

Assessing Distribution Theory #2

Geography of Scarcity

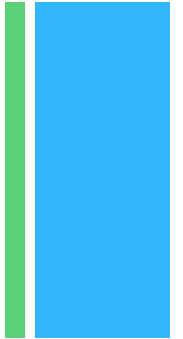
Dr. Sangeetha Chandrashekeran

+ Essay topic - questions





Outline

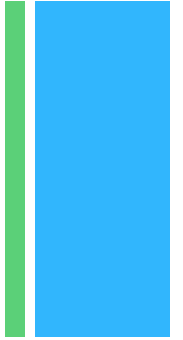


1. Key Points
2. Recap – Sen's micro framework on famine
3. Now we look at the macro
 - The issue of scale
 - Poverty
 - The Market
 - Politics and Policy
 - War and conflict
4. Some Key Questions
5. Conclusions

1. KEY CONCEPTS



Key Concepts

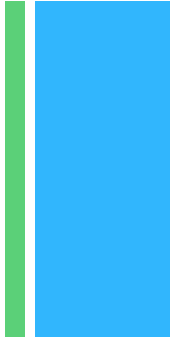


- Scale and use of distribution theory (Global-local)
- The availability of evidence about the validity of the distribution theory, and its relevance to today's food situation

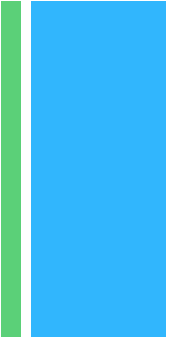
2. RECAP: ENTITLEMENTS



Sen's entitlements approach:



- Famines occur when household's and individual's access to food fails:
 - Because of declining availability of food;
and/or
 - Because of reduced ability to access food through reduced income
and/or increased food price

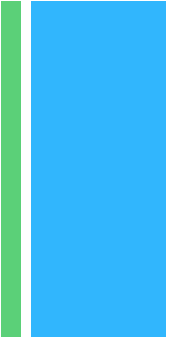


The distribution theory:

- *distribution* of food: *who* produces it, *who* gets it, and *why* distribution is uneven
- economic, political, and cultural factors that effect food availability and access
- Macro-micro scale:
 - global, regional, national, local, household and individual



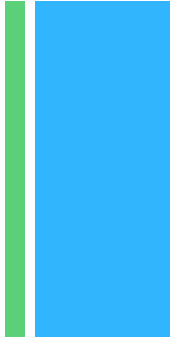
Other factors: Fuzzy entitlements



- Therefore:
 - Unit of analysis difficult
 - Community level institutions are important
 - intra-household, and intra-community entitlements
 - Property rights don't cover all conventions (exchange etc.)



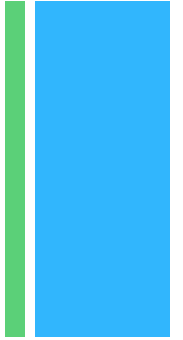
Looting and extra-legal entitlements



- 21/32 20th C famines had adverse politics at local, national or international level as principal **cause** (Devereux 2000: 6)
- Drought or other economic trigger then **became** politicised by failures of government or response
- Entitlements overlooks the centrality of political processes



Looting and extra-legal entitlements



War disrupts:

- economic activity
- food production
- food transport and storage
- social networks

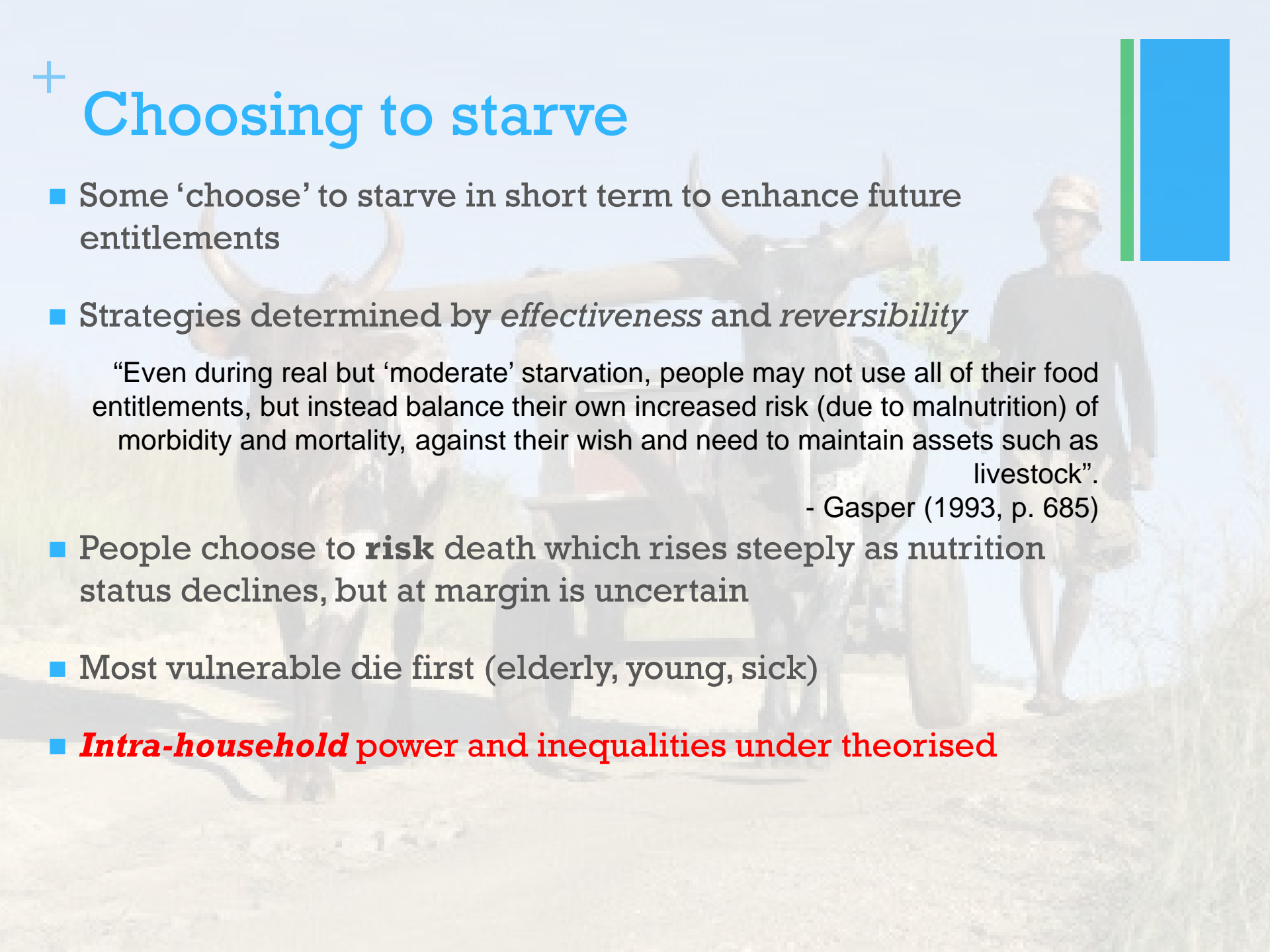
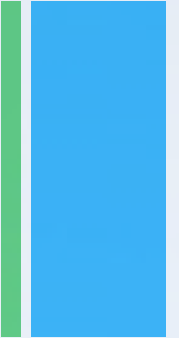
Therefore, extra legal process have structural impacts on entitlements

+ Choosing to starve

- Some 'choose' to starve in short term to enhance future entitlements
- Strategies determined by *effectiveness* and *reversibility*

“Even during real but ‘moderate’ starvation, people may not use all of their food entitlements, but instead balance their own increased risk (due to malnutrition) of morbidity and mortality, against their wish and need to maintain assets such as livestock”.

- Gasper (1993, p. 685)
- People choose to **risk** death which rises steeply as nutrition status declines, but at margin is uncertain
- Most vulnerable die first (elderly, young, sick)
- ***Intra-household*** power and inequalities under theorised



+ Health or starvation?

- Most famine deaths are from epidemics
- Hunger related diseases
 - Diarrhea
 - Gastro-enteritis
 - Lack of biological resistance to these illnesses
- De Waal (1989): indicators of poverty “no evident relation to mortality”
 - Migration and exposure to new disease
 - E.g. African famines: cholera, measles, typhus
 - Therefore: famine because of **social processes**, *not economic processes* at individual level (i.e. collapse of entitlements)

+ Health or starvation?

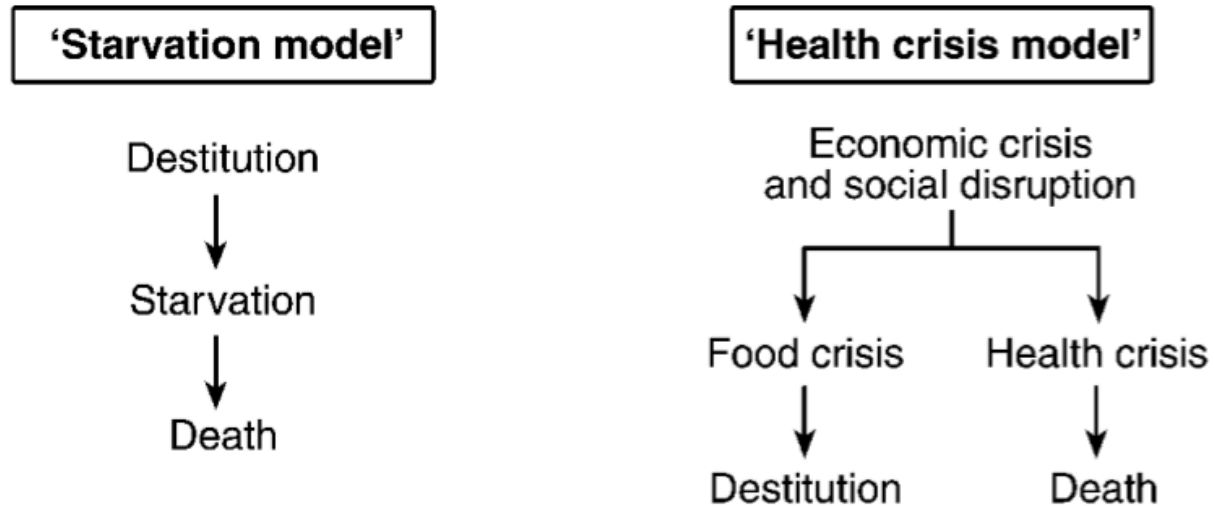


Figure 1. Famine mortality models.

Source: De Waal (1989, pp. 187–189).

+ Health or starvation?

'Starvation model'

'Health crisis model'

Household level entitlements scaled up to the group level doesn't always work; there are social crises that lead to famine too

Figure 1. Famine mortality models.

Source: De Waal (1989, pp. 187–189).

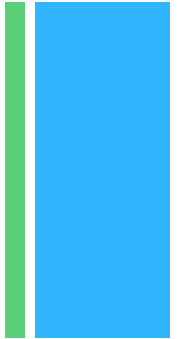
- Young and Jaspars (1995): synergism between malnutrition and morbidity best explaining famine mortality
- People may have left homes and migrated *because* they lost their entitlements to food

Therefore:

- Mortality comes from both
 - Increased *susceptibility*
 - Increased *exposure*
- Both from **disrupted access to food**



SEN'S CASE FOR DEMOCRACY



- Popular media
 - To hold government accountable and expose misdeeds
- Campaigning civil society
 - To publicize civil emergencies, drive votes in response to disaster
- Multi-party elections
 - To pander (in a good way) to voters (who would rather not starve)
 - Democracy is an 'anti-famine political contract' (Waal 1997).
- Good governance (democratic) is entwined with this interpretation and approach, and it too has been very successful.
 - Fueling the adage that “democracy ends famines”

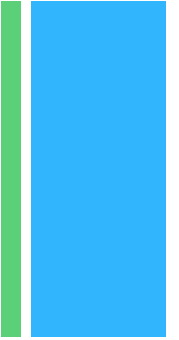
5. CONCLUSIONS

+ Conclusions



- Entitlement approach revolutionised famine thinking
- It explains some famines well (e.g. Bengal 1943)
- Not a theory, but an *abstract general account of reality*
- It can't explain all famine, but components of it can be used
- Political and social factors need to be incorporated
- Need to understand broader political economic and scale shifts in distribution

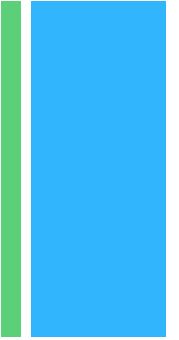
+ Vanuatu – Cyclone Pam



3. DISTRIBUTIONAL ASPECTS OF FAMINE



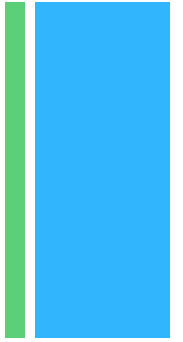
Explaining distributional aspects



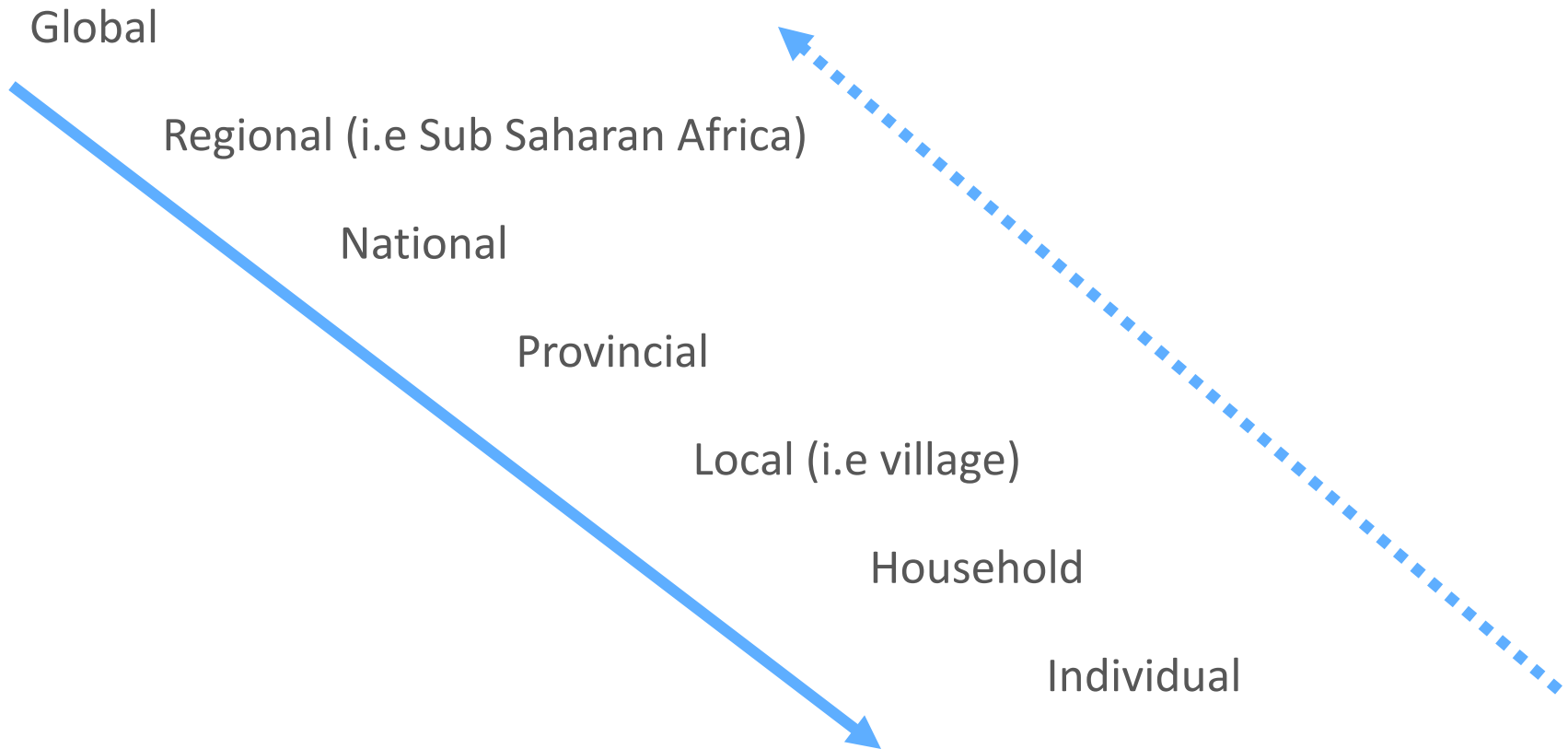
The distributional causes of famine and food insecurity include:

- The issue of Scale
- Poverty
- Market failures
- Policy failure and politics
- War and violent conflict

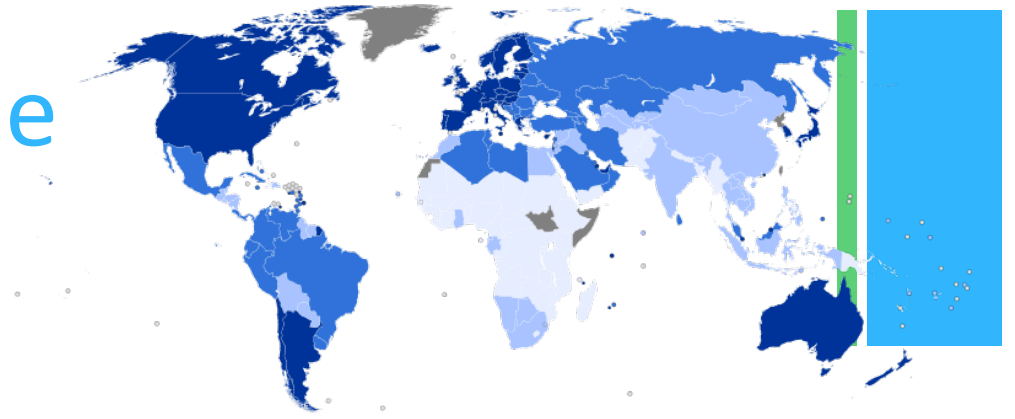
+ The issue of scale



Scales of analysis:



+ The issue of scale



The kinds of data..

■ Global

UNDP Human Development Report 2000

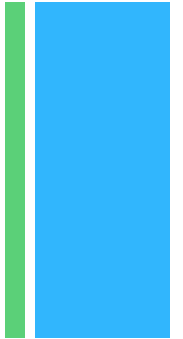
	GDP/capita 1998 (US\$)	IMR 1998	Calories/ capita/day 1997	Food as a % of household expenditure '97
Low HD	994	105	2,166	Mali 48%
Medium HD	3,458	51	2,743	Tunisia 35%
High HD	21,799	7	3,371	Australia 14%

Human Development Index: life expectancy, education, GNI.



The issue of scale – within the nation

The kinds of data..

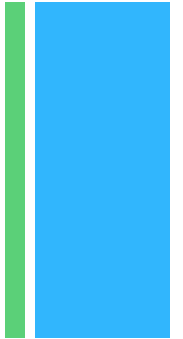


Papua New Guinea data: Gibson 2001

	Calories/ capita/day	% of children stunted
Rural PNG	2,665	47%
Urban PNG	2,645	20%
All PNG	2,662	43%



The issue of scale – within the household



Papua New Guinea household data: Gibson 2001

	Mothers with BMI < 18.5	Fathers with BMI < 18.5
Rural PNG	13.5%	4.5%
Urban PNG	6.2%	1.4%
All PNG	12.4%	4.1%

+ Poverty

Poverty and Development

- Food security linked development
- The cyclical nature of poverty (or poverty traps)
- Economic growth does not necessarily mean improvements in food security
- Additional drivers: *nutrition interventions, water and education, gender equality*

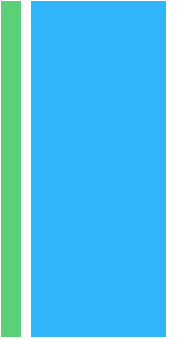




The Market

Globally:

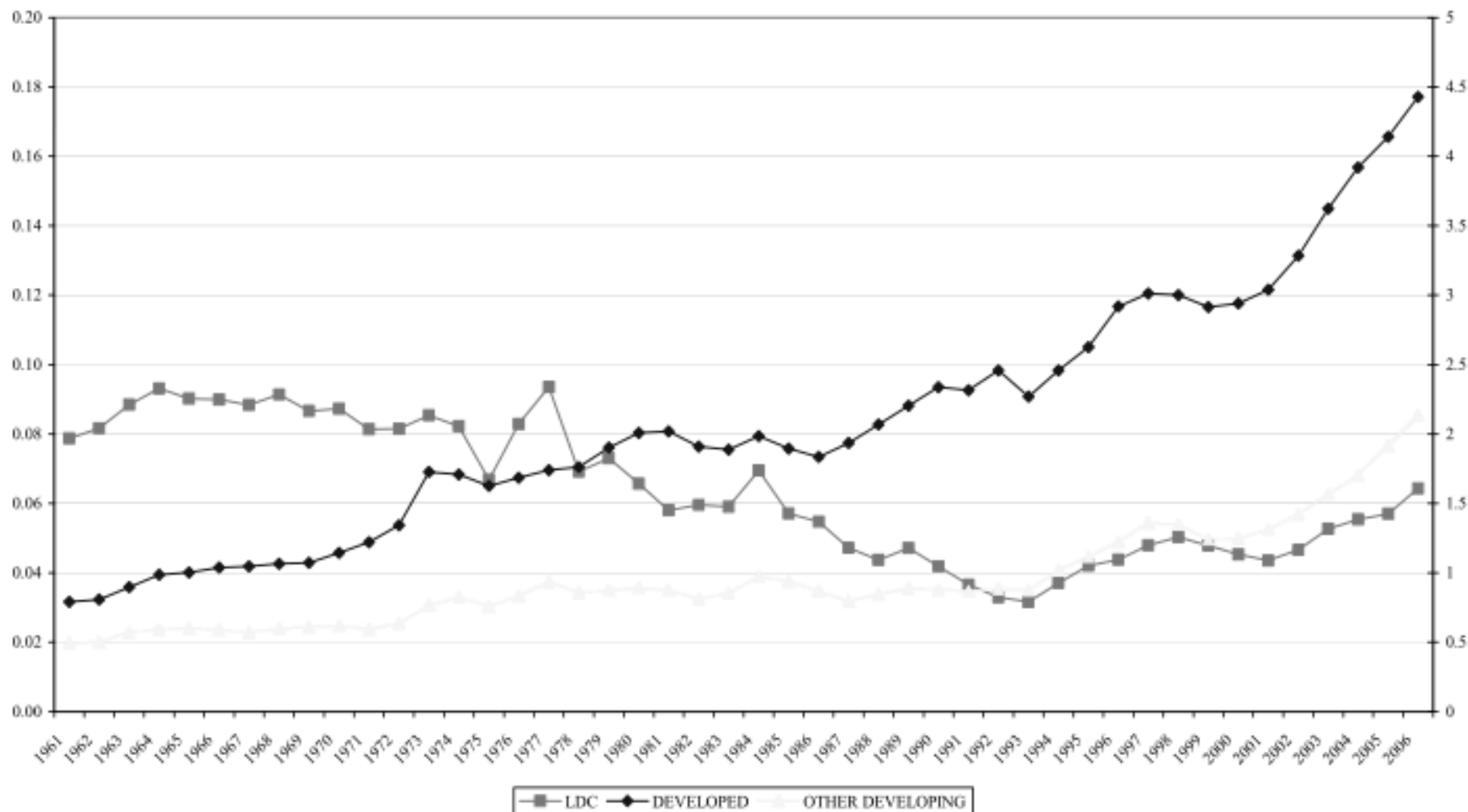
- Countries export and import
- The *terms of trade* (price for exports relative to imports) is an important determinant of food supply:
 - how much of one commodity (say rice) a country can purchase by selling a unit volume (say a tone of coffee) of another commodity?
- Terms of trade affected by changes in demand, supply and processes that ‘add value’
- Also terms of trade worse in Least Developed Countries



+ The Market



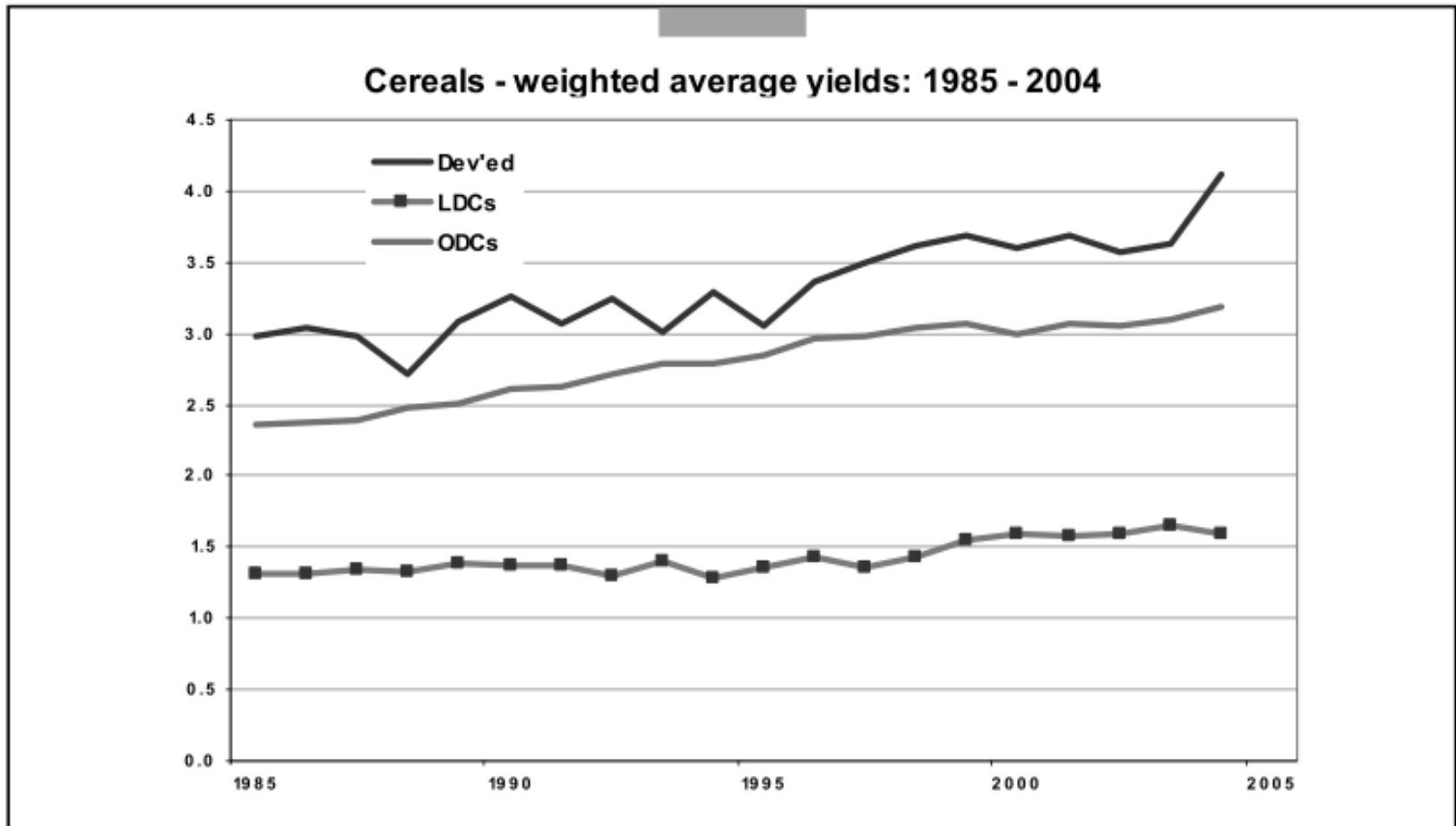
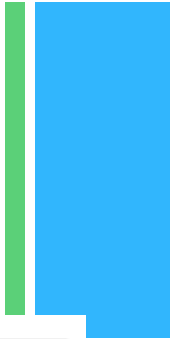
Value of Export/MUV index in Billion\$
Left axis-LDC, Right axis--Other Developing and Developed





The Market

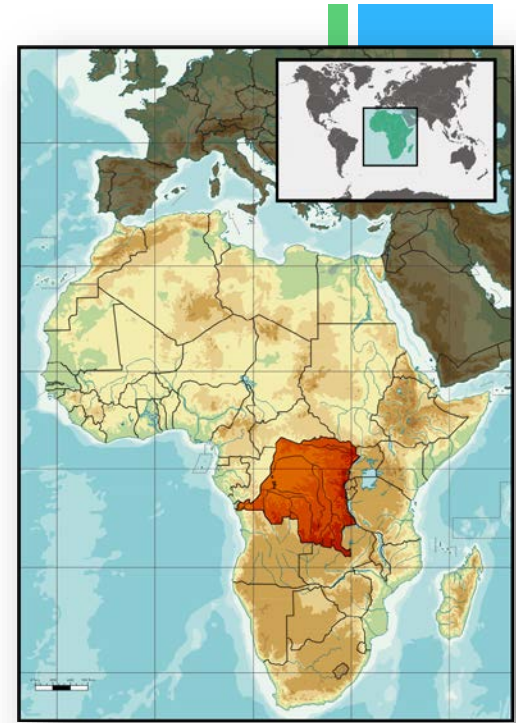
Globally:



+ The Market

Democratic Republic of Congo

- Exports: US \$250 million in 1997
 - Copper 47%
 - Imports: US \$300 million in 1997
 - Manufactured goods 67%, food 21%
 - Terms of trade: 35% decrease since 1980
 - Trade deficit 1997 = US\$50 million
 - Debt as a proportion of GDP = 104%
 - Malnutrition: 64% of population
- Source: UNCTAD 2002





The Market

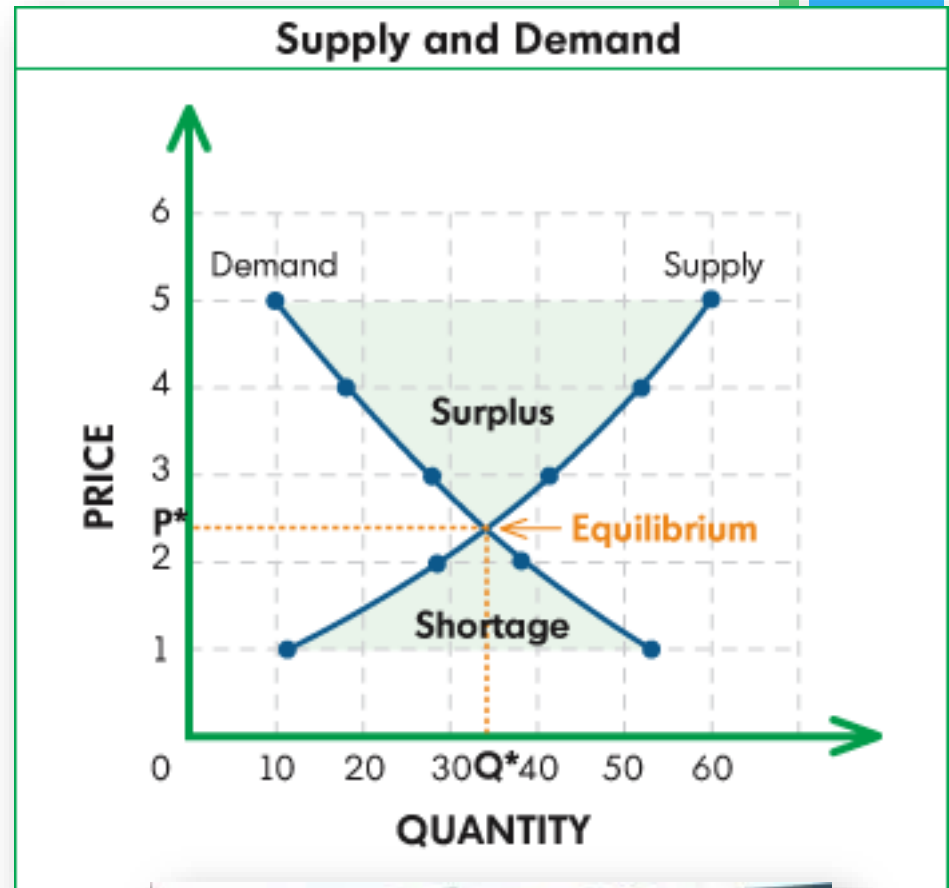
Principles of supply and demand operate at different scales:

- Between countries;
- Within countries.

Principles of supply and demand help to determine distribution and consumption of food.

SUPPLY FAILURE:

- markets are weak and unintegrated (*spatial arbitrage*); or
- Speculative hoarding drives food prices up (*temporal arbitrage*)



+

The Market

DEMAND FAILURE:

- lack of purchasing power, but food is available (Sen)
- 'entitlements to food' can be effectively restored by boosting purchasing power (Peppiatt 1997).
- Sen's approach overlooks underlying ***social and political marginalisation***.



+ Politics and Policy

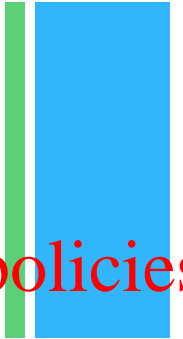


Political factors:

- Persistent development biases, e.g:
 - Some countries favoured over others
 - cities over towns and rural areas
 - race, class and religious influences
 - bias in household consumption against females



Politics and Policy



Policy:

Markets

■ Economic policy

- labour markets
- tariffs and subsidies
- interest rates and credit schemes
- insurance
- social security systems

■ Health care

■ Defence and security policy

■ Support for 'civil society'

■ Institutions for conflict resolution

Export policies

- **Agricultural policy**

- cash crops or food for domestic consumption
- Research and development

- Environmental policy

- Transport infrastructure

- Water resource policy

- Land use and land tenure policies

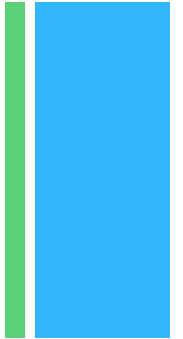
- Population policy

Capacity

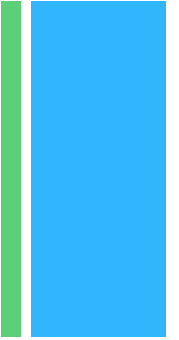
Health and citizenship



Famine as failure of macroeconomic policy?



- “Famine is largely a function of institutional, organisational, and policy failure” (von Braun *et al.* 1998:2).
- If so, then need more neoliberalisation of food markets
 - What about Zimbabwe near famine in 1992?
- So is it poverty that creates it really?
- Political famines do not operate according to the economic rules of supply and demand.
- In famines created by repressive governments or civil conflict, the **link between individual wealth and access to food is broken.**

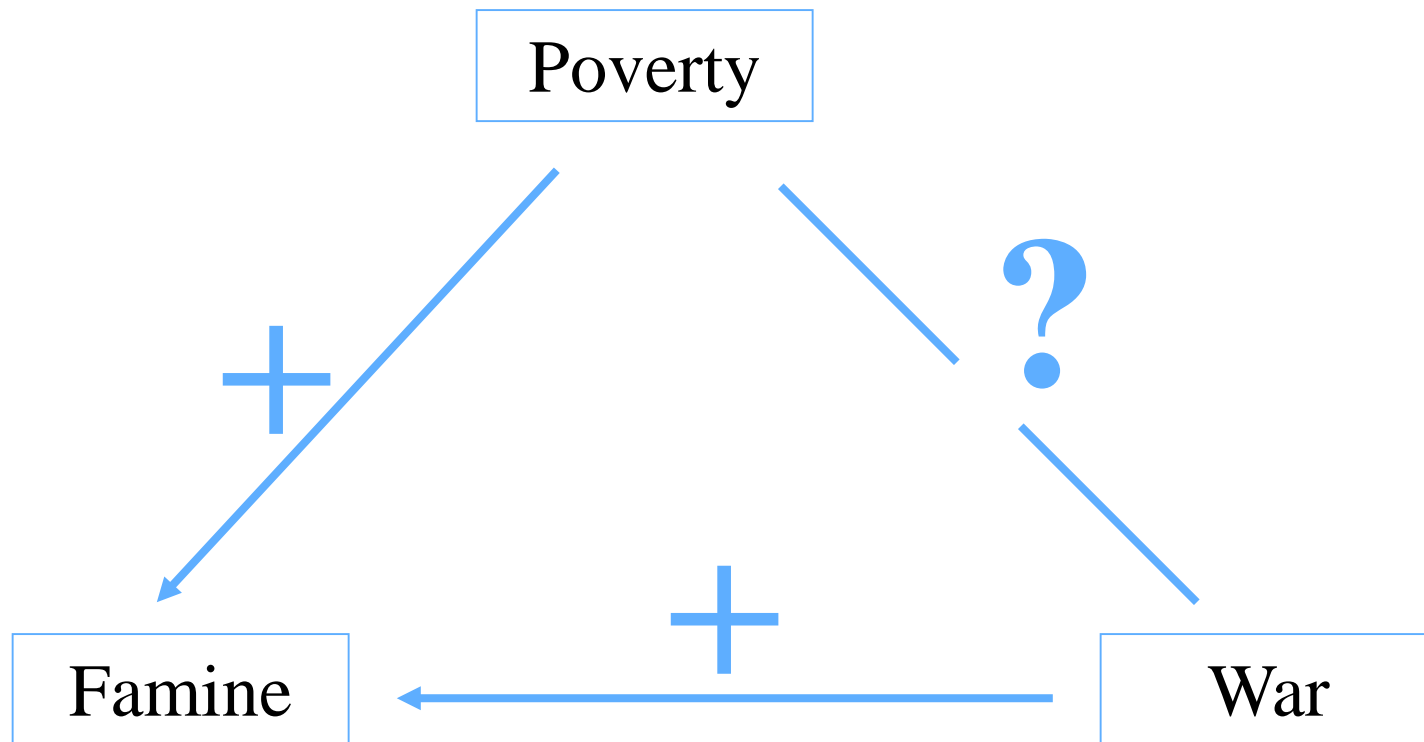


War and Conflict

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So,

What are the links between poverty, famine, and war?

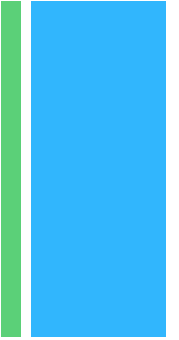




3. Evidence

War/conflict	Famine	GDP/cap (US\$) 1999	Gini
Sudan	1998	664	n/a
Ethiopia	1983-5	628	.40
Mozambique	1982-5	861	.40
Uganda	1980-81	1,167	.37
Sri Lanka	No	3,279	.34
Colombia	No	5,749	.57
Algeria	No	5,063	.35

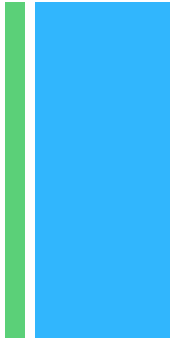
+ Somalia and Famine



- <http://www.abc.net.au/7.30/content/2011/s3296983.htm>



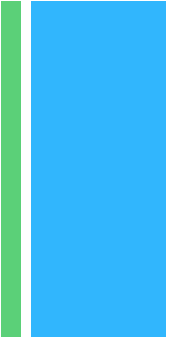
A complete distributional theory of famine would explain



- Interactions within the *world economy*
- Mix of state *policies*
- *Distribution of wealth* within countries
- *Allocation of wealth* within households
- *Sudden failures* in access to food



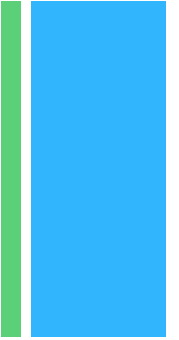
Assessing the distribution theory



- At different scales
 - Over time
 - In different sectors
 - Across different disciplines
-
- Makes assessing evidence very difficult.

5. CONCLUSIONS

+ Conclusions



In conclusion from the last couple of lectures:

1. Some truth in the abundance argument
2. But more complex than population and food supply.
3. Distribution theory – enough food but not unequally shared
4. Involves complex sets of processes over space, time, and different sectors of analysis.
5. Food problems linked to broader social systems