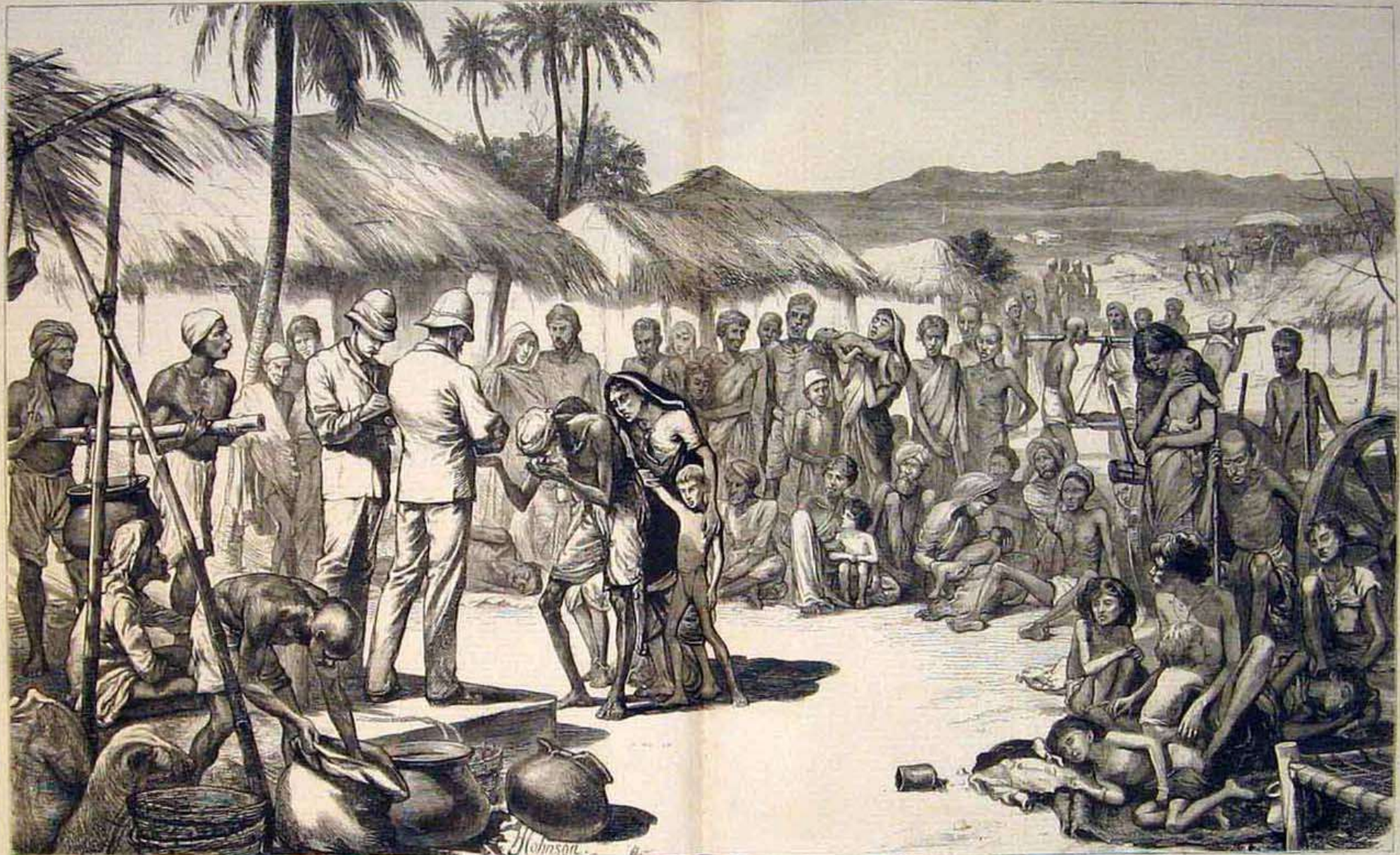


A paved road leads through a lush tropical forest towards the ocean. The road is flanked by dense greenery, including palm trees and other tropical plants. The ocean is visible on the left side of the road. The sky is clear and blue.

# The worthy, vulnerable: Distributive norms of adaptation governance

Jessica Lehman  
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23 March 2012

# El Niño Famines 1870s



THE FAMINE IN INDIA—DISTRIBUTION OF RELIEF TO THE SUFFERERS AT BELLARY, MADRAS PRESIDENCY

# Famine relief, India 1870s



Work camps

Free relief for women, children,  
indigent

# To now: adaptation funding



# Adaptation funding as a liberal mechanism

## Markets

- Externalities
- Free exchange
- “Too much” government

## Morality

- Responsibility/Responsibilization
- Humanitarianism
- “Cultures of poverty”

# Ambiguous liberal morality

“these decisions and actions are fundamentally characterized by an ethical and moral grounding of what is ‘right,’ ‘good’ and ‘better’ in terms of what to do about climate change” (Goodman and Boyd 2011: 103)

Who is deserving?

# Climate relief apparatus

- Response to urgency
- Power relations with specific goals
- Intersection of power and knowledge

# Funding priorities

- (a) Level of vulnerability;
- (b) Level of urgency and risks arising from delay;
- (c) Ensuring access to the fund in a balanced and equitable manner;
- (d) Lessons learned in project and programme design and implementation to be captured;
- (e) Securing regional co-benefits to the extent possible, where applicable;
- (f) Maximizing multi-sectoral or cross-sectoral benefits
- (g) Adaptive capacity to the adverse effects of climate change.

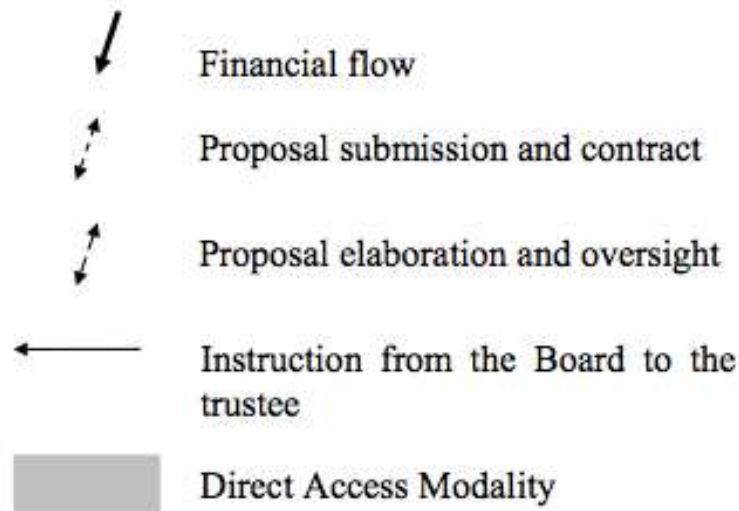
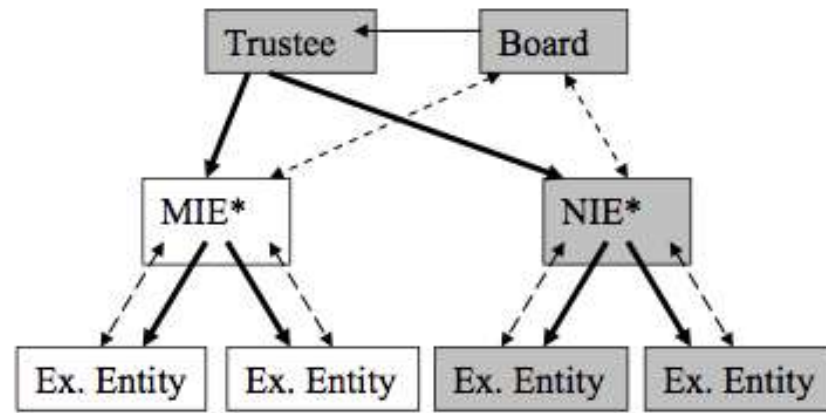


# Bureaucratic framings



“a force through which particular technologies and forms of expertise defines, controls and regulates the life of populations in both oppressive and life-enhancing ways”  
(Cupples 2012: 13)

# Bureaucratic Framings



# To be vulnerable is to be worthy

Vulnerability must be

- Calculable
- Comparable
- Reducible

**Vulnerability = (exposure x sensitivity)/adaptive capacity**



# Critiques of vulnerability

- Necessarily partial and political measure
- Creates “race to the bottom”
- Ignores holistic livelihoods/views of poor
- Shifts focus to victims
- Disregards common vulnerability
- Must be in line with neoliberal development

# Resisting vulnerability



Photo: Reuters

# Resisting vulnerability



Artist: Kirsten Justesen

Mobilizing ambiguity

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