



THE CHICAGO COUNCIL  
ON GLOBAL AFFAIRS

## Global Food For Thought

Global Agricultural Development Initiative

Weekly News Brief



December 15<sup>th</sup> – December 21<sup>st</sup>, 2012

**PLEASE NOTE: Due to the holiday, the next edition of the Global Food for Thought news brief will arrive on January 4th. On behalf of the Global Agricultural Development Initiative team, best wishes for the New Year!**

**Quote of the Week:** *“We want our children to be safe and free from fear. We want people to live in dignity and prosperity, free from want. We want people to be free to think for themselves, and speak their minds and pray as they choose. We want them to surpass or do a little bit better than we did. That’s what we want for our children. That’s why we’re here -- to serve them to do everything in our power to leave our children, and the next generation a better, safer world. And that’s why, over the past four years, we’ve worked together, wherever we can, with your nations in a new era of engagement, based on mutual interest and mutual respect. Strengthening alliances. Forging new partnerships. Confronting the spread of nuclear weapons. Promoting open government, global health and food security, and fighting human trafficking.”* – President Barack Obama at the U.S. State Department, December 19, 2012

For more information:

- The [Global Food for Thought Blog](#) provides expert commentary, debate, and updates on key developments in real time.
- Background information on the Global Agricultural Development Initiative, and previous editions of *Global Food for Thought*, can be found on the Initiative’s website: [www.thechicagocouncil.org/globalagdevelopment](http://www.thechicagocouncil.org/globalagdevelopment).
- To receive *Global Food for Thought* weekly, please register [here](#).
- To unsubscribe from *Global Food for Thought* weekly, please click [here](#).
- Follow us on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#).

---

### CONTENTS

[Key Articles and Reports](#)

[Relevant U.S. Administration and Congressional Activities](#)

[Upcoming Events](#)

[Agricultural Issues](#)

[Foreign Assistance](#)

[Environment \(Water/Climate\)](#)

[Women & Girls](#)

[Market Access and Trade Issues](#)

[Agribusiness](#)

---

### KEY ARTICLES AND REPORTS

**Obama Nominates John Kerry To Be Secretary Of State, CNN, December 21**

Sen. John Kerry, the former presidential candidate who chairs the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, is Barack Obama’s choice to be the next secretary of state, the president announced Friday. Kerry has traveled the globe on behalf of the Obama administration to mend frayed relationships. Most notably, he traveled to

Pakistan after relations had been set back by a series of incidents, including the raid that killed al Qaeda leader Osama bin Laden.

<http://www.cnn.com/2012/12/21/politics/kerry-nomination/index.html>

**Mikulski to Take Top Job on Appropriations Committee**, *New York Times*, December 19

Senator Barbara A. Mikulski of Maryland will become the first woman to head the Senate Appropriations Committee, after Senator Patrick D. Leahy of Vermont decided to pass up the chairman's job. Her rise to the chairmanship of the Appropriations Committee reflects the growing influence of women in Congress.

<http://thecaucus.blogs.nytimes.com/2012/12/19/mikulski-to-take-top-job-on-appropriations-committee/>

**SEE ALSO: Mikulski Will Take Gavel Of Powerful Senate Appropriations Committee**, *The Hill*, December 19

Her first job will be to try to shepherd a \$60.4 billion Hurricane Sandy emergency-spending bill through Congress, and to see if an omnibus spending bill replacing the current 2013 stopgap bill can be passed next week.

<http://thehill.com/blogs/on-the-money/appropriations/273821-leahy-will-not-take-appropriations-committee>

**Basket Of Promise**, *Financial Times*, December 17

Ukraine is again seeking to establish itself as a significant exporter of wheat, barley and corn, as well as oil-bearing crops such as sunflower seeds. The world's largest grain trading companies have recognized Ukraine's potential, with the likes of Cargill, Toepfer, ADM and Bunge investing billions of dollars over the past decade in building modern storage, processing and logistics facilities. One issue for Ukraine, however, is that its crop yields remain stubbornly low – a third of the EU average – due to heavy reliance on inefficient farming techniques.

<http://www.ft.com/intl/cms/s/0/b25f4704-4515-11e2-838f-00144feabdc0.html>

**Extreme Forecast Dead-On In 2012: Hot And Either Too Dry Or Too Wet, Just As Experts Warned**,

*Washington Post*, December 20

In 2012 many of the warnings scientists have made about global warming went from dry studies in scientific journals to real-life video played before our eyes: Record melting of the ice in the Arctic Ocean. U.S. cities baking at 95 degrees or hotter. Widespread drought. Flooding. Storm surge inundating swaths of New York City. Globally, five countries this year set heat records, but none set cold records. 2012 is on track to be the warmest year on record in the United States.

[http://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/extreme-forecast-dead-on-in-2012-hot-and-either-too-dry-or-too-wet-just-as-experts-warned/2012/12/20/f02c8e80-4adc-11e2-8758-b64a2997a921\\_story.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/extreme-forecast-dead-on-in-2012-hot-and-either-too-dry-or-too-wet-just-as-experts-warned/2012/12/20/f02c8e80-4adc-11e2-8758-b64a2997a921_story.html)

**Betting on Hunger: Is Financial Speculation to Blame for High Food Prices?**, *Time*, December 17

The shift in prices affects consumers in rich countries, who will see their grocery bills rise at a time when wages in much of the world are stagnant. But the real impact is felt by the global poor, in places like Tajikistan, where individuals spend nearly 80% of their income on food. Price spikes in those places can be devastating, even deadly. Prices of agricultural commodities are now 7% higher than a year ago.

<http://science.time.com/2012/12/17/betting-on-hunger-is-financial-speculation-to-blame-for-high-food-prices/>

**In Brazil, A Landholder Who Speaks For Agribusiness**, *Washington Post*, December 17

Katia Abreu has heard all the warnings about ranches and soybean farms carving up Brazilian forests. But Abreu insists Brazilian farmers should be commended, not demonized. Big Agro has transformed this country into a breadbasket to the world, she said, one that's poised to feed billions. Many in Brazil, though, are not convinced that Abreu's modern-sounding projections for farm production line up with what Big Agro really wants. Environmentalists and experts on land use in Brazil say there is a latent threat.

[http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/the-americas/in-brazil-a-landholder-who-speaks-for-agribusiness/2012/12/16/178d05ae-43c1-11e2-8c8f-fbebf7ccab4e\\_story.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/the-americas/in-brazil-a-landholder-who-speaks-for-agribusiness/2012/12/16/178d05ae-43c1-11e2-8c8f-fbebf7ccab4e_story.html)

**SEE ALSO: The New Face Of Agribusiness In Brazil**, *Washington Post*, December 16

[http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/the-new-face-of-agribusiness-in-brazil/2012/12/16/256a9b3a-47d3-11e2-b6f0-e851e741d196\\_gallery.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/the-new-face-of-agribusiness-in-brazil/2012/12/16/256a9b3a-47d3-11e2-b6f0-e851e741d196_gallery.html)

**Learning to Fish**, *Opinion, Roger Thurow, Senior Fellow, Global Agricultural Development Initiative, The Chicago Council on Global Affairs, December 20*

In the vast assembly room at the Greater Chicago Food Depository, overlooking one of the nation's premier food banking facilities, Drexton Granberry joyfully came to the end of his speech. He and 25 others were graduating from Chicago's Community Kitchens, a 14-week program that teaches culinary skills to unemployed and underemployed adults. Concluding his touching speech, Drexton said, "CCK didn't just give me a fish, they taught me how to fish."

<http://globalfoodforthought.typepad.com/global-food-for-thought/2012/12/roger-thurow-outrage-and-inspire-learning-to-fish.html>

**13 Resolutions To Improve The World's Food Supply In 2013**, *Opinion, Danielle Nierenberg and Ellen Gustafson, Christian Science Monitor, December 20*

Here are 13 resolutions that the world can't afford to break with nearly 1 billion people still hungry and more than 1 billion others suffering from the effects of being overweight and obese. We have the tools – let's use them in 2013!

<http://www.csmonitor.com/World/Making-a-difference/Change-Agent/2012/1220/13-resolutions-to-improve-the-world-s-food-supply-in-2013>

**Five Development Innovations to Watch in 2013**, *Opinion, Isobel Coleman, Council on Foreign Relations, December 19*

Although this year had welcome news about poverty rates falling across the globe, almost two and a half billion people still get by on less than \$2 a day. Innovative solutions for tackling global poverty are needed as much as ever. Here are five development innovations to watch in 2013: 1) Cash Transfers; 2) ICT4GOV; 3) A Broadband Revolution for Africa; 4) Microinsurance; 5) Family Planning.

<http://blogs.cfr.org/coleman/2012/12/19/five-development-innovations-to-watch-in-2013/>

**Leveling the Plowing Field, Creating Choices**, *Commentary, Roger Thurow, December 20*

After two weeks of lively opinion and discussion, this much is clear: The future of agriculture needs to play out on a level plowing field. This means all farmers of the world should have equal access to the essential elements of their business—seeds and soil nutrients, financing, risk-mitigation, extension advice, markets, trade.

<http://blogs.oxfam.org/en/blogs/12-12-21-day-10-levelling-the-plowing-field>

**Genetically Enhanced Seeds to Get Carbon Credits**, *Bloomberg, December 19*

The United Nations-overseen emissions-market regulator has approved a system of rules that will allow farmers using genetically improved seeds to claim carbon offset credits. Nitrogen is a large source of agricultural emissions because less than half the volume applied to fields globally is used by plants, with most of the rest entering water systems or converting into nitrous oxide.

<http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2012-12-19/genetically-enhanced-seeds-to-get-carbon-credits.html>

**Corn Drops After Government Reports Higher Fuel Ethanol Inventories; Other Commodities Mixed**, *Associated Press, December 19*

An increase in ethanol inventories has sent the price of corn to its lowest level since July. Corn for March delivery fell 17 cents to finish at \$7.03 a bushel Wednesday. That's the lowest since July 6, just about the time that last summer's record-setting drought began pushing corn prices to all-time highs. Corn is a key ingredient in the process of manufacturing ethanol vehicle fuel.

[http://www.washingtonpost.com/business/corn-drops-after-government-reports-build-in-fuel-ethanol-inventories-other-commodities-mixed/2012/12/19/95756e32-4a1c-11e2-8af9-9b50cb4605a7\\_story.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/business/corn-drops-after-government-reports-build-in-fuel-ethanol-inventories-other-commodities-mixed/2012/12/19/95756e32-4a1c-11e2-8af9-9b50cb4605a7_story.html)

**SAHEL: Malnourished To Remain Above One Million In 2013**, *IRIN, December 20*

Despite good rains across much of the Sahel this year, 1.4 million children are expected to be malnourished – up from one million in 2012. The number of malnourished children being targeted is rising partly because absorbing the 2012 shock takes time and food prices remain high; and because the illness is linked to health care services, caring practices and access to clean water, not just food security.

<http://www.irinnews.org/Report/97093/SAHEL-Malnourished-to-remain-above-one-million-in-2013>

**Slideshow: A Look Back at 2012: Year in Review**, *World Bank, December 19*

As 2012 draws to a close, we're looking back at some key moments in the Bank's work this year.

<http://blogs.worldbank.org/voices/node/1611>

---

## RELEVANT U.S. ADMINISTRATION AND CONGRESSIONAL ACTIVITIES

**Presidential Proclamation -- African Growth and Opportunity Act**, *The White House, December 20*

Section 104 of the AGOA authorizes the President to designate a country listed in section 107 of the AGOA as an "eligible sub-Saharan African country" if the President determines that the country meets certain eligibility requirements.

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2012/12/20/presidential-proclamation-african-growth-and-opportunity-act>

**Lucas Announces New Leadership Team for the Agriculture Committee**, *U.S. Congress, December 20*

Chairman Frank Lucas of Oklahoma named five members to serve as Subcommittee Chairmen of the House Agriculture Committee for the 113th Congress: Rep. Steve King, Department Operations, Oversight, and Nutrition; Rep. K. Michael Conaway, General Farm Commodities and Risk Management; Rep. Glenn "GT" Thompson, Conservation, Energy, and Forestry; Rep. Austin Scott, Horticulture, Research, Biotechnology, and Foreign Agriculture; and Rep. Rick Crawford, Livestock, Rural Development, and Credit.

<http://agriculture.house.gov/press-release/lucas-announces-new-leadership-team-agriculture-committee>

**Agricultural Research**, *Letter to the Editor, Catherine Woteki, New York Times, December 18*

"U.S. Agricultural Research Is Faltering, Report Warns" sheds light on a pressing issue: the urgent need to finance agricultural research. But as the Agriculture Department's chief scientist, I disagree with the characterization that our research is faltering. Agricultural science has led our country to be the global leader in feeding the world. It has also returned more than \$10 to our economy for every \$1 invested in research. Continued innovation and investment are critical to maintaining our leadership and our competitive edge.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2012/12/19/opinion/agricultural-research.html>

**U.S. Policy Toward Africa**, *State Department, December 18*

We strive for food security, water security, health, and we aim to encourage all parts of civil society to participate in this development in Africa: women, youth, students, because we believe that everyone must work together to have a truly sustainable development in Africa.

<http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ime/202303.htm>

**Video of the Week: Administrator Shah Discusses Humanitarian Crisis in Syria**, *USAID, December 17*

Dr. Shah stressed the importance of international support for those affected by the crisis, which is why the U.S. has committed more than \$200 million for displace people inside and outside of Syria. He also noted that humanitarian efforts are reaching about 1.5 million people with food, 400,000 families with winterization materials, 22,000 people with surgeries.

<http://blog.usaid.gov/2012/12/video-of-the-week-administrator-shah-discusses-humanitarian-crisis-in-syria/>

**Bipartisan Action On Tuberculosis Crucial To Progress, Elimination**, *Opinion, Rep. Eliot L. Engel, The Hill, December 17*

TB is the second leading cause of death due to infectious disease worldwide; taking approximately 1.4 million lives in 2011 alone. It is the third leading cause of death among women of reproductive age and orphaned nearly 10 million children around the world in 2010. The good news is that the MDGs to halt and reverse the TB epidemic by 2015 has already been achieved in several regions of the world.

<http://thehill.com/blogs/congress-blog/healthcare/273307-bipartisan-action-on-tuberculosis-crucial-to-progress-elimination>

**New Office in U.S. to Fight AIDS**, *New York Times*, December 15

Ambassador Eric Goosby, the Obama administration's global AIDS czar, was named to lead a new Office of Global Health Diplomacy on Friday. Dr. Goosby will continue to head PEPFAR, the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief, which pays for prevention and treatment. His new role was welcomed by some advocacy groups and U.N.AIDS, the UN agency.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2012/12/15/health/new-office-in-us-to-fight-aids.html?>

**SEE ALSO: Strengthening Global Health By Elevating Diplomacy**, *Opinion*, Eric Goosby, *State Department Blog*, December 14

A goal of this Administration has been to ensure that we are not only investing in saving lives, but that we are helping partner countries eventually take on this responsibility themselves. Country ownership is a central objective of the U.S. government and it challenges our own government, partner and other donor countries alike to work tirelessly to create sustainable health systems that are eventually owned, managed and operated by the partner nation and their people.

[http://blogs.state.gov/index.php/site/entry/strengthening\\_global\\_health\\_by\\_elevating\\_diplomacy](http://blogs.state.gov/index.php/site/entry/strengthening_global_health_by_elevating_diplomacy)

---

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### **World Soybean Research Conference 2013**

*Date:* February 17-22, 2013

*Location:* Durban, South Africa.

<http://www.wsrc2013.co.za/>

### **USDA 2013 Agriculture Outlook Forum: Managing Risk in the 21st Century**

*Date:* February 21-22, 2013

*Location:* Arlington, VA

[www.usda.gov/oce/forum/](http://www.usda.gov/oce/forum/)

### **Commodity Classic**

*Date:* February 28-March 2, 2013

*Location:* Kissimmee, Florida.

<http://www.commodityclassic.com/>

### **President Obama's Africa Policy: Just Right Or Not Enough?**

*Date:* February 28, 2013

*Location:* Chicago, IL

<http://bit.ly/ZlKTDF>

### **Political Economy of Agricultural Policy in Africa**

*Date:* March 13, 2013

*Location:* Washington, D.C.

<http://csis.org/event/sahel-deepening-crisis-and-its-humanitarian-consequences>

---

## AGRICULTURAL ISSUES

### Media Articles:

#### **Infestation Threatens Zambia's Maize Crop**, *VOA News*, December 18

The Zambia National Farmers' Union is appealing to President Michael Sata's government to provide pesticides and other resources so farmers can combat a plague of army worms threatening the country's food security. The worms, also known as caterpillars, have invaded farmland in the country's central, southern and eastern provinces destroying Zambia's staple crop, maize.

<http://www.voanews.com/content/zambia-army-worms-invasion/1566976.html>

**Nepalese Farmers Tap Into Global Thirst For Coffee**, *Guardian*, December 18

Driven by surging demand – especially in traditionally tea-drinking countries such as India and Pakistan – the Nepalese coffee farming industry is booming. The result is visible on the neat rows of bushes on the green slopes of Kavre district. Nepal now has 1,700 hectares of coffee plantation, more than 10 times the area 20 years ago when growing started. Total production is 417 tonnes of coffee, more than 30 times the crop in the early 1990s.

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2012/dec/18/nepal-farmers-coffee-industry-booming?>

**The Federal Government's Biodiesel Mandate Ensures Higher Prices All Around**, *Opinion*, Robert Bradley, *Forbes*, December 17

On January 1, the Renewable Fuel Standard automatically ratchets up, requiring American agriculture/energy producers to generate even more “renewable” transportation fuels. The 2013 requirement, 1.28 billion gallons of biodiesel, is a 28 percent increase over 2012. More food-price increases are coming (no) thanks to the 2013 mandate. Price WaterhouseCooper estimates that the RFS by 2015 will increase food costs of quick-service restaurants by \$2.5 billion and full-service operations by up to \$691 million.

<http://www.forbes.com/sites/robertbradley/2012/12/17/the-federal-governments-biodiesel-mandate-ensures-higher-prices-all-around/>

**The Seeds Of Another GM Row Are Sown**, *The Telegraph*, December 14

An official consultation, seeking views on GM crops among other agricultural technologies, ended last month and there are indications that senior Lib Dems are moving away from their party’s longstanding hostility. Everything, it seems, is to play for. An opinion poll this year suggested public opposition to GM has softened from 2003 – the height of the row – from 36 to 33 percent, with those in favor increasing from 14 to 16 percent. But now, as then, most people remain neutral.

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/earth/agriculture/geneticmodification/9745609/The-seeds-of-another-GM-row-are-sown.html>

**Farming In The Sky In Singapore**, *Asia Times*, December 11

Singapore is applying the vertical model to urban agriculture, experimenting with rooftop gardens and vertical farms in order to feed its many residents. Currently only 7% of Singapore's food is grown locally. The country imports most of its fresh vegetables and fruits daily from neighboring countries. An engineer by training, Ng created the vertical farming system, which he nicknamed "A Go-Grow".

<http://www.atimes.com/atimes/Southeast Asia/NL11Ae01.html>

---

**FOREIGN ASSISTANCE**

Media Articles:

**Japan To Give \$2.26 Lakh Grant For Agricultural Development**, *The Daily Star*, December 21

The two projects will establish unique models of agricultural development. They will procure agricultural machineries and provide comparatively cheaper-rate renting service to poor farmers.

<http://www.thedailystar.net/newDesign/news-details.php?nid=261953>

**Parliament Approves 19.1 Million Loan For Food Security**, *Ghana Web*, December 20

The mixed credit agreement comprises a financing agreement between the government of Ghana and the Arab bank for Economic Development in Africa for an amount of \$8.6 million and an OPEC Fund for International Development for an amount of 10.5 million dollars to finance the Integrated Rural Development Project. The IRDP is part of government’s efforts to improve agricultural productivity under the Ghana Shared Growth and Development Agenda, 2010 to 2013.

<http://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/NewsArchive/artikel.php?ID=260024>

**Diverting Foreign Aid Sets Dangerous Precedent**, *Opinion*, Tim Costello and Jack de Groot, *Sydney Morning Herald*, December 18

The federal government has dropped a bombshell on poor communities in developing countries, just in time

for Christmas. The government now plans to divert \$375 million of Australia's much-needed aid budget to fund domestic refugee programs. Canberra's plan not only undermines the trust Australians have in our aid program, it also damages our international reputation.

<http://www.smh.com.au/opinion/politics/diverting-foreign-aid-sets-dangerous-precedent-20121218-2bkve.html>

**SEE ALSO: \$375 Million Cut To Foreign Aid 'Trickery', *The Australian*, December 19**

<http://www.theaustralian.com.au/national-affairs/treasury/million-cut-to-foreign-aid-trickery-alexander-downer/story-fn59nsif-1226540212375>

**Syrians At Home And Abroad Try To Ease Humanitarian Crisis, *Washington Post*, December 18**

Aid agencies and others say hunger is reaching alarming proportions, as the armed rebellion spawned by the 21-month old uprising against the Assad regime presses deeper into government held-areas and the resulting conflict cuts more supply lines. The U.N. World Food Program warned this month that the deteriorating security situation meant aid groups were unable to reach 1 million people at risk of starvation.

[http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/middle\\_east/syrians-at-home-and-abroad-try-to-ease-humanitarian-crisis-/2012/12/18/561a0d76-4939-11e2-ad54-580638ede391\\_story.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/middle_east/syrians-at-home-and-abroad-try-to-ease-humanitarian-crisis-/2012/12/18/561a0d76-4939-11e2-ad54-580638ede391_story.html)

**Increasingly Hard To Provide Food Aid In Syria: UN, *AFP*, December 18**

The UN's World Food Programme warned that the spiralling violence in Syria was making it increasingly difficult to distribute food in the war-torn country. WFP said in a statement it had seen a sharp rise in the number of attacks on its aid trucks in recent weeks. Since the beginning of October, the organisation said, armed groups have stolen or confiscated around 10 of its trucks.

<http://www.france24.com/en/20121218-increasingly-hard-provide-food-aid-syria-un>

**EU Warned Over Untracked Overseas Aid, *Financial Times*, December 18**

More than €1.6bn in EU overseas development aid doled out to poorer countries last year cannot be properly tracked, an auditor has warned, as he demanded changes in the way the bloc awards funds. The EU's development funds are coming under greater scrutiny. Development is a particularly sensitive area, because EU leaders have had to balance demands for budget cuts against their pledges to help foster growth and democracy in north Africa and elsewhere after the Middle East uprisings.

<http://www.ft.com/intl/cms/s/0/dcece148-493e-11e2-b25b-00144feab49a.html>

**Don't Let Foreign Aid Fall Off the Fiscal Cliff, *Opinion*, David Weiss, *Huffington Post*, December 17**

Sequestration means that all federal programs would face across-the-board cuts of 8.2 percent come New Year's Day, unless Congress can agree upon more than \$1 trillion in savings. Thoughtful leaders from both sides of the political aisle agree that a critical link exists between our national security and the assistance that we provide to struggling countries to reduce poverty, mitigate conflict, spur economic development, help rebuild after disasters, and build self-sufficiency.

[http://www.huffingtonpost.com/david-weiss/foreign-aid-fiscal-cliff\\_b\\_2296206.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/david-weiss/foreign-aid-fiscal-cliff_b_2296206.html)

**In Sign of Normalization, Pentagon to Reimburse Pakistan \$688 Million, *New York Times*, December 17**

The Pentagon quietly notified Congress this month that it would reimburse Pakistan nearly \$700 million for the cost of stationing 140,000 troops on the border with Afghanistan, an effort to normalize support for the Pakistani military after nearly two years of crises and mutual retaliation.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2012/12/18/world/asia/pentagon-to-reimburse-pakistan-688-million.html>

**How Effective Is Overseas Aid?, *Guardian*, December 14**

The government has ringfenced overseas aid, but is that the right thing to do? At a time when almost all budgets are facing cuts, the Chancellor has ring-fenced 0.7% of GDP for foreign aid. Was he right to do so? Economist Ha-Joon Chang and the UK's former international development secretary Clare Short discuss.

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2012/dec/14/how-effective-overseas-aid-conversation>

**UN Seeks \$8.5bn For Emergency Aid Worldwide In 2013, *AFP*, December 14**

In 2012, the UN had appealed for \$7.7 billion to help about the same number of people, although the world body increased its appeal mid-year to \$8.9 billion. While formidable, Friday's appeal falls short of the more

than \$10 billion requested for aid in 2010. In 2013, the three countries set to receive the largest chunks of the pot are Somalia, South Sudan and Sudan, which suffered severe underfunding of aid projects this year.  
<http://dawn.com/2012/12/14/un-seeks-8-5bn-for-emergency-aid-worldwide-in-2013/>

**Why It Is Catch-22 For Liberia's Development Hopes**, *BBC, December 14*

In short, why does development take so long, even in a place where the intentions of those in power are good? The answer is because while any one physical or human institution can be reformed or improved rapidly, it simply takes a long time to create them all from scratch.  
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-20724574>

---

## ENVIRONMENT (WATER/CLIMATE)

### Media Articles:

**Will the Carbon Tax Make a Comeback?**, *Opinion, William O'Keefe, Wall Street Journal, December 20*

A carbon tax is intellectually elegant to economists but dangerous and complex in practice. The theoretical basis is to raise taxes on things considered bad (carbon from energy consumption) and to lower taxes on things considered good (labor, for example). But energy is consumed to produce things that people value, and there are no near-term substitutes for fossil fuels. So a carbon tax would affect food prices, consumer goods, electricity, mobility, charitable works.  
<http://professional.wsj.com/article/SB10001424127887324469304578145640617261224.html>

**BANGLADESH: Deforestation Threatens Food Security In Southeast**, *IRIN, December 18*

Activists warn food insecurity in southeastern Bangladesh may worsen over the next decade as a result of unfettered deforestation. In 2010, the country had an estimated 1,442,000 hectares of forest, 52,000 hectares less than two decades earlier. While official data for forests in the country's southeast are unavailable, NGOs and residents say forest loss here has been more dramatic.  
<http://www.irinnews.org/Report/97067/BANGLADESH-Deforestation-threatens-food-security-in-southeast>

**Kenyan Cookstoves Don't Significantly Reduce Pollution**, *VOA News, December 17*

A recent study examining the health impacts of ceramic cookstoves used in rural Kenyan households found that the risk of pneumonia in children was not significantly reduced. "We found after a year that the use of these stoves did not significantly reduce the risk of pneumonia when compared to 3-stone fire pits that are used commonly in that area of Africa," stated Dr. Rob Quick, who also explained the stoves are produced locally according to a standard design and are popular.  
<http://www.voanews.com/content/cookstoves-pneumonia-/1566581.html>

---

## WOMEN & GIRLS

### Media Articles:

**United Nations Bans Female Genital Mutilation**, *United Nations, December 20*

The UN General Assembly today passed unanimously a resolution banning the practice of Female Genital Mutilation. Female Genital Mutilation affects about 100-140 million women and girls worldwide, and each year it is estimated that an additional three million girls are at risk of being subjected to the practice globally.  
<http://www.unwomen.org/2012/12/united-nations-bans-female-genital-mutilation/>

**Banning Female Genital Mutilation**, *Opinion, Emma Bonino, New York Times, December 19*

The U.N. resolution will be adopted by consensus, demonstrating the international community's unified stance. The consensus is strengthened by the fact that two thirds of U.N. member states are co-sponsoring the resolution, with 67 states joining the 54 nations of the African Group, which initially introduced the text.  
<http://www.nytimes.com/2012/12/20/opinion/global/banning-female-genital-mutilation.html>

**Agriculture and Healthcare Come Together to Fight HIV/AIDS, VOA News, December 14**

Chris Brett is the senior vice-president of Olam International. Because Olam is based in communities, it gives local NGO's the opportunity to link into the Olam systems, where they can reach farmers and employees. Brett pointed out one interesting aspect of the partnering with NGO's is that they were able to reach many women <http://www.voanews.com/content/hiv-aids-farmers-olam-africans-agriculture/1564807.html>

**Some Côte d'Ivoire Women Don't Want Joint Responsibility for Family, IPS, December 14**

After 17 years of women struggling for parity with men in the household, Côte d'Ivoire's legislature has finally adopted a law which establishes equal responsibility for legally married spouses. But not everyone is happy. According to the new law, families are now to be managed jointly by both spouses, who are together responsible for the moral and material care of the household. Under the previous law, the husband was designated as the sole head of the family.

<http://www.ipsnews.net/2012/12/some-cote-divoire-women-dont-want-joint-responsibility-for-family/>

---

**MARKET ACCESS AND TRADE ISSUES**

Media Articles:

**India, ASEAN Set to Sign Trade Pact, Wall Street Journal, December 20**

India said it is set to sign a free trade agreement for services and investments with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, a key step aimed at increasing trade to \$100 billion by 2015. The Asean group of countries comprises Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam. The bloc, along with India, is among the fastest-growing regions in the world.

<http://professional.wsj.com/article/SB10001424127887324461604578191153483452658.html>

**SRI LANKA: WFP Eyes Cash/Voucher Expansion, IRIN, December 20**

The World Food Programme hopes to expand its ongoing cash/voucher programme across northern Sri Lanka, allowing thousands of recent returnees to diversify their diets. Under the programme, beneficiaries receive vouchers valued at US\$11 per month per person, for a six-month period that can be redeemed at 815 multi-purpose cooperative society outlets across the north. C/Vs are more advantageous than traditional food distributions, experts believe, as they allow people access to a greater variety of food options.

<http://www.irinnews.org/Report/97091/SRI-LANKA-WFP-eyes-cash-voucher-expansion>

**China Slowdown Hits Indonesian Farmers, Financial Times, December 19**

Farm-gate prices for palm oil in his village of Pulo Dogom on Sumatra have fallen by more than a third over the past six months. As the world's biggest exporter of palm oil and coal for power stations, millions of Indonesians have felt the pinch from slowing growth in China and India, and this is most evident in rural, commodity-producing areas. Nearly half the country of 240m lives on less than \$2 a day.

<http://www.ft.com/intl/cms/s/0/489d2efa-3d20-11e2-b8b2-00144feabdc0.html>

**National Intelligence Council Report: Megatrends That Matter For Business, Forbes, December 19**

The private sector should pay careful attention to the megatrends the report highlights. Many relate to the profound sustainability challenges facing a warming world that will house around 8 billion people in 2030. Below is my take on how four of these trends—resource scarcity, a booming global middle class, the rural to urban transition, and transformative information and communications technology—will impact businesses, and why corporate leaders should start preparing today.

<http://www.forbes.com/sites/manishbapna/2012/12/19/national-intelligence-council-report-megatrends-that-matter-for-business/>

**Mad Cow Report Prompts Brazilian Beef Imports Ban In Saudi Arabia And Other Nations, Huffington Post, December 19**

Five nations have banned imports of beef from Brazil, the world's largest beef exporter, following a long-delayed report released on Dec. 7 detailing the nation's first suspected case of bovine spongiform encephalopathy, or mad cow disease, in 2010. The move by authorities in Japan, China, South Africa, South

Korea and Saudi Arabia is in response to Brazil's handling of the incident.  
[http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/12/19/mad-cow-brazil-beef-ban\\_n\\_2331429.html?](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/12/19/mad-cow-brazil-beef-ban_n_2331429.html?)

**Bangladesh Bids To Boost Trade With Burma**, *BBC, December 18*

Bangladesh, with its population of close to 150 million, is more focused on securing resources and food. While it can currently produce enough food grains for its people, Bangladesh still needs to protect itself against drought, flooding or other natural disasters. And that is where Burma comes in.  
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-20675228>

**EU Rapeseed Growers Eye Output Gain as Germany Boosts Acres**, *Bloomberg, December 18*

Rapeseed output in the European Union, the world's largest producer of the oilseed used in cooking and biofuels, may increase to a four-year high after German farmers planted more crops. The EU is the world's largest producer, consumer and importer of rapeseed. The oilseed is the bloc's fourth-largest arable crop, after wheat, barley and corn.  
<http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2012-12-18/eu-rapeseed-growers-eye-output-gain-as-germany-boosts-planting.html>

**Communication Technologies Transform Relief And Development**, *IRIN, December 18*

Since Africa's first mobile phone network went live in 1994, mobile phone penetration has shot up to 65 percent; access to the internet is also increasing rapidly. Today, information and communications technology plays a central role in promoting development and humanitarian assistance. Stephen Wang'ombe, a potato farmer near Nyeri, Kenya, uses M-Farm, a real-time price information service on his mobile phone, to determine how to price his goods.  
<http://www.irinnews.org/Report/97070/AID-POLICY-Communication-technologies-transform-relief-and-development>

**For Brazil, The Sweet Dream Is Over**, *Opinion, Arcos Troyjo, Financial Times, December 17*

The country has a hard time putting together a priority list and sacrificing for it. But Brazil presents clear potential for the old economy of commodities to build new competencies in tech-intensive sectors. This would necessarily involve the many areas in which Brazil has comparative advantages, such as agribusiness, mining, deep-water oil and biofuels. These are the vehicles that could drive Brazil to the forefront of emerging markets.  
<http://blogs.ft.com/beyond-brics/2012/12/17/guest-post-for-brazil-the-sweet-dream-is-over/>

**Gulf States To Build Latin America Links**, *Financial Times, December 17*

Big Arab petro-state wealth funds have taken stakes in leading South American companies, with the two regions sharing interests in areas such as energy, infrastructure and food security. Food security investments in South America's wide open spaces are an obvious attraction for Gulf states, which are also a potential source of funds for badly needed infrastructure building deals around the continent. Yet big obstacles to a broader relationship across the Atlantic Ocean remain, including inadequate transport and logistical links.  
<http://www.ft.com/intl/cms/s/0/b6197a02-4841-11e2-8aae-00144feab49a.html>

**Processing Capacity Grinds Cocoa Industry**, *Financial Times, December 17*

Cocoa is the antithesis of oil. Yet, its industry has become the latest to be hit by the mismatch of processing capacity and demand. The result? As in oil, weak refining margins and volatile prices. In Indonesia, processing capacity grew by 2.4 times in the past seven years, and almost 40 percent in Malaysia in the past six years. The extra capacity and, thus, the over production of cocoa products – referred by the industry as butter and powder – pushed grinding margins into negative territory in 2012.  
<http://www.ft.com/intl/cms/s/0/b70912b0-4823-11e2-8aae-00144feab49a.html>

**MALAWI-ANGOLA: Food Crises And Response**, *IRIN, December 17*

Squeezed supplies and a towering inflation rate have kept the price of the main staple grain, maize, high throughout the region. Malawi and Mozambique have seen prices climb 40 to 100 percent since 2011. Angola, meanwhile, is experiencing its worst drought in years, according to UN agencies.  
<http://www.irinnews.org/Report/97064/MALAWI-ANGOLA-Food-crises-and-response>

**Japan: Leader Shows Reluctance for U.S.-Led Trade Pact**, *Wall Street Journal*, December 16

The victorious Liberal Democratic Party criticized the defeated Democratic Party of Japan's desire to join the Trans-Pacific Partnership, an ambitious trade initiative covering both sides of the Pacific. The TPP proposes an aggressive liberalization of trade, as well as sweeping harmonization of trade and investment rules across the Asia-Pacific region. China is opposed to the TPP and is leading efforts to create a separate.

<http://professional.wsj.com/article/SB10001424127887324407504578182880166833470.html>

**How To Manage Post-Harvest Loss**, *Guardian*, December 14

Estimates range from 5 to 30% or more, and in sub-Saharan Africa alone the value of Post Harvest Loss overall is thought to be around \$4bn (£2.5bn) a year. PHL isn't a new concept, but there's been a flurry of activity around it since the start of the food crisis, with growing recognition of its untapped potential in mitigating food insecurity in sub-Saharan Africa in particular.

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/global-development-professionals-network/2012/dec/14/post-harvest-loss-food-security?>

---

**AGRIBUSINESS**

Media Articles:

**Analysis: Painted Into A Corner, Dupont Tries To Reinvent Itself**, *Reuters*, December 21

DuPont, the 210-year-old chemical company, is under pressure to exit its lucrative but unpredictable paint business as it focuses more on food and agriculture products. Kullman spoke passionately in an interview earlier this month about DuPont's research into soy protein and biofuels, as well as the use of farm products in non-food applications. The aggressive move into food and agriculture means more competition for DuPont, especially from rival Monsanto, now the world's largest seed producer with a popular line of herbicides.

<http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/12/21/us-dupont-pigment-idUSBRE8BK0J320121221>

**How Big Business Can Engage Small-Scale Farmers In Africa**, *How We Made It in Africa*, December 20

International competition for agricultural resources is increasing fast, and companies are struggling to ensure a long-term steady supply. However, smallholder farmers in developing countries could be the solution to this. Syngenta partnered with Safaricom, the largest mobile network operator in Kenya, and UAP, a major Kenyan insurance company, to develop an input insurance programme for smallholders.

<http://www.howwemadeitinafrica.com/how-big-business-can-engage-small-scale-farmers-in-africa/22989/>

**Bengal Farmers Reap Benefits Of Collaborative Farming**, *Business Standard*, December 20

The greener of the lot are the fields where food and beverage firm, PepsiCo, has entered into a collaboration with farmers for growing the Atlanta variety of potato, meant for making chips. PepsiCo's collaborative farming programme in West Bengal currently operates in six districts – Burdwan, Hooghly, Bankura, Birbhum, Howrah and West Medinipore. The company procures around 60000 metric tones of commodity from about 10000 farmers in the state, and plans to increase to over 30,000 farmers by 2013.

<http://business-standard.com/india/news/bengal-farmers-reap-benefitscollaborative-farming/496221/>

**Monsanto Says States Closed 5-Year Probe of Seeds**, *Bloomberg*, December 20

Monsanto said attorneys general from Iowa and other states have closed a 5-year investigation into its seed and herbicide businesses without taking further action. The U.S. Department of Justice's antitrust division last month dropped its probe into possible anti-competitive practices in the seed industry. Iowa had coordinated its inquiry with at least six other states.

<http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2012-12-20/monsanto-says-states-closed-5-year-probe-of-seeds.htm>

**Potash Seen Falling as Asia Wields Purchasing Power: Commodities**, *Bloomberg*, December 19

China and India are set to negotiate the biggest price cut in three years to buy potash as they break a deadlock in meetings with Russian and North American producers that dominate the \$24 billion market for the crop nutrient. The two most-populous nations put off new accords since then with the aim of getting cheaper

supply.

<http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2012-12-19/potash-seen-falling-as-asia-wields-purchasing-power-commodities.html>

**ADM, Graincorp CEOs Square Off Over Bid**, *Wall Street Journal*, December 19

Two of the most powerful women in the male-dominated global commodity industry are squaring off in the battle to feed China. ADM in October launched its effort to acquire GrainCorp to gain access to its grain storage and ports on Australia's east coast, the beachhead for exporting grain to China and the rest of Asia.

<http://professional.wsj.com/article/SB10001424127887324731304578189350704721498.html>

**Yum, McDonald's Vow Food Safety After China Poultry Report**, *Bloomberg*, December 19

Yum! Brands Inc. and McDonald's Corp. said they are working with Chinese suppliers to ensure the safety of food they serve after China Central Television reported the companies may have sold chicken that had been indiscriminately fed antibiotics and growth hormones.

<http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2012-12-19/yum-mcdonald-s-pledge-food-safety-after-china-report-on-poultry.html>

**Uganda's Fruit Juice Consumption On The Rise As Dominant Player Battles For Market**, *Monitor*, December 18

A fast growing middle class and a more health conscious population is spearheading the increased consumption of fruit juices. Although processing is still considered low due to limited extraction of juice and packing, the positive strides witnessed in the last two years signal improvement as both juice production and farmers' involvement has grown. In 2011, two big companies; Sameer Agriculture Livestock Ltd and Coca Cola joined the local market.

<http://www.monitor.co.ug/Business/Prosper/Uganda-s-fruit-juice-consumption-on-the-rise/-/688616/1645718/-/4wgtmdz/-/index.html>

**Commercialising Smallholder Production**, *Editorial, AllAfrica*, December 18

Partnerships will prove central if value chains are to be transformed. Aware of constraints to land, water, growing seasons and productivity, more and more multinationals are forming synergies with smallholders, often through contract farming schemes which offer control over supply and quality, and reduce production and transaction costs. Working together, businesses, governments and agricultural producers across the Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific could deliver the agricultural renaissance their populations need.

<http://allafrica.com/stories/201212191007.html>

**Cargill To Invest \$91 Mln In India's Food Processing Boom**, *Reuters*, December 18

Cargill is investing in India's burgeoning processed food sector with a \$73 million corn milling unit, the head of its India operation said. Demand for modified starch - produced from corn - as a sweetener and thickener for the food and drinks industry is growing at 10-15 percent in India, Asia's third-largest economy.

<http://www.reuters.com/article/2012/12/18/india-cargill-investment-idUSL4N09S3GN20121218>

**SEE ALSO: US Food Major Cargill To Invest Rs 500 Cr In India**, *The Hindu*, December 18

Cargill India, a Rs 9,000 crore company and part of nearly \$ 134 billion global group, sells edible oils and vanaspati under Nature Fresh, Sweekar, Gemini, Rath and Sunflower Vanaspati brands.

<http://www.thehindu.com/business/companies/us-food-major-cargill-to-invest-rs-500-cr-in-india/article4213523.ece>

**DuPont Acquired Verdezyn Sugar-to-Fuels Enzyme Technology**, *Bloomberg*, December 17

DuPont Co., the largest U.S. chemical maker by market value, bought from Verdezyn Inc. the rights for an enzyme technology that's used to convert sugar into fuel and chemicals.

<http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2012-12-17/dupont-acquired-verdezyn-sugar-to-fuels-enzyme-technology.html>

**Cargill's Work With Palm Oil Is Significant**, *Opinion, Mike Fernandez, Star Tribune*, December 16

Cargill believes palm can be grown sustainably, without harming the rainforest, and we are proud to say we've been supplying sustainable palm oil since 2010. We grow palm fruit trees on agricultural land, not on

forest land with high conservation value. We buy palm fruit from thousands of small farmers who use responsible farming practices, too.

<http://www.startribune.com/opinion/commentaries/183584741.html>