia and Kenya. These three countries all share common climactic attributes yet why was it that the greatest impact of the famine was felt most in Somalia? This paper focuses on the Somalia context where systems failed most dramatically. However, it is also worth looking at the different experiences of a neighbouring country such as Ethiopia that encountered similar climactic conditions in the 2011 drought yet experienced a different outcome to Somalia.

The 1984 famine highlighted shortcomings that were present in Ethiopia's institutional mechanisms for action. Unlike Somalia, Ethiopia coped with the 2011 crisis in contrast to the 1984 famine. An important difference in how Ethiopia dealt with the famine compared to Somalia stems from the institutional changes that occurred in the years between these crises in Ethiopia and the implementation of safety net programs directly linked to an early warning system. Since 2005 the Ethiopian government has been connecting early warning to response through the Productive Safety Net Program (PSNP) (Gilligan, Hoddindot and Taffesse, 2008) which was aimed at enabling the rural poor facing chronic food insecurity to resist shocks, create assets and become food self-sufficient. An evaluation of the Ethiopia's PSNP safety net system found that broadly "...response to the 2011 drought in Ethiopia saved lives. The results are an improvement on earlier years and are largely due to a number of predictable systems that have been put in place as well as the additional support provided by international partners." (Sida, Gray and Asmare, 2012, 9).

Unlike Ethiopia, King (2012) discusses that Somalia remains highly vulnerable to drought and the effects of climate change, particularly when exacerbated by conflict and insecurity in the South Central region. While some disaster risk reduction structures are in place across different regions, the capacity of these actors to implement is limited by poor financing and low capacity. The coordination of these structures with both communities and national level early warning systems also remains limited.

During the 1980s, the study of famine and food security emerged as a major area of empirical research and conceptual debate. Several frameworks evolved to better incorporate issues of food security, coping and vulnerability, environmental sustainability and adaptation, and livelihood diversification (Start and Johnson, 2004). The structuralist paradigm asserts that physical hazards are distinct from the disasters that they cause, the required linkage being a vulnerable population (Wisner 1993). The older paradigm termed the 'behavioural paradigm' (Bankoff 2001) suggests that technology, prediction, bureaucratic organisation and modernisation can help to mitigate disasters. The structuralist point of view forms the basis for much disaster risk reduction (DRR) development work which seeks to address the underlying causes of vulnerability and thus disasters. Disaster Risk Reduction is defined by the United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (2009, 10) as "The concept and practice of reducing disaster risks through systematic efforts to analyse and manage the causal factors of disasters, including through reduced exposure to hazards, lessened vulnerability of people and property, wise management of land and the environment, and improved preparedness for adverse events."

As explained by Maxwell et al. (2014, 46), "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." Constas and Barrett (2013) suggest that many now see resilience as one of the key solutions to poverty and food insecurity. Central and common to definitions of resilience are the ability to absorb shocks and stresses, the ability to "bounce back" after a shock or stress and lastly the ability to adapt to future shocks or stresses. "Resilience is a broad conceptual umbrella, covering many concepts related to positive patterns of adaptation in the context of adversity" (Masten and Obradovic, 2006, 14). Much work on resilience has moved beyond looking at resilience as the ability to 'bounce back' (resilience as recovery) or return to the original state to looking at resilience as the ability to respond to a change adaptively (resilience as transformation) (Maguire and Cartwright, 2008). Resilience is very much part of the ability to adapt to changes, "In many ways the ability to cope underlines what we mean by resilience in disaster management" (Collins, 2009, 103). This adaptive capacity is key to dealing with current ongoing and future unknown shocks. Resilience in transformation indicates a capacity of individuals, households and communities to transform according to a changing context and across phases of development.

This raises the notion of addressing the underlying cause of vulnerability. If we consider early actions as opposed to early relief from the structuralism point of view we need to move away from the continuum and consider a continuum which recognises an underlying state of vulnerability, and as explained by (Audet ,2014 ,4) "highlighted the need to apply a variety of aid instruments simultaneously, in ways that both complemented one another and linked across space and time, reflecting the fact that operations in relief, rehabilitation, and development may all be ongoing simultaneously within any given country."

The Somalia Resilience Program (SomReP) built an evidence-based case for proactive humanitarian actions based on the above thinking.[1] A successful operationalization of both relief and development programming simultaneously is underpinned by adaptive capacity in an ever changing context. Early Action in the SomReP context is defined as targeted, scalable and contextual actions that reinforce existing coping mechanisms and are guided by principles of no regrets, parsimony and best practice. Early Actions can be scaled up and replicated efficiently to increasing number of households to meet growing severity of a slow onset disaster, and link into humanitarian actions if necessary. Early Actions are contextual in that they are appropriate to local livelihoods, seasonality and social conditions while reinforcing existing coping mechanisms.

The funding of early actions is politically charged as it requires donor governments to utilise public funds on a crisis that in theory may never occur. (Bailey 2013, 4) highlights the difficulty in securing funding for early actions "Domestically, budgetary constraints and declining public support for aid increase the political risks of funding early action: in the absence of a high-profile disaster relayed by the broadcast media, sceptical publics may punish politicians for spending taxpayers' money on a crisis that is to all intents and purposes invisible and may not even happen." In 2014 SomRep successfully received funds for early actions. Perhaps more importantly for future iterations of the Crisis Modifier System was that these agencies additionally reallocated and reprogrammed existing funds and activities to towards early actions. While a successful initial undertaking, these agencies recognise that they must continue to adapt their crisis modifier system to reflect an evolving understanding of EWEA and particularly how those concepts apply to a resilience programme in Somalia (McDowell 2014a).

This paper details the rationale for this pilot, the methodology used during the pilot assessment and the recommendations made along with the new proposed indicators and thresholds for actions.

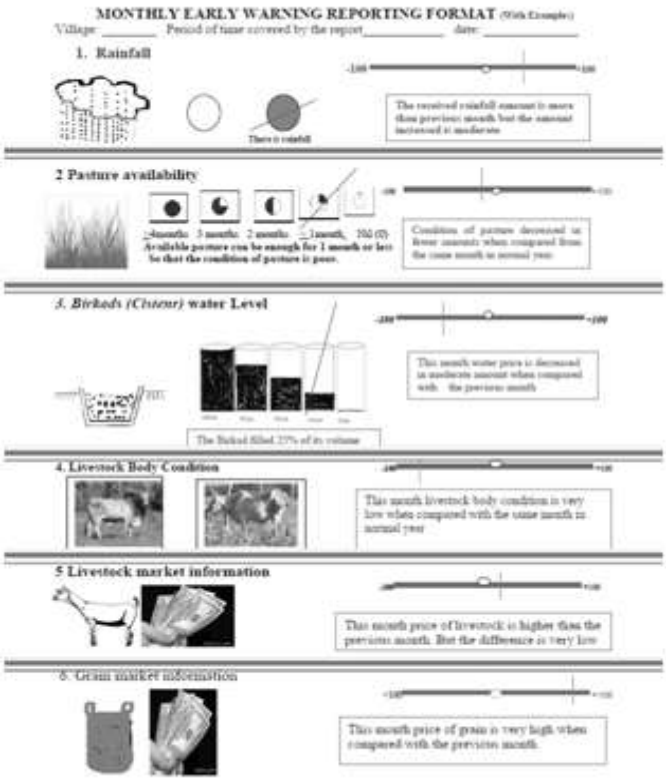
[1] A multi-year effort by seven leading International Non-Governmental Organisations to tackle the challenge of recurrent droughts—and the chronic vulnerability that results—among pastoralists, agro-pastoralists, and peri-urban households across Somalia. Designed to address communities' unique needs toward building resilient livelihoods, the program builds on collective lessons learnt by consortium members World Vision, Oxfam, Danish Refugee Council (DRC), Cooperazione Internazionale (COOPI), CARE, Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA), and Action Contra la Faime (ACF).

Overview of formal Early Warning Early Action in Somalia

One approach to building Early Warning Early Action in Somalia was implemented in 15 districts in Somalia to improve the timeliness and efficacy of humanitarian action in mitigating and addressing slow onset disasters such as drought and the effects of climate change. A contextualized community based disaster risk management approach developed in Somalia by member agency Oxfam, facilitated local communities in the establishment of community level Early Warning Committees (EWCs). These community level committees were trained and supported by agencies to monitor simple early warning indicators and develop contingency plans for fast onset (floods, conflict) and slow onset (drought and climate change) disasters. By linking EW indicators to their contingency plans, EWCs identify when they need to take action and when to advocate to the implementing agency or government for actions beyond their own resources and capacity.

EWCs use simple tools to monitor a selection of early warning indicators that support the decision making process and decision making for when to take action. Using a simple pictorial chart (figure 1), EWCs track specific early warning signs such as seasonal rainfall, market prices, animal and pasture conditions and household migration. Agencies also receive these indicators from EWCs to help monitor trends across program areas.

Figure 1 Pictoral Early Warning Tools



Source: Oxfam (2013) Ethiopia- Somaliland Cross-Border Community-Managed Drought Resilience Project

A dedicated technical unit worked with partners to identify actions that would be taken should certain thresholds in humanitarian condition be exceeded. The agencies monitor five broad areas including food security, livelihoods, nutrition, health and conflict for early warning signs of slow onset disaster. These thematic bundles are termed 'meta indicators', each being comprised of a number of specific indicators. These indicators are weighed differently across different regions in Somalia to account for differences in context, livelihoods and environment. The triggers for early action occur when shifts in specific indicator severity contribute to a change in the overall severity or measurement level of a meta indicator. Data collection for these indicators is a combination of community level data collected through the EWCs, agency collected and secondary data from the consortium's technical partners such as FEWS NET and FSNAU whom manage the regional Famine Early Warning networks.

As agencies implement new SomReP grants in each district, a scenario building activity is conducted by project staff to identify the key risks to monitor for early warning, and the activities they would undertake to support communities to respond, mitigate or cope with the early effects of slow onset disasters. These actions take into account the specific livelihoods, environment and market conditions of the area which they are implementing in. A scenario building exercise results in a 'Menu of Actions' for that implementing area - activities the agency would do in the event that the early warning indicators trigger activities. Levine et al. (2011), referring to a region-wide United States aid 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.

If the Early Action requires a cost modification or extension to current programming, an 'Early Action Request' form is released by the agency in cooperation with the SomReP technical unit to donors. These early actions are typically conducted within the first 45 days of the triggered early warning so as to give time to the agency to identify and prepare for more substantial actions if required.

Research Methodology

In June and July 2014, SomReP agencies conducted pilot early warning assessments across three regions of Somalia. The scope of this assessment was to test early warning indicators and produce useable information to determine the need for early actions in response to the risk of slow onset disaster with targeted livelihood groups. The pilot assessment examined the usefulness of each early warning indicator collected and the feasibility and importance of each in monitoring early warning at the project level.

Three districts were initially chosen for the pilot assessment as illustrated in figure 2. These included Badhan District in Somaliland, Dangorayo District in Puntland and Eyl District in Puntland. As of June 2014, both Dangorayo and Badhan Districts were in Integrated Phase Classification (IPC) 2 Phase according to FSNAU (2014), and areas of Eyl were in IPC 3 following poor Gu rains and a cyclone that caused damage in coastal and inland areas in November 2013.[2] These locations provided different conditions, livelihood groups and IPC phases to test the early warning indicators.

[2] Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) is commonly used by the humanitarian community to describe the severity of food emergencies. The IPC scale consists of five levels of increasing severity: Minimal, Stressed, Crisis, Emergency, or Famine. Underneath each phase is a set of thresholds, such as malnutrition or mortality rates. These thresholds bring specificity and formality to the definition of each phase. These phases are numbered from 1 to 5. 1 been stressed and 5 been famine.

Figure 2 Map of Somalia depicting Pilot EWEA areas

Source: Nthiwa (2014)

Data Collection tools

Documentation provided to enumerators included a guidance note with the methodologies of each survey, and the survey forms which were separated into a household survey and key informant survey. The household survey included the Coping Strategies Index, Household Hunger Score and the Household Dietary Diversity Score survey tools. The key informant survey looked at community level indicators and measured areas of seasonal morbidity, household and livestock migration, local market prices and an experimental conflict indicator.

Many of the tools used in the pilot assessment are standardized and well documented questionnaires and surveys. The questionnaires used in the surveys were based on the standard surveys developed for each tool this is depicted in figure 3. For example, the market survey was based on the FSNAU rural markets survey form provided by FSNAU, the Reduced Coping Strategies Index questionnaire was based on guidance notes for the original tool from the tool author, and some tools were adopted from existing SomReP surveys used in post distribution monitoring. Where possible standardized tools were used, and questionnaire designs already used by agencies in SomReP programming were given higher preference to ensure a certain level of standardization across the consortium. Rather than evaluating the effectiveness of these existing tools, the early warning early action pilot assessment considered the contribution of these used by SomReP agencies to collectively monitor the early warning signs of slow on set disasters that may appear in the areas of food security and livelihoods, health and nutrition, and conflict and migration.

For SomReP's Early Warning Early Action system, agencies use mobile data tools for fast data collection, entry and a level of basic automated analysis (compilation of graphs with trends, bar charts and pie charts etc). Based on feedback from partners during orientation of the guidance notes the original survey assessment was divided into two separate documents (1) the household level survey, and (2) the community level observation and key informant survey. Community level and Key Informant surveys focused on five areas. Trends of epidemic prone diseases, mid upper arm circumference, school attendance, household migration and conflict and market prices survey. Each household survey was expected take around 40 to 45 minutes per household. Key informant interviews, and community level observations varied in length of time needed depending on availability of appropriate informants and skills of the enumerator. Community level observations varied depending on the sample size of respondents and size of each village. There was a large variance in the number of surveys planned and number of surveys actually conducted in each village. The number of planned household surveys was 600 with 161 been conducted. At the community level 41 were planned and 38 conducted. Drastically less surveys were conducted than planned due to security and access issues for enumerators.

While the pilot was used to assess the effectiveness of different tools in contributing to the assessment the overall system relies largely on a process of data triangulation, this use of converging lines of enquiry is well documented (Yin 1994, Patton 1987).

Figure 3 Household level Early Warning survey

SOMREP EARLY WARNING HH SURVEY

HOUSEHOLD LEVEL EARLY WARNING SURVEY					
Notes: The household level survey is carried out with selected respondents who are responsible for purchasing & preparing meals (based on their wealth group and livelihood group - see guidance notes). It should take no more that 40-45 minutes to complete this questionnaire.					
E1.	District:		E2.	Village:	
E3.	Name of interviewer/Assessor:		E4.	Date of interview: Day/month/year	
E5.	Gender of household head:	□ Male □ Female	E6.	Livelihood Group:	
E7.	Wealth Group:	□ Low Assets/ Low Market Access	□ Low Assets / High Market Access	□ High Assets / Low Market Access	

A. COPING STRATEGY INDEX (CSI)				
Notes: The CSI is a HOUSEHOLD LEVEL SURVEY that enumerates various consumption-related coping strategies commonly used by a population.				
FILTER QUESTION: In the past 7 days, were there times when you did not have food or enough money to buy food? 1 = Yes 2 = No		If NO, then the CSI=0 (no more questions) If YES, then proceed with the following questions to measure the CSI		
In the past 7 days, how often has your household had to:		RAW SCORE (Insert frequency value – 0 to 7 days)	UNIVERSAL SEVERITY WEIGHT (these values are fixed)	WEIGHTED SCORE (Frequency X Weight) (for each row, multiply the frequency value by the related weight)
F8.	Rely on less preferred and less expensive food?		1	
F9.	Borrow food, or rely on help from a friend or relative?		2	
F10.	Limit portion size at mealtime?		1	
F11.	Restrict consumption by adults in order for small children to eat?		3	
F12.	Reduce number of meals eaten in a day?		1	
F13.	CSI – TOTAL HOUSEHOLD SCORE (sum down the weighted scores)			

Source: Nthiwa (2013)

The villages in each district were chosen to reflect the different livelihood groups in each of these areas, geo- physical vulnerabilities as well as meeting criteria of having at least 70 households. The selection of these villages were based on the level of access due to high insecurity in the area. Of these villages, two were predominately pastoral communities and three were agro pastoral communities.

After field teams had completed their surveys, the raw data collected in paper survey forms was manually inputted into a spreadsheet and checked for errors. Open coding was conducted and data visualized for easy analysis by the pilot team members. Each survey question was directly related to an indicator in the crisis modifier tool. Standard surveys such as the coping strategies index had standardized units of analysis or indexes with established thresholds, while other values were presented in percentages or prices according to the values used in the crisis modifier matrix.

Respondent profiles

The pilot assessment was conducted using a purposive sampling approach. Purposive sampling is a non-probability sampling approach that allows the assessor to look at each different context, and makes sure the tool being piloted doesn't affect wealth and livelihood groups differently. This selection was based on the characteristics of the different groups in this study in order to select respondents that could offer information of interest to the study and allow analysis related to the issues being studied. Mayoux (2006 ,120) explains that "Purposive sampling enables close focus on cases and issues of interest. "The aim was not a sample that was statistically valid but "related to the scope, nature and intent of research." McGuirk and O' Neil, (2010, 205).

In the guidance for selecting households, enumerators were asked to focus on different livelihood groups across the three districts. SomReP focuses on three livelihood groups in its resilience programming, including peri urban, agro pastoral and pastoral livelihood groups. Peri urban respondents were the target in Badhan town and urban settings in Badhan district. In Dangorayo, predominately pastoralist households were targeted and Elbarde was to focus on the Agro Pastoral households. The surveys generally reflected these trends. 100% of respondents in Dangorayo were pastoralists, in Badhan district a mix of peri urban (40%) and pastoralist (60%) households were surveyed, and in Elbarde the respondents were roughly split between pastoral households (53%) and agro pastoralists (47%).

The selection of respondents for the household surveys was based on which individual was responsible for purchasing food and preparing meals. In Dangorayo 72% of respondents were women and 24% were men. In Badhan a similar split between women (70%) and men (23%) was seen, and in Elbarde the male (49%) to female (46%) respondents were roughly equal.

Enumerators were required to nominate the wealth ranking of the individual respondent according to their assets (high or low) and access to markets (high and low) on the survey forms as illustrated in table 1. According to follow up interviews, enumerators either made the assessment themselves (Badhan and Dangorayo) or used community leaders to help identify respondents by their wealth rankings (Elbarde).

The majority of respondents in Dangorayo and Elbarde were classified as 'Low Assets / Low Market Access' (88% and 86% respectively). However in Badhan, 50% of respondents were classified as 'Low Assets / High Market Access', which roughly correlates with the high percentage of peri urban households (40%) surveyed in that district compared with the other two districts in the pilot assessment.

In order to determine the wealth rankings (assets & market access indicators) of households for interviews previously collected PRA wealth ranking survey data and corresponding geographical positioning system coordinates were utilised to locate and nominate appropriate households in the target villages.

Table 1 Example Household (HH) Level Sampling Matrix

	Livelihood group 1	Livelihood group 2	Livelihood group 3
High assets - low market access	6 HH	6 HH	6 HH
Low assets - high market access	6 HH	6 HH	6 HH
Low assets - low market access	6 HH	6 HH	6 HH

Source: Swanson 2014b

Limitations of this Research

Lack of historical data in Somalia make comparisons difficult as regards what is a normal year. This lack of historical data posed an important barrier to action in 2010/11 were divisions about what should be done in the face of uncertainty over conditions and whether or not conditions would deteriorate into a humanitarian disaster. In the previous decade Somalia had been seemingly on the brink of catastrophe every year. (McDowell 2014b). This lack of data makes rigorous analysis and comparisons difficult. For the pilot assessment, analysis was done as a desk exercise as there was very limited capacity in partners to work with the data collected. Strengthening field staff capacity to monitor and interpret early warnings side by side with the communities within which they work will result in more responsive and contextually sound programming.

The ability to conduct primary research – and what form that field research can take in Somalia is influenced to a large extent by the prevailing security situation. During the main field study period between May and July 2014 an on-going security concern affected the areas where the research was undertaken this influenced significantly the progress of the field work, the respondent selection as well as the methods eventually utilised to collect the necessary data. In particular, the security context negatively affected the ability to of technical advisors to provide on the ground field support to enumerators. During the pilot assessment numerous field based challenges emerged including a lack of or delayed access to communities due to the security situation.

Lastly, enumerators were unable to identify wealth rankings in any of the three districts as global positioning system data was also unreliable or not recorded in many circumstances, and inaccessible to field teams.

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Utilising research to inform EWEA through a resilience lens in Somalia

The key findings from the pilot study generated key learnings which in turn were used to inform the direction of further work on the modification of the SomReP crisis modifier (Version 2.0). Notably the pilot assessment found that a number of important localized indicators were regularly omitted during their scale up to regional level warning systems or not captured when they are inputted into traditional food security models which leaves local communities at risk of being overlooked when affected by localized shocks.

The pilot survey found that many of the household level indicators in the pilot version were very time and resource consuming to collect in comparison to the usefulness of information that they produced. However local understanding of markets, seasons and historic context is essential as is the role of civil society taking leadership in monitoring local early warning signs that may get missed in regional early warning systems.

Results of the pilot also found that large disparities in the prices recorded in some cases as high as 34% can occur between local markets and their regional hubs. Regular monitoring at the district level over time is necessary to ensure that practitioners and early warning mechanisms are adequately informed about the local food security context.

Early Action must occur in advance of a crisis outcome – effectively when there is no crisis. The complexity and nature of a slow-onset crisis, such as a drought in Somalia, requires early warning systems in Somalia to have triggers for action rather than outcome based, or ex post indicators. Importantly, early actions should protect development gains .While importantly food security phases do enable early actions a more holistic predictable and preventative complementary approach would be beneficial if early actions are to achieve their intended impact. Early Actions also need to address underlying causes of vulnerability by becoming an integral part of programming across all stages of the development cycle rather than just an early response to a crisis.

Table 2 highlights different levels of early actions which are proposed in order to address some of the learnings above. Importantly each level focuses on an objective which is preventive in nature and also aims to protect and contribute towards development. These early actions also presume the engagement with sector stakeholders within the community. Early Action objectives are not 'top down' prescriptive approaches, rather integrating with and supporting existing systems to remain functioning and flexible in the face of increasing stress. This transformative lens goes well beyond relief interventions and aims to protect past and future development.

Table 2 Objectives for Each Level of Early Action

Sector of Intervention	**Level 0 Normal Seasonal**	**Level 1**	**Level 2**	**Level 3**
Livestock	Transition to market based livestock keeping systems to manage seasonal challenges and a changing climatic	Equitable access to market mechanisms to manage dryer than normal conditions	Stimulate market & prices when supply likely to exceed demand (Commercial Offtake, Subsidy to producers)	Stimulate market & prices when capacity to buy is exceeded & quality of animal is poor
Crop	Transition to market-based crop production, manage seasonal challenges and changing climatic conditions	Actions to reduce losses or maintain value of crop to producer	Support farmers to secure off-farm sources of employment to preserve productive assets	Reduce HH expenditures until the next harvest
Labour	Improve job opportunities through expanded social networks, improved technical and financial skills	Seize work opportunities outside saturated labour markets. Use financial services to manage reduction in income	Effective exploitation of nearby labour opportunities	Manage excess labour supply, maintain day rate & use opportunity to retrain individuals
Small Business	Increase profitability or competitiveness of small businesses and ability of small scale entrepreneurs to identify and exploit new opportunities (value chain analysis, internet, and online/SMS banking services)	Plan for linkages to un affected markets, or decrease stock in the face of depressed sales	Decrease household expenditures. Hibernate businesses and take on additional local or regional work	Migration to find work
Social Protection	Compassionate assistance for those unable to care for themselves. Future opportunities for children/youth are protected	Existing finances and services deepen existing assistance	Broaden numbers assisted and levels of assistance - with greater role for external funds ensure crisis does not compromise opportunities of the young	Additional services, numbers assisted and amount of assistance with much greater role for external financing. Ensure crisis does not compromise opportunities of the young
Water Supply	Sustainable, local rural water supply & new long-term solutions in place for	Optimum performance of existing infrastructure, and	Planned infrastructure investments fast tracked, and temporary measures to	Further subsidy to extend existing water supply, temporary solutions

	water supply to settled and urban populations	planned increased capacity in place	extend existing water supply	or migration considered
Health & Nutrition	Promote healthy & health seeking behaviour and curative system responsive and competent	Prepare health system for above normal demand	Health system supported to manage above seasonal level of demand	Health system capacity exceeded. External support required to meet spike in demand

Source: McDowell, 2014b.

Table 3 below provides a top level outline of some suggestions of early action objectives using the example of the livestock sector.

Table 3 Livestock Early Actions

Level	Level 0 Normal Seasonal	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
Objective	**TRANSITION TO MARKET BASED LIVESTOCK KEEPING SYSTEMS, MANAGE SEASONAL CHALLENGES AND CHANGING CLIMATIC CONDITIONS**	**EQUITABLE ACCESS TO MARKET MECHANISMS TO MANAGE DRYER THAN NORMAL SEASON**	**STIMULATE MARKET & PRICES WHEN SUPPLY LIKELY TO EXCEED DEMAND** (Commercial Offtake, Subsidy to producers)	**STIMULATE MARKET & PRICES WHEN CAPACITY TO BUY IS EXCEEDED AND QUALITY OF ANIMAL** (Slaughter offtake, direct assistance to producers)
Early Action Trigger	Onset of Jilaal & Xagaa	Gu/Deyr Predictions Below Normal Actual Rainfall Below Normal NDVI Below Normal"	Second consecutive season of below normal conditions or where: Gu/Deyr Predictions Below Considerably Normal Actual Rainfall Considerably Below Normal NDVI Considerably Below Normal	Third consecutive below normal season or second where: Gu/Deyr Predictions Below Considerably Normal Actual Rainfall Considerably Below Normal NDVI Considerably Below Normal
Livestock Indicator	*Goat Prices seasonally normal*	*Goat Price in Jilaal & Xagaa is XX% of normal*	*Goat Price in Jilaal & Xagaa is XX% of normal* *Some markets not reporting sales or reporting reduced volume of sales*	*Market Collapse - no sales/prices reported*

Originator of Action	Ongoing, progressive actions taken by Livestock sector	Possible actions to be taken by SomReP Members		
Early Actions	**General** Migration either by HH male or by extended family to pasture/water **Markets** Owners of 60 goats sell approx 15 animals per year value of sales increased through better exploitation of markets/market mechanics by producers & traders Increased utilisation of mobile financial services Increased utilisation of mobile price/market information Taxation rationalised to promote production, local and regional livestock trade **Feed** plans to purchase fodder or possibly water Increasing, commercial	**LEVEL 0 ACTIONS PLUS** **General** **Markets** Assist sellers and buyers to discuss/plan dry season sales - healthy, non-core breeding stock. Traders identify their preference of animal condition (animals for immediate sales or fattening) Assist sales of non-core breeding stock prior to migration Assistance to access finance services to facilitate sales or savings Work with traders to access terminal market price/demand information & potential of holding grounds for increased purchases Advocate for reduction in taxes related to sales, transport & marketing of	**LEVEL 1 ACTIONS PLUS** **Commercial Offtake** Assist the Health inspection of purchased livestock Assist creation of temporary holding grounds Support traders to access feed/water for purchased animals (on cost recovery basis) Help traders access veterinary services/vaccinations for purchased animals - on a cost recovery basis Help traders to ensure adequate, affordable fuel is available to purchase/transport animals. Assist to identify / source additional vehicles which may be required (other business, NGO, government etc.) **PRODUCERS with 100 goats /10 camels or less:** Support owners considering	**LEVEL 2 ACTIONS PLUS** **Slaughter Offtake** NGO must organise procurement, slaughter, selection of meat handlers, distribution of meat, disposal of hides & skins, pre/post mortem inspection potential other issues to address may include: taxation reduced, loans for traders or subsidy to traders to overcome increased expenditures during emergency **PRODUCERS with 100 goats /10 camels or less:** Close links to social protection activities to enable producers access income or decrease other household costs Direct support to core-

	fodder production/trade **Animal Health** vaccination prior to dry season migration increased compliance with animal health regulations to access higher value regional/export markets **Environment (Pasture/Water)** Progressive small stock systems (i.e. zero grazing elements) utilised for greater commercial success of settled/urban livestock keepers Pasture management regimes evolve with changing livestock management systems Urban planning that includes pasture and water for small stock	animals **Animal Health** Assist livestock keepers to access/purchase animal health services prior to migration **Feed** Assist planning by livestock keepers to purchase fodder/water in the dry season **Environment (Pasture/Water)** Assist seasonal planning of pasture/water management near settlements	selling animals prior to dry season - leaving core-breeding stock (technical advice, savings options etc.) Support schools to purchase animals (consumption offtake - assist with purchase, processing, storage) Assist owners or members of their family to find work elsewhere - to purchase fodder/water Consider targeted fodder / supplementation programmes (lactating females, prized males) for core breeding stock) Consider water supply assistance/subsidy (unlikely to include water trucking)	breeding stock ✓ fodder/feed supplement ✓ water

High Risk Groups: Households exclusively depending on livestock (i.e. most likely those with 20 to 30 camels or 100 to 150 goats) for their income. Households unable to migrate or find seasonal labour elsewhere. NOTE: Households with few livestock, but where 50% or more of the income is derived small business or labour would not be considered high risk.

Source: McDowell, 2014.

In order to utilise the triggers presented above a large amount of community data and community participation is necessary and forms an integral part of resilience project design. Viewing early action in this way is compatible with predictable shocks and thus integrates early action and contingency measures into overall project design. However this runs the risk of confusing good project design with contingency fund allocations that are necessary for early actions where risks are unpredictable.

Some of the challenges surrounding this research heavy approach include the complexity of the research required, the time and resources involved, the difficulty in sharing such a complex tool with partners and challenges in the assessment of qualitative results. These challenges are magnified in fragile contexts which may have restrictions on collecting data on the ground. However this approach enables synergy and encourages holistic analysis which in turn enables identification of complementary actions. Early actions will need to take into account awareness of the changing livelihood and risk context in Somalia, but must also do so in a highly charged, volatile conflict setting. This is a significant task and not always feasible at the field level under current funding mechanisms and the pressure to implement projects in terms of the methods necessary to achieve this. “However if we are to understand everyday living then the scope of view must extend from the cultural to the economic, from the social to the political, from the present to the past, and from the local to the global. ”(Rigg, 2007). One solution may be to consider less traditional methods of data collection such as the use of SMS.

This level of research, monitoring and responding to early warning signs require field based practitioners to be retrained in new concepts and skills in order to program in a manner which incorporates thinking on protecting development gains in slow onset crisis. This requires time, resources and an institutional commitment to early warning early action principles.

In conclusion, if early actions are to achieve their intended impact they must be both predictive and preventative in nature. Early actions need to be integrated into existing systems enabling them to “flex” with stress rather than top down prescriptive actions. Early action triggers must anticipate humanitarian conditions and form an integral part of resilience programming. Early actions therefore need to contribute to and protect development as well as humanitarian program objectives.

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