

THE PETER AND KATHERINE TOMASSI ESSAY

## ACCOUNTABILITY WITHOUT DEMOCRACY: LESSONS FROM AFRICAN FAMINES IN THE 1980S

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### ABSTRACT

Development economist and Nobel laureate Amartya Sen argues that democracies, by virtue of mechanisms of accountability, are better able to avert famines than non-democratic regimes. Using empirical evidence from colonial and independent India, Sen argues for the existence of an anti-famine political contract, between the government and its supporters, predicated on the prevention of famine. Building on this theory, Sen later tested his argument using cases in Africa. While Sen's theory accurately predicts the outcomes, the causal mechanism he uses to explain each variation is falsifiable. In studying the experiences of each African country that succumbed to famine in the 1980s, I find that a free press and competitive elections are neither necessary nor sufficient conditions for a country to avert famine. The results presented in this paper question the presence and role of other causes contributory to famine prevention efforts, as well as the possibility of anti-famine commitments within less-than-democratic polities.

### INTRODUCTION

Despite modern advances in the production and distribution of food, episodes of hunger and food insecurity still occur in many of the world's least developed countries. Though "hunger is not a modern malady," as Jean Drèze and Amartya Sen (1989:3) remind us, it is recurrent in parts of the world, and no civilization is totally immune. During the twentieth century, endemic famine was all but eliminated from regions outside Africa, and even within the continent, there has been considerable variation. While certain countries have managed to avoid famine, others have succumbed repeatedly. Although many theories attempt to answer this question, perhaps the best-known explanation comes from Amartya Sen, who argues that "with a relatively free press, with periodic elections, and with active

opposition parties, no government can escape severe penalty if it delays preventive measures and permits a real famine to occur. That threat keeps governments on their toes."<sup>1</sup> Democracies, Sen argues, are better equipped to prevent famines than non-democratic governments, which may be less responsive to the demands of the people. However, this argument is problematic for several reasons.

First, while Sen's argument does accurately predict the outcome of various African countries' famine prevention efforts, in each case, the influence of their free press and competitive elections was less than clear. Additionally, in each case, the country's political, economic, and other circumstances were different than those in India, on whose experience Sen's argument was originally based. Sen's theory stems from China and colonial India, both of which

succumbed to famine, in comparison with post-independence India, which has avoided famine.

Second, despite the predictive accuracy of Sen's theory, in each African case, the reality is slightly different from what Sen claims. For example, while Sen uses Ethiopia and Sudan as examples of countries that experienced famine, and had neither competitive elections nor a free press, this does not tell the whole story. In the early stages of Ethiopia's 1983-85 famine, the dictatorial government did not suppress information about the impending crisis, with a brief exception coming during a time of national celebration—the tenth anniversary of the fall of Haile Selassie.<sup>1</sup> Rather, clear predictions were published about the food shortage, but were ignored by Western governments and the UN, due to the country's domestic politics. Sudan also descended into famine under an authoritarian government, and though between 1986 and 1989 the country experienced a free press and competitive elections, these were not enough to diminish or eliminate famine conditions. In truth, the democratic government was to blame not only for failing to respond to the famine, but also for encouraging its continuation.

Table 1: Selected Cases

Table 1a: Sen's Cases

Country	Famine	Democracy	Press Freedom
Botswana	No	Yes	Free
Ethiopia	Yes	No	Not Free
Kenya	No	No	Not Free
Sudan (pre-1985)	Yes	No	Not Free
Sudan (post-1985)	Yes	Yes	Free
Zimbabwe	Yes	No	Partly Free

Table 1b: Additional Cases

Country	Famine	Democracy	Press Freedom
Mozambique	Yes	No	Not Free
Uganda (pre-1984)	Yes	Yes	Partly Free

i September 12, 1984 marked the tenth anniversary of the Dergue revolution, a celebration that cost the Dergue between \$100 million and \$200 million. By this point in the country's famine, an estimated 700,000 people had already perished (Clay, 1984).

On the other hand, Amartya Sen and Jean Drèze herald Botswana and Zimbabwe as “positive” examples of famine prevention, claiming that democratic accountability [was] instrumental in averting famine despite severe food crises.”<sup>2</sup> Although Zimbabwe did manage to avoid famine following drought in 1982, around this time the province of Matabeleland was subject to government suppression of dissidents, which included the strategic withholding of relief. Additionally, even though Zimbabwe was fairly democratic in 1982, the next year marked the start of a downward trend, and by the end of the decade, the country was strongly autocratic. Throughout this time, the press was decidedly not free. Sen's fourth case, Botswana, has maintained an extended period of electoral democracy and has managed to avoid famine, though the causality is different than in the Indian case. Since independence, Botswana has been run by a single party, which has maintained its power through patronage networks, including relief programs. Throughout the decade, the country's press was largely free from government intervention.

Finally, Sen considers Kenya, which managed to avert famine following a drought in 1983. Drèze and Sen attribute the government's responsiveness to elected members of parliament in the face of a *de jure* one-party state, limited but significant press freedoms, and the threat of political instability. De Waal, in contrast, argues that “Kenya's success in escaping famine was largely attributable to the political astuteness of President Daniel arap Moi, who recognized a rudimentary and implicit political contract: feed the central highlands and the cities, and the government will survive.”<sup>3</sup> However, despite arap Moi's apparent recognition of this political pressure, his regime “avoided tackling the structural causes of poverty and vulnerability,” and committed innumerable human rights violations during and after this time. There are also reports of interference in the affairs of the press by arap Moi's regime, which further complicate the picture.<sup>4,5,6</sup>

In an attempt to further clarify Sen's thesis, I will also consider the experiences of Mozambique and Uganda, both examples of African countries that succumbed to famine. Mozambique, once a Portuguese colony, was ravaged by civil war from 1977 to 1992, and experienced famine twice throughout the 1980s: in 1983-84, from natural

causes, and again in 1987 from the conflict. Throughout the civil war, the country did not hold elections, and throughout the decade, the press was not free. Uganda also experienced famine in 1980, resulting from environmental, economic, and post-conflict issues following the deposition of Idi Amin the previous year. In 1980, the country's first elections in eighteen years were held, though they resulted in the reelection of Milton Obote, who was previously deposed by Amin in 1971. Under Obote II, as his second term was known, the country's elections were not completely free or fair, though they were rated as among the most legitimate in this report and on the continent. While Uganda's press was deemed partly free in 1980, these freedoms were tenuous and fluctuated throughout the decade.

A third complication with Sen's argument stems from a much more fundamental question: *for what reasons—if any—should democracy be supposed to have an advantage in fighting famine?* A basic assumption of Sen's claim is that "civil and political rights—to free speech, to free association, to elect representatives of one's choice—contribute to the protection of social and economic rights—[such as] the right to food and livelihood."<sup>7</sup> Indeed, throughout history, one of the most important aspects of civil and political rights has been their use in promoting social and economic rights. However, though it seems logical that citizens of a democracy would exploit their civil and political liberties to ensure their protection against famine, the reality is not so simple. Certainly, abuses of social and economic rights can and do occur in democracies, and often stem from a failure of related civil and political rights. How, then—if at all—is famine different?

Despite variation in each country's response to the threat of famine, there is a common pattern across all countries. In each case, the dominant motivation underlying governmental attempts to prevent or ignore famine is that its primary interests—maintaining power—depend upon it. Thus, in some cases, there exists a political incentive to prevent famine. However, this incentive is by no means unique to democratic polities. Indeed, in all democratic states there exist interests and interest groups whose demands are not met, and an authoritarian government may just as easily derive some legitimacy from meeting certain demands of

the populace—whether on the people's conditions or the leader's.

According to de Waal (2000), though, while efforts to this effect taken by autocratic or otherwise less-than-democratic governments may constitute an anti-famine *program* or *commitment*, these are mere privileges granted to the population by the grace of the ruler. Only in the context of "real' democratic institutions," it is argued, can an anti-famine *contract* emerge—a lasting and, crucially, enforceable solution to famine.<sup>8</sup> However, while the difference between a repressive and a democratic government may be relatively easy to identify, the difference, both theoretical and practical, between a *commitment* and a *contract* is less than clear and raises further questions regarding the nature of political incentives and government responses to them.

As a result, we may extrapolate Sen's thesis to a universal form: mechanisms of accountability, such as a free press and competitive elections, promote responsive governments. Yet, the mechanisms Sen describes may be distinct from the institutional form of government or even any pre-existing institutional measures of accountability, which may exist without necessarily promoting any specific interest. It is apparent that neither the form of government nor the openness of the press significantly account for a government's responsiveness to famine among its citizens. Instead, preventive action to famine seems more heavily influenced by the desire of those in power to preserve and perpetuate the regime, a motive more widely shared across regimes of all forms.

Having established that the presence and application of factors instrumental to anti-famine measures is independent of the form and structure of government, this thesis will attempt to reconcile Sen's hypothesis with the experiences of African countries during the 1980s. In countries that experienced famine, what were the significant causal mechanisms? And in countries that avoided famine, how—if at all—did governmental action contribute to the effort? More importantly, why did the government choose to act?

Beyond Sen's initial cases—Botswana, Ethiopia, Kenya, Sudan, and Zimbabwe—I have also included Mozambique and Uganda, both of which also experienced famine in the 1980s. By reevaluating each case, I argue that a free press and

competitive elections—supposed preconditions to averting famine—are, in reality, neither necessary nor sufficient in achieving this objective. While these mechanisms of accountability are undeniably important to improving the quality of governance, they must be considered distinct from other specific issues and from the political will to act.

The structure of the thesis is as follows. I first review Sen's thesis over time, followed by a review of literature on the topics of famine, elections, and press, and ultimately, an elaboration of my argument. In the second section, I provide further background on each case, focusing on the countries' political regime and elections, operational freedom of the press, and food security efforts. Finally, in the conclusion, I provide implications and recommendations for future action.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### Entitlements, Acquirement, and Freedom

Though Sen's theory appears most explicitly in his 1990 speech, "Individual Freedom as a Social Commitment," the notion that a free press and competitive elections could hold a government accountable stems from an earlier development by Sen: entitlements. Described as "the set of different alternative commodity bundles that [a] person can acquire through the use of various legal channels of acquirement open to someone in [their] position," a person's entitlements not only reflect the goods available to them, but also the conditions under which such exchanges are carried out.<sup>9</sup> Thus, a person who owns and lives off their land, for example, will establish command over food in a very different way than a wage laborer who is paid in cash. While the former conducts an exchange with 'nature' (*own-labor* entitlement), the latter transacts with other members of society (*trade-based* entitlement).<sup>ii</sup> It is of great importance, Sen argues, that these differences in exchange conditions are considered in matters of hunger and food policy—without them, it is impossible to understand how people can or cannot acquire enough food.

As a result, Sen advocates considering entitlements—the means by which people acquire commodities, including food—in addition to the

level of food produced or available. Though this approach does not seek to provide a complete explanation of famine, Sen notes that "famine reflects widespread failure of entitlements on the part of substantial sections of the population."<sup>10</sup> Starvation may be thought of as any commodity bundle that does not include sufficient food. Thus, a person's entitlements may reduce them to starvation due to changes in their endowment (e.g. loss of land or labor power), or their 'exchange entitlement mapping' (e.g. fall in wages, rise in commodity prices, or changes in employment).

A few years later, Sen dramatically expanded the concept of entitlements by removing its tangible boundaries. In *Individual Freedom as a Social Commitment* (1990), Sen argues that famine constitutes not only a breakdown of vulnerable groups' entitlements, but also violations of individuals' positive freedom to survive.

Sen argues that poverty is not necessarily a violation of negative freedom: "A person in extreme poverty is not free to do many things (e.g., feeding his family well, staying home when riots threaten his life), but the poverty and consequent failure of positive freedom may not be due to interference by others."<sup>11</sup> Rather, poverty and famine represent serious violations of a person's positive freedom to survive. Despite the change in language, though, Sen's policy solution remains the same: focus on vulnerable groups' entitlements and changes thereof. Within this framework, explanations of famine would take the form of economic and political changes that alter various groups' relative economic power.

By way of these considerations, Sen argues that the difference between India prior to independence—which experienced the Bengal famine of 1943—and India post-independence—the push for which was provoked by that particular famine—was not the formation of a famine response policy, but rather a willingness to invoke the policy when necessary.<sup>12</sup>

Since independence, India's famine prevention measures have been used judiciously. Thus, Sen concludes that the government's accountability to its people, made paramount by the country's democratic revolution and its resulting political contract, is the causal factor in the country's newfound ability to avert famine. This case, then, illustrates that "one set of freedoms—to criticize, to publish, to vote—are causally linked with other types of freedoms, such

ii Sen (1981) also identifies production-based and inheritance and transfer-based entitlement relations. While the latter is generally of limited relevance to famine theory, the former is relevant insofar as it interacts with others' trade-based entitlement prospects.

as the freedom to escape starvation and famine mortality.”<sup>13</sup>

In colonial India, it was the reluctance of the British government to take responsibility for famine relief that helped discredit it and foment nationalist movements. Eventually, “sustained political agitation forced the government to take serious anti-famine measures, implicitly accepting a social contract.”<sup>14</sup> The Bengal famine of 1943 represented a significant breach of this contract, and independence came four years later. Post-colonial governments have continued to honor this anti-famine contract, and continue to be held accountable by the press and competitive elections.<sup>15</sup>

On the other hand, Sen considers China, a country that experienced no such popular democratic uprising. As a result of the country’s Great Leap Forward and the resulting social and economic reforms—which attempted to rapidly modernize the country’s economy through processes of industrialization and collectivization—a tremendous famine befell them. From 1958-61, between sixteen and thirty million people are estimated to have died, though other estimates place the toll even higher.<sup>16</sup> At this time, “the government faced no pressure from newspapers, which were controlled, or from opposition parties, which were absent.”<sup>17</sup> Indeed, the Chinese government itself was misled by the lack of free reporting, with its own propaganda and party officials all competing for credit in Beijing, distorting or fabricating statistics from around the country.<sup>18</sup>

After the fall of the Soviet Union, Sen reformulated his theory to focus on five African cases: democratic Botswana and Zimbabwe and the questionably-democratic Kenya, which averted famine in the early 1980s, and authoritarian regimes in Sudan and Ethiopia, which succumbed to famine. Though Sen undoubtedly considers his theory robust enough to be applicable to the individual cases, there are important differences among the countries to consider that present a challenge to Sen’s hypothesis.

As in India, under colonialism, African governments faced little pressure to introduce anti-famine measures. Rather, it was only towards the end of the era that there arose any “sense of administrative responsibility towards colonial subjects.”<sup>19</sup> However, before then, colonialism in the area was primarily exploitative and relied on military

power. In the early twentieth century, for example, famine was brought about in British Tanganyika (later Tanzania) and German Ruanda-Urundi by colonial troops, in an attempt to suppress the populations.<sup>20</sup>

Elsewhere in Africa, though, colonial administrations had begun to acknowledge famine as a detriment to the local population. Following famine and food insecurity in Sudan during the 1910s, the colonial government attempted to transplant the Indian Famine Code in the country, resulting in the 1920 Sudan Famine Regulations. However, Sudan was very different than Madras, the Indian state on whose policies Sudan’s were based. First, there was not enough administrative capacity in Sudan to organize a system necessary to predict and prevent famine, let alone undertake the prescribed relief efforts. Second, the populations most affected by the famines were different. Reflective of “the generic difference between (most) South Asian famines and (most) African ones,” those most at risk of famine in India were agricultural laborers and rural artisans, while in Sudan, those most at risk were largely pastoralist farmers and herders.<sup>21</sup> Crucially, while the fortunes of the former depended on market conditions (i.e. food prices and employment), the wealth of the latter was held primarily in assets such as livestock, meaning that famine in Sudan would be harder to predict but slower to arrive, reducing the advantage of responding quickly.<sup>iii</sup> The area’s lack of transport infrastructure and the absence of any food markets also meant that “the deference of the regulations to classical economics was inappropriate.”<sup>22</sup> In reality, de Waal argues, the Sudanese Famine Regulations were constructed primarily to deter political threats by prioritizing subsidized food government employees and townspeople, followed by those in flood-prone riverine areas, while dwellers of more remote regions would be lucky to receive any assistance.

Though Sudan’s famine codes of the early twentieth century are notable for being somewhat inappropriate given their context, other African colonies also experienced ‘relief’ policies that provided a bare minimum of assistance. While in certain instances, the legacies of colonial

iii In terms of entitlements, while the wealth of agricultural laborers and rural artisans is primarily trade-based (or possibly production-based), that of pastoralist farmers and herders is more along the lines of own-labor entitlements.

administrations did help to instill an expectation of emergency relief provision (e.g. Tanzania), this was not the norm. There is thus a clear difference between the approaches of famine-prevention regimes in India and in Africa: in the former, famine relief had become a right, while in the latter it was still seen as little more than an administrative duty. However, the situation was different in African cities due to the growth of trade unions and nationalist sentiment, where keeping the people fed became a political imperative and consequently was popularly recognized as a responsibility of the government.

Politics of famine prevention in colonial Africa was further complicated by disputes regarding land use and soil conservation, with colonial governors seeing traditional techniques as backwards and damaging to the environment. As one might expect, the policies that resulted from this view generated resentment and resistance that significantly strengthened nationalist sentiments. Policies dealing with epidemic disease control were met with similar hostility, owing both to their rudimentary nature and the authoritarian manner in which they were implemented.<sup>iv</sup>

Even as African countries achieved independence, there were no nationalist movements that utilized the prevention of famine as a party platform. Instead, other issues like racial identity and economic development tended to prove more salient, reflecting both a relative lack of rural civic mobilization and the problematic legacy of colonial anti-famine land-use policies.

In promising macroeconomic and social welfare development, these regimes pursued technocratic policies that in some instances succeeded in averting famine. Ultimately, though, the authoritarian nature of the governments undermined their relief programs, leaving those most vulnerable unable to protect themselves. Thus, while systemic anti-famine policies were implemented in colonial Africa, they were markedly simpler than their Indian counterparts.

### Famine Prevention in Post-Colonial Africa

Perhaps the clearest example of a minimal commitment to famine relief is Sudan. A British

colony until 1956, the country descended into civil war almost immediately after gaining its independence. At this time, however, scholars note that the country exhibited structures that served to guard against localized food shortages degenerating into famine, but that their effectiveness was undermined by political instability. In 1969, Jaafar Nimeiri seized power and embraced political Islam, exacerbating the conflict between the country's Northern (Muslim) and Southern (Christian) halves. Nimeiri's corrupt regime destroyed its domestic accountability during this time, exploiting its strategic position in the West's anti-communist strategy, and the state began to decay domestically.

In 1983, the specter of famine loomed in a few provinces, and, though drought struck again in 1984, the government took no action. In an attempt to persuade international financiers of his country's stability, Nimeiri stated publicly at that time that the situation in the South—civil war, by all accounts—was “reassuring.”<sup>23</sup> Though Nimeiri did ultimately acknowledge the gravity of the conditions, the famine helped solidify a coalition against him, resulting in a popular democratic uprising in 1985. However, the use was largely tactical, the consequence of which was that the movement failed to achieve any real political change.

Following the regime change, Sudan's famine response effort was delegated to international relief agencies and became a depoliticized, technical issue. This shift was reflected in the creation of a technical early warning system that monitored economic, climatic, and agricultural data, in the spirit of the “neo-liberal agenda for eviscerating government responsibilities.”<sup>24</sup> Under the democratically-elected Umma Party (1986-9), the country did possess liberal democratic institutions, but in practice they did not extend beyond Khartoum and other (Northern) urban centers. War in the South continued to rage, as did the famine. At this time, the press was unrestrained, though there was little interest in covering either situation.

Around this time, Ethiopia also failed to prevent famine, though the country's prospects were not nearly so bright as Sudan's after Nimeiri. Though Ethiopia was never colonized by a European power, Haile Selassie's Solomonic empire came to an end in 1974 when he was deposed by a Soviet-backed Marxist-Leninist military junta—the

<sup>iv</sup> It was not unheard of for entire communities to be forcibly relocated in the name of preventing the spread of disease, though in reality these programs would have done little more than expose relocated populations to new disease vectors and undermine existing social institutions.

Dergue (“council” in Gêez). Led by Mengistu Haile Mariam, the country immediately became a one-party communist state. After the country’s 1973-4 food crisis, the imperial government established a Relief and Rehabilitation Commission (RRC) to help prevent future crises; following the revolution, the Commission quickly became a tool of the Dergue. Land reforms enacted around this time were designed by a small number of intellectuals without the involvement of the peasant base, and were imposed from above. The Dergue also established a central grain-marketing corporation that extracted food from rural populations to sustain a few cities and the ever-expanding army: “precisely the same pattern of distribution which prevailed before the revolution.”<sup>25</sup> During the 1980s, the RRC became a political tool to implement radical social reforms, and later the military used it to relocate people. The RRC was also tasked with procuring foreign aid—most of which went to fuel militias—and spreading propaganda, identifying the country’s 1983-5 famine as the result of overpopulation and drought, as opposed to war.

However, though drought and harvest failure did contribute to the famine, they cannot be considered direct causes. Even the government’s economic and agricultural policies were not as integral to the famine’s sustainment as the counter-insurgency campaigns in Tigray and Wollo: “The zone of severe famine coincided with the war zone, and the phases of the developing famine corresponded with major military actions.”<sup>26</sup> After the famine was uncovered by international media in the fall of 1984, the Dergue began to use “aid as a strategic alibi,” with a newly-formed UN Office for Emergency Operations in Ethiopia acting as an international official mouthpiece.<sup>27</sup> On the other side of the frontline, the Tigrayan People’s Liberation Front (TPLF) was much more cognizant of their reliance on the rural population, and as a result, aligned their interests. By “[linking] the political fortunes of the Tigrayan peasantry in the face of famine to the political fortunes of the TPLF,” the TPLF was also able to frame the government as having genocidal intentions.<sup>28</sup>

Ultimately, de Waal explains, Ethiopia’s famines of the 1970s and 1980s are “replete with ironies, which are explicable only by attention to the existence or not of an anti-famine political contract.”<sup>29</sup> While

the failed response to the 1973 famine was elitist and institutionalized (and resulted in the fall of Haile Selassie), the response to the 1983-85 famine was, for a short time, thought of as a major policy success for the government of Ethiopia. Because discourse about fighting famine is disconnected from discourse of internal conflict, though, the TPLF has largely been unable to take credit for its actions.

Parts of Mozambique also experienced famine due to domestic conflict. Even before Mozambique’s 1975 independence from Portugal, the territory was subject to a decade of sporadic warfare. Additionally, following the formation of the new government—a one-party state based on Marxist principles—most of the country’s roughly 250,000 Portuguese returned to Europe, leaving the economy in shambles. Civil war broke out in 1977, and lasted until 1992. During times of peace, Mozambique is a fertile country that has little trouble feeding its population and producing exports. Between 1983 and 1984, though, the south-central region descended into famine, with most commonly cited statistics placing the death toll at around 100,000. A second major famine occurred in 1987, centered on the eastern Zambézia province, which was the result of conflict. The civil war was characterized by extensive human rights violations on both sides, and only ended after the accidental death of the president and the end of the Cold War.

Though political instability in Uganda arguably did not directly contribute to the country’s famine in 1980, the situation was indeed exacerbated by confusion and fragility following the fall of Idi Amin. After being deposed in 1979, Amin and his forces fled the country, and around the same time, crisis struck Karamoja, a region periodically afflicted by drought. Amin’s soldiers’ abandonment of a barracks within Karamoja further contributed to the instability, as traditional power relations were upset, and a power struggle following (possibly rigged) elections resulted in Karamoja—already a marginalized region—being caught in the crossfire. In the end, an estimated 50,000 Karimojong perished. Though the human rights record of Milton Obote’s regime was below par, the country did manage to avoid famine in Karamoja following drought in 1984, just before a coup removed Obote from the presidency. Dodge and Alnwick (1986), though, attribute this success entirely to efforts by international aid organizations.

At the other end of the spectrum lies Botswana,

whose government is noted for exhibiting an inherent sense of obligation and a keen sense of its electoral interests. Having gained independence from Britain in 1964, Botswana has consistently maintained what Freedom House judges as free and fair elections. In reality, though, the Botswana Democratic Party (BDP) has “benefited from an uneven playing field,” winning every contest since independence by a considerable margin.<sup>v,30</sup> When drought struck in 1982 (and continued for six years), the government enacted various programs in an attempt to prop up rural incomes. Though the country’s use of plow and tractor subsidies was socially regressive, the country did manage to avoid famine conditions. There are some, however, who argue that the country’s success was in no small part bolstered by its economic growth throughout the decade, rather than by any political commitment to relief. The country’s constitution does not contain explicit guarantees for freedom of the press, and though the government occasionally interferes in media affairs, abuse by the BDP is “neither as frequent nor as severe as other countries in the region.”<sup>31</sup>

Though Drèze and Sen similarly laud Zimbabwe’s government for enacting effective entitlement protection programs and preventing the country’s 1982-84 drought from precipitating a major famine, this is far from a complete picture. After gaining independence in 1980, Robert Mugabe and his ZANU party were elected to power. Less publicized than the country’s aversion to famine, however, was the ZANU military campaign conducted within the province of Matabeleland, home to supporters of the rival ZAPU party.<sup>vi</sup> This campaign—*Gukurahundi*—resulted in widespread famine conditions and the deaths of between 10,000 and 20,000 people.<sup>vii</sup> Though this was obscured partly by Zimbabwe exploiting its strategic position between East and West, the *Gukurahundi* was also kept secret by restrictions on the content of news reports. It was not until 1987 that the campaign ended, following an agreement to unify ZANU and ZAPU (forming ZANU-PF). However, this relationship broke down some years later, and though the country has experienced “limited multi-party

democracy,” in practice, Mugabe has held power throughout.<sup>32</sup>

Last, but not least, Drèze and Sen consider the case of Kenya. After peacefully gaining independence from the British in 1963, Kenya became a republic, with Jomo Kenyatta as its president. Political pressure prompted Kenyatta to consolidate power in 1966 after winning re-election, and established a *de facto* one-party state. Upon his death in 1978, then-Vice President Daniel arap Moi took his place, and though he enjoyed support from around the country, he was too weak to consolidate power. However, in 1982, some officers of the air force attempted and failed to overthrow him, and arap Moi dismissed political opposition, establishing a *de jure* one-party state. In 1984, the country experienced a severe drought, in response to which an ‘inter-ministry drought response coordinating committee’ was established and given top priority. Ultimately, the country managed to avert famine, though there is evidence of widespread hunger leading to malnutrition.

While Drèze and Sen attribute the government’s responsiveness to political pressure from elected MPs, the (somewhat free) press, and the threat of political instability, de Waal argues that Kenya’s “success in escaping famine was largely attributable to the political astuteness of President Daniel arap Moi, who recognized a rudimentary and implicit political contract: feed the central highlands and (most importantly) the cities, and the government will survive.”<sup>33</sup> However, despite recognizing this pressure, action taken by arap Moi’s regime seemed oriented primarily towards the placation of his opponents, failing to address the country’s more fundamental causes of poverty. Additionally, there are reports of numerous human rights violations during and after this time, as well as of governmental interference in press affairs that further complicate Drèze and Sen’s argument.<sup>34</sup>

To summarize, then: while Botswana and Kenya managed to avert famine conditions, neither were fully democratic. On the other hand, Sudan, Ethiopia, Mozambique, and Uganda were all autocratic, and all failed to avert famine conditions (in most cases due to war-time politics). Finally, on first glance, Zimbabwe also managed to avert famine, though in reality, the government indirectly created hunger to suppress political opposition.

However, while anecdotal evidence is largely

v XRCOMP in Polity IV (see page 28).

vi While ZANU was Western-aligned, ZAPU supported the USSR.

vii *Gukurahundi*, meaning “the early rain which washes away the chaff before the spring rains,” in the Chi-Shona language, was also known as the Matabeleland Massacres.



sufficient to reconcile Sen’s theory with reality, it cannot provide general (or generalizable) definitions of famine, competitive elections, or a free press—all of which may be used to further examine the hypothesis’ validity. While for each variable, a simple binary measure (e.g., free press vs. restricted press) would seem to suffice, in reality, it is the gradations in between which provide information pertinent to this endeavor, as they often reflect decisions and actions of a wide political variety.

### Conceptualizing Famine

While most popular definitions of famine include scenes of malnutrition and starvation resulting from a general lack of food, this is somewhat of an oversimplification. Though famine conditions may obviously result in starvation and destitution, these symptoms are generally indicative of breakdowns of other social systems as well. Exactly which systems are affected and how they are affected, though, is a matter of debate. While some scholars argue that famine is the result of a decrease in relative exchange power of (vulnerable) populations, others emphasize nutrition, disease, social disruption, excess mortality, or other indicators as both reflecting and stemming from ‘famine conditions.’<sup>35</sup> Clearly, then, we are faced with a complex phenomenon, with debates ranging from umbrella definitions to the relevance of component factors.

Early ‘modern’ scholars of famine were influenced by Thomas Malthus, who focused on the gap between food supply and demand given a level of technological advancement and a fixed amount of land. In his 1798 work *An Essay on the Principle of Population as it Affects the Further*

*Improvement of Society*, Malthus identified famine as “a shortfall in the supply of food in a given area and, simultaneously, the death by starvation of a substantial proportion of the inhabitants.”<sup>36</sup> However, de Waal notes, the picture painted by this description—of society constantly existing on the verge of famine—is fallacious.

Though classical theories of famine have fallen out of favor, the question of whether famines stem from ‘natural’ or ‘artificial’ causes is still pertinent. Sen claims that the distinction can be misleading: famine, he argues, is fundamentally a social phenomenon, involving “the inability of large groups of people to establish command over food” in the face of adverse meteorological conditions.<sup>37</sup> Furthermore, though a natural catastrophe may cause (or exacerbate) food insecurity, a disaster’s impact will nonetheless depend upon how a society is organized. For example, a country with an extensive irrigation network could theoretically weather a drought much better than one without such redistributive infrastructure. That said, even the existence of droughts, floods, and other calamities is not independent of social and economic policies. In Sub-Saharan Africa, for example, problems of famine and hunger are often seen as related to climate change, overlooking the influence of societal factors on how people produce and consume food.

To those in power, the identification of famine as primarily resulting from drought or other natural causes can dramatically reframe lines of accountability, and may significantly alter the policy or international response. Even the identification of famine as such “represents a choice and is therefore more political than technical: rather than being ‘found,’ a definition of famine must be ‘agreed [upon].”<sup>38</sup> Thus, when famine is blamed on natural causes, as with the Sahelian famines of the 1970s—supposed products of cyclical “changes in heat coming from the sun”—drought and famine (and the prevention or alleviation thereof) are removed from the scope of agentive action.<sup>39</sup>

Table 2: Estimated Mortality in Select Twentieth Century Famines

Years	Location (epicenter)	Excess Mortality	Causal Triggers
1943	India (Bengal)	2.1m–3m	Conflict
1958–62	China	30m–33m	Government
1969–74	West Africa (Sahel)	101k	Drought
1972–75	Ethiopia (Wollo & Tigray)	200k–500k	Drought
1980–81	Uganda (Karamoja)	30k	Conflict & Drought
1982–85	Mozambique	100k	Conflict & Drought
1982–85	Zimbabwe (Matabeleland)	10k–20k	Conflict
1983–85	Ethiopia	590k–1m	Conflict & Drought
1984–85	Sudan (Darfur, Kordofan)	250k	Drought
1988	Sudan (South)	250k	Drought

(Devereux, 2000)

A similar argument that has existed since colonial times is the tendency to place blame on pastoral society, the idea being that these societies are 'backwards' and conservative, and emphasize "stock accumulation as opposed to quality control, pastoral mobility and cattle raiding."<sup>40</sup> Indeed, it is not uncommon to see Africa's endemic twentieth century famines attributed directly and solely to the victims themselves.<sup>viii</sup>

However, these arguments are misleading because they are based on generalities and present pastoralism as ignorance, without considering external factors such as the weather and often-exploitative economic conditions. While Sen's argument for considering entitlements follows, Okudi argues that such an approach is as "narrow in scope as it is limited to the immediate causes of famine and its consequences,"<sup>41</sup> failing to expose the relationship between long- and short-term causes of famine.

### Identification

Beyond identifying the cause(s) of a famine, there is still the question of what 'famine conditions' entail, what distinguishes famine from mere 'episodes of food insecurity' or 'chronic hunger,' and, of course, how best to avert such afflictions. While 'pop' conceptions of famine do tend to oversimplify matters, they can provide a helpful starting point for exploring what constitutes this complex occurrence.

To some, famine is identified primarily as a health crisis, manifested by significant changes in nutrition levels or starvation. In this vein, Drèze and Sen (1989) distinguish famine, "involving acute starvation and a sharp increase in mortality," from chronic hunger, "sustained nutritional deprivation on a persistent basis," as distinct yet related phenomena.<sup>42</sup> While the former, they note, requires speed in intervention, often resulting in the use of existing distributional mechanisms, the nature of the latter is such that slower but more impactful policies may be enacted. This distinction is also important in considering the experiences of different countries. India, for example, experiences regular hunger and endemic undernutrition, though the Bengal

famine of 1943 was the result of acute starvation escalating into large-scale mortality. On the other hand, countries may become adept at dealing with persistent hunger, but fall prey to considerable transient hunger, as in China during 1958-61.

However, de Waal (2000) argues that the distinction between transient 'famine' and 'chronic hunger' is fallacious; as with most social scientific terms, the linkage between real-world phenomena and social scientific concepts can be unclear. In response, de Waal (2000) identifies five main components of theoretical famine, with real-world instances combining some, if not all, to varying degrees: hunger, impoverishment, social breakdown, mortality, and coping strategies undertaken in response. However, it is also possible, he notes, for a famine to occur without any number of these factors. Though uncommon, famine striking asset-rich societies is not unheard of, while others have occurred without social breakdown or even excess mortality.<sup>ix</sup>

Rather than simply conceptualizing hunger and famine as occurring on the same linear scale, famines may assume qualitatively different forms as they escalate. While this does help clarify famine conceptually, it does not make the identification of such an occurrence any less imprecise.

### Quantification

A second measure for distinguishing famines from one another is severity—the degree to which each factor is present. One problem arises, however, in that it is often difficult to know the true scale of the excess mortality caused by a famine. Estimates are always approximate, and reflect the incentives of the published. For methodological reasons, then, demographers and nutritionists prefer to release 'crude mortality rates' expressed in deaths per thousand, though the media and public tend to desire aggregate totals, which are not completely accurate measures.

De Waal identifies three qualitative degrees of famine severity: famines involving primarily hunger and impoverishment, those with elevated mortality rates, and those seeing spectacularly high death rates alongside severe social dislocation and collapse.<sup>43</sup> These measures also allow for consideration of

viii In the case of Uganda, for example, Akol (1985) argues that the development of agricultural productivity in affected areas was impeded by a 'persistent' rustling of livestock, leading to distress migration, as well as detrimental traditional rituals and practices. Similarly, Alnwick (1985) attributes the country's 1980 famine to the 'alarming' amount of plundering and raids after the fall of Idi Amin the previous year.

ix For example, though the Dutch Hunger Winter of 1944 was notable for occurring in a more developed and asset-rich country, it occurred during and was generated in no small part by the Nazi occupation.

auxiliary factors such as changes in exchange entitlement mappings (e.g., the ability to buy food) or coping strategies.

De Waal then proposes five general types of famine, based on the sector of society most affected and the primary causal elements. The first, pastoral famines, primarily affect herders, and are caused by drought, leading to a lack of pasture and water for animals and an abandonment or reduction of the pastoral lifestyle. Due to their slow onset, they are quite dispersed and may be extremely protracted. Agrarian/smallholder famines affect scattered farming populations, and result from drought-related production failures that often betray deeper social problems, such as exploitative economic relationships. These famines are usually slow-onset, and may manifest themselves as multiple localized famines surrounding an 'epicenter' from which waves of grain prices rise and cause migration. These famines may remain invisible outside the affected areas. Class-based/occupational famines negatively affect wage laborers and can result from rapid and drastic changes in exchange entitlements (e.g. collapse of labor, changes in grain price). These famines may become highly visible as people migrate, which in turn strains the resources of neighboring locales. Finally, wartime famines stem from conditions imposed on civilians during war, including destruction or confiscation of goods and restrictions on movement. These famines are highly dependent on the nature of the war.<sup>44</sup>

Of course, many famines are combinations of the above types. Agrarian famines, for example, are commonly associated with pastoral famines, and changes in grain prices caused by agrarian or wartime famines may cause class-based famines in adjacent areas. In Ethiopia in 1983-5, for example, "some of the highest mortality was recorded in areas which did not themselves suffer a major production failure, but which were suddenly (and to their residents, inexplicably) struck by high food prices and immigration of destitute laborers."<sup>45</sup>

Generally, de Waal notes, 'characteristic Asian famines' have been class-based, rapid-onset, and high visibility, making coping strategies less helpful and state action more necessary. In contrast, African famines are generally more localized, slow-onset, and low in visibility, placing greater importance on coping strategies than public action. It is for this

reason that famines in Africa often fail to achieve political significance.

Walker (1989), on the other hand, focuses on behavioral responses to food insecurity, with four distinct 'stages' of coping strategies. The first includes strategies for overcoming 'normal seasonal stress.' The second includes increasingly irreversible coping strategies as scarcity persists (e.g., selling livestock or mortgaging land). The third is "characterized by dependence on external support,"<sup>46</sup> such as international aid, and if all else fails, the fourth stage, starvation and death, will follow.<sup>47</sup> While the first stage is at least indicative of food insecurity, the second embodies a weakening of future security in the name of present survival.

Thus, both Walker and Howe remind us that "famines threaten livelihoods as well as lives, and that effective famine prevention requires early intervention to protect livelihoods, rather than mandating relief just to 'save lives.'"<sup>48</sup> Because coping strategies are highly context-dependent, though, their usefulness as generalizable famine indicators is diminished. Some authors distinguish 'coping' from 'adaptive' strategies, while some argue that such strategies may be adopted concurrently, while still others dismiss the idea of dividing famine into 'stages' at all. Ultimately, then, theories promoting coping strategies as a viable dimension of classifying famine do not effectively justify their (exclusive) use.

Whereas coping strategies are context-specific, Howe and Devereux argue that nutrition-based indicators may be compared universally. However, this metric also possesses definitional problems, such as what specific rate of malnutrition or mortality indicates the beginning of a famine. Additionally, nutritional indicators generally refer to children under five years of age, though children over five and adults are demonstrated to be more affected by emergencies than are younger children, in part because adults will often reduce their intake to ensure that their children have enough food. Child malnutrition, then, may serve as a 'trailing indicator,' failing to manifest until well after adult malnutrition has set in.

A third complication of nutrition-related metrics is the ambiguous relationship between aggregate nutrition and food crises, as "malnutrition outcomes can be the result of [factors]... such as disease, an unsanitary public health environment or

poor child-care practices.”<sup>49</sup> In particular, the point is raised that nutrition should not be considered an indication of famine independent of wider food-security information, as low rates of malnutrition may obscure advancing famine conditions such as severe degradation of livelihoods or the use of drastic coping strategies.

To provide greater operational clarity and accountability for famine prevention efforts, Howe proposes a bipartite scale to estimating famine severity. In addition to the ‘magnitude’ of a famine, which refers to the aggregate impact, the authors establish ‘intensity’ as a separate metric, reflecting the severity of the crisis at a given time and place.

### Intensity

To estimate a measure of ‘intensity,’ the authors combine anthropometric and mortality indicators, as well as ‘food-security descriptors.’ The “anthropometric/mortality indicators provide cut-offs for each level that can be compared across situations. The food-security descriptors capture the dynamic, self-reinforcing changes in the livelihood system associated with increasing degrees of food insecurity and famine, and can be adapted to specific circumstances (for example, drought or conflict) and diverse contexts.”<sup>50,x</sup> Additionally, the authors establish a system of weighting anthropometric/mortality versus food-security indicators depending on which is estimated to occupy a more causal role.

One issue with this scale, however, which has yet to be resolved, is the appropriate unit of analysis for determining the intensity level. The authors offer no solution, except to note that the intensity (localized) and magnitude (aggregate) measures are designed to be complementary. By creating an ordinal scale of localized food insecurity, the situation may be observed over time, and allows external stakeholders to make more informed decisions regarding aid.

### Magnitude

A complete assessment of a crisis’ full impact, Howe and Devereux argue, can only be made in retrospect. Thus, ‘magnitude’ refers to “the scale of human suffering caused by the entire crisis, as

proxied by excess mortality.”<sup>51</sup> The authors also note that mortality of the ‘magnitude’ scale starts at zero, rather than one because, as has been established, malnutrition need not imply deaths. As the authors clarify, this points to one resolution to the long-standing debate as to whether famines must be characterized by excess mortality.

On the one hand, quantifying the impact of famine by excess mortality makes sense, because death is “the most tragic human consequence of famine.”<sup>52</sup> Still acknowledging that ‘famine’ can occur without excess mortality enables a better characterization of famine as a complex set of processes (marked chiefly by hunger and destitution).

As mentioned earlier, the intensity and magnitude scales are designed to work in tandem, and thus interact in specific ways: “Any intensity level of 3 or above will register as a famine on the magnitude scale, even if it occurs in a very localized area, and even if no deaths are recorded (this could be a ‘Category A’ famine).”<sup>53</sup> However, the opposite is not necessarily true: every incident which involves death is not necessarily a famine. Additionally, deaths can result from a food crisis condition, but the crisis may not be considered a ‘famine’ unless the intensity of the conditions in any given area matches or exceeds ‘level 3.’

Ultimately, Howe and Devereux argue that while their metric is not perfect, the establishment of a universal famine scale has great implications for accountability. During a crisis, such a scale offers a basis to pressure intervention by responsible, or accountable, actors, and after the fact, it may be invoked to assign ‘proportionate accountability.’ Proportionality, it is argued, is important to establishing accountability both in terms of the number of deaths caused, as well as intent

However, while attempting to determine intent can increase accountability and bring perpetrators to justice, the authors warn against the realization of perverse incentives, “such that governments and humanitarian agencies devote disproportionate resources and energy to ensuring simply that threshold malnutrition and mortality rates on the famine scales are not crossed.”<sup>54</sup> Additionally, on the part of a perpetrator—if such a role exists—these perverse incentives may result in efforts to mitigate (or exacerbate) famine conditions to the extent that the crisis crosses one threshold or another. Instead,

x “The anthropometric/mortality indicators and food-security descriptors can be thought of as registering the effects of a crisis on the ‘lives’ and ‘livelihoods,’ respectively, of the affected population.” (Howe and Devereux, 2004)

Table 3: Famine Intensity Scale

Level	Phrase Designation	Malnutrition & Mortality Indicators	Food-security Descriptors
0	Food-security	CMR < 0.2/10k/day & Wasting < 2.5%	Social system is cohesive; prices are stable; negligible adoption of coping strategies.
1	Food-insecurity	CMR ≥ 0.2 by < 0.5/10/day and/or Wasting ≥ 2.3 but < 10%	Social system remains cohesive; price instability, and seasonal shortage of key items; reversible 'adaptive strategies' are employed.
2	Food crisis	CMR ≥ .5 but < 1/10k/day and/or Wasting ≥ 10 but < 20% and/or prevalence of oedema	Social system significantly stressed but remains largely cohesive; dramatic rise in price of food and other basic items; adaptive mechanisms start to fail; increase in irreversible coping strategies.
3	Famine	CMR ≥ 1 but < 5/10k/day and/or Wasting ≥ 20% but < 40% and/or prevalence of oedema	Clear signs of social breakdowns appear; markets begin to close or collapse; coping strategies are exhausted and survival strategies are adopted; affected population identify food as the dominant problem in the onset of the crisis.
4	Severe famine	CMR ≥ 5 but < 15/10k/day and/or Wasting ≥ 40% and/or prevalence of oedema	Widespread social breakdown; markets are closed or inaccessible to affected population; survival strategies are widespread; affected population identify food as the dominant problem in the onset of the crisis.
5	Extreme famine	CMR ≥ 15/10k/day	Complete social breakdown; widespread mortality; affected population identify food as the dominant problem in the onset of the crisis.

CMR: crude mortality rate

Wasting: proportion of child population (six months to five years) who are below eighty percent of the median weight-for-height or below -2 Z-score weight-for-height. (Howe, 2004)

the authors advocate formulating policy solutions that address the underlying causes of famine, though the effort to do so may be prompted or catalyzed by

the identification of more discrete levels.

## THEORETICAL ARGUMENT Democracy and Elections

While there certainly is no dearth of scholarship regarding identifying the presence, scope, and causes of famine, we turn now to the relationship between famine and politics. The events that catalyze famine may be of a natural or meteorological character; however, another line of thought identifies famine as resulting from a lack of action. The intuition for this perspective begins from the assumption

Table 4: Famine Magnitude Scale

Category	Phrase Designation	Mortality Range
A	Minor famine	0-999
B	Moderate famine	1,000-9,999
C	Major famine	10,000-99,999
D	Great famine	100,000-999,999
E	Catastrophic famine	1,000,000 & over

(Howe, 2004)

that any society, with concerted effort, can prevent drought or other natural causes from escalating into famine. What circumstances, then, would alter a government's response, or provoke a government to respond?

From Malthus (1798) comes a 'demographic explanation' of famine: it is the result of food supply restricting unsustainable increases in population. By this reasoning, famine is a natural phenomenon that cannot be averted. Though in retrospect we may call neglectful the government that allows famine to 'run its course' (e.g. Britain prior to 1880), the logic behind this argument only allows structural conditions to cause famine.

Sen (1981) gives an economic explanation of famine. He argues that famine is the result of the failure of some people's entitlement relations to provide them access to enough food to survive. In other words, famines are allowed to occur when a government is insufficiently concerned with protecting the entitlements of its citizens (i.e., preventing a relative degradation or decline of people's exchange entitlement mapping). A policy solution under this paradigm would take the form of entitlement protection, seeking to prevent changes in exchange conditions or in endowments.

Finally, Drèze and Sen (1989) and Sen (1999) offer reformulations of the entitlement argument, namely that competitive elections and freedom of the press are essential to preventing famine. The logic behind this argument is that competitive elections encourage politicians to appease voters and thereby protect their entitlements, while a free press acts as an additional tool for compelling governments to act.

De Waal (1990, 2000) responds to Sen, and though he believes in entitlement theory, he identifies entitlements as part of a larger picture. Famines are composed of five elements in varying proportions: hunger, impoverishment, social breakdown, mortality, and coping strategies in response to the first four. Thus, while famine prevention efforts should include entitlement protection measures, the presence and severity of each other factor should be considered as well.

Sutter (2011), on the other hand, explores 'statehood' as a mediator between political institutions and famine. To disaggregate state quality, the author measures two forms of legitimacy: 'horizontal'—the ethnic fragmentation of a country—

and 'vertical'—the "proximity of the state—as a structure of political power—to the society."<sup>55</sup>

According to this conception of political famine response, institutions that promote (vertical) accountability, such as a free press and competitive elections, are made distinct from the political will necessary to utilize those mechanisms effectively.<sup>x1</sup>

Another explanation, known as selectorate theory, comes from Bueno de Mesquita et al. (2002). They argue that governments possess a finite amount of response capacity: "both democracies and autocracies face a trade-off between the cost of action and the cost of inaction. The government is assumed to maximize its political support to stay in power." As a result, famine mortality may occur if governments "find that inaction is the support-maximizing strategy."<sup>56</sup> Key to this decision is evaluating the size of the selectorate (*S*)—"the set of people who have an institutional say in choosing leaders"—relative to the winning coalition (*W*)—"the minimal set of people whose support the incumbent needs in order to remain in power."<sup>57</sup> When *W* is small, leaders may focus on the particularistic transfer of goods and services, at the expense of the provision of public goods, while a large winning coalition encourages bandwagoning.

In all cases, legitimacy accompanies political authority and trust, which forms the "basis of a better ability of institutions to protect citizens," and increases the state's power to act.<sup>58</sup> A second aspect of legitimacy is the "respect of social contract, reflecting how close the state is to society," and third, state legitimacy "decreases the risk of shocks leading to famine, especially the likelihood of civil wars: trust in institutions build peace." While Mesquita et al. do not discuss the legitimacy of the state *per se*, the same responsiveness may be thought of as a successful broadening of the winning coalition—the set of people whose support the incumbent needs to remain in power. Sutter proposes a few measures of state legitimacy, including public opinion, a 'behavioral' approach rooted in votes for and against the incumbent, and changes in politicians' definitions of legitimacy.<sup>59</sup>

#### Polity IV

x1 Her examination of thirty-six countries over 1980-2005 reveals two findings: as institutional quality improves, the likelihood of famine decreases; and even accounting for climatological and political shocks, a higher aggregate state legitimacy corresponds to a lower probability of famine.

In an attempt to more rigorously examine each country's political situation over time, I have included the use of the Polity IV dataset in my analysis. Begun as an attempt to "[code] the authority characteristics of states in the world system" the dataset's level of analysis is a country's 'polity': a "political or governmental organization; a society or institution with an organized government; state; body politic."<sup>60</sup> Among other reasons, the dataset is particularly useful for its placement of 'democracy' and 'autocracy' as collinear—captured as a country's 'Polity Score'—as well as its disaggregation of 'executive recruitment.'

Table 5 contains Polity scores of relevant countries. For the scores of all African countries, see Appendix A. For each case, the score listed is the country's average from 1980 to 1989, with the exceptions of Sudan, whose 1985 regime change warrants a distinction, and Uganda, whose score is only that under Obote II (1980-85).

The first score (POLITY) is simply the difference between a country's democracy (DEMOC) and autocracy (AUTO) scores on a scale of +10 (full democracy) to -10 (full autocracy). Democracy is a complex measure comprised of three elements: institutions of accountability, constraints on executive power, and the guarantee of civil liberties. According to these elements, the authors identify a 'mature and internally coherent democracy' as "one in which (a) political participation is unrestricted, open, and fully competitive; (b) executive recruitment is elective, and (c) constraints on the chief executive are substantial."<sup>61</sup>

On the other hand, though 'autocracy' has become a pejorative term in Western political discourse, the authors operationalize the concept not as simply a lack (or negative value) of democratic components. Rather, autocracies are polities with restricted political participation, executives chosen by political elites, and few constraints on executive power.

Though the authors construct a combined polity score (POLITY), they note that regimes may simultaneously exhibit elements of both autocratic and democratic authority. Rather, this variable is included as "a convenient avenue for examining general regime effects in analyses."<sup>62</sup> As with famine, though, scores near the middle of the spectrum are muddled somewhat, obscuring the combination of

democratic and autocratic components. Thus, while POLITY is included in Table 5, this is mostly for the sake of readability. More detailed statistics are available in Appendix A.<sup>xii</sup>

As concerns this study are three statistics from the Polity dataset related to executive recruitment: "(1) the extent of institutionalization of executive transfers, XRREG; (2) the competitiveness of executive selection, XRCOMP; and (3) the openness of executive recruitment, XROPEN."<sup>63</sup>

**XRREG** The regulation of executive recruitment refers to the extent to which a polity possesses institutionalized mechanisms for the transfer of executive power. This has three possible values: (1) Unregulated, (2) Designational/Transitional, and (3) Regulated. 'Unregulated' implies "forceful seizures of power," such as coups,<sup>xiii</sup> 'Designational/Transitional' entails selection by political elites without formal competition,<sup>xiv</sup> and 'Regulated' recruitment involves either hereditary succession or competitive elections.<sup>xv</sup>

**XRCOMP** The competitiveness of executive recruitment seems rather self-explanatory, with competition achieved when no contending party or candidate possesses a handicap (though incumbency

xii Also of note (in Appendix A) are periods during which countries' scores are rated -77 or -88. Though Table 5 does not show these scores, they represent "standardized authority scores," indicating years during which no assessed polity score could be awarded. A score of -77 represents a year of "interregnum," or anarchy between successive regimes, and a score of -88 notes periods of "transition."

Of countries in Africa, only three were awarded a standardized authority score during the 1980s: Chad, Sudan, and Uganda. Briefly: After the death of Chad's president in the late 1970s, central authority collapsed until 1985, when a strongly autocratic government (with a POLITY score of -7) was established. In 1985, Sudan's autocratic president, Jaafari Nimeiri (-7) was overthrown, and in 1986, the democratic Umma Party (7) was elected. For this transition the country was awarded -88 in 1985.

Uganda during the 1980s experienced a similar but opposite shift. Following the fall of Idi Amin in 1979, Milton Obote reassumed power (having previously been deposed by Amin in 1971). Obote's second term (3) was marred by widespread human rights abuses, and he was deposed in 1985, though his immediate successor only held power for six months. January 1986 saw another new president, Yoweri Museveni (-7), whose administration was also marked by internal conflict and human rights abuses. He has held power since, though during that time the country has significantly improved its Polity scores.

xiii Such transfers may be legitimized after the fact through (noncompetitive) elections or the enactment of legislation, though a polity will remain classified as unregulated until the coup leader has been replaced via "designative or competitive modes of executive selection." (ibid.)

xiv Also considered here are polities with arrangements made following an initial unregulated seizure of power that seek to regularize future transitions of power, as well as polities in transition from selective to elective modes or vice versa.

xv The fundamental distinction between regulated and unregulated recruitment is the level of institutionalization, and, in competitive cases, impartiality.

is obviously significant). This measure also has three possible values: (1) Selection, (2) Dual/Transitional, and (3) Election. ‘Selection’ refers to determination of executives by “hereditary succession, designation, or by a combination of both;”<sup>64,xvi</sup> ‘Dual/Transitional’ implies a polity with dual executives chosen by different means, or transitions between selection and

as much of the literature and multiple cases show, the presence of democratic institutions does not necessarily warrant their application towards the prevention of famine. Though institutionalized mechanisms of vertical or horizontal accountability may exist, the government may still possess a monopoly on the regulation of civilian activity, including the dissemination of information.

Table 5: Polity IV Scores of Examined Countries

Country	POLITY	XRREG	XRCOMP	XROPEN
Botswana	6.3	2	2	4
Ethiopia	-7.6	2	1	4
Kenya	-6.8	2	1	4
Mozambique	-7.6	2	1	4
Sudan (Nimeiri)	-7	2	1	4
Sudan (Mahdi)	3.5	2.5	2.25	3
Uganda (Obote II)	3	2	2	4
Zimbabwe	3	2	2	4

(Marshall et al., 2011)

election; and ‘Election,’ of course, refers to executive selection by competitive election between two or more parties.

**XROPEN** The ‘openness’ of executive recruitment is the extent to which all members of the politically active population have an opportunity, in principle, to attain the position of chief executive through an institutionalized process. If transfers of power are coded as Unregulated in XRREG, or involve a transition to/from Unregulated, XROPEN is coded 0. Four degrees of openness are used: (1) Closed, (2) Dual Executive–Designation, (3) Dual Executive–Election, and (4) Open.

For a translation of Polity IV executive recruitment concepts and component variables, as well as component variable scores for all African countries by year (1980-1989), see Appendix A.

### Press

Though literature reviewed thus far has pointed to various political mechanisms of accountability that mediate the relationship between the government and its citizens, this is only half the picture. Indeed,

Thus, an equally important mechanism for generating government accountability is one that is in practice distinct from the government itself (bottom-up, so to speak). Just as a governmental separation of powers can promote a system of checks and balances, a free press can provide an important check on government action (or inaction). As Drèze and Sen note, it is important to remember that state action is by no means independent of “political ideology, public pressure, and popular protest.”<sup>65</sup> However, as with governmental mechanisms of accountability, the efficacy of the press is by no means guaranteed.

Indeed, though a free press can help spread information within and between countries—in the latter case attempting to evoke embarrassment or shame—a free press may only help prevent famine if “those vulnerable to famine are considered fully citizens of the country.”<sup>66</sup> It is not enough for the press to simply possess the freedom to report, but a ‘political trigger’ must be present as well. To return to Mesquita et al. and selectorate theory: in serving to help fight famine, the press must make clear who exactly the winning coalition includes, both to the government and to the voters.

Devereux (2000) argues that a combination of ‘primary’ and ‘secondary’ mobilization is essential to catalyzing positive action in pursuit of rights. While primary mobilization is undertaken in pursuit of one’s own interests (e.g., mass movements), secondary mobilization (a.k.a. activism) entails the participation of interest groups. Though primary mobilization is important, it cannot overcome famine alone, as those who mobilize could be satisfied with food handouts. Secondary mobilization, then, is necessary to identify issues and frame them politically. It is print, visual, and other forms of

xvi This also includes rigged or single-candidate elections, replacement of presidents before the end of their term, military selection of civilian executives, selection from within an institutionalized major party, incumbent selection of successors, boycotts of elections by major opposition parties, et cetera.



broadcast media that must, in times of dearth, aid those affected in their fight against famine.<sup>xvii</sup>

To paint a more complete picture of each country's civil and political freedoms, I have also considered Freedom House's *Freedom of the Press* survey data. Unfortunately, though, in some instances there seem to be discrepancies between the numerical scores reported by Freedom House and more detailed historical accounts. Though in part this stems from an ironic lack of transparency on the

then, I have provided averages, with Not Free equal to 0, Partially Free, 1, and Free, 2. For a table of Freedom House Press scores for all of Sub-Saharan Africa, see Appendix A.

Countries with half-scores include Botswana, Kenya, Sudan, Uganda, and Zimbabwe. Throughout the decade, Botswana fared the best of any country (among those examined), exhibiting a print freedom score of 2 and a broadcast score of 1. Kenya, Sudan, Uganda, and Zimbabwe, on the other hand, all had

Table 6: Freedom House Scores of Examined Countries

Country	1980	1981	1982	1983-4	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989
Botswana	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	1	2
Ethiopia	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Kenya	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0	0	0
Mozambique	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Sudan	0	0	0	0	0	0.5	0.5	1	0
Uganda	1	0	0	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0	0
Zimbabwe	0.5	0.5	0.5	0	0	0	0	0	0

0: Not Free; 1: Partly Free; 2: Free. (Freedom House, 2012)

periods with print scores of 1 and broadcast scores of 0 (when both were not 0). No country on the continent exhibited more broadcast freedom than print freedom.<sup>xx</sup>

### Theory

Since the publication of *Poverty and Famines* in 1981, Amartya Sen and Jean Drèze have argued that democracy—

part of Freedom House, it is also indicative of the complex, variable, and occasionally subjective nature of such a rating scheme.<sup>xviii</sup> These discrepancies are interesting in their own right, and when they do arise, I have attempted to reconcile them with my own findings.

Conducted by Freedom House since 1980, the *Freedom of the Press* survey measures the degree to which a country permits the free flow of news and information.<sup>xix</sup> To assess this, Freedom House undertakes a “multilayered process of analysis and evaluation by a team of regional experts and scholars” who examine legal, political, and economic indicators.<sup>67</sup>

From 1980 to 1988, Freedom House disaggregates countries' scores into Print and Broadcast freedom (which I have combined to form half scores in Table 5), while from 1989 to 1992, they published consolidated statistics. For 1980-1988,

minimally, a regime with a free press and competitive elections—prevents famine. To support the argument, Sen first considers India and China, noting that where one experienced a democratic revolution whose leaders successfully used famine to mobilize support, the other, in its pursuit of social and economic reforms, caused the greatest famine of the twentieth century without even realizing it.<sup>68</sup> This difference of outcomes Sen attributes to the formation of a political contract, predicated on the prevention of famine, between the revolutionary government and its supporters. This compact—an explicit acknowledgement of a persistent and fundamentally important political issue—was also catalyzed by the country's free press, which allowed the citizens to hold the government accountable, and was lent significant weight when independence followed its breach by the colonial government

In later texts, the argument is reformulated to fit countries in Africa. While the first, Botswana, supposedly maintained free and fair elections, in reality, a single party has won every contest handily. And though the second positive case, Zimbabwe, experienced political conflict and famine in Matabeleland, this was not exposed until after the end of the Cold War, in part due to restrictions on

xvii Though the internet has largely upended the traditional media position as the sole means of distributing or broadcasting information, this principle applies equal well to so-called 'new' or 'social' media.

xviii Though they do publish an outline of their methodology, for older cases especially the data is less extensive, and their conclusions less self-evident.

xix According to the UN Universal Declaration on Human Rights, information freedom is a universal and basic human right. Article 19, specifically, states that “Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive, and impart information and ideas through any media regardless of frontiers.”

xx For discussion of each, see Page 35.

the press. However, the country's elections were, by most accounts, free and fair. Thus, while in Botswana the case could be made for the existence of an anti-famine political contract, it is imperfect. In Zimbabwe, the government may have been responsive to the needs of certain regions, though its actions in others indicate the lack of any significant anti-famine contract.

However, I argue that the history of Kenya is crucial to determining whether the causation is valid. As presented by Drèze and Sen, Kenya was a single-party state which, despite its lack of primary elections or political opposition, was responsive to the demands of the people due to elected members of parliament and a press which enjoyed limited but significant press freedoms. De Waal, though, diminishes the significance of the MPs and attributes government responsiveness to the astuteness of the President, who recognized the need for famine relief. However, in this case, the contract seems quite limited, painting a picture of the government response as mere political opportunism—though aid was distributed throughout affected areas (which were also politically significant), the government also committed various human rights violations during and after this time.<sup>69</sup>

Further, while Drèze and Sen consider the country's limited but significant press freedoms to be causal in the formation of this political contract, the reality seems more complex. While Freedom House rates the country's press as 'Partly Free' throughout the decade, Wanyande (1995) presents a more detailed analysis, describing the relationship between the state and mass media in independent Kenya as "uneasy and conflictual." Just as the state "has continually accused the press of being unpatriotic and bent on serving the interest of Western nations at the expense of the interest of Kenya," the media accuses the government of "undermining its freedom and right to inform and educate the public on matters of public importance." Wanyande also notes that while each side's perception of the other intensified following the advent of multi-party politics in the early 1990s, whereas "under one party rule, the state could, with relative ease, suppress attempts by the media to expose its shortcomings."<sup>70</sup> De Waal corroborates, noting that neither parliament nor the press had significant sway on the president's decision to respond to calls for relief.

Though Kenya's successful response to drought was prompted by a recognition of the people's needs, it was not necessarily the result of any action by the press, and certainly was not motivated by the threat of being voted out of office—after 1982, arap Moi dismissed political opposition and established a *de jure* single-party state. While on the surface this seems to follow Sen's causal theory, any argument for a political contract in Kenya under arap Moi would be dubious at best. For both Botswana and Kenya, then, famine prevention efforts and political stability were aided by their governments' direct provision of goods and services, as opposed to any more programmatic efforts—reflecting a sizable disparity between the selectorate and the winning coalition.

In summary, while under certain circumstances famine may become an issue salient enough to warrant continual prevention efforts (i.e. the formation of an anti-famine contract), this is not always the case. Further, it seems that in a country's mission to avert famine, a free press and competitive elections are neither sufficient nor necessary conditions to spur government action. Though such action may not, according to de Waal, constitute a strict 'anti-famine political contract,' the distinction between such a contract and its diminished analogs—a *program* or *commitment*—is far from clear, and, more importantly, of questionable relevance.

## EMPIRICAL EVIDENCE

This section includes specific details on the elections and press of each case, as well as their 'outcomes' (e.g. whether they experienced famine or not). While I have attempted to include details regarding each case throughout the article where appropriate, this section includes consolidated summaries of each country's relevant historical episodes.

### Case Selection

For this project, I have chosen to consider all African countries that experienced a famine during the 1980s. This includes Sudan, Ethiopia, Zimbabwe, Mozambique, and Uganda. Additionally, I have included Botswana and Kenya, both of which experienced drought and a reduction of marketed food, but managed to avert the onset of famine conditions.

Though Drèze and Sen also consider the island nation of Cape Verde as a positive example of an anti-famine political contract, I have not included this country in my analysis because it did not experience famine or the threat of food insecurity during the 1980s. With that said, the country's experience does accord with my reformulation of Sen's theory.

## Analytical Narratives

### BOTSWANA

#### Political Regime and Elections

Botswana, Zimbabwe's neighbor to the west, was a British colony until 1964, when the UK accepted proposals for a democratic self-government. In 1965, the country ratified its constitution, and the next year, formally declared independence. The country has held regular elections since independence, which international observers have judged free and fair.

Though the country's press has been rated "Free" by Freedom House since 1973, Botswana does exhibit specific authoritarian tendencies. Since independence, for example, the Botswana Democratic Party (BDP) has won every single election by a considerable margin. Though the elections have been observed as free and fair, the BDP has "benefited from an uneven playing field, in which extreme resource and media disparities undermined the opposition's ability to compete."<sup>71,xxi</sup>

#### Institutions of Famine Prevention

Scholars note the country for having "the most enduring [anti-famine] system on the continent."<sup>72</sup> Throughout the 1980s, though, the country's harvests were insufficient to meet its needs.

Though Botswana's electoral system—characterized by high levels of professionalism and accountability—is undeniably important to the country's improvement and self-preservation, it is arguably not the cause of the country's 'implicit anti-famine political contract.'<sup>73</sup> Instead, de Waal argues, this contract comes from "political commitment, a sense of administrative obligation, and accountability through participatory structures and electoral politics."<sup>74, xxii</sup>

Botswana's anti-famine system of the 1980s

xxi As a result, Levitsky and Way categorize Botswana as a "competitive authoritarian" state (Levitsky & Way, 2010).

xxii Historically, the country's ability to protect its food security has also been aided by its (relative) wealth, though at the same time, an absence of popular (i.e. secondary) mobilization for civil rights has helped to undermine government responsiveness.

was conceived primarily in response to its program employed in 1979-80, which was conventional and moderately successful. During this time, child malnutrition and mortality rates rose slightly, and much food aid was distributed poorly. In response, the government commissioned an independent evaluation that recommended the establishment of a famine prevention system modeled on India's Scarcity Manuals. This solution, however, did not consider an important difference between the two countries: "in Botswana there was no mass popular agitation, but instead a government with a sense of obligation and a shrewd sense of where its electoral interests lay."<sup>75</sup>

In the interest of bureaucratic integrity, the government commissioned, considered, and discussed publicly eleven more reports, and in January 1982, Botswana formally adopted a set of guidelines for a Drought Relief Programme (DRP). Modeled on Indian policy, the program was eventually reorganized and renamed the Department of Food Resources (DFR). Though the 'right' to relief was granted and not fought for (as it had been in India), the DFR was "an example of the characteristically Botswanan process of consultation and consensus-making, not of adversarial vigilance," which helped ensure its continued success.<sup>76</sup>

After 1984, though (when Quett Masire was elected), the DRP shifted its focus from 'human relief programs' to agricultural programs, which were more expensive and economically regressive, and favored commercial and bureaucratic elites.

#### Press

The country's constitution does not contain explicit guarantees of press freedom, though it does protect freedoms of speech, assembly, and expression, which are generally respected by the government. Freedom House consistently rated the country's press as 'Free' during the 1980s.

Although the Botswana Democratic Party occasionally breached civil liberties by shutting down independent radio networks, placing pressure on private media by adjusting allocated state advertising funds, and occasionally prosecuted (or deported) critics under the 1986 National Security Act, "such abuse was neither as frequent nor as severe as other countries in the region."<sup>77</sup>

#### Episodes of Food Scarcity

Drought struck the country in 1982, and continued for six years. By 1984, relief-related expenditures had grown to 15 percent of total government expenditures, and around 20 percent of the rural working population was employed in a labor-based relief program. As a result, even though the drought was longer and more severe than that of 1979, malnutrition rose only slightly before falling to levels lower than before the drought. No excess mortality was reported, and between 1980 and 1984, death rates among children and infants fell by over 30 percent.

During this time, though, the DRP began to spend considerable amounts of money on an Accelerated Rainfed Arable Production Programme (ARAP). Designed as yet another relief program, in practice, it amounted to little more than a subsidy to rural elites. The program was also notable for having been designed in secret and announced over the radio, to the surprise of both civilians and the Ministry of Agriculture.

Begun as a one-year program, the Accelerated Rainfed Arable Production Programme was ultimately extended to four years and consumed over half of the Drought Relief Programme's annual expenditures. Seventy-five percent of this was taken up by a 100 percent plowing subsidy to tractor owners—commercial contractors who plowed more land than was ever cultivated. The expansion of commercial tractor ownership proved to be socially regressive, as well: by awarding subsidies to the individual in whose name the land was registered, customary land tenure institutions (communal/mutual ownership among many relatives) were destroyed, as were the equally complex customs regarding oxen ownership and lending. This led to greater income inequality, as well as increased plot sizes and agricultural output of larger farmers and a reduction or elimination of the agricultural productivity of smallholders. There was also a high misappropriation of funds, in contrast to most other Botswanan entitlement programs.

Once again, an independent evaluation was commissioned. Though the resulting report was highly critical of ARAP, its existence alone reflects an “enduring sense of government obligation for rural welfare.”<sup>78</sup> The evaluation ultimately recommended the government's delinking famine prevention from agricultural programs, and focusing on lasting

solutions to the economic vulnerability of the poorest.

During this time, though the Drought Relief Programme's shortcomings were overshadowed by the economic effects of the country's diamond mining industry, Botswana's GDP grew at 18 percent per year between 1985 and 1990, up from 3 percent per year earlier in the decade.

Ultimately, the strengths of the Drought Relief Programme lay not in any explicit anti-famine contract, but in the “integrity of the public administration and the BDP's astute use of patronage and local institutions to ensure popular legitimacy while still pursuing policies aimed at enhancing the power and wealth of a commercial-governmental elite.”<sup>79</sup> Despite admirable levels of accountability, though, the program faced weakness in its inability to catalyze mass political mobilization for the enforcement of the government's commitment to relief. Instead, the poor still relied on structures of representation in which they had little power to set the agenda, such as Village Development Councils and general elections.

While the Accelerated Rainfed Arable Production Programme exacerbated economic inequality, the Drought Relief Programme augmented state power with respect to the rural poor by recasting patronage networks as focused on state structures, rather than customary exchange networks. Thus, drought and famine relief in Botswana remained “hostage to a patrimonial style of government, albeit a relatively benevolent one.”<sup>80</sup> Though Botswana's relief program is often invoked as a notable example of African anti-famine systems, it is important to remember that this ability was bolstered in no small part by the country's economic growth.

## ZIMBABWE

### Political Regime and Elections

Prior to the country's birth in 1980, Zimbabwe was engaged in a protracted war of independence, during which the Rhodesian counter-insurgency used food as a weapon. Their techniques involved the forcible relocation of rural populations and the restriction of rural food supplies, creating widespread hunger just before independence. The plight of the guerrilla struggle was, therefore, based in part on an intimate symbiotic relationship between the front

and the people, paving the way for a strong political contract.

However, two complicating factors exist when analyzing the Zimbabwean case. First, the revolutionaries invoked traditional spirit mediums to gain legitimacy, and second, the front constantly inflated claims of popular mobilization.<sup>81</sup> Even before independence, then, there were few significant channels for popular representation, with dissent subdued by party politics.

February 1980 saw the creation of a liberated Zimbabwe, with Robert Mugabe and his Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU) party winning the first election by a considerable margin. Polity reports this election as regulated, competitive, and open (ideal conditions). Elections were held again in March 1990, though independent observers reported this election as neither free nor fair.<sup>82</sup>

### Institutions of Famine Prevention

As a leader, Mugabe was committed to several radical agendas, though in the end, a lack of executive ability betrayed him. Health and education services were improved almost as much as was promised before independence, and some structural inequalities of agricultural marketing were removed. Additionally, following drought in 1980, the government introduced temporary taxes to finance future relief measures without resorting to foreign aid. This levy was relatively successful, and its funds were used for relief programs after the (milder) drought of 1987.

Compared to other African countries, Zimbabwe's economy is vigorous and diversified, though some social and economic inequalities persist as colonial residues. Thus, the agricultural sector is starkly divided, with the majority of fertile land cultivated by a group of commercial farmers, while peasant production is largely limited to 'communal areas.' Even within these communal areas, there exists regional variation in both agricultural potential and access to infrastructural support, with further divisions between ethnic and class groups. As a result, despite the economy's relative prosperity, large sections of the population do live in acute poverty

Although they receive almost no attention, Drèze and Sen highlight the direct entitlement protection programs undertaken by Zimbabwe as a significant factor in preventing the country's 1982-84

drought from precipitating a major famine. Though the country's food supplies grew around this time, "a close examination of the facts reveals that the prevention of famine in 1982-4 must be attributed as much to far-reaching measures of public support in favor of affected populations as to the growth of food supplies."<sup>83</sup>

Despite the government's "socialist aims," the country has maintained private ownership and market incentives, and since independence the country's social services—particularly those related to health and nutrition—have experienced considerable improvement.<sup>84</sup>

### Press

Prior to independence, restrictive laws consistently stifled the media. For instance, during the fight for independence, the government proscribed reports about casualties, and instructed the media only to report rebel casualties and their retreats to Zambia and Mozambique.<sup>85</sup> As a result of this and other instances of restraints on the media, the fight for a free press became central to the struggle for independence.

However, after independence in 1980, Mugabe's government did not follow through with its pre-independence promises regarding media reforms. In fact, the only colonial act that was immediately repealed following independence was one that prohibited reporting on debates in parliament. In January 1981, though, the government established the Zimbabwe Mass Media Trust to expedite the transition of media control from the white minority to all of Zimbabwean society. At this time, the Ministry of Information also imposed restrictions on the content of news reports, despite its emphasis on a free, non-partisan, and mass-oriented media.<sup>8</sup>

This restriction on reporting was one of the primary reasons *Gukurahundi* was met with such little international outcry. In addition to limiting the scope of information contained in reports, the government imposed curfews and denied press access to affected areas. A state of emergency was declared, which allowed the government to "detain and arrest ZAPU leaders, and deport international journalists for their reporting of human rights abuses."<sup>87</sup> On a systemic level, Zimbabwe was a 'Frontline State' during the Cold War, which allowed Mugabe to couch *Gukurahundi* as a campaign to

quash Communist-allied ZAPU dissidents. At the same time, Drèze and Sen argue that the press was “relatively unconstrained,” and that they played a great part in keeping the government focused on the drought.<sup>88</sup>

In the face of government pressure, though, the media did succeed in making advances in its ability to criticize the government. Later in the 1980s, one newspaper published an article about the country’s AIDS problem, the government was criticized for being a one-party state, and a widespread corruption scandal was exposed.

### Episodes of Food Scarcity

Soon after independence, the country began to experience a drought. This lasted three years, and peaked during the second year (1983). Though Zimbabwe generally produces a grain surplus, in the worst affected areas of the country, harvests of Zimbabwe’s principal staple, maize, completely failed during the drought. To combat this, Zimbabwe imported food in an attempt to reduce variability in the food supply. Botswana, in contrast, was less predisposed to produce a surplus, and consequently resorted to propping up rural incomes during the same drought period. Zimbabwe’s strategy worked well in most areas, with local party chairmen doling out relief to those earning less than the legal minimum wage.

Following two consecutive years of massive reductions in maize sales to the Grain Marketing Board (see Table 6), remittances from relatives became a crucial line of support for many households, and, as in Kenya, many of the households whose members resorted to wage labor in the wider economy were found to be the least susceptible to the drought. For others, though, government relief became the main or even the only source of food.

Begun in 1982, the country’s famine

prevention measures were taken early and given high political and financial priority. The main entitlement protection measures included large-scale food distribution to the adult population and supplementary rations for children under five. Weiner (1988) estimates the number of people for whom the government drought relief program supplied the primary means of survival during 1982-4 at about 2.5 million—roughly 30 percent of the population. However, that said, estimates of how many households actually benefitted from government food distribution are complex and varied.<sup>89</sup> Despite variation in estimates of the number of beneficiaries, though, the program is to be commended for its size and logistical complexity, though there were reports of delays, uncertainties, and frauds in the distribution of food.

The programmatic distribution of food faced its own difficulties, with some accounts describing the eligible population as limited only to households without any member in regular employment. There have also been disputes over how judicious the distribution actually was; though some suggest the

Table 7: Zimbabwe: Official Maize Sales, 1979–85

Season	Total Sales (tons)	Δ%	Percentage sales by type of farmer	
			Large-scale commercial	Communal lands
1979-80	825,563	n.a.	87.9%	8.1%
1980-81	2,013,759	+143%	82%	14.4%
1981-82	1,451,827	-27%	70.4%	21.8%
1982-83	639,747	-55%	72.6%	21.4%
1983-84	941,591	+47%	58.6%	35.5%
1984-85	2,000,000	+112%	50.0%	45.0%

(Bratton, 1987)

distribution was fair, others argue that the pattern was indiscriminate and blind to people’s actual needs. Such variation may have stemmed in part from the politicization of the program, given that at times party members became involved in the provision of relief, leading to favoritism along party lines. Additionally, the distribution of food was limited to rural areas, an unusual focus for relief programs that tend to have an urban bias.

### Matabeleland

While these successes were well publicized,

the conflict and famine in Matabeleland managed to avoid popular consciousness. Following inflammatory remarks by a high-ranking ZANU official, the region, home to many ZAPU supporters, was brutally suppressed by the government. This suppression came to be known as *Gukurahundi*.<sup>xxiii</sup> Also known as the Matabeleland Massacres, the campaign lasted from 1982 to 1985, with an estimated 10,000 to 20,000 Matabele murdered and tens of thousands more tortured in internment camps by Mugabe's infamous North Korean-trained Fifth Brigade.<sup>90</sup>

On the other hand, Drèze and Sen describe this conflict as a product of the program's politicization, noting that "the coverage of the drought relief programme in Matabeleland, the stronghold of political dissidents, has been described as 'exceedingly patchy.'" <sup>91</sup> Leys (1986) adds that the government blamed the dissidents for disrupting relief efforts, even holding them responsible for the drought at one point. These accounts, however, seem more concerned with the 'official' provision of aid and the mechanisms thereof, rather than considering the situation as a whole.

The year 1984 also saw the third consecutive harvest failure, causing drought relief to become a major source of food for people in Matabeleland. In addition to killing civilians outright, the Fifth Brigade exploited Matabeleland's food dependence, with later reports noting the use of "food as a weapon of coercion."<sup>92</sup> Curfews and blockades were set up across the region, and soldiers began to control or block all food supply channels. When relief was distributed, "recipients were not allowed to take any rations away, but had to eat their meals under army supervision," amounting to "a sentence of starvation."<sup>93</sup> Only after a unity agreement between ZANU and ZAPU in 1987 that merged their parties did the conflict come to an end, though this was at the expense of competitive politics. Though the Matabeleland famine has not been systematically investigated, there is strong evidence pointing to its place as the result of a power struggle between the two parties.<sup>94</sup>

Despite this, Sen argues that the overall effectiveness of the country's entitlement protection programs at this time is "beyond question," with starvation deaths having been "largely and perhaps

even entirely prevented."<sup>95</sup> Bratton (1987) boldly argues that "no person in Zimbabwe died as a direct result of starvation," though most are not quite so confident.

Beyond this, the government's health and education efforts since independence have caused "a noticeable *improvement* in the health status of the population of rural Zimbabwe in spite of the severe drought," most notably manifesting as an apparent decline in infant mortality throughout the drought period.<sup>96</sup> A decline in child morbidity (in relation to immunizable diseases, at least) was also reported around this time, caused primarily by the government's widespread immunization campaigns

Overall, evidence regarding the nutritional status of the population during the drought is mixed. Many informal reports stressed rising levels of undernutrition in the early stages of the drought, although there is some evidence that this statistic declined following an expansion of the relief program in 1983. Nonetheless, over the whole drought period, there is a lack of any marked change in the nutritional status of the total Zimbabwean population, a remarkable accomplishment given the initial severity of the drought.

## KENYA

### Political Regime and Elections

A British colony until 1964, Kenya gained its independence through peaceful elections. Following the 1978 death of the country's first president, Jomo Kenyatta, Vice President Daniel arap Moi assumed power and was met with support throughout the country. Though he followed in the footsteps of his popular predecessor, Moi was too weak to consolidate power until 1982, following a failed coup by Air Force officers. Political opposition was dismissed, and the constitution was altered to establish a *de jure* single-party state. However, Drèze and Sen note that the country retained an elected parliament, arguably allowing for some degree of responsiveness.

### Institutions of Famine Prevention

Kenya has experienced remarkable economic growth and stability since independence. The economy features a strong private sector and a substantial public sector based on parastatal corporations. However, the country has limited natural resources and no petroleum production.

xxiii "The early rain which washes away the chaff before the spring rains," in the Chi-Shona language.

Approximately 80 percent of the population lives in rural areas, mostly on the 20 percent of land that receives enough rainfall to support agriculture. Trade of food grain is managed by the National Cereals and Produce Board (NCPB), a government-owned corporation that sets prices by buying and reselling grain (mostly maize).

### Press

At the time of independence, Kenya's media was mostly foreign-owned but friendly to the new state. Kenyatta's administration generally had a policy of nonintervention, and Kenyatta himself argued that the media should be free but responsible, with the administration having "frequently made calls to newsrooms, ostensibly to have some sensitive stories killed."<sup>97</sup> However, after 1978, when Arap Moi assumed power, the press became subject to near-constant attacks by the government, including the arrest and detention of some journalists and editors.

### Episodes of Food Scarcity

Early in 1984, the country experienced a hundred-year drought that cut production of maize by half. Wheat and potato harvests were down 70 percent, and pastoralists reported similar rates of livestock mortality. However, disaster never struck, thanks to the government's entitlement protection efforts.

Kenya generally experiences two rainy seasons per year (once in spring and once in winter). As a result, the onset of drought in April 1984, continuous sunshine during the normal 'long rain' season, was evident without any technical early warning system. Around this time, the government launched an active response to the drought, beginning with the importation of food. The government's ability to respond in this way was greatly aided by high market prices of coffee and tea, the country's largest exports.

At the onset of the drought, the National Cereals and Produce Board possessed a stock that could last only four to six months. At the behest of the President, an 'inter-ministry drought response coordinating committee' that was tasked with assessment and response was established. They initiated commercial imports of food, negotiated with international donors for assistance, and established a task force to manage imports and distribution.

This effort was aided greatly by the government's

strong analytical capabilities, as well as an emphasis placed on ability rather than bureaucratic formality: "Junior clerks who operated microprocessors found themselves with immediate access to the Director of Planning," resulting in unprecedented levels of productivity.<sup>98</sup>

Early on, the government chose to frame the drought as a serious problem, though "it would not be considered a crisis."<sup>99</sup> Normal administrative systems would be employed, with additional labor sourced from the private sector as needed; the response would be handled by Kenyans alone.

The low profile adopted by the government helped keep public concern in check, and the country managed to avoid hoarding and public security issues typically associated with crisis droughts. The use of normal administrative systems also helped keep costs low. Most importantly, however, their use "provided a conceptual frame of reference within which everyone could work. There would be no crises-motivated *ad hoc* programs."<sup>100</sup>

However, despite the best efforts of the National Cereals and Produce Board, the inevitability of food imports soon became clear. Once the international community learned of the country's need for food, the response was "dramatic. The government found itself in the peculiar position of welcoming aid while discouraging the general public and the donors from characterizing the situation as a crisis."<sup>101</sup> Arap Moi's uncompromising stance on Communism may have influenced the international community's response as well.

To determine how much food would be needed and when it would be needed required an estimation of aggregate need. The Ministry of Finance and Planning approached this problem from two perspectives: The first focused on aggregate nutritional requirements, while the second focused on national production shortfall as a proxy for imports needed. Ultimately, the second approach was used, "because its relative simplicity facilitated operationalization, and because it would reproduce market conditions experienced in a normal year."<sup>102</sup> In the end, more than 850,000 metric tons of grain were imported.

Developing a schedule for the imports, however, proved to be particularly difficult. From negotiations with donors and initial assessments of the NCPB's stocks, it became clear that even



with the most efficient effort of all parties involved, foreign assistance could not arrive until well after the depletion of domestic stocks. It also became evident that almost all aid would arrive in the form of food, rather than money, forcing Kenya to import grain commercially to endure the span between the exhaustion of domestic stocks and the arrival of aid.

Another important question was the variety of maize to import. As Glantz (1987) notes, “[a]lthough there is little nutritional difference, Kenyans strongly prefer to eat white maize as opposed to the yellow varieties.” Unfortunately, Kenyans are unique in this preference, and there is very little white maize grown for human consumption outside East Africa, such that the variety cost about 30 percent more. Ultimately, the decision was made to import cheaper yellow maize, as “it was felt that this premium for aesthetic preferences could not be justified.”<sup>103</sup>

Beyond saving money, importing ‘inferior’ yellow maize had a secondary effect of encouraging informal rationing by those who could afford alternative food supplies. Some scholars note that this ultimately contributed to a progressive distribution of grain. Because the yellow maize was less desirable than its white counterpart, the demand could be expected to drop substantially as soon as the rains resumed and white maize became available again. However, this meant that the government had to be careful not to import too much, as it could end up with stocks of valuable but unmarketable grain.

To further emphasize that the drought was a ‘serious problem’ rather than a crisis, the government chose to distribute food primarily via established commercial channels in an attempt to reduce variability in food prices and availability. This would help decrease the likelihood of any informal food economies, as well as maintain an air of stability and confidence. Keeping food prices at normal levels, however, required a substantial subsidy of grain and its transport.

Thus, entitlement protection efforts took two forms. First, the imported food was directed to help reduce variability in the food supply, and second, direct relief was provided to the neediest households.

Initially, the government attempted to accomplish the former through employment generation, developing a food-for-work system, though that scheme was eventually phased out in favor of rural development projects with cash wages

(which had been successful in India). Additionally, early in the drought response, the government realized that despite its employment generation efforts, some households would need direct relief. As a result, District Commissioners were authorized to freely distribute food wherever it was needed, mainly through local chiefs who knew the needs of their community. By most accounts, the chiefs did an effective and equitable job, though in the end, most households receiving rations were given very little food (just some 5 to 10 percent of individual daily requirements).

A number of NGOs also became involved in the response effort, with some groups establishing their own import schemes. To ease this process, the government allowed organizations to draw grain from existing stocks, which would later be replenished by the NCPB. While most NGOs focused on food-for-work programs, some also provided seeds for future harvests. Though deserving of commendation, NGOs’ efforts proved almost impossible to coordinate—because these programs were established before the drought and were expected to continue afterwards, there was great reluctance to surrender autonomy for the sake of the larger coordination effort. As a result, people and organizations struggled to obtain adequate information for planning and management during the drought.<sup>104</sup> To combat this, the Ministry of Finance and Planning moved quickly to assemble pertinent information and began disseminating weekly reports on the drought response effort.

While Drèze and Sen attribute the government’s responsiveness to the actions of elected members of parliament, de Waal argues that the country’s ultimate “success in escaping famine was largely attributable to the political astuteness of President Daniel arap Moi, who recognized a rudimentary and implicit political contract: feed the central highlands and (most importantly) the cities, and the government will survive.”<sup>105</sup> However, despite the successes of arap Moi’s regime in averting famine during this time, action taken ultimately amounted to little more than securing their own base of power and represented only a slight policy change from colonial times. Thus, though hunger was averted, the Kenyan government “avoided tackling the structural causes of poverty and vulnerability in both the highlands and the lowlands.”<sup>106</sup>

Ultimately, Glantz argues, the success of Kenya's drought response effort was a product both of official institutional action and cooperation by laborers in the name of national unity and pride. Cohen and Lewis (1987) stress the role 'political commitment' played in the government's response, while Drèze and Sen emphasize the threat of political instability following the government's failure to avert famine after the drought in 1979.<sup>107</sup> The instability argument, however, seems especially appropriate, as the affected Central and Eastern Provinces were both politically important and meteorologically and economically unstable, and also because drought conditions reached the outskirts of Nairobi. Regardless, the Kenyan case provides insights that challenge and improve conventional prescriptions for responding to food insecurity.

#### Implications for Famine Response Efforts

Most prescriptions for famine response efforts are based on analyses of the worst famines during which, by definition, existing structures and systems are unable to cope with the demands placed upon them. Conventional wisdom dictates the creation of institutional structures designed specifically to respond to food shortages. Focusing on these types of responses, though, tends to overlook the effective action a government can undertake independent of purpose-specific institutions. By virtue of their non-crisis nature, the rare cases when government is successful in averting famine often go unrecognized, their significance unappreciated. Their importance, however, "lies in the fact that potential famines are prevented from growing to the point of attracting international attention."<sup>108</sup>

The Kenyan case, on the other hand, suggests that there may be two major approaches to addressing food insecurity: the "permanent structural strategy typically recommended by the international community," and a "functional standby strategy."<sup>109</sup> Without establishing any purpose-specific structural apparatus, Kenya's government was able to draw upon the managerial and operational resources of existing administrative structures. While the country did undertake some steps deemed essential for food security, these were not integral to the creation of a crisis-response capacity. Rather, strategies that helped mitigate drought and famine conditions were part of a broader national development strategy, with their

success reinforcing this as a viable linkage.

## UGANDA

### Political Regime and Elections

Uganda gained independence from Britain in 1962, with the country's first elections held the year prior. Though initially a republic, many debates occurred within the country over how centralized the government should be, with deep divides along national, religious, and ethnic lines. In 1966, Prime Minister Milton Obote suspended the constitution, and in 1967, a new one was ratified that expanded the president's authority and abolished the division of traditional kingdoms.

In 1971, Obote was deposed by a military coup led by Idi Amin, who declared himself president, dissolved the parliament, and amended the constitution to give himself absolute power. Under Amin's rule, the country experienced significant economic decline, social degeneration, and widespread human rights violations, resulting in the deaths of between one and five hundred thousand Ugandans. Following a border altercation with Tanzania, the Tanzanian army, with Ugandan exiles, fought for the liberation of Uganda, and in 1979, Amin and his armies fled to Libya.

In December 1980, the country's first elections in eighteen years were held, which resulted in Milton Obote and his Uganda People's Congress party returning to power. Though the Commonwealth Observer Group (a collection of groups formed to monitor elections throughout the Commonwealth of Nations) declared itself satisfied with the outcome of this election, there is considerable debate as to whether they were rigged.

Polity lists the country's elections as having 'Transitional or Restricted Elections,' one category below competitive elections. The country has some of the highest scores on the continent at this time.

Following a military campaign against the Uganda National Liberation Army—comprised of exiled Ugandans against Amin (as well as Obote)—Obote was deposed in 1985, by military coup. Amnesty International estimates the Obote II regime as responsible for the deaths of more than 300,000 civilians across the country.

### Institutions of Famine Prevention

In July 1978, when crop failures signaled a

dearth of food, Amin's government took no action. In 1980, the situation escalated, and eventually gained international attention following appeals by elders and an exposé in London's *Observer* newspaper. However, by the time relief supplies began to arrive in June 1980, a large number of people had already died, and the situation was quite severe. In summary, during the 1979-80 food crisis, the government did not take action to avert famine conditions.

### Press

Though the state and local press were silent on the 1980 famine until its exposure by Western media, the government had been alerted about the situation from 1978 onwards by way of food monitoring in Karamoja, crop acreage and harvest assessments by agricultural officers, and estimates of affected populations. By October 1978, there was correspondence at various levels of government regarding the food situation in Karamoja. Between September and October 1978, the District Agricultural Officers for South, Central, and North Karamoja had sent reports to the Provincial Commissioner for Agriculture, which described the loss of crops to disease and drought, as well as cases of starvation and migration by pastoralists.

However, almost all indications of the drought and impending famine occurred under the reign of Idi Amin. Shortly after assuming power in 1978, Amin "tortured and killed journalists... [and] shut down all newspapers except the one he used as his own propaganda vehicle."<sup>110</sup> Though Obote was perhaps only slightly less dictatorial than Amin, he did allow some independent newspapers to exist, "but their editors and journalists suffered constant harassment and prolonged imprisonment."<sup>111</sup>

### Episodes of Food Scarcity

Since pre-colonial times, the Karamoja region of Uganda has been plagued by drought and famine. Since the 1970s, though, natural, social, and political events have left the area "disaster-prone," with the majority of the population impoverished and extremely vulnerable to food shortages.

During the 1980 famine, between 20,000 and 50,000 people were believed to have perished.<sup>112</sup> Though the famine was centered in the Karamoja region, it also affected a number of other districts whose economies were agro-pastoral and

agricultural. But though these areas experienced extreme food shortages between February and July 1980, the intensity of the shortage and the disparity between the majority impoverishment and minority enrichment were both most notable in Karamoja.

Immediate causal factors included shocks to the rural economy in 1979 and 1980, including unusually low rainfall in 1979 and the war that ousted Idi Amin, both of which led to low agricultural production. The country's inflation led to the sale of agricultural produce to meet peasant demands, but these stocks were bought primarily by speculative traders, who later resold them at prices unattainable by the poor. This led to further impoverishment as many households "resorted to sale of what they never would have considered objects of commercial transactions in normal times, i.e., land, cows, etc."<sup>113</sup>

Episodic shocks also occurred in the early months of 1980, with neighboring districts receiving unusually heavy rains that washed away most planted crops. The rampant theft of cassava from the fields also exacerbated normal seasonal hunger, and was largely attributed to people displaced from Karamoja.

Within Karamoja, drought and raids were prevalent. 1978 and 1979 were years of minimal harvest, due to natural conditions as well as political instability. After the war of liberation, Idi Amin's soldiers abandoned a stocked barracks in Moroto, a district within Karamoja. The guns were picked up and traded by locals, for many of whom this marked a considerable advance in defense technology.

This in turn led to increased violence among tribes, primarily in the form of raids. Conditions worsened, and many lost their herds. By the fall of 1979, food was scarce, leaving to elevated starvation and mortality rates. The situation deteriorated further in early 1980, with the arrival of cholera from Sudan and restrictions on road travel in and out of the Karamoja.

Because the Karimojong people face a harsh environment and limited technology, pastoralism forms the basis of their society, with livestock herds comprising their principal source of food. Thus, Karimojong cows are rarely slaughtered, with food instead coming from animal products like milk supplemented by crops like sorghum and millet. The irregular rainfall of the area makes rain-fed agriculture unreliable, and it is not uncommon for seeds to be sowed up to four times per season. In

addition, the low level of productive development means that even after good harvests, “what is produced is consumed before the beginning of a new season.”<sup>114</sup> The pastoralist Karimojong are, therefore, extremely vulnerable to environmental irregularities, raids, or epidemics.

To avoid the loss of animals and alleviate suffering during times of disaster, traditional measures such as “avoiding environmental degradation, close community solidarity through the exchange of gifts and ceremonies, keeping part of one’s herds with relatives or friends, raids approved by elders and assistance to those who are victims of a crisis” are employed.<sup>115</sup> However, during the 1980 famine, these traditional means of assistance collapsed across the region.

Overall, three factors were significant during the 1980 famine: livestock, security, and the limited role of rain-fed agriculture in the local economy. Areas that were hit hardest were also those with little livestock, due to raids, whereas those hit least were those with military superiority and animals.

In the end, the 1980 famine in Karamoja seems to have ended not through any concerted government action, but simply with the passage of time. Since then, the region has continued to experience recurring food shortages, including following drought in 1984. However, during this time, the country’s relative political stability allowed for a more effective response. Dodge and Alnwick note that the response of the UN, UNICEF, and other international relief agencies helped keep starvation deaths to a minimum, though “drought, armed conflict and the displacement of large numbers of people” still occurred.<sup>116</sup>

## MOZAMBIQUE

### Political Regime and Elections

Prior to its independence, Mozambique was managed by Portugal. Ten years of sporadic warfare and a leftist military coup in Portugal in 1974 allowed the Marxist-Leninist Front for the Liberation of Mozambique (FRELIMO) to take control of the territory. Within a year of Portugal’s Carnation Revolution, almost the entire Portuguese population had left Mozambique, and in June 1975, the country formally declared independence. The rapid exodus left the country’s economy in shambles. Soon after, civil war broke out against the western-aligned

Mozambican National Resistance (RENAMO), lasting from 1977 to 1992.

From the time of independence to the resolution of the country’s civil war, FRELIMO was the only legal political party; the country’s first elections were not held until 1994.<sup>117</sup>

### Institutions of Famine Prevention

Though droughts and famines have occurred throughout Mozambique’s history, in the past, people were generally able to carry out various coping strategies. Prior to colonial rule, people grew and ate drought-resistant crops such as millet, sorghum, and cassava. The arrival of European colonizers heralded the introduction of maize to the region, which soon became the national staple. However, maize is much more dependent upon rainfall, portending an era of precarious food security for the area.

In addition, the Portuguese forced African men to “grow industrial crops like cotton, and also forced them to provide labor in the mines of South Africa.”<sup>118</sup> Beyond further exacerbating the area’s food security, this placed additional burdens on women to grow food crops in addition to their preexisting domestic and reproductive duties. As a result of these policies, labor migration became significant, yielding dependency on food imports as people failed to use remittances from South Africa to develop agriculture. In the 1940s and 50s, famine became increasingly common, and in 1965, Portugal enacted a ‘scorched earth’ policy along the Tanzanian border in its fight against FRELIMO supporters which often led to starvation.

At independence, FRELIMO assumed power and stifled all local trading, imposing a uniform policy of villagization and collective production that severely affected crop yields. It was through these policies, though, that FRELIMO hoped to invigorate industrial agriculture at the expense of peasant farming. This disruption was costly and ineffective, and made the urban population reliant on food produced through a centralized and mechanized system of production.

The time after independence also saw an unusual number of natural disasters. In 1977, the Limpopo and Incomati rivers flooded, damaging crops and livestock; in 1978, the Zambezi river also flooded, driving 220,000 people from their homes, and in 1979, Cyclone Justine damaged agriculture in

the north of the country. Prior to 1980, however, the government was largely able to curtail damage via a Department for the Prevention of Calamities and Natural Disasters. Through this organization, the government was able to mobilize resources to deal with the crises, including foreign aid.

### Episodes of Food Scarcity

In 1980, three factors contributed to the sharp decline in food production and marketing. First were military tactics used by RENAMO fighters, which were directed towards infrastructure, and the population displacement that resulted. Second were official policies that restricted rural trade, established communal villages, and forcibly recruited urban jobless to rural labor programs in the north. The third factor was the weather, which in 1983-84 “turned the economic disaster into widespread human tragedy.”<sup>119</sup>

During times of peace, Mozambique is a fertile country which has little trouble feeding its population and producing exports, agricultural and otherwise. Between 1983 and 1984, though, the south-central region of the country descended into famine, with most commonly cited statistics placing the death toll at around 100,000. A second major famine occurred in 1987, centered on the eastern Zambézia province, which was the result of conflict.

According to UNICEF, over 600,000 people perished during Mozambique’s decade-long period of intermittent famine—a toll that compares to Ethiopia’s famine of 1983-85. However, except for 1983-84, there were not scenes of mass starvation. Instead, famine meant “chronic shortages of food and all consumer goods, constant insecurity and frequently homelessness, loss of assets such as livestock, and being forced to survive on a reduced diet of leaves and roots, and perhaps wild game, until it [became] possible to reach a food distribution center or plant and harvest a crop.”<sup>120</sup>

In the early 1980s, an unusually severe drought affected most of central and southern Mozambique, with the poorest families starting to suffer extreme hunger. In Tete Province, many died of complications related to the lack of available food, though the famine received no publicity. In Gaza and Inhambane provinces, where RENAMO was the most active, an estimated twenty-five percent of normally marketed crops were lost. In the following year, as RENAMO

attacks began in earnest, 100,000 Mozambicans sought refuge in neighboring Zimbabwe.

International aid was slow to arrive, delayed until the crisis had already struck. In 1983, Zimbabwe (itself combatting famine) was the major food donor to Mozambique, and it was not until early 1984 that more food aid was sent. After 1984, though, Mozambique became massively dependent on foreign aid: “Food shortages became chronic and food became almost unobtainable on the official market.”<sup>121</sup> Where food surpluses did exist, they were sold on the black market or bartered, and in provinces such as Gaza, the black market accounted for as much as half of food surpluses. By 1986, harvests were down to roughly ten percent of 1981 levels. At the same time, Mozambique’s urban population increased as rural food insecurity deepened.

1985 and 1986 saw no reprieve from conflict and hunger, with a major RENAMO offensive in Zambézia Province in late 1986 coinciding with the planting season. After attacks began on roads, over 500,000 were reported as ‘at risk’ from famine, and over 270,000 were displaced.

At the same time, there was a severe food shortage in the northern Niassa Province due to floods, poor harvests, and RENAMO activity, placing 400,000 people at risk of famine. Additionally, 1986 floods in the Zambezi Valley washed away a portion of Tete Province’s first harvests following three years of drought, placing around 500,000 at risk of a food shortage.

Around this time, famine spread to the south of the country, even reaching the outskirts of the capital, Maputo. In Maputo Province, 60 percent of the population faced serious food shortages in 1986, with another 22,000 displaced by RENAMO activity along the South African border. In Inhambane Province, about 38 percent of the population was described as at risk, and in Sofala Province, almost 1 million individuals were placed in danger by the war. Serious malnutrition was also reported in the Chibabwa area, where RENAMO burned maize.

Marginal recovery occurred in 1987, when agricultural production grew by seven percent, though around this time, famine struck in Zambézia, previously the country’s wealthiest and least famine-prone province. While it is undeniable that many in Zambézia suffered hunger and destitution due to the

RENAMO occupation, the Mozambican Air Force's counter-insurgency strategy, which included large-scale population displacement, was also to blame.

Despite this, there is little evidence pointing to RENAMO or FAM creating famine as an end. Instead, "the basic military strategy of aiming to control the civilian population leads to famine as a direct and foreseeable consequence... The logic of war-created famine has not been one in which starvation is used to kill people, but one in which the threat of starvation is used to control people."<sup>122</sup>

The abuse of food aid was also instrumental in maintaining famine conditions, with both RENAMO and FAM responsible for attacks on relief convoys and storehouses, as well as corrupt government officials and merchants systematically diverting large amounts of relief food.

Though famine was not a deliberate strategy, as one FAM officer explained, people were relocated "for their safety. Otherwise the bandits (RENAMO) would make them feed them. In remote areas we then destroy their fields—so the bandits will not become fat."<sup>123</sup> Between 1986 and 1988, 466 such 'accommodation camps' were established, though many were more significant as "nodes of government control in a sea of insurgency"<sup>124</sup> which could not be maintained without international aid. As a result, the government's access to relief became one of its greatest assets in the war.

The only tangible evidence of government forces systematically destroying crops as a tactic of war comes from their 1987 counter-insurgency campaign in Zambézia. Assisted by units from Tanzania and special forces from Zimbabwe, the operation entailed large-scale population displacement from districts that had come under RENAMO control. The government's scorched earth policy during these attacks directly contributed to the 1987 famine.

All of this is not to say that RENAMO did not commit similarly grave atrocities. An early South African training manual for RENAMO, which taught readers how to ambush, retreat, and spread propaganda, also "advised units to 'live off the land' by capturing supplies and destroying everything remaining so as to deny the enemies access to it."<sup>125</sup> RENAMO also targeted infrastructure in its campaigns, including railroads, bridges, trucks, shops, FRELIMO offices, clinics, and schools. In 1982 alone, 140 villages were torched by RENAMO, and in

1982-3, they destroyed 900 rural shops. In addition to its tangible effects, the destruction of infrastructure was also symbolic, "cleansing the area of government presence, providing an outlet for accumulated grievances of the populace, and returning the countryside to a subsistence condition."<sup>126</sup>

However, one of the most devastating aspects of RENAMO's campaign was the obstruction and diversion of relief. Between 1984 and 1987, RENAMO destroyed and damaged relief trucks, killed drivers, and stole or destroyed over 400 tons of food and relief supplies. Over half of these attacks occurred in 1987—a year which also saw some 4,500,000 people face famine and the displacement of 1,600,000 more. The destruction continued through 1988, and in 1989, RENAMO launched attacks on a railway line, destroying over 2,000 tons of relief food.<sup>xxiv</sup>

Beyond this, however, it is difficult to generalize about RENAMO's operations, with the treatment of populations under their control varying considerably. According to accounts of Mozambicans who experienced it, RENAMO's administration can be categorized by geographical, logistical, and local political factors, with areas subject to 'taxation,' 'control,' or 'destruction' modes of control. Given the fluidity of the insurgency, though, these categorizations are tenuous at best.

'Taxation' areas constituted much of RENAMO's domain, and were used "to produce and services for the organization, with RENAMO frequently only imposing on the local population light tribute demands."<sup>127</sup> In 'control' areas, on the other hand, RENAMO attempted to establish health clinics, schools, and government institutions.<sup>xxv</sup>

When Zimbabwe fully entered the war in 1985, RENAMO was faced with the threat of air-based attacks. In response, larger bases were fragmented and moved to inaccessible locations. As areas came under military pressure, civilian food supplies dwindled considerably. By 1985-86, this had helped undermine RENAMO's support among the local population.

Finally, Maputo and Gaza provinces were 'destruction' zones, subject to "the seemingly wanton destruction of health, educational and economic

xxiv In 1991, a senior RENAMO official confirmed the role of food in their strategy: "Food is a tool of war, we use it to make strategic gains, but so do the FRELIMO Marxists!" (Karl Maier, 1992).

xxv In most cases, though, these were nothing more than poor replicas of the system RENAMO had previously destroyed.

infrastructure, and food stores and food convoys.”<sup>128</sup> From these areas, for example, came four reports one year of aid vehicles being destroyed, rather than first removing the cargo. Empty trucks were also targeted on occasion, further hampering the government’s relief efforts.

These displays of dominance, then, were dramatic indicators of RENAMO’s destructive capacity, signifying a “deliberate and effective weapon of war. [This conspicuous destruction] sends a very vivid message to the thousands of hungry *deslocados* (displaced people) waiting for food relief to arrive in their accommodation centers and is very effective in eroding morale.”<sup>129</sup> In some instances, these displays of power signaled to the population a choice between RENAMO and starvation. Thus, in the end, food security all but dictated military strategy.

After the death of Samora Machel, Mozambique’s President, in a 1986 plane crash, Joaquim Chissano, his successor, implemented sweeping economic and political changes. In addition to transforming the country from Marxism to capitalism, Chissano successfully carried out peace talks with RENAMO, bringing the civil war to an end in 1992. Around this time, a new constitution was rated that created a multi-party political system, a market-based economy, and free elections. By 1993, more than 1,500,000 Mozambican refugees returned from neighboring countries in one of Africa’s largest repatriation efforts.<sup>130</sup>

## Press

Throughout Mozambique’s civil war, there were many human rights violations. Even since the cessation of hostilities, there have been many concerns regarding infringements of the press and other civil liberties, although the country has improved in recent years. Consequently, during the 1980s, Mozambique’s press was rated as ‘Not Free’ by Freedom House.

## ETHIOPIA

### Political Regime and Elections

Unlike other countries in this study, Ethiopia was never colonized by a European power. In 1974, though, the reign of Emperor Haile Selassie I was brought to an end when he was deposed by a Marxist-Leninist military junta known as the ‘Dergue’ (“committee” or “council” in Ge’ez). Led by

Mengistu Haile Mariam, the junta established a one-party communist state after assuming power.

### Institutions of Famine Prevention

Prior to 1974, there had been little successful protest action, and no urban food riots. Indeed, the early stages of the revolution were relatively non-violent. De Waal notes that at this time, Ethiopia was (on paper, at least) better equipped to prevent famine than ever in its history. Rather, “the shortcoming was that while the *famine* played a role in the revolution, the *famine-vulnerable* people did not.”<sup>131</sup> After the revolution, reforms were imposed from above, making tenuous the gains of the revolution, and causing the government to struggle with its legitimacy.

During the power struggle that followed the revolution—the ‘Red Terror’—extractive policies were implemented to sustain the ever-increasing army. Around this time, a central food extraction institution was also established, though in practice the corporation simply supplied food to a few select cities—the same pattern of distribution as under the Emperor.

Overall, the Dergue’s economic policies had disastrous consequences that caused mass impoverishment and were partly to blame for the scope of the country’s 1983-85 famine. While the Relief and Rehabilitation Commission (RRC), an anti-famine bureau established in the final years of the Empire, once produced comprehensive analyses of poverty and famine in Ethiopia, by the 1980s, the RRC had become compromised as a tool of the Dergue.

Tasked with collectivizing Ethiopia’s workforce and procuring foreign assistance, the RRC was very successful in securing aid, though much of the food was used to supply militias (especially in Eritrea and Tigray). Elsewhere, the RRC “pushed international agencies to set up relief programmes in surplus-producing regions, where the [government] continued to collect substantial quotas.”<sup>132</sup> The RRC was also instrumental in spreading propaganda which framed the 1980s famine as resulting from overpopulation and drought, downplayed the role of war, and claimed that all victims were being reached by it and other aid organizations. However, despite these distorted claims, the RRC never interrupted the flow of early warning information, which could have

inhibited its ability to procure aid.

### Press

During the country's 1973-75 famine, Emperor Selassie suppressed information about the situation, and it was not until a newsreel aired on Canadian television that the international community began to respond.<sup>133</sup> After the explosion of international attention, Ethiopia's government sought to restrict foreign media and relief agencies, though this only drew more attention. The revolutionary Dergue used this attention to their advantage, culminating with the creation of a UN Office for Emergency Operations in Ethiopia (UNEOE). Though intended to be an authoritative source of information, the office deliberately obscured information, including their own reports.

During the Eighth Offensive, a domestic military operation launched in February 1985, the UNEOE did not mention any offenses, even those that involved direct attacks on relief operations. They consistently downplayed reports of forcible resettlement, rebutted independent research, and even appealed for aid at resettlement sites.

Thus, not only did the government's control over media serve to veil its repressive military actions, but it was also able to influence the content of news that was released. This allowed the government of Ethiopia to exploit the international humanitarian community for aid through its own channels as well as through the UNEOE, while simultaneously engaging in continued domestic conflict.

### Episodes of Food Scarcity

While many speak of 'the Ethiopian famine' as a homogeneous national phenomenon, this is misleading. This image, though, allowed the RRC to claim that it had been predicting the 1983-85 famine as early as 1981. In reality, many of those affected were in one section of the country, afflicted by a wholly different crisis that was precipitated by the Dergue's war with various ethnic groups. Further doubt is cast on the RRC's claims when one considers the unreliability of local statistics at that time. As late as early 1984, no one could truly have predicted the famine, with food production estimated as above average for 1981 and 1982 (see Table 7).

It was not until February 1983, when "destitute

migrants [turned] up at feeding centers," that signs of famine began to arise.<sup>134</sup> International NGOs began appeals for aid, and the RRC quickly revised its assessment and claimed a major production shortfall, retroactively identifying drought to cover destruction wrought by government forces.

Though the country's 1983 harvest was far from disastrous, famine occurred in the northern province of Tigray. In 1984, the short rains failed, and the RRC played up the incident as causing catastrophic famine, though it was not until the main harvest of 1984 that severe drought spread to the eastern and southern parts of the country.<sup>xxvi</sup> Though not nearly as prolonged or severe as the famine in the north, the figures were conflated in government statistics, giving the impression that the entire country was suffering from a unitary crisis.

While drought and harvest failure contributed to the famine, neither they nor the government's economic and agricultural policies can be considered direct causes of the famine. Rather, the country's famine was principally caused by the government's counter-insurgency campaign in Tigray and Wollo: "The zone of severe famine coincided with the war zone, and the phases of the developing famine corresponded with major military actions."<sup>135</sup> Five elements of Ethiopia's counter-insurgency strategy in particular helped catalyze famine: military offensives aimed at rebel strongholds in surplus-producing regions, the bombing of markets in rebel-held areas, severe restrictions on trade and movement, forced population resettlements, and the manipulation of relief programs.

Until early 1984, international donors were (justifiably) skeptical of the Ethiopian government's appeals for relief amidst mounting evidence that diversion and abuse of aid were employed as tactics in counter-insurgency efforts. In October 1984, however, the famine was thrust into the international media spotlight. Though this mobilized some, others felt the exposure resulted from collusion between private relief agencies and television broadcasters.<sup>xxvii</sup> Western governments' priorities at the time were simply to avoid embarrassment, such

xxvi A less partial indicator of famine is the price of grain, which was consistently high in eastern and central Tigray, with elevated prices rippling outwards following the 1984 harvest failure (see Table 8). Rainfall data from the time corroborates this theory, with localized droughts occurring in 1983 alongside above-average rainfall in other areas.

xxvii In addition, the broadcast aired during prime fundraising season for relief agencies, causing NGOs to compete for media exposure.



that “aid became a strategic alibi.”<sup>136</sup>

In response, the Ethiopian Government sought to restrict media and relief agencies, drawing further attention to the situation. However, the Dergue soon began to use the relief presence to their advantage with the creation of a UN Office for Emergency Operations in Ethiopia (UNOEOE). The office’s purported mission was to coordinate relief efforts with the Ethiopian Government and to centralize the flow of information, though these functions were already served by other organizations. This left the UNOEOE, de Waal notes, to help maintain the appearance of competent action towards the famine without antagonizing the Dergue.

Nonetheless, the official UN view was that the agency enabled a broader and more effective response force. The Ethiopian Government intensified its actions (the creation of famine and manipulation of aid), and the UNOEOE acted as its mouthpiece, with journalists frequently turning to it as an authority on the topic. Rather than investigating abuses, though, the UNOEOE “consistently concealed disturbing evidence, including evidence produced by its own monitors.”<sup>137</sup> In the same month as the establishment of the UNOEOE, for example, the Dergue launched a ‘silent offensive’ in Eritrea, so named for its lack of publicity.

The one international agency to withdraw from the country in protest was Doctors Without Borders (MSF), who departed soon before the government ordered their expulsion. MSF later published a damning report of the situation, though this only caused other organizations to discredit them on the basis of incompetency.<sup>xxviii</sup> Thus, the relationship between international humanitarian actors, the media, and the Ethiopian government greatly impeded any systematic evaluation of the famine.

Following a UNOEOE report on Tigrayan garrison towns that dramatically overstated the proportion of people receiving satisfactory rations, the US government was forced to become an accomplice in the cover-up. Days earlier, the US Congress requested that President Reagan determine whether Ethiopia had used starvation as a weapon of war, a tactic that would have provoked the US to take action. While the Presidential Determination

xxviii Though its ineptitude was not the cause of its expulsion, it is not inconceivable that MSF was politically naïve: “its field staff were unaware of the implications of reporting on what they had seen, and had they been more experienced they would have followed their colleagues in other agencies and remained silent” (de Waal, 1997).

Table 8: Relative Food Production in Ethiopia, 1977-84

Year	Production	
	Total	Per Capita
1977	99	95
1978	110	104
1979	122	113
1980	117	106
1981	115	102
1982	127	110
1983	118	99
1984	110	90

NOTE: 1974-6 = 100 (de Waal, 1991)

ultimately argued that the Dergue’s policies “have no doubt caused vast unnecessary suffering including starvation,” there was no evidence of deliberative use of starvation at that time (a qualifier that allowed Mengistu’s administration to escape further scrutiny).<sup>138</sup>

The US also felt pressure domestically to continue providing humanitarian assistance: following popular aid concert events in England and America, it became a priority to be seen as giving generously. Because media and politicians were prohibited from visiting rebel-held areas, “it was necessary for US assistance to have a high media profile in government-held areas,” depoliticizing the famine and allowing the Dergue to exploit the media presence.<sup>xxix, 139</sup>

Among areas of Tigray held by the Tigrayan People’s Liberation Front (TPLF), the greatest force against famine was the political relationship between civilians and the TPLF, who believed that the peasantry was crucial to succeed in revolution. As the TPLF began to undertake more quasi-governmental programs, it continued to involve the rural population. The TPLF had drawn support from peasants since its inception, so their political contract had become enforceable. Had the TPLF lacked the support of the locals, it would have been crushed militarily.<sup>xxx</sup>

As the war and food crises intensified, the TPLF

xxix A convenient scapegoat for the famine was found in the natural environment, the tropes of which are familiar: drought, overpopulation, and unsustainable land-use practices. ‘Saving’ the environment became a popular nonpolitical way for Western (particularly American) donors to send aid to communist Ethiopia.

xxx The TPLF also established a relief administration with the face of an independent NGO, though in practice it was “virtually indistinguishable from the civil administration of the front” (de Waal, 1997).

also shifted its focus to economic and social policies over military action. These policies, including wage employment, money lending, and trading, helped to greatly reduce variability in individual purchasing

Table 9: Average Grain Prices in Northern Ethiopia, 1981-85

Season	Province		
	E. Tigray	N. Wollo	N. Gondar
Nov/Dec 1981	100	50	40
Nov/Dec 1982	165	65	55
Nov/Dec 1983	225	90	45
Nov/Dec 1984	300	160	70
Jun/Jul 1985	380	235	165

(de Waal, 1997)

power, and further promoted the idea of the TPLF as a governing force.

Ultimately, de Waal concludes, Ethiopia's famines of the 1970s and 80s are "replete with ironies, which are explicable only by attention to the existence or not of an anti-famine political contract."<sup>140</sup> While the failed response to the 1973 famine was "highly intellectual, elitist and institutionalized,"<sup>141</sup> the response to the 1983-85 famine was, for a time, thought of as a major policy success for the government of Ethiopia. At the same time, the TPLF largely did not receive recognition for its productive efforts.

## SUDAN

### Political Regime and Elections

Prior to its independence in 1956, Sudan was under the purview of the British, who allowed the establishment of a democratic parliament following a series of polls. At independence, de Waal notes, Sudan exhibited two structures that "stood as guarantees against localized food shortages degenerating into famine (in the North at least)."<sup>142</sup> The first was a civil service with a reputation for professionalism, which tasked itself with safeguarding local food supplies, and the second was the system of 'native administration' of villages and sub-districts.

However, the situation was undermined by political instability in the form of multiple coup attempts, the migration of many of the country's professionals, and the failure of Sudan's 'open door' strategy for attracting foreign investment. Additionally, there was rampant corruption under the rule of Jaafar Nimeiri, who seized power in

1969. As a result, Sudan defaulted on its foreign debts, causing Nimeiri to appeal to international lending and aid organizations, and to invoke a spirit of 'national reconciliation.' In practice, this meant abandoning political alliances with secular professionals as well as the South, and Nimeiri's rule "became characterized by an embrace of political Islam and deepening economic dependence."<sup>143</sup> At this time, the country's legal system began a process of 'Islamization,' with the appointment of a prominent Sudanese Muslim Brothers member to the post of Attorney General.

Over time, prominent secularists and religious leaders left the regime, and the situation in the South degenerated into civil war. In an attempt to legitimize his government's use of political Islam, Nimeiri declared Islamic law in 1983 and proclaimed himself Imam. In so doing, however, he made the claim that he was accountable only to Allah, eliminating any remaining shred of commitment to popular welfare. By this point, Sudan was experiencing a massive influx of remittances; the country was also deeply indebted to foreign governments. As a result, the government became significantly less accountable to its internal tax base, and "instead [relied] on the apparently magical liquidity of Islamist financiers."<sup>144</sup> Meanwhile, capitalist investors began to withdraw, and Islamic banks and merchants began to invest, "exploiting their tax privileges, political connections and access to hard currency."<sup>145</sup>

### Institutions of Famine Prevention

In the late 1970s and early 1980s, Sudan's renowned system of local government began to decay. Inflation devalued government salaries, and many civil servants joined the migration of professionals to the Gulf States. Corruption was widespread, and experiments in regional governance fostered factionalism, further lowering morale.

During the 1980s, Sudan became a strategic player in the Cold War, and was seen as key to the anti-communist strategy after it changed alliances from East to West. Despite the country's massive offshore debt, Nimeiri exploited this position to receive more foreign aid, making Sudan the recipient of the most US foreign assistance in sub-Saharan Africa (over \$1.4 billion throughout the decade). However, this foreign assistance, combined with multiple debt reschedulings, served only to

prolong the country's impending economic crisis. The management of Sudan's debt was such that "by 1984, Nimeiri's treasury was living from hand to mouth."<sup>146</sup> Eventually, the country defaulted on its debt to the IMF, making Nimeiri accountable primarily to financiers in Washington.

Around this time, reforms demanded by the US and IMF included the "widespread privatization of nationalized corporations and the radical slimming down of the state budget."<sup>147</sup> These were welcomed by Islamist merchants, to whom it provided greater leeway for investment. At the same time, more non-state actors began to become involved in the reconstruction of southern Sudan, following the 1972 peace agreement. Unlike before, though, foreign aid was now being channeled to foreign NGOs over whom the Sudanese Government had no control.

### Press

The Library of Congress reports that since the country's independence, Sudan's mass media has largely served to disseminate information supporting various political parties or official government views (depending on the power structure at the time). Radio has "remained virtually a government monopoly, and television broadcasting [has] been a complete monopoly."<sup>148</sup> Freedom House corroborates, awarding Sudan scores of zero ('Not Free') for print and broadcast freedom until 1987, when print media gained some freedom.

In the end, the famine in the South failed to become a political scandal in Sudan. In addition to a lack of interest by political groups in the North, northern journalists rarely covered the crisis, which would have meant traveling to an active war zone and challenging security restrictions. Equally important, though, was the lack of significant interest among readers: "Apart from the English language *Sudan Times* (edited by a Southerner), only the Communist *al Meidan* showed an interest, and that was largely connected to the political implications of the militias."<sup>149</sup>

Though press freedom plainly "did not exist" under Nimeiri, the Library of Congress notes that under Mahdi, Sudan had numerous political newsletters, as well as independent newspapers and magazines.<sup>150</sup> Following the coup by the Revolutionary Command Council for National Salvation, all newspapers were banned.

### Episodes of Food Scarcity

In 1983, the specter of famine loomed as drought reduced food production by seventy-five percent in north Kordofan, north Darfur, and the Red Sea Hills. Local governments attempted to distribute relief, but were restrained by tight budgets and meager stores.<sup>xxx1</sup>

Rains failed again during the summer of 1984, and conditions became increasingly desperate. Apart from a (largely symbolic) declaration of emergency in Darfur, however, no action was taken by the government. There were mass migrations to towns and cities, including Khartoum, but around this time children in rural areas began to die.

Though Nimeiri felt himself accountable only to Allah, in reality he had actual or potential financiers as well, to whom "the drought and famine were an embarrassment and a distraction."<sup>151</sup> In an attempt to persuade international donors that Sudan was stable and a good recipient of aid, Sudan was forced to deny classifying the troubles in the South as war. Because the conflict was not 'war,' militias were mobilized instead of the army. Similarly, the government did not admit to famine, which would have shaken investors' confidence.

In the end, Nimeiri's strategy for averting famine was simply to deny that any problem existed. In November 1984 he said publicly, "The situation with respect to food security and health is reassuring;" it was not until January 1985 that he admitted to the reality of the situation.<sup>152</sup> By this point, though, it had been a full year since drought became apparent, and an estimated 250,000 had perished.

The famine did help solidify a broad coalition against Nimeiri, led by professionals, including doctors, lawyers, and civil servants. In November 1984, the Ministry of Health broke ranks and published an honest report of the famine conditions. Shortly thereafter, the Ministry of Agriculture released estimates of relief needed that contradicted those released by Nimeiri. The famine also divided the Sudan Socialist Union (SSU), the single political party at the time. With the defection of Sudan's largest city, there began the formation of an urban-rural alliance that would overthrow the

xxx1 By early 1984, the FAO estimated the relief needed in Darfur at 39,000 metric tons. Khartoum cut the figure to 7,000 metric tons, and even less was delivered. Nothing was sent to Kordofan.

government.<sup>xxxii</sup>

In April 1985, there was a popular uprising by democratic forces. While the fall of Nimeiri was a “triumph of the politicization of famine,” the coalition which formed to overthrow him was fragile, and its use of famine largely tactical, such that in the end, no robust anti-famine political contract would emerge.<sup>153</sup>

Perhaps the most blatant example of political opportunism during the famine, though, was “the rebel Sudan People’s Liberation Army (SPLA), which used its radio broadcasts to chastise the government for inaction over the famine, while the SPLA itself was helping to create famine in the south.”<sup>154</sup> After the fall of Nimeiri, many who once mobilized against the famine lost interest, and the political agenda shifted. By this point, interest in overcoming the drought came only from those still affected by it.

Immediately after the fall of Nimeiri, Dr. Al-Jazuli Daf’allah, became interim prime minister and promptly delegated responsibility for relief to international agencies (in light of Sudan’s now-bankrupt economy). In addition to helping depoliticize famine, this solidified the crisis as within the domain of relief organizations, rather than being owned by the democratic forces behind the uprising—famine prevention became an internationalized technical issue, rather than a (domestic) political one. This shift was reflected in the establishment of an early warning system that monitored economic, climatic, and agricultural data, reflecting “the neo-liberal agenda for eviscerating government responsibilities.”<sup>155</sup>

In 1986, democratic elections returned to Sudan, though they were spread over a twelve-day period and delayed in thirty-seven constituencies due to the civil war. After the elections, Sadiq al-Mahdi and the Umma Party assumed power. During this time:

Sudan enjoyed all the institutions of liberal democracy, at least in Khartoum and other urban centers. The press was uncensored and vigorous, and often highly critical of the government. Political parties, trade unions and professional associations were free to mobilize. There was no suspicion of fraud in the elections. The judiciary was independent and on several occasions overruled government decisions.<sup>156</sup>

It is arguable, though, that this liberalism was “as

much a reflection of the weakness of government as of a true spirit of tolerance; but the freedoms were genuine and were used by, among others, human rights activists.”<sup>157</sup>

At the same time, this period saw the most severe famine in Sudan’s modern history. In the South, famine was caused by the ongoing civil war. The government endorsed proxy militias to conduct raids, which were frequent, widespread, and devastating. Livestock were stolen, villages were destroyed, wells were poisoned, and people were killed indiscriminately. Militias were also implicated in the capture and enslavement of civilians. Those who managed to escape fled to garrison towns, where they were forced to sell their labor and assets cheaply, and were often prohibited from moving farther north, where there was the possibility of work or charity.

Local government officials and army commanders also prevented relief assistance from reaching displaced people, and an estimated 30,000 people died in Western Sudanese displacement camps that year. Localized famines were also created by the military, whose tactics included raiding and scorched earth.

Due to the militias’ connections to Sadiq’s Umma Party, a war economy eventually developed, with a vested interest in the conflict’s continuation. Additionally, for some politicians, merchants, and officers, the violence, famine, and failure of relief represented a policy success.

Despite this, though, there is little evidence that points to a strategic plan to use the famine as a weapon of genocide. Instead, the “moral, political and economic logic of the war as interpreted in Khartoum created a space where such near-genocidal motives and practices could flourish”<sup>158</sup>

The South was not only a war zone, but also an area with no legitimate political authority, which allowed state agents to act with impunity. This ‘abolition of restraint’ did not develop automatically, of course, but was the result of state and local politics: “Khartoum still had clients and allies in the South, whom it had to mollify, and who had power bases in their own right. But in Khartoum, the famine was virtually invisible.”<sup>159</sup> At the same time, the Sadiq government was exceptionally sensitive to the demands of Northern constituents, especially those from urban areas, and established a subsidy on

<sup>xxxii</sup> Omdurman, population 526,284 in 1983.

wheat that was prohibitively expensive (equivalent to roughly 7 percent of government revenue). The insistence by the IMF to remove this subsidy in March 1985 helped contribute to the downfall of Nimeiri, and while Sudan's donors insisted it should be further cut or abolished, Sadiq refused to touch it, despite other agreed-upon austerity measures. Even the mention of cutting the wheat subsidy drew crowds in the streets, such that "all government finance was hostage to this single issue," as well as reducing the government's accountability to a single, limited constituency.<sup>160</sup>

In the end, Sudan's famine failed to become a political scandal as interest waned among journalists and the general public. The SPLA also proved an obstacle to the peace process, placing military victory over political mobilization. At best, the SPLA represented 'benevolent paternalism,' while at worst, it was violent and extractive. Tactics used by the force created food shortages in many areas by requisitioning food, labor, and livestock, and exacerbating shortages in others. Garrison towns were reduced to starvation, and relief supplies were consistently blocked, inhibiting efforts by Northern politicians to build anti-famine alliances with affected populations.

A glimmer of hope for relief came following widespread floods in August 1988, when "there was criticism from all quarters over corruption and favoritism in the distribution of relief," but as the issue was gaining attention, the ruling coalition collapsed following a dispute regarding Sharia law.<sup>161</sup> The 1988 peace accords between the SPLA and the Democratic Union Party (DUP), the second largest political party, made no mention of famine or famine relief, and it was only later in the year that Western donors took up the cause. By the end of 1988, pressure from Danish and American governments yielded Operation Lifeline Sudan (OLS), a plan proposed, designed, and implemented almost exclusively by international relief agencies.

Ultimately, political liberalism was unable to substantially alter the lines of accountability established in the final years of Nimeiri's regime. The exclusivism of the government combined with a lack of significant opposition and an emphasis on international assistance contributed to an environment hostile to any democratic institutions that would provide protection from famine.

Additionally, the government was only sensitive to its urban constituents, and there was no urban-rural or North-South coalition that could promote broader accountability.

## CONCLUSION: LESSONS FROM THE AFRICAN CASES

I have argued that while Amartya Sen's theory that a free press and competitive elections would allow a country to avert famine is not entirely accurate, its underlying causal mechanism is valid. However, press freedom and competitive elections are by no means the only mechanisms of accountability that could prompt a government to take action to avert famine.

By examining Sen's cases—Botswana, Zimbabwe, Kenya, Ethiopia, and Sudan—as well as Mozambique and Uganda (thus completing the set of all African countries that experienced famine during the 1980s, I argue that although the causality is valid, in most cases, countries' famine prevention efforts were not motivated solely by freedom of the press or competitive elections. Moreover, the presence of either institution in a country does not guarantee the prevention or aversion of famine conditions. In some cases, the domestic press prompted a government's response to famine, while in other instances it was the international media that exposed a crisis. Yet, in other cases, action was not taken despite a free press, reflecting either a lack of incentive to report food shortages or a lack of political imperative to act on the information. Thus, while a free press is, if anything, likely to expedite famine response efforts, it is by no means necessary or sufficient. Additionally, while representative politics are generally considered necessary to align the interests of politicians with the voting population, they are by no means sufficient.

Beyond raising questions of what factors are sufficient to prompt a response to famine, this finding challenges the necessity of a representative form of government for such an effort: in all institutional forms of government, the key political incentive—maintaining power—remains the same.

De Waal answers this by noting that despite the existence of other accountability-promoting institutions, the press and elections may be used by people to sanction elected politicians for past actions, while simultaneously projecting a (vague) image of desired political action. In this way, a contract

is formed which indicates to those in power the importance of a particular cause, such as preventing famine. In a liberal political system, various mechanisms can afford this ability, while under an authoritarian regime, the people's only recourse is protest, peaceful or armed.

However, as with famine versus chronic hunger, the threshold of an anti-famine political *contract* versus a *commitment* is less than clear, and, more importantly, of questionable relevance. First, in reality, there is no perfect means of enforcement in representative politics, and so there can be no 'pure' manifestation of a political contract. Second, while the preconditions for a *contract* are the same as for a *commitment*, the latter seems little more than an impermanent version of the former; the two can only be distinguished in retrospect.

More significantly, though, is the scope of a contract, both in terms of the parties involved and the content of the agreement. While an anti-famine political contract includes the government, the people, and famine, in theory, variation in each may lead to 'impure' contracts and possibly famine conditions. In Zimbabwe, Sudan, and Kenya, for example, an anti-famine contract may be claimed to have existed, though only for a specific portion of the population (i.e. a greater disparity between the *selectorate* and the winning coalition).<sup>xxxiii,162</sup> Additionally, while an agreement (be it a contract or some other pact) between a state and the people may entail the prevention of famine conditions, the government may be free from addressing more fundamental causes, such as structural poverty or vulnerability to food insecurity, a pattern observed in Kenya in 1984.

Ultimately, freedom of the press and the regulation, competitiveness, and openness of elections cannot be considered panaceas for the prevention of famine. While these mechanisms of accountability are undeniably important to improving the quality of governance, they must be

Table 10: Relief and Political Representation by Region, 1986-87

<i>Region</i>	<i>1986 Relief (mt)</i>	<i>1987 Relief (mt)</i>	<i>Number of Seats in Sudanese Constituent Assembly</i>
Upper Nile	1,000	3,000	7
Bahr el Ghazal	2,000	4,000	9
Darfur	51,000	—	43
Kordofan	107,000	20,000	43
Eastern	35,000	35,000	31
Northern	2,400	1,000	20
Central	18,000	6,000	55
Khartoum	2,000	1,000	34
Total	223,400	82,000	262

(Keen, 1994)

delinked both from specific issues and from the political will to take action.

<sup>xxxiii</sup> In terms of selectorate theory, this scenario would result from a disparity between the selectorate, "the set of people who have an institutional say in choosing leaders," and the winning coalition, "the minimal set of people whose support the incumbent needs in order to remain in power." (Mesquita et al., 2002)

## APPENDIX A: TABLES

Table 11: Polity IV Executive Recruitment Concepts and Component Variables

Polity IV Concept	Brief Description	Polity IV Component Variables		
		XRREG	XRCOMP	XROPEN
(1) Ascription	Succession by birthright	Regulated (3)	Selection (1)	Closed (1)
(2) Dual Executive: Ascription & Designation	Ascriptive and designated rulers coexist	Regulated (3)	Selection (1)	Dual-Des. (2)
(3) Designation	Informal competition from within an elite	Transition (2)	Selection (1)	Open (4)
(4) Self-Selection	Self-selection by seizure of power	Unregulated (1)	N/A (0)	N/A (0)
(5) Gradual Transition from Self-Selection		Transition (2)	N/A (0)	N/A (0)
(6) Dual Executive: Ascription & Election	Ascriptive and elective rulers coexist	Regulated (3)	Transition (2)	Dual-Elec. (3)
(7) Transitional or Restricted Election		Transition (2)	Transition (2)	Open (4)
(8) Competitive Election	Formal competition among publicly supported candidates	Regulated (3)	Election (3)	Open (4)

Table 12: POLITY Scores for All African Countries

Country	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989
Algeria	-9	-9	-9	-9	-9	-9	-9	-9	-9	-2
Angola	-7	-7	-7	-7	-7	-7	-7	-7	-7	-7
Benin	-7	-7	-7	-7	-7	-7	-7	-7	-7	-7
<b>Botswana</b>	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	7	7	7
Burkina Faso	-7	-7	-7	-7	-7	-7	-7	-7	-7	-7
Burundi	-7	-7	-7	-7	-7	-7	-7	-7	-7	-7
Cameroon	-8	-8	-7	-8	-8	-8	-8	-8	-8	-8
Cape Verde	-4	-4	-4	-4	-3	-3	-3	-3	-3	-3
CAR	-7	-7	-7	-7	-7	-7	-7	-7	-7	-7
Chad	-77	-77	-77	-77	-88	-7	-7	-7	-7	-7
Comoros	-5	-5	-6	-6	-6	-7	-7	-7	-7	-7
Congo B	-8	-8	-7	-8	-8	-8	-8	-8	-8	-8
Congo K	-9	-9	-9	-9	-9	-9	-9	-9	-9	-9
Côte d'Ivoire	-9	-9	-9	-9	-9	-9	-9	-9	-9	-9
Djibouti	-8	-8	-8	-8	-8	-8	-8	-8	-8	-8
Egypt	-6	-6	-6	-6	-6	-6	-6	-6	-6	-6
Eq. Guinea	-7	-7	-7	-7	-7	-7	-7	-7	-7	-7
<b>Ethiopia</b>	-7	-7	-7	-7	-8	-8	-8	-8	-8	-8
Gabon	-9	-9	-9	-9	-9	-9	-9	-9	-9	-9
Gambia	8	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7
Ghana	6	-7	-7	-7	-7	-7	-7	-7	-7	-7
Guinea-Bissau	-7	-7	-7	-7	-8	-8	-8	-8	-8	-8
Guinea	-9	-9	-9	-9	-7	-7	-7	-7	-7	-7
<b>Kenya</b>	-6	-6	-7	-7	-7	-7	-7	-7	-7	-7
Lesotho	-7	-7	-7	-7	-7	-7	-7	-7	-7	-7
Liberia	-7	-7	-7	-7	-6	-6	-6	-6	-6	-6
Libya	-7	-7	-7	-7	-7	-7	-7	-7	-7	-7
Madagascar	-6	-6	-6	-6	-6	-6	-6	-6	-6	-6
Malawi	-9	-9	-9	-9	-9	-9	-9	-9	-9	-9
Mali	-7	-7	-7	-7	-7	-7	-7	-7	-7	-7
Mauritania	-7	-7	-7	-7	-7	-7	-7	-7	-7	-7
Mauritius	9	9	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10
Morocco	-8	-8	-8	-8	-8	-8	-8	-8	-8	-8
<b>Mozambique</b>	-8	-8	-8	-8	-8	-8	-7	-7	-7	-7
Niger	-7	-7	-7	-7	-7	-7	-7	-7	-7	-7
Nigeria	7	7	7	7	-7	-7	-7	-7	-7	-5
Rwanda	-7	-7	-7	-7	-7	-7	-7	-7	-7	-7
Senegal	-2	-1	-1	-1	-1	-1	-1	-1	-1	-1
Sierra Leone	-7	-7	-7	-7	-7	-7	-7	-7	-7	-7
Somalia	-7	-7	-7	-7	-7	-7	-7	-7	-7	-7
South Africa	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
<b>Sudan</b>	-7	-7	-7	-7	-7	-88	7	7	7	-7
Swaziland	-10	-10	-10	-10	-10	-10	-10	-10	-10	-10
Tanzania	-6	-6	-6	-6	-6	-6	-6	-6	-6	-6
Togo	-7	-7	-7	-7	-7	-7	-7	-7	-7	-7
Tunisia	-9	-8	-8	-8	-8	-8	-8	-5	-5	-5
<b>Uganda</b>	3	3	3	3	3	-77	-7	-7	-7	-7
Zambia	-9	-9	-9	-9	-9	-9	-9	-9	-9	-9
<b>Zimbabwe</b>	4	4	4	1	1	1	1	-6	-6	-6



Table 13: XRREG Scores for All African Countries

Country	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989
Algeria	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Angola	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Benin	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
<b>Botswana</b>	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Burkina Faso	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Burundi	1	1	1	1	2	2	2	1	1	1
Cameroon	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Cape Verde	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
CAR	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Chad	-77	-77	-77	-77	-88	1	1	1	1	1
Comoros	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Congo B	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Congo K	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Côte d'Ivoire	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Djibouti	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Egypt	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Eq. Guinea	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
<b>Ethiopia</b>	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Gabon	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Gambia	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Ghana	3	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Guinea-Bissau	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Guinea	2	2	2	2	1	1	1	1	1	1
<b>Kenya</b>	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Lesotho	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	1	1	1
Liberia	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	2	2	2
Libya	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Madagascar	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Malawi	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Mali	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Mauritania	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Mauritius	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Morocco	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
<b>Mozambique</b>	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Niger	1	1	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Nigeria	3	3	3	3	1	1	1	1	1	1
Rwanda	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Senegal	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Sierra Leone	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Somalia	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
South Africa	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
<b>Sudan</b>	2	2	2	2	2	-88	3	3	3	1
Swaziland	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Tanzania	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Togo	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Tunisia	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
<b>Uganda</b>	2	2	2	2	2	-77	1	1	1	1
Zambia	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
<b>Zimbabwe</b>	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2

Table 14: XRCOMP Scores for All African Countries

Country	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989
Algeria	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Angola	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Benin	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Botswana</b>	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Burkina Faso	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Burundi	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Cameroon	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Cape Verde	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
CAR	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Chad	-77	-77	-77	-77	-88	0	0	0	0	0
Comoros	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Congo B	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Congo K	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Côte d'Ivoire	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Djibouti	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Egypt	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Eq. Guinea	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Ethiopia</b>	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Gabon	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Gambia	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Ghana	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Guinea-Bissau	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Guinea	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Kenya</b>	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Lesotho	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	0
Liberia	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Libya	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Madagascar	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Malawi	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Mali	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Mauritania	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Mauritius	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Morocco	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
<b>Mozambique</b>	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Niger	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1
Nigeria	3	3	3	3	0	0	0	0	0	0
Rwanda	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Senegal	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Sierra Leone	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Somalia	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
South Africa	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
<b>Sudan</b>	1	1	1	1	1	-88	3	3	3	0
Swaziland	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Tanzania	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Togo	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Tunisia	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
<b>Uganda</b>	2	2	2	2	2	-77	0	0	0	0
Zambia	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
<b>Zimbabwe</b>	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	1	2

Table 15: XROPEN Scores for All African Countries

Country	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989
Algeria	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
Angola	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
Benin	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Botswana</b>	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
Burkina Faso	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Burundi	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Cameroon	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
Cape Verde	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
CAR	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Chad	-77	-77	-77	-77	-88	0	0	0	0	0
Comoros	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Congo B	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
Congo K	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
Côte d'Ivoire	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
Djibouti	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
Egypt	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
Eq. Guinea	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Ethiopia</b>	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
Gabon	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
Gambia	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
Ghana	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Guinea-Bissau	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
Guinea	4	4	4	4	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Kenya</b>	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
Lesotho	4	4	4	4	4	4	0	0	0	0
Liberia	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Libya	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Madagascar	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
Malawi	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
Mali	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Mauritania	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
Mauritius	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
Morocco	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
<b>Mozambique</b>	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
Niger	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	4	4
Nigeria	4	4	4	4	0	0	0	0	0	0
Rwanda	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Senegal	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
Sierra Leone	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
Somalia	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
South Africa	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
<b>Sudan</b>	4	4	4	4	4	-88	4	4	4	0
Swaziland	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Tanzania	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
Togo	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Tunisia	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
<b>Uganda</b>	4	4	4	4	4	-77	0	0	0	0
Zambia	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
<b>Zimbabwe</b>	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4

Table 16: Press Freedom Scores for All African Countries (Press/Broadcast)

Country	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989
Algeria	0/0	0/0	0/0	0/0	0/0	0/0	0/0	0	0/0	1
Angola	0/0	0/0	0/0	0/0	0/0	0/0	0/0	0	0/0	0
Benin	0/0	0/0	0/0	0/0	0/0	0/0	0/0	0	0/0	0
<b>Botswana</b>	2/1	2/1	2/1	2/1	2/1	2/1	2/1	1	2/1	2
Burkina Faso	1/1	1/1	1/0	0/0	0/0	0/0	0/0	0	1/1	0
Burundi	0/0	0/0	0/0	0/0	0/0	0/0	0/0	0	0/0	0
Cameroon	0/0	0/0	0/0	0/0	0/0	0/0	0/0	0	0/0	0
Cape Verde	0/0	0/0	0/0	0/0	0/0	0/0	1/0	0	0/0	0
CAR	1/1	1/1	1/1	0/0	0/0	0/0	0/0	0	1/1	0
Chad	0/0	0/0	0/0	0/0	0/0	0/0	0/0	0	0/0	0
Comoros	0/0	0/0	0/0	0/0	0/0	0/0	0/0	0	0/0	0
Congo B	0/0	0/0	0/0	0/0	0/0	0/0	0/0	0	0/0	0
Congo K	1/0	1/0	1/0	1/0	1/0	1/0	1/0	0	1/0	0
Côte d'Ivoire	1/0	1/0	1/0	1/0	1/1	1/1	1/1	1	1/0	1
Egypt	0/0	0/0	0/0	0/0	0/0	0/0	0/0	0	0/0	0
Eq. Guinea	0/0	0/0	0/0	0/0	0/0	0/0	0/0	0	0/0	0
<b>Ethiopia</b>	0/0	0/0	0/0	0/0	0/0	0/0	0/0	0	0/0	0
Gabon	2/2	2/2	2/2	2/2	2/2	2/2	2/2	1	2/2	2
Gambia	1/1	1/1	0/0	0/0	0/0	0/0	0/0	0	1/1	0
Ghana	0/0	0/0	0/0	0/0	0/0	0/0	0/0	0	0/0	0
Guinea-Bissau	0/0	0/0	0/0	0/0	0/0	0/0	0/0	0	0/0	0
Guinea	1/0	1/0	1/0	1/0	1/0	1/0	0/0	0	1/0	0
<b>Kenya</b>	1/1	1/1	1/1	1/1	1/1	1/1	0/0	0	1/1	0
Lesotho	0/0	0/0	1/0	1/0	1/0	1/0	1/0	0	0/0	0
Liberia	0/0	0/0	0/0	0/0	0/0	0/0	0/0	0	0/0	0
Libya	0/0	0/0	0/0	0/0	0/0	0/0	0/0	0	0/0	0
Madagascar	0/0	0/0	0/0	0/0	0/0	0/0	0/0	0	0/0	0
Malawi	0/0	0/0	0/0	0/0	0/0	0/0	0/0	0	0/0	0
Mali	0/0	0/0	0/0	0/0	0/0	0/0	0/0	0	0/0	0
Mauritania	2/2	2/2	2/2	2/2	2/2	2/1	2/1	2	2/2	2
Mauritius	1/0	1/0	1/0	1/0	1/0	1/0	1/0	0	1/0	0
Morocco	0/0	0/0	0/0	0/0	0/0	0/0	0/0	0	0/0	0
<b>Mozambique</b>	0/0	0/0	0/0	0/0	0/0	0/0	0/0	0	0/0	0
Niger	2/1	2/1	2/1	1/1	1/1	1/1	1/1	2	2/1	1
Nigeria	1/1	1/1	1/1	1/1	1/1	1/1	1/1	1	1/1	1
Senegal	0/0	0/0	0/0	0/0	0/0	0/0	0/0	0	0/0	0
Sierra Leone	0/0	0/0	1/0	1/0	1/0	1/0	1/0	0	0/0	0
Somalia	0/0	0/0	0/0	0/0	0/0	0/0	0/0	0	0/0	0
South Africa	1/0	1/0	1/0	1/0	1/0	1/0	1/0	0	1/0	1
<b>Sudan</b>	0/0	0/0	0/0	0/0	0/0	1/0	1/0	1	0/0	0
Swaziland	0/0	0/0	0/0	0/0	0/0	0/0	0/0	0	0/0	0
Tanzania	0/0	0/0	0/0	0/0	0/0	0/0	0/0	0	0/0	0
Togo	0/0	0/0	0/0	0/0	0/0	0/0	0/0	0	0/0	0
Tunisia	1/0	1/0	1/0	1/0	1/0	1/0	1/0	0	1/0	1
<b>Uganda</b>	1/1	0/0	0/0	1/0	1/0	1/0	1/0	0	1/1	0
Zambia	1/0	1/0	1/0	1/0	1/0	1/0	1/0	0	1/0	0
<b>Zimbabwe</b>	1/0	1/0	0/0	0/0	0/0	0/0	0/0	0	1/0	0

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