

Contents:

- Key Articles
 - New Reports/Policy Briefs
 - New Books
 - Political/Conceptual Shifts
 - Food Aid
 - Food Crisis - Objective Developments
 - The Food Crisis and Impacts on Poverty
 - Agriculture Development Practices (corporate, IGO, NGO, gov't) with Focus on South Asia/Sub-Saharan Africa
 - Biofuels
 - Market Access
 - Small scale farms and agriculture productivity
 - Developments in Agriculture, Science, and Technology
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Key Articles

- ***Less talk, more action, Ghana aid conference told***, By Kwasi Kpodo, Reuters, September 2, 2008
ACCRA (Reuters) - Translating billions of dollars of foreign aid into concrete, timely action that helps the world's poorest is the biggest challenge facing both donor and recipient countries, speakers at an aid conference said on Tuesday. Ministers and officials from more than 100 countries that give and receive aid, along with leaders of humanitarian, lending and relief agencies, opened a three-day conference in Ghana aimed at improving the delivery of development assistance. Critics say that the effectiveness of more than \$100 billion of international aid that is channeled to the developing world each year is often undermined and obstructed by bureaucratic bottlenecks, delays, overlapping and political interests. Concerns about corruption and the squandering of aid funds, especially in weak states in Africa, have also triggered debate about how much donor governments should try to maintain control and oversight over their aid programs. Recipient countries insist the aid must follow their own development strategies. Opening speakers at the High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness in Accra warned the clock was ticking on efforts to improve aid delivery to achieve ambitious Millennium Development Goals that aim to halve global poverty by 2015.
<http://www.reuters.com/article/worldNews/idUSL2677020080902>
- **The food sector's other growing need**, by James Drummond, Financial Times, September 2, 2008
It cuts both ways. Wealthy Arab states have been going cap in hand to buy and lease land from poor but agriculturally richer neighbours such as Pakistan and Sudan to provide themselves with an element of food security. There is, though, an additional dependence, as HSBC pointed out in a recent note. Many Middle Eastern countries, short of food and water, are large-scale exporters of a material that could enable those poor countries to grow crops to feed everyone - fertilizers. And here companies in the region find themselves in a sweet spot. Those with access to gas - an essential input for nitrogen-based fertilisers - are likely to do particularly well because

they have negotiated long-term and generous supply contracts, the bank says. Nitrogen-based fertilisers are by far the largest component of global consumption. They need to be applied to fields annually whereas the other two types - potash and phosphates - do not. There is a mismatch between supply and demand for fertilisers generally as South America, India and China demand ever greater quantities and the world's population grows. It is predicted that there will be 1.5bn to 2bn more people in 20 years' time. Worldwide production of meat, which needs more fertilisers than arable crops, is expected to grow as consumption increases by 25 per cent, according to the United Nations food and agriculture organisation.

<http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/f8adfa18-7885-11dd-acc3-0000779fd18c.html>

- ***Tanzania smallholder farmers receive US\$20m grant from US***, Washington Daily News, August 30, 2008

THE US government has granted to Tanzania 20 million US Dollars (about 25bn/-) as credit guarantee to enable smallholder farmers and agribusinesses to access credit to invest in their enterprises. The US government has also issued 700,000 US Dollars (over 800m/-) to Energy and Water Utilities Regulatory Authority (Ewura) for boosting its efficiency. The two grants were announced on Thursday by US Agency for International Development (USAID) Acting Deputy Administrator James Kunder when welcoming President Jakaya Mrisho Kikwete at USAID headquarters in Washington. President Kikwete is on a three-day visit to the United States at the invitation of President George Bush. The Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, Mr Bernard Membe, and Deputy Director for the US Trade and Development Agency, Ms Leocadia Zak signed agreement for Ewura's assistance on behalf of their respective governments. Announcing the commitment, Mr Kunder said the credit programme would jointly be facilitated by USAID, African Development Bank and CRDB Bank in Tanzania.

<http://dailynews.habarileo.co.tz/home/index.php?id=6961>

- ***Agriculture futures trade mostly lower on CBOT***, Associated Press, September 3, 2008
CHICAGO - Agriculture futures traded mostly lower Wednesday on the Chicago Board of Trade. Wheat for December delivery rose 5.25 cents to \$7.72 a bushel; December corn fell 8.25 cents to \$5.61 a bushel; December oats fell 1.25 cents to \$3.5875 a bushel; November soybeans fell 22.5 cents to \$12.76 a bushel. Beef futures traded mixed and pork futures traded lower on the Chicago Mercantile Exchange. October live cattle traded flat at \$1.0375 a pound; October feeder cattle fell 0.27 cent to \$1.115 a pound; October lean hogs fell 0.65 cent to 68.9 cents a pound; February pork bellies fell 0.60 cent to 92.15 cents a pound.

<http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2008/sep/03/agriculture-futures-trade-mostly-lower-on-cbot/>

New Reports/Policy Briefs

- ***ACCRA AGENDA FOR ACTION***
As part of the Aid Effectiveness Forum in Accra, Ghana - ministers of developing and donor countries responsible for promoting development and Heads of multilateral and bilateral development institutions adopted the following statement in Accra, Ghana, on 4 September 2008

http://www.aefgh.org/images/stories/aaa_final_draft_25_july_2008.pdf

- ***The Failed States Index 2008***, Foreign Policy, Published September 2, 2008
Whether it is an unexpected food crisis or a devastating hurricane, the world's weakest states are the most exposed when crisis strikes. In the fourth annual Failed States Index, FOREIGN POLICY and The Fund for Peace rank the countries where state collapse may be just one disaster away.
http://www.foreignpolicy.com/story/cms.php?story_id=4350
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New Books

- ***Developing Markets for Agrobiodiversity*** By Alessandra Giuliani, Earthscan 2008
Only four crops-maize, potatoes, rice and wheat-provide more than 90 per cent of the world's food. Increasingly, old varieties of even these crops are disappearing as farmers and consumers strive for more uniformity in food products. This narrowing of the diversity of the main components of agricultural systems has a knock-on effect on less obvious elements, such as insects that play a role in pollinating plants or controlling pests and the soil organisms that help plants extract nutrients from the soil. Also, farmers need a broad base of agrobiodiversity to be able to respond and adapt to environmental changes and to improve their production. This is especially important in the face of climate change and changing economic and political pressures. This book from Bioversity International describes a study conducted in Syria of how communities are developing markets for local products derived from neglected and underutilized plants. Based on concrete case studies, the data and processes documented in the book show the potential of biodiversity to make a significant contribution to livelihood security in communities that inhabit difficult environments with unique resources. The study also highlights the importance of local cultural knowledge and institutions in sustainable development of biodiversity markets. Published with Bioversity International.
http://books.google.com/books?id=rCTqOA2XebcC&dq=agricultural+development+date:2008-2008&lr=&num=30&as_brr=0&rview=1&source=gb_s&cad=0
- ***China's New Role in Africa and the South*** By Dorothy-Grace Guerrero, Firoze Manji, Fahamu 2008
China's global expansion is much talked about, but usually from the viewpoint of the West. This unique collection of essays, written by scholars and activists from China and the global South, provides diverse views on the challenges faced by Africa, Latin America and Asia as a result of China's rise as a significant global economic power. Chinese aid, trade and investments - driven by the needs of its own economy - present both threats and opportunities for the South, requiring a nuanced analysis that goes beyond simplistic caricatures of good' and evil'. China's engagement cannot be understood independently of the imperial expansion of the US in the global economy. Chinese production and American consumption, ' writes Walden Bello, are like the proverbial prisoners who seek to break free from one another but cannot because they are chained together. This relationship is progressively taking the form of a vicious cycle.' Arising from a conference held in Shanghai in May 2007, when the African Development Bank was also meeting in that city, this book provides a fresh perspective that focuses on the economic, social and environmental impact of China's expansion. It represents the first attempt to establish a dialogue between civil society in China and the global south. From reviews of Fahamu's African Perspectives on China in Africa (2007): ...a timely book on a subject of critical importance. We should use it to strengthen Africa's hand in negotiating with China...' Irungu Houghton, Pan African Policy Advisor, Oxfam GB ...the first attempt in recent years to examine African views of

China.' London Review of Books anyone interested in economic developments in Africa - and China - will find much useful material here.' Charlie Hore, Socialist Review

http://books.google.com/books?id=9V6KiGcOsKYC&dq=agricultural+development+date:2008-2008&lr=&num=30&as_brr=0&rview=1&source=gbs_summary_s&cad=0

- ***Global Rice and Agricultural Trade Liberalisation*** By Mohammad A. Razzaque, Edwin Laurent, Commonwealth Secretariat 2008
Rice has long been one of the most protected commodities in world trade. Now the probable significant liberalisation of trade in rice is likely to have huge welfare implications for many countries dependent on its production and trade, particularly those in South Asia. This book explores the poverty and welfare implications of this liberalisation for India, Bangladesh, Pakistan and Sri Lanka, and identifies the effects on different groups within poor rice-dependent developing countries. This book will be of great interest to researchers and policy makers, in South Asia and elsewhere, looking at the distributional consequences of multilateral trade agreements in terms of poverty and welfare within individual countries.

http://books.google.com/books?id=LktttMUdxc4C&dq=agricultural+development+date:2008-2008&lr=&num=30&as_brr=0&rview=1&source=gbs_summary_s&cad=0

- ***Promise, Trust and Evolution*** By Narpat Jodha, Rucha Ghatge, Pranab Mukhopadhyay, Oxford University Press 2008
From land management to water rights, this volume looks at the current status of Common Property Resources, or CPRs, in South Asia. Developed countries, have managed to establish well-defined property rights over numerous resources and in some instances extended non-exclusionary rights over privately owned resources over an extended period of time. In the developing world, however, the share of community property is extensive, either as a response to an expanding market or because the exposure to markets is still in its nascent stage. This coupled with the demands of globalization, has led to the co-existence of both community ownership of resources as well as an evolving private property rights market.

This tension between public versus private ownership rights is particularly relevant in the developing countries of South Asia, not only because of its shared history but also because of its resources frequently cross national boundaries. This book tells the story of CPRs and the commons in a rapidly changing South Asia. Including contributions from those working with natural resources in Bhutan, India, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka, the papers discuss issues such as equity in distribution; efficiency and productivity of resources; sustainability of resources; and institutional transition and governance.

http://books.google.com/books?id=jQvVQFck_QYC&dq=agricultural+development+date:2008-2008&lr=&num=30&as_brr=0&rview=1&source=gbs_summary_s&cad=0

Political/Conceptual Shifts

- ***The California Consensus: Can Private Aid End Global Poverty?***, Brookings Institute, August-September, 2008
Global philanthropy is remaking the relationship between the world's rich and poor. Private aid - aid provided by foundations, corporations, non-governmental organisations, and individuals - has doubled over the past decade and may soon overtake 'official' foreign aid. Something of a consensus has developed around the emergence of private aid - that it is less prone to corruption and more likely to benefit the poor. While private aid has the potential to be a more

effective form of aid, it remains vulnerable to many of the same problems affecting official development assistance. Private aid that is both accountable and well monitored, however, can potentially catalyse more competitive markets for foreign aid, and dismantle the monopoly held by traditional bilateral and multilateral donors.

http://www.brookings.edu/articles/2008/08_private_aid_kharas.aspx

- ***African Union wants Zimbabwe crisis deal now***, by George Obulutsa, Reuters, September 2, 2008
DAR ES SALAAM (Reuters) - African Union chair Tanzania wants to see a 50-50 power-sharing deal agreed for Zimbabwe immediately to stem a growing economic crisis, Tanzania's foreign minister said on Tuesday. Zimbabwe's main opposition party, the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC), said talks with President Robert Mugabe's ZANU-PF that resumed on Friday in South Africa did not reach agreement. "There is a problem and we still hope the mediation will continue and we still hope wisdom will prevail," Tanzanian Foreign Minister Bernard Membe said in Dar es Salaam. "We would prefer a solution be arrived at immediately because of the escalating economic crisis. We still pray that a solution will be found towards a 50 percent power-sharing solution," he told reporters in Tanzania's commercial capital. On Friday, negotiators from ZANU-PF, the main MDC and a smaller breakaway MDC faction separately met South African President Thabo Mbeki, who is mediating the discussions. The power-sharing talks have stalled over how to share executive power between Mugabe and MDC leader Morgan Tsvangirai, who refused to sign an agreement two weeks ago that would have made him prime minister. Tsvangirai protested against the proposed deal, saying it did not give him enough executive powers.
<http://www.reuters.com/article/worldNews/idUSL236403520080902>
- ***GM crops necessary to fight hunger, says wheat body***, Daily Nation (Kenya), September 3, 2008
CANBERRA - Japan and Europe need to embrace genetically modified wheat to combat food shortages in poor countries, rather than pander to consumer fears, the head of a global wheat research institute said today. Resistance from the public and consumer groups in rich countries to genetically modified (GM) wheat has forced major producing countries, such as Australia, the United States and Canada, to steer away from growing GM crops. But GM crops can boost yields and help poor countries feed their people at a time of food shortages and rising world prices, said Thomas Lumpkin, head of the Mexico-based International Maize and Wheat Improvement Centre. **"Governments should try to help the public appreciate how much the high price of food affects the poor in developing countries,"** Lumpkin told Reuters in an interview on Wednesday. **"By denying them this technology, you are keeping them hungry, they are dying."** Wheat and maize account for 40 percent of the world's food and 25 percent of calories consumed in developing countries, according to the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation.
<http://www.nation.co.ke/News/africa/-/1066/466826/-/view/printVersion/-/4jtocqz/-/index.html>
- ***Food wasted is water lost***, IRIN News, August 29, 2008
JOHANNESBURG - To meet growing food demand, in another 40 years the world would need enough water to fill at least three lakes the size of Victoria, Africa's largest body of water, according to a projection in a new policy brief. Lake Victoria's estimated volume is 2,750 km³. In [Saving Water: From Field to Fork – Curbing Losses and Wastage in the Food Chain](#), a policy brief by the Stockholm International Water Institute (SIWI), the Food and Agriculture Organisation

(FAO) and the International Water Management Institute (IWMI), projected food and cereal demand could double by 2050, and the world would need 10,000 to 13,500 km³/year of water supply to keep up with production requirements. Enormous amounts of water are required to produce food: since the beginning of this century, about 7,000 km³ of water has evaporated or transpired every year in producing crops to meet global food demand, the paper said. Between the farmer's field and the fork, almost half the food on our tables is lost in food storage, transport, food processing, retailing and in kitchens, the paper noted, arguing that "This loss of food is equivalent to a loss in water."

<http://www.irinnews.org/Report.aspx?ReportId=80078>

Food Crisis - Objective Developments

- ***GCC plans joint fund to invest in farming sector***, Business Intelligence - Middle East, September 1, 2008

INTERNATIONAL - The six-nation Gulf Co-operation Council (GCC) plans to establish a company or a fund to invest in agriculture to ensure food security and put a limit to rising prices, Dubai-based Al Bayan daily reported yesterday. "Talks in this regard are being held with some South East Asian countries as well as Egypt, Sudan and Brazil among others," the report said. "The GCC secretariat has decided to form a team from the ministries of commerce, finance and agriculture to find common solutions and unified policies to stabilise prices (of various commodities) as far as possible," it added.

<http://www.bi-me.com/main.php?id=23834&t=1&cg=4>

The Food Crisis and Impacts on Poverty

- ***Zimbabwe Lifts Ban on Aid Groups, but Its Effects Linger***, by Celia W. Dugger, New York Times, August 30, 2008

JOHANNESBURG — Zimbabwe lifted an almost three-month-old ban on the work of aid groups on Friday. The government had imposed the ban because it claimed some of the groups had been backing the opposition during a bitter election season in which President Robert Mugabe was fighting for his political survival. The suspension of the groups' field operations deprived more than a million orphans, schoolchildren, the elderly and other impoverished Zimbabweans of food and other basic assistance, according to the nations that donated the aid. The effects of the aid restrictions will linger. The United Nations World Food Program had planned to feed 1.7 million Zimbabweans next month, but was unable to deploy its partners on the ground, the suspended aid groups, to identify and register the needy this month.

http://www.nytimes.com/2008/08/30/world/africa/30zimbabwe.html?_r=1&pagewanted=print&oref=slogin

- ***ZIMBABWE: Wild fruits instead of food aid***, IRIN news, September 3, 2004

NHARIRA - During the nearly three months that nongovernmental organisations (NGOs) in Zimbabwe were banned from operating by President Robert Mugabe's government, people desperate for food foraged for wild fruits to survive, in some cases with tragic consequences. Janet Chagwiza, 70, who lives in Nharira village, about 40km south of the Mashonaland East town of Chivu, told IRIN that two of her grandchildren were thought to have died from eating

too much of a wild fruit that grows abundantly during the dry season. "This fruit has become our staple food. We don't have mealie-meal [maize-meal] and our vegetable gardens have been overwhelmed by the daily demand, leaving whole villages in this area to depend on wild fruits," Chagwiza told IRIN shortly after burying her grandchildren in a single pit "because people here no longer have the energy to dig graves." The fruit's pulp is separated from the hard seed by pounding it in pestles, but if eaten in excess it can cause extreme constipation, a nurse told IRIN at a nearby referral hospital where the two children were taken. A nationwide strike by government doctors began a few weeks ago, which meant that the two children were unable to receive medical attention at the hospital. Zimbabwe's hunger rates will peak early next year at about 5.1 million people in an estimated population of 12 million, according to the UN, but the ban put aid agencies on the back foot because they rely on NGOs to distribute food aid.
<http://www.irinnews.org/Report.aspx?ReportId=80150>

Agriculture Development practices (corporate, IGO, NGO, gov't) with focus on South Asia/Sub-Saharan Africa

- **Dairy farmers to benefit from Sh1.4bn support**, by Watoro Kamau, Business Daily (Kenya), August 29, 2008
Lack of a breeding policy in the country has impacted negatively on livestock production. The Government and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) are implementing a Sh1.4 billion programme to support dairy farmers in nine districts to enhance milk production. The Smallholder Dairy Commercialisation Programme (SDCP) aims at increasing the incomes of poor rural households that depend on dairy products. The six-year programme lays emphasis mainly on the commercialisation of dairy products through development of market oriented enterprises. "A key focus is to reduce the cost of milk production and increase amount of milk produced and marketed," the project co-ordinator, Mr Moses Kembe, told Business Daily yesterday.
http://www.bdafrica.com/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=9677&Itemid=5811
- **10,000 tractors for Punjab farmers**, Dawn (Pakistan), September 3, 2008
MULTAN: The Punjab government has launched a green tractor scheme with an objective to promote agriculture sector and in this regard invited applications from farmers in the province. According to agriculture sources, the government will deliver tractors to small farmers at subsidised rates and for this purpose the government will offer Rs0.2 million subsidy per tractor. The government will deliver **10,000 tractors** to peasants under the scheme. According to assistant director agriculture Ishaq Khan Lashari, the government has fixed quota for each tehsil across the province according to its cultivated capacity. He further disclosed that the application forms are available from DDO offices for Rs250 for each form. Tractors will be given to farmers having piece of land ranging from five acre to 25 acres. However, the defaulters of Zarai Traqqiati Bank Limited will not be provided the facility. He further maintained that tractors will be distributed among the farmers through a ballot. —APP
<http://www.dawn.com/2008/09/03/eb4.htm>
- **WEST AFRICA : Do high food prices warrant a cash response?**, IRIN news, September 3, 2008
DAKAR - Experts say many of the right conditions are in place across West Africa to make cash distributions work in the current global food price crisis. Michael O'Donnell, head of hunger reduction for non-governmental organisation (NGO) Save the Children, said "the current food

price crisis could be an opportunity for governments to work with NGOs and UN agencies to provide cash transfers to build up stronger social protection systems for the chronically poor.” While agencies have been handing out cash in the form of vouchers for food and other items, straight cash, or through cash-for-work schemes for many years – WFP has been distributing vouchers as far back as 1994 in Pakistan – many are considering larger-scale targeted distributions over the coming year.

<http://www.irinnews.org/Report.aspx?ReportId=80154>

Analysis: While its language is hard to follow, the article is centered around a quotation delivered by the head of *Save the Children* and how he thinks that various agencies can provide aid through cash distributions. This would be instead of providing food vouchers, etc. The article suggests that cash would be a more dynamic social support mechanism than voucher distribution. The full benefits of the switch are not explained.

- **AGRA Hosts Green Revolution in Africa Conference (Oslo), September 3, 2008**

The third annual Africa Green Revolution Conference was held in Oslo, Norway, 27-29 of August. The host of this prestigious event was the global fertilizer company Yara International. The theme of this year’s conference, *An Alliance for Action*, was most appropriate for an organization like AGRA, which promotes strategic alliances for improving productivity and profitability of small-scale farms throughout the continent. Kofi Annan is chair of the Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA).

<http://www.agra-alliance.org/content/news/detail/831>

Biofuels

- ***Strategic incentives needed for developing bio-fuel industry*** (Tanzania), By Mgeta Mganga, IPPMedia.com, September 3, 2008

Calculated incentives are badly needed to support small and large-scale bio-fuel development in Tanzania, a renewable energy expert has said. This is according to Estomih Sawe, Executive Director of the Tanzania Traditional Energy Development and Environment Organisation (TaTEDO) who has decried present institutional trends which tend to favour multinational industrial bio-fuel producers at the expense of small-scale, mostly indigenous ones. The industry is chiefly founded on the growth of jatropha plant which produces bio-diesel. Investments into the industry have recently jolted due to global rise in prices of fossil fuel. The cultivation of sugar cane for ethanol production is also gaining currency. Sawe said for small-scale farmers to be fully engaged in bio fuel business, they would require special support, much so in the form of access to finance and other important inputs.

<http://ippmedia.com/ipp/guardian/2008/09/03/121806.html>

Market Access

- ***Trade not aid the answer to poverty, economists say***, by Jonathan Lynn, Reuters, August 31, 2008

GENEVA - As ministers from over 100 countries gather in Ghana to review how effective aid is in helping developing nations deal with poverty, many economists argue the answer is elsewhere - in freeing up trade. The meeting in Accra this week comes just over a month after talks at the World Trade Organisation (WTO) to secure a breakthrough in the long-running Doha round collapsed at the end of July. Rich and poor countries alike have called for efforts to save the Doha round and build on the compromises that were reached in July's talks. Senior negotiators

are likely to meet in September to see whether the talks can be revived. Economists of all persuasions agree now that growth is the key to lifting people out of poverty -- a view reinforced by a major World Bank report in May on growth and development. And the key to growth is trade, the WTO says. "Trade openness is believed to have been central to the remarkable growth of developed countries since the mid-20th century and an important factor behind the poverty alleviation experienced in most of the developing world since the early 1990s," it said in a report last month (July). Former New Zealand Prime Minister Mike Moore, who headed the WTO when the Doha round was launched, put the case for trade in a characteristically forceful manner earlier this month. "Seven years ago, we introduced at Doha what was to be a "development round". All trade rounds are," he said. "President Kennedy, who introduced the Tokyo round, famously said: 'This will lift all boats and help developing countries like Japan.' Case made, I would have thought."

<http://www.reuters.com/articlePrint?articleId=USLP59590620080831>

- ***Reject aid with conditions, civil groups urge Ghana forum***, By Njeri Rugene, Daily Nation (Kenya), September 3, 2008
More than 100 civil society organisations are urging participants of the aid effectiveness conference to reject foreign aid with imposed conditions. The groups are also demanding cancellation of debts saying it would be a major requisite to "aid effectiveness." The civil society groups which concluded a two day parallel meeting ahead of the high level forum on aid effectiveness and management also called for community organisations, NGOs, and trade unions be involved in negotiations of foreign aid as well as in formulating the national development strategy. "Aid giving is not only exercised in the context of unequal power relations, it is also being used as an instrument of power...and conditionalities are the most blatant expression of this fact," the organisations said in a statement distributed to participants. They argued that donor conditions had undermined the sovereignty of recipient countries and their people while violating the principle of democratic governance."
<http://www.nation.co.ke/News/africa/-/1066/466832/-/view/printVersion/-/maqgit/-/index.html>
- ***Uprooted farmers groan under piling pressure of bank loans***, by Kipchumba Some, Daily Nation (Kenya), September 2, 2008
The Agricultural Finance Corporation (AFC) is asking Mzee Jamuel Kiragu to pay back a loan they advanced him last year to expand his farming activities. Indeed, the 79-year-old man they are asking to pay up was a happy man last year. After massive investment and years of work, his efforts paid off in a bountiful harvest — the largest he had ever had. But before he could enjoy the fruits of his labour, tragedy befell him through the post-election violence that rocked the country early in the year. Youths who were protesting against the announced presidential election results razed his stores, which held 500 bags of maize and 100 bags of wheat at his home in Mafuta Farm in Uasin Gishu District. They looted all the machines in his compound, which included a tractor, a plough, a harrow and planter. To crown it all, they set his house ablaze. Mr Kiragu estimates to have lost property in excess of Sh5 million during the two months in which the violence raged. But his woes are just about to increase. "I have nothing to give AFC," Mr Kiragu said bitterly. "I was reduced to nothing by the violence. Now I wonder how I am supposed to settle the debt yet I cannot even afford food for my children," he added. His family lives at the Eldoret ASK Showground camp for the internally displaced.
<http://www.nation.co.ke/News/-/1056/466652/-/view/printVersion/-/45b77b/-/index.html>

Analysis: Agricultural development is aided by access to credit. The ability of the individual in an economic system to consistently spend more than 100% of their income creates a rapidly growing economy. But, that credit system can fail (on an individual or societal level). Such a happening is described in this article. In order to compete with other economic centers, developing states need to promote credit institutions, but it seems reasonable that they should also have measures of protection against their failure (due to violence, natural disaster, ect.).

- ***Land reform to miss 2014 target without R74bn more***, Business Day (South Africa), September 3, 2008
THE 30% target set by government and reinforced at the Polokwane conference of the ANC last December, for handing over agricultural land to black farmers by 2014, is not going to be met until 2025 – eleven years late – according to the new director general of land affairs, Thozzi Gwanya. Addressing a media briefing in Parliament, Gwanya, who moved to his new post after being the chief land claims commissioner, said that the cost of land and the speed of processing transfers were the big delaying factors.
<http://www.businessday.co.za/articles/topstories.aspx?ID=BD4A835844>

Small scale farms and agriculture productivity

- **Farmers turn to cassava as maize loses popularity, by Steve Mbogo, Business Daily (Kenya), September 1, 2008**
The dusty village of Makuyuni in Makueni District is thousands of miles away from West Africa. But every so often, West Africans residing in Kenya troop into the village to buy a rare find; cassava flour and gari, a creamy, granular flour made from fermented cassava. While gari and other cassava made products are popular foods in West Africa, the opposite is true in Kenya. However, this reality did not stop Monica Wandeti, a 60-year-old mother of seven from growing the crop on her two acre piece of land. “I have lived on cassava,” she says of her occupation, thanks to the relative popularity of the food crop in the area. “There is nothing I get from maize. Cassava does not require water or fertilisers to grow,” said the elderly Wandeti, a widow who says she educated all her children from cassava proceeds. Just a kilometre away from Wandeti’s homestead is a small cassava processor housed inside a typical village town shop with an extension behind that acts as the sorting and drying area. The processor, barely one month old, has brought life to the sleepy Makuyuni market, located 124 kilometres east of Nairobi. It was initially a maize grinder, but converted to cassava processing because of the dwindling maize returns.
http://www.bdafrica.com/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=9708&Itemid=5811

Developments in Agriculture, Science and Technology

- ***Low-tech aid for poor***, by Vijaysree Venkatraman, Christian Science Monitor, September 3, 2008
For three weeks this summer, masons and mechanics, farmers and welders, scientists and a pastor threw themselves into creating low-tech solutions to big problems that persist across the globe. Converging at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, these 61 inventors from 20 countries divided into multilingual teams, each drafting and tinkering a device of the team's own making that may make life for the world's poor a little easier. Soon, their prototypes will be rebuilt and refined in the developing world by artisans using locally available materials, and ultimately they will be tested by consumers who live on less than \$1 a day.

Key Design Projects:

- Hand-crank grinder for cheap, renewable, efficient production of healthier charcoal
- 8-bit TV-based educational software platform a la the 1980s Nintendo® system
- Mechanical-to-Electrical energy converter that allows operators of foot operated irrigation pumps to produce decentralized energy for rural lighting.

<http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2008/sep/03/low-tech-aid-for-poor/>

- ***New Weed-resistant sorghum set to boost harvest***, by Steve Mbogo, Business Daily (Kenya), September 2, 2008

Sorghum production in Kenya is set to increase following the development of a variety that is resistance to the deadly weed that has been wiping out the produce from the farms for years. The scientific breakthrough is the first in the history of sorghum farming in Africa. Sorghum is among the crops being touted as strategic to Africa's future food needs because of its ability to withstand drought conditions. The weed known as striga or the witchweed destroys between 40 to 100 per cent of a complete season's crop. Its annual crop damage across Africa is estimated at about Sh450 billion. Currently, the weed threatens to wipe out cereal crops in most of Western Kenya and Eastern Uganda, national agricultural research institutes in the two countries have warned. Dr Dionysious Kiambi, a molecular geneticist with the International Crops Research Institute for Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT), said scientists have determined the precise segments of the sorghum genome known to confer Striga-resistance and have transferred them to farmer-preferred varieties through conventional breeding with very promising results.

http://www.bdafrica.com/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=9727&Itemid=5811

- **Follow Up** to Section, "So, Does this mean that the only hope for changing this anti-GMO mindset in Africa is first a change in European policy?" in Paarlberg's *In Need of a Green Revolution Article*. <http://www.harvardir.org/articles/1723/>