



April 17th- 24th, 2009

For more information on the Global Agricultural Development Project and previous editions of *Global Food for Thought*, please visit www.thechicagocouncil.org/globalagdevelopment.

Contents:

- **Key Articles**
 - **New Reports/Policy Briefs**
 - **Upcoming Events**
 - **Agricultural Issues**
 - **Environment (Water/Climate)**
 - **Global Economic Crisis in the Developing World**
 - **Food Crisis**
 - **Women**
 - **Market Access and Trade Issues**
 - **Agribusiness**
-

KEY ARTICLES

Farm Futures: Bringing Agriculture Back to U.S. Policy, *Foreign Affairs*, May/June 2009

By Dan Glickman and Catherine Bertini

It is not easy for Americans to understand the starvation that afflicts much of the developing world. Families in the poorest parts of Africa and Asia spend up to 80 percent of their incomes on food; for the average U.S. household, that would mean an annual grocery bill of \$40,000. Yes, there are hungry Americans in the millions, and the U.S. food-stamp program is operating at record levels. But hunger in the United States does not put tens of thousands of infants into hospitals and require them to be hooked up to feeding tubes. Nor does it lead to stunting, wasting, and debilitating forms of malnutrition, such as kwashiorkor and marasmus. Yet even if Americans strain to comprehend the depth of hunger that plagues much of Africa and Asia, they do care about it. They know that chronic hunger among Afghans, Congolese, or North Koreans can pose a threat to their national security. Surveys conducted by the Pew Research Center have consistently revealed that Americans want to make ending hunger and poverty a priority for U.S. foreign policy. A recent survey conducted by the Chicago Council on Global Affairs showed that the American public feels aid to poor farmers overseas should play a more prominent role than any other form of U.S. development assistance.

<http://www.maxwell.syr.edu/FA.pdf>

G-8 Agriculture Ministers Meeting - Final Declaration, *April 20*

The G8 partners also renewed the central role played by agriculture that can have significant impacts on other policies, particularly health policies through the fight against hunger and malnutrition and environmental policies, including the sustainable management of natural resources and reiterated their determination to defeat hunger and to ensure access to safe, sufficient and nutritious food for present and future generations.

http://www.g8italia2009.it/G8/G8_Allegato/presidential_statement_INGLESE_final,1.pdf

Global Monitoring Report 2009: A Development Emergency, April 2009

Low-income economies, many of which are in Sub-Saharan Africa, were until recently buffered from the global financial crisis, since their banks and stock exchanges were distant from sub-prime meltdowns and collapsing investment banks. Yet most of the world's regions now face recession. This means poor countries are facing a slump in their exports, government budgets are badly stretched, and foreign aid appears likely to fall short of donor promises at the very time when it will be most needed.

<http://econ.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/EXTDEC/0,,contentMDK:22154703~pagePK:64165401~piPK:64165026~theSitePK:469372,00.html>

US urges food output boost to avert unrest, *Financial Times*, April 19

The US agriculture secretary has warned that unless countries take immediate steps to sharply boost agricultural productivity and food output and reduce hunger, the world risks fresh social instability. In an interview with the *Financial Times*, Tom Vilsack indicated that food security and global stability were tied, in a sign that Washington's worries about the global food crisis go well beyond its humanitarian implications.

<http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/16bacc66-2cd1-11de-8710-00144feabdc0.html>

Obama's USDA Picks Might Signal New Priorities, *Congress Daily*, April 21

With his two latest picks for key USDA posts, President Obama is signaling a possible shake-up in several programs that have historically gotten little attention, including nutrition and agricultural research. Kevin Concannon, director of the Iowa Department of Human Services, has been tapped to be USDA undersecretary for food, nutrition and consumer services -- a post that oversees, among other things, the food stamp program -- while Rajiv Shah of the Gates Foundation has been nominated for USDA undersecretary for research, education and economics. Both appointments, announced Friday, require Senate confirmation.

<http://lostintransition.nationaljournal.com/2009/04/obamas-usda-picks-might-signal.php>

World Bank to Invest \$45 billion in Infrastructure to Help Create Jobs and Speed Crisis Recovery,

World Bank, April 23

The World Bank will increase infrastructure investments to \$45 billion over the next three years to provide the foundation for rapid recovery from the global economic crisis, **World Bank Group President Robert B. Zoellick** announced today at the World Bank/IMF Spring Meetings. In the wake of last year's food crisis, the Bank Group is also boosting support for agriculture from \$4 billion in 2008 to \$12 billion over the next two years to help ensure vital food security.

<http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/NEWS/0,,contentMDK:22152817~pagePK:64257043~piPK:437376~theSitePK:4607,00.html>

"U.S. Assistance to Africa: A Call for Foreign Aid Reform," *Steve Radelet, Testimony for the House Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Africa and Global Health, April 20*

To reap benefits from strong development policies, we must work with international partners and recipient governments in ways that demonstrate impact on the ground and show that we are reaching our key objectives in developing countries: stimulating economic growth and poverty reduction, promoting political stability and responding to humanitarian crises.

http://www.cgdev.org/doc/Opinions/Radelet_Africa_Global_Health.pdf

The Next Big Thing: Africa, *Dambisa Moyo, Foreign Policy, May/June 2009*

Africa's newfound transparency, technology, and growing financial maturity do not have to be erased by today's financial slump. The continent may even be poised to benefit from the global economic downturn.

http://www.foreignpolicy.com/story/cms.php?story_id=4849

The Coming Food Coups, *The Washington Quarterly, January 2009*

By Andrew Natsios and Kelly Doley

The doubling of grain prices over the past two years has already set off violent protests in over 30 developing countries and led to the overthrow of the Haitian prime minister Jacques Edouard Alexis. Even though the media has provided extensive coverage and analysis of the causes of the increase in food prices, the potential

political and security consequences have been given little attention. All food crises do not become famines, but the dynamics of rapid food price increases show some of the same characteristics of famines in their early stages.

http://twq.com/09winter/docs/09jan_natsiosdoley.pdf

NEW REPORTS/POLICY BRIEFS

Asia's Next Challenge: Securing the Region's Water Future, *Asia Society, April 2009*

An Asia Society Task Force Report - Decreased access to a safe, stable water supply in Asia "will have a profound impact on security throughout the region," warns a new Asia Society Leadership Group report. In response to the cascading set of consequences reduced access to fresh water will trigger—including impaired food production, the loss of livelihood security, largescale migration within and across borders, and increased economic and geopolitical tensions and instabilities—the report recommends a comprehensive strategy to avert a regional crisis.

<http://www.asiasociety.org/taskforces/water/>

The Global Financial Crisis and Developing Countries: Preliminary Synthesis of Ten Draft Country Reports, *Overseas Development Institute, April 2009*

The UK Department for International Development and the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs supported a team of 8 ODI researchers and 30 research collaborators in ten countries (in Asia: Indonesia, Cambodia and Bangladesh; in South America: Bolivia; and in Africa: Benin, Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, Uganda and Zambia) to examine the effects of the global financial crisis.

<http://www.odi.org.uk/resources/download/3251.pdf>

World Economic Outlook, *International Monetary Fund, April 2009*

The World Economic Outlook (WEO) presents the IMF staff's analysis and projections of economic developments at the global level, in major country groups (classified by region, stage of development, etc.), and in many individual countries. It focuses on major economic policy issues as well as on the analysis of economic developments and prospects. It is usually prepared twice a year, as documentation for meetings of the International Monetary and Financial Committee, and forms the main instrument of the IMF's global surveillance activities.

<http://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/weo/2009/01/index.htm>

From AfPak to PakAf: A Response to the New U.S. Strategy for South Asia, *Daniel Markey, Council on Foreign Relations, April 2009*

Quick-hitting economic assistance is also to be used to support counterinsurgency efforts on both sides of the border. U.S. forces will have access to flexible emergency funds so they can rush humanitarian, development, and reconstruction programs into areas immediately after offensive operations. This rapid-response programming is designed to win compliance from local populations and avoid swelling the ranks of the insurgency.

http://www.cfr.org/publication/19125/from_afpak_to_pakaf.html?breadcrumb=%2F

Dambisa Moyo's (Serious) Challenge to the Development Business, *Todd Moss, Center for Global Development, April 2009*

Todd Moss considers the future of foreign aid in light of Dambisa Moyo's book, *Dead Aid*, which argues that Western aid to Africa has brought more harm than help. Moss finds Moyo's book reflective of widely felt frustration in Africa and deserves to be taken seriously.

http://www.cgdev.org/files/1421594_file_Moss_Moyo_review_FINAL.pdf

The Geoengineering Option: A Last Resort Against Global Warming? *David G. Victor, M. Granger Morgan, Jay Apt, John Steinbruner, and Katharine Ricke, Foreign Affairs, March/April 2009*

Global warming is accelerating, and although engineering the climate strikes most people as a bad idea, it is time to take it seriously.

<http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/64829/david-g-victor-m-granger-morgan-jay-apt-john-steinbruner-and-kat/the-geoengineering-option>

Emerging Markets, Emerging Models, *The Rockefeller Foundation, March 2009*

This report investigates “market-based solutions” as a means to help those residing at the base of the global income pyramid. An alternative and complement to traditional government expenditures, aid, and philanthropy, market-based solutions give low-income people better access to socially beneficial products and services that genuinely and directly improve the quality of their lives and livelihoods. In India, for example, such solutions provide or enable:

http://www.rockfound.org/initiatives/health/emerging%20markets_final.pdf

Patterns of access and utilization of output markets by emerging farmers in South Africa: Factor analysis approach, *G. M. Senyolo, P. Chaminuka, M. N. Makhura and A. Belete, African Journal of Agricultural Research Vol. 4 (3), pp. 208-214, March 2009*

This study determines the patterns of access and utilization of output market by emerging farmers in South Africa. The study reveals that farmers tend to sell their produce to public stores as most of these stores are close to the farming communities. Friends and family also provide an important market outlet for produce by emerging farmers. Improving road conditions and transport services in rural areas will not only improve accessibility of external markets, but will also improve accessibility of local output markets.

<http://www.academicjournals.org/AJAR/PDF/pdf%202009/Mar/Senyolo%20et%20al.pdf>

Soil fertility restoration techniques in sub-Saharan Africa using organic resources, *Omotayo, O. E. and K. S. Chukwuka, African Journal of Agricultural Research Vol. 4 (3), pp. 144-150, March 2009*

Food security concerns are currently escalating in sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) due to poor soil management practices on the fragile soils. This review describes the role of organic resources acting both as amendments and fertilizers in improving soil nutrient status and productivity potentials in SSA.

<http://www.academicjournals.org/AJAR/PDF/pdf%202009/Mar/Omotayo%20and%20Chukwuka.pdf>

Avoiding more biofuel surprises: The fuel, food and forest trade-offs, *Clayton W. Ogg, Journal of Development and Agricultural Economics Vol. 1(1), pp. 012-017, April 2009*

Biofuel policies involve a convergence between policies to protect ecosystems and reduce greenhouse gases, and policies to support food security and agricultural income. Beginning in 1985, agricultural programs shifted dramatically from being a major cause of environmental damage to providing a strong leverage which encouraged the most environmentally beneficial practices. Biofuel programs are erasing some of those gains.

<http://www.academicjournals.org/JDAE/PDF/Pdf2009/Apr/Ogg.pdf>

UPCOMING EVENTS

House Subcommittee on Africa and Global Health DONALD M. PAYNE (D-NJ), CHAIRMAN U.S. Assistance to Africa: A Call for Foreign Aid Reform

Date: April 23, 2009

Time: 11:30 AM EDT

Location: Room 2172 of the Rayburn House Office Building

Witnesses: **Mr. Earl Gast**, Senior Deputy Assistant Administrator, Bureau for Africa, USAID;

Ousmane Badiane, Ph.D., Africa Director, IFPRI; **Steven Radelet**, Ph.D., Senior Fellow, Center for Global Development; **Meredeth Turshen**, D. Phil, Professor, Edward J. Bloustein School of Planning and Public Policy Rutgers University; Mr. **Bill O'Keefe**, Senior Director of Policy and Advocacy, Catholic Relief Services

http://www.internationalrelations.house.gov/hearing_notice.asp?id=1067

Implications of the Financial Crisis for Developing Countries, *IFPRI*

Date: April 30, 2009

Time: 12-2:00 p.m.,

Location: IFPRI, Washington, D.C.

Presented by Maximo Torero, Director, MTID, IFPRI; Ousmane Badiane, Africa Director, IFPRI; John Hoddinott, Senior Research Fellow and Deputy Director, PHND, IFPRI. IFPRI Headquarters, 2033 K Street NW, Washington DC. Lunch served at 12:00 pm, panel begins at 12:30 pm.

http://www.ifpri.org/events/events_menu.asp

*****SAVE THE DATE*** *ENOUGH: Why the World's Poorest Starve in an Age of Plenty* Book Release, by SCOTT KILMAN and ROGER THUROW**

Date: June 17, 2009

Time: 6:00 p.m.

Location: Chicago, IL

For more than 40 years, humankind has had the knowledge, tools, and resources to end chronic hunger worldwide. Yet at the start of the twenty-first century, 25,000 people a day – and nearly six million children a year – die of hunger, malnutrition, and related diseases. Malnutrition kills more Africans than AIDS and malaria combined. In this compelling investigative narrative, Roger Thurow and Scott Kilman, award-winning writers on Africa, development, and agriculture, explain through vivid human stories how the agricultural revolutions that transformed South America and Asia stopped short in Africa. They argue passionately and convincingly that this generation is the one that could finally end the scourge that has haunted the human race since its beginning.

AGRICULTURAL ISSUES

Food Follies, *National Interest*, April 24

Pakistan's government has recently announced a plan that could make a potentially dry and tense summer there even more difficult—granting al-Qaeda added recruitment appeal and undercutting a much-touted strategy by the Obama administration to improve standards of living.

The Federal Minister of Investment in Pakistan, Waqar Ahmed Khan, said this week that the government plans to sell or lease 1 million acres of farmland to foreign investors, primarily from Saudi Arabia and other Gulf countries. Although the news has yet to gain much coverage, if carried out it could punctuate growing unrest and frustration, given Pakistan's limited amount of arable land and population of more than 170 million.

<http://www.nationalinterest.org/Article.aspx?id=21364>

Africa: Realising the Right to Food, *Olivier De Schutter, AllAfrica.com*, April 23

At last, the idea is gaining ground that the right to food, as an enforceable human right, should be at the centre of our efforts to reform the global food system - a system which the 'global food crisis' of 2007-2008 has shown to be fragile particularly in the face of shocks such as a peak in the prices of oil, a sudden shift in demand, or speculative behaviour on the commodities markets.

<http://allafrica.com/stories/200904240653.html>

Petrodollars v smallholders: Disputes erupt over plans to invest millions in rice farming, *The Economist*, April 23

It seemed like the perfect match. Kuwait has a lot of money and needs to import food. Cambodia has a lot of fertile land and wants to attract foreign capital. So, as has been happening around the world since the food-price spike of 2007-08, the government of a poor farming country is planning to hand over vast tracts of land to a richer, oil-producing one.

http://www.economist.com/world/asia/displaystory.cfm?story_id=13527987

Beijing rules out investments in African farmland, *The Financial Times*, April 21

China has said it will not join the growing trend of outsourcing food production by investing in overseas farmland, particularly in Africa, expressing doubts that such deals could improve its food security. Niu Dun, China's deputy agriculture minister, said yesterday that Beijing preferred to depend on its land to maintain selfsufficiency in grain, distancing the country from nations such as Saudi Arabia and South Korea, which are investing in land overseas.

<http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/bd3a41ea-2e0a-11de-9eba-00144feabdc0.html>

G8 admits losing hunger battle, *Financial Times*, April 21

The G8 leading nations called yesterday "for increasing public and private investment" in agriculture but its communiqué after the first meeting on the subject acknowledged the world was "very far from reaching" the UN's goal of halving by 2015 the world's proportion of malnourished people, **writes Javier Blas** .
<http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/4ecd6e42-2e0c-11de-9eba-00144feabdc0.html>

Vietnam Offers Plan to Help Farmers, *Wall Street Journal*, April 19

Vietnam announced an economic stimulus plan to help farmers, who are among those worst affected by the global recession, including giving them access to interest-free bank loans to buy farming tools and processing equipment.

The government said Saturday it will also subsidize part of the interest paid on bank loans used to buy fertilizer, insecticide and construction materials. The state will subsidize interest payments of up to 4% on the loans, which typically carry annual interest rates of 10% to 11%.

<http://online.wsj.com/article/SB124017678104232411.html>

US not convinced on idea of global grain reserve, *Reuters*, April 19

United States Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack cautioned against the idea of creating global grain reserves, saying it might not be the ideal tool to ensure food price stability. Speaking on the margins of a meeting of G8 and G5 farm ministers, Vilsack said the U.S. experience with such schemes had shown it was better to focus on technical advances in irrigation, seed varieties, machinery and farming methods.

<http://af.reuters.com/article/investingNews/idAFJJOE53I02N20090419?sp=true>

U.N. food agencies see "win-win" farmland deals, *Reuters*, April 19

Rich nations buying farmland in less developed countries to boost own food supplies should also contribute to improving agriculture overseas, heads of two United Nations' food agencies said.

<http://www.reuters.com/article/environmentNews/idUSTRE53I10D20090419>

At Agriculture Department, A Surprising Pick, *New York Times*, April 17

In another sign that business is anything but usual at [the Department of Agriculture](#), the Obama administration on Friday announced that Dr. Rajiv J. Shah was named as under secretary of research, education at economics and chief scientist of the agency.

Dr. Shah is a most unlikely choice, given that the agency's research has long focused on improving agricultural production in the United States. As director of the agricultural development program at [the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation](#), Dr. Shah has focused on improving productivity for the world's poor, particularly in Africa. He has little experience with American farming.

<http://dinersjournal.blogs.nytimes.com/2009/04/17/at-agriculture-department-a-surprising-pick/?scp=2&sq=agriculture&st=cse>

Taliban Exploit Class Rifts in Pakistan, *The New York Times*, April 17

Unlike India after independence in 1947, Pakistan maintained a narrow landed upper class that kept its vast holdings while its workers remained subservient. Successive Pakistani governments have since failed to provide land reform and even the most basic forms of education and health care. Avenues to advancement for the vast majority of rural poor do not exist.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2009/04/17/world/asia/17pstan.html>

Ghana: Plummeting profits drive tomato farmers to suicide, *IRIN News*, April 17

With cross-border price-undercutting, mounting debt and a lack of buyers, many tomato farmers in Ghana's Upper East Region are turning to suicide. Three tomato farmers in the region committed suicide in 2008 and many others attempted to, according to the General Agriculture Workers Union.

<http://www.irinnews.org/Report.aspx?ReportId=83980>

G8 farm ministers plot world food strategy, *Reuters*, April 17

Farm ministers of the Group of Eight meeting in Italy this weekend aim to forge a strategy to secure food supplies and stabilize prices, as rich nations scramble for acreage abroad to feed their people.

But tensions caused by the pull toward protectionism may also simmer at the first-ever meeting of G8 farm ministers and their counterparts from major developing nations. The idea of creating a global grain reserve was likely to be on the agenda, said host Italy's Agriculture Minister Luca Zaia.

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/04/17/AR2009041702048.html>

Strategic plan sought to achieve food security, *Emirates Business* 24/7 (UAE), April 17

Abu Dhabi's Department of Planning and Economy called for a strategic plan to achieve food security through an increase in agricultural investment outside the UAE, especially in Sudan, and schemes to encourage nationals to cultivate land inside the emirate.

[http://www.business24-](http://www.business24-7.ae/articles/2009/4/pages/15042009/04162009_eeeb01e71f2f4234b02043bfb1d130e7.aspx)

[7.ae/articles/2009/4/pages/15042009/04162009_eeeb01e71f2f4234b02043bfb1d130e7.aspx](http://www.business24-7.ae/articles/2009/4/pages/15042009/04162009_eeeb01e71f2f4234b02043bfb1d130e7.aspx)

The world must feed its hungry, *Financial Times*, April 16

As we agonise about the recession, we should remember that humanity's greatest economic problem is more basic: how to get enough food, a challenge still faced by millions.

This weekend the Group of Eight leading countries gathers in Italy for its first ever meeting of agriculture ministers. Their goal must be to move food policy up the global political agenda to a position where it is treated as the vital international security matter it is.

http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/ab8dc834-2ab0-11de-8415-00144feabdc0.html?nclick_check=1

China, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation to breed super rice, *People's Daily (China)*, April 16

The Chinese Academy of Agricultural Sciences (CAAS) recently signed an international cooperation project with the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation (B&MGF), to breed green super rice in the infertile regions of Asia and Africa. Zhai Huqu, President of CAAS, said that in the next three years, the rice output of 20 million poor rice peasants in Africa and Asia will increase by more than 20 percent.

<http://english.people.com.cn/90001/90782/90872/6638762.html>

Government plans Rs 5.989bn food security projects, *Daily Times (Pakistan)*, April 16

The government has planned a comprehensive policy for ensuring food security with five developmental projects worth \$5.989 billion over a period of five years. These projects are: protection of irrigation infrastructure worth \$2.3 billion; construction of 32 small dams worth \$1.434 billion; increasing post harvest efficiency with cost of \$890 million; Productivity enhancement worth \$390 million; and Value addition and institutional development worth \$975 million.

http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=2009%5C04%5C16%5Cstory_16-4-2009_pg5_7

China sows seeds of food self-sufficiency, *Financial Times*, April 16

The the Group of Eight ministers of agriculture meeting for the first time on Saturday 9there will be no greater example of the dilemma faced in feeding a growing population than China.

The world's largest agricultural economy makes the ministers wary because of its huge and expanding food needs: but also curious at Beijing's success in weathering last year's [global food crisis](#) better than most emerging economies.

Ever since China entered its phase of high economic growth 30 years ago it has faced apocalyptic warnings that its increasing demand for food would lead to shortages worldwide.

http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/c0d54870-2aa1-11de-8415-00144feabdc0,dwp_uuid=a955630e-3603-11dc-ad42-0000779fd2ac.html

As Chinese Investment in Africa Drops, Hope Sinks, *The New York Times*, March 25

CONAKRY, [Guinea](#) — Chinese and Guinean workers toil shoulder to shoulder on a sun-blasted construction site at this crumbling city's edge, building the latest symbol of an old and sturdy alliance: a \$50 million, 50,000-seat stadium. This city is littered with such tokens of a friendship that first flowered when Guinea was an isolated and struggling socialist state in the late 1950s.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2009/03/26/world/africa/26chinaafrica.html?ref=africa>

1,500 farmers commit mass suicide in India, *Independent (U.K.), April 15*

Over 1,500 farmers in an Indian state committed suicide after being driven to debt by crop failure. The agricultural state of Chattisgarh was hit by falling water levels.

<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/asia/1500-farmers-commit-mass-suicide-in-india-1669018.html>

Chad: Powder Keg in the East, *International Crisis Group, April 15*

Large-scale internal displacement and a massive influx of Sudanese refugees have upset eastern Chad's demographic balance and intensified the struggle for resources. Both the Chadian government and rebel groups have armed their supporters, leading to bloodier banditry and bloodier inter-ethnic conflicts that often pit farmers against cattle breeders and make the work of humanitarian workers increasingly difficult.

<http://www.crisisgroup.org/home/index.cfm?id=6055&l=1>

ENVIRONMENT (WATER/CLIMATE)

Vilsack: Climate legislation benefits farmers, *Des Moines Register, April 21*

Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack says climate legislation should be a "net winner" for farmers although key details that will determine how much growers get paid for offsetting greenhouse gas emissions are yet to be worked out. Payments to farmers could hinge on the extent to which emission allowances for greenhouse gases are sold or given away to utilities and other polluters, Vilsack said in an interview with agricultural journalists.

<http://www.desmoinesregister.com/article/20090421/BUSINESS/90421051>

Asia may see more conflicts over water, *Reuters, April 17*

NEW YORK (Reuters) - Asia may see more conflicts over scarce water resources in the coming years as climate change and population growth threaten access to the most basic natural resource, a report warned on Friday. Water problems in Asia are already severe, with one in five people, or 700 million, not having access to safe drinking water and half the region's population lacking access to basic sanitation, according to the report produced by the Asia Society, a New York-based think tank. Population growth, rapid urbanization and climate change are expected to worsen the situation, according to the report, "Asia's Next Challenge: Securing the Region's Water Future."

<http://www.reuters.com/article/environmentNews/idUSTRE53G0ZZ20090417>

Climate change could worsen African "megadroughts", *Reuters, April 17*

The recent decades-long drought that killed 100,000 people in Africa's Sahel may be a small foretaste of monstrous "megadroughts" that could grip the region as global climate change worsens. Droughts, some lasting for centuries, are part of the normal pattern in sub-Saharan Africa. But the added stress of a warming world will make these dry periods more severe and more difficult for the people who live there.

http://uk.reuters.com/article/homepageCrisis/idUKN16255903.CH_2420

See Also: West Africa faces 'megadroughts', BBC, April 17

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/science/nature/8003060.stm>

Water Fight, *Time, April 16*

The Songhua river in northeastern China doesn't have the history of the Mekong, the spirituality of the Ganges or the sheer power of the Yangtze. But in November 2005, this 1,200-mile (2,000 km) waterway made headlines when a chemical plant in the Chinese city of Jilin spilled massive amounts of the toxic chemical benzene, creating a 50-mile (80 km) noxious slick. The chemicals oozed toward the sea, and Chinese cities that drank from the Songhua were forced to cut off supplies, leaving millions to fend for themselves.

<http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,1891640,00.html>

Stopping climate change — and starvation, *Ken Curtis, Commentary, McClatchy Newspapers, April 16*

The struggle against nature's extremes has never been easy, but global warming seems poised to make things even harder for many farmers.

<http://www.mcclatchydc.com/337/story/66290.html>

A Clear, Clean Water Act, *Editorial, The New York Times, April 16*

Clean water policy is in a terrible muddle, and the country has the Supreme Court to thank for it.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2009/04/17/opinion/17fri2.html>

Internet Pair Start Fund to Tackle Global Issues, *Wall Street Journal, April 16*

Larry Brilliant, the former director of Google Inc.'s philanthropic arm, and Jeff Skoll, the billionaire founding president of eBay Inc., are starting a \$100 million fund to find solutions to five pressing problems for the planet. In an interview, Mr. Skoll, 44, said the new fund will focus its money on areas Mr. Skoll sees as the most pressing problems: climate change, water scarcity, pandemics, nuclear proliferation and conflict in the Middle East.

<http://online.wsj.com/article/SB123976487829019919.html>

GLOBAL ECONOMIC CRISIS IN THE DEVELOPING WORLD

Investments in safety nets, infrastructure needed to support poor in crisis, *Zoellick says, World Bank, April 23*

These Spring Meetings of the World Bank and the IMF are the first major global gathering since the G-20. They provide an important opportunity for all 185 members of the World Bank Group to assess the G-20 outcomes and make sure that their voices are heard. The G-20 Meetings in November and April provided a useful start in addressing some of the global financial issues. It took steps to insure against global financial risks, although we still need to follow up on pledges.

<http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/NEWS/0,,contentMDK:22153125~pagePK:34370~piPK:34424~theSitePK:4607,00.html>

Cheap food blunts crisis impact on Bangladesh economy, *Reuters, April 17*

Declining food and oil prices globally, along with a bumper rice harvest, have pushed prices in domestic markets down substantially, and helped shield the country from economy-linked social unrest and protests. Though around 40 percent of Bangladeshis live on less than \$1 a day, good crops over the years have generally ensured at least subsistence.

<http://www.reuters.com/article/asiaCrisis/idUSDHA422030>

Economic slump provides tinder for global conflicts, *Christian Science Monitor, April 17*

Last November Robert Zoellick, president of the World Bank Group, noted that the global financial crisis would hit hardest the "poorest and most vulnerable" in the developing world. Powerful droughts around the world could cause food shortages, reversing a dramatic drop in global poverty that the economic crisis recently halted. In Africa and in East Asia, population growth also adds to economic pressures.

<http://www.csmonitor.com/2009/0415/p13s01-wmgn.html>

Every 3 seconds, 1 child dies of malnutrition in economic downturn, *Shanghai Daily, Editorial, April 17*

AS many citizens of the world's wealthy countries grieve over slashed bonuses or possible job cuts, many of their counterparts in poorer nations are going to bed with an empty stomach due to a widening food shortage. The deadly dilemma, which has been deepening during the ongoing economic downturn, can't afford to be ignored or overshadowed by the raging financial storm.

http://www.shanghaidaily.com/sp/article/2009/200904/20090417/article_397906.htm

Pakistan secures \$5bn in fresh aid, *Financial Times, April 17*

Pakistan on Friday won commitments for \$5.28bn in aid over two years from more than 20 countries to prop up the country's battered economy and support investment in healthcare, education and infrastructure development.

<http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/12e74722-2b3c-11de-b806-00144feabdc0.html>

See Also: U.S. Pledge at the Tokyo Donors' Conference, U.S. State Department, April 17

<http://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2009/04/121822.htm>

Crisis could create 100 million 'new hungry': UN, *Agence France-Presse*, April 16

The United Nations warned that the global economic crisis could create up to 100 million "new hungry" as it wipes out jobs in poorer countries.

<http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5izwSmidjx7ZpPBqAsY9kKQX8eH7w>

FOOD CRISIS

UN calls on Asia to protect poor from food crisis, *The Washington Post*, April 23

The food crisis that hit many developing countries last year is likely to re-emerge following the recession and Asian countries must take measures to protect poor people from rising prices, a U.N. report said Friday.

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/04/24/AR2009042401363.html>

Strange fruit: Could genetically modified foods offer a solution to the world's food crisis?, *Independent (U.K.)*, April 18

It's a decade since GM products were hurriedly swept from UK shops after a panic about their safety. In the meantime, GM crops have been widely – and successfully – cultivated elsewhere. So is it time we embraced the new food?

<http://www.independent.co.uk/life-style/food-and-drink/features/strange-fruit-could-genetically-modified-foods-offer-a-solution-to-the-worlds-food-crisis-1668543.html>

Facing hunger in Kenya's Kajiado, *Al Jazeera English*, April 18

According to the government and aid agencies, nearly 10 million Kenyans are facing starvation due to a drought which has severely affected the country's east, south and coastal provinces. Women and young children often have to walk as far as 15km in search of water and food. Rising food prices have contributed to the shortage of cereals, such as maize meal, which were once considered affordable food alternatives for many Kenyans.

<http://english.aljazeera.net/focus/2009/03/20093236545173595.html>

Pirate attacks could ramp up hunger in Africa, warns UN agency, *UN News Centre*, April 16

Several ships carrying United Nations emergency relief supplies bound for Somalia have become the latest victims of piracy off the Horn of Africa, prompting the World Food Programme (WFP) to express concern that millions of people in the strife-torn region could go hungry.

<http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=30492&Cr=piracy&Cr1>

Food Rebellions: 7 Steps to Solving the Food Crisis, *YES! Magazine*, Spring 2009

Forty years ago, the global South had yearly agricultural trade surpluses of \$1 billion. After three "Development Decades," they were importing \$11 billion a year in food. Immediately following de-colonization in the 1960s, Africa exported \$1.3 billion in food a year. Today it imports 25 percent of its food.

<http://www.yesmagazine.org/article.asp?id=3331>

WOMEN

VPs roots for women in agriculture, *VPPS*, April 22

In a speech read on his behalf by Nduati Kariuki, the National Chairman of the Kenya National Federation of Agricultural Producers (KENFAP), the Vice President noted that most traders in agricultural products were women. "At any give time you find that women constitute 70 percent of traders involved directly or indirectly with agricultural products," he said. At the same time Mr Musyoka challenged leaders of farmers' organisations in Africa to involve both the private and public sectors in addressing the problems facing the industry.

<http://www.capitalfm.co.ke/business/Local/VPs-roots-for-women-in-agriculture-2037.html>

Sustainable Development in Nigeria: Roles of Women and Strategies for Their Improvement, Bessie A. Ukpore, *Journal of Sustainable Development in Africa (Volume 10, No.4, 2009)*

This study analyses and discusses the roles of women, the different factors affecting their roles and suitable strategies for promoting the roles of women in sustainable development. The main purpose of the study is to encourage better participation of women in their achievement of the goals of sustainable development which includes lasting improvement on the quality of life.

http://www.jsd-africa.com/Jsda/V10N4_Spring2009/PDF/SustainableDevelopmentNigera.pdf

MARKET ACCESS AND TRADE ISSUES

Americans Oppose Most Farm Subsidies, *World Opinion Poll, April 22*

As the Obama administration has sought to cut farm subsidies for next year's budget they have encountered strong resistance, especially in farm states. However a new WorldPublicOpinion.org poll finds that the American public, including in farm states, would favor eliminating most farm subsidies.

http://www.worldpublicopinion.org/pipa/articles/home_page/602.php?nid=&id=&pnt=602&lb=

Poor nations bear brunt of global trade tax dodging, *Editorial, Irish Times, April 16*

It has been called the ugliest chapter in global economic affairs since slavery. And, as with slavery before abolition, it is so widely accepted that for years it has excited little or no comment. It is the manner in which businesses trading internationally shift billions of euro of profits between jurisdictions to reduce, or even dodge completely, their tax bill.

<http://www.irishtimes.com/newspaper/opinion/2009/0415/1224244721224.html>

AGRIBUSINESS

Syngenta Calls for Greater International Collaboration to Address Food Security Challenge, *PR Newswire, April 21*

At today's Annual General Meeting, Syngenta Chairman Martin Taylor and CEO Mike Mack highlighted the key global challenge of ensuring food security for a rapidly growing world population. To help address this critical challenge, they called for greater international collaboration and more coherent trade and regulatory policies that support farmers in producing sufficient, affordable food and, at the same time, help conserve the planet's limited natural resources.

<http://sev.prnewswire.com/agriculture/20090421/PH0232521042009-1.html>

Kraft Foods Advances Its Sustainability Agenda, *PR Newswire, April 20*

In February, Kraft Foods and other industry, government and nongovernmental partners joined with the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and announced the launch of a comprehensive program that will invest \$90 million over five years to advance the sustainable production of cocoa and cashews in Africa.

<http://news.prnewswire.com/DisplayReleaseContent.aspx?ACCT=104&STORY=/www/story/04-20-2009/0005008446&EDATE>

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