



June 27<sup>th</sup> – July 10<sup>th</sup>, 2009

Agricultural development news surrounding the L'Aquila G-8 Summit is covered in a special edition of *Global Food for Thought*. To receive a copy, please contact Lisa Eakman ([leakman@thechicagocouncil.org](mailto:leakman@thechicagocouncil.org)), or visit [www.thechicagocouncil.org/globalagdevelopment](http://www.thechicagocouncil.org/globalagdevelopment).

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**KEY ARTICLES**

**G8 to commit \$20bn for food security**, *Financial Times*, July 10

The G8 summit will pledge \$20bn over three years, \$5bn more than initially expected, to boost agricultural investment and fight hunger. Franco Frattini, foreign minister of Italy, told the FT as the summit ended that the final declaration would contain a pledge of \$20 bn over three years for the food security fund. Italy's contribution would be \$480m, he said. Management of the fund had not been finally decided but there would be close cooperation between the World Bank and the Rome-based UN food agencies, the minister said..

[http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/b71a9052-6d2b-11de-9032-00144feabdc0.html?nclick\\_check=1](http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/b71a9052-6d2b-11de-9032-00144feabdc0.html?nclick_check=1)

**Leaders aim to finish trade talks by 2011**, *The Washington Times*, July 9

Fighting a rising tide of protectionism, leaders of the world's top economies Thursday said they will try to restart trade talks and have the on-again-off-again talks finished by the end of next year. Protectionist sentiments have increased in many countries, including recently in the U.S. House, where a bill to combat global warming would impose tariffs on countries that don't limit their greenhouse gas emissions by 2020.

<http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2009/jul/09/world-leaders-aim-finish-trade-talks-by-2011/>

**Food Security Assessment, 2008-09**, *Unites States Department of Agriculture, Economic Research Service, July 2009*

Food security in 70 developing countries is projected to deteriorate over the next decade. After rising nearly 11 percent from 2007 to 2008, the number of food-insecure people in the developing countries is estimated to rise to 833 million in 2009, an almost 2-percent rise from 2008 to 2009. Despite a decline in food prices in late 2008, deteriorating purchasing power and food security are expected in 2009 because of the growing financial deficits and higher inflation that have occurred in recent years.

Report Summary: [http://www.ers.usda.gov/Publications/GFA20/GFA20\\_ReportSummary.pdf](http://www.ers.usda.gov/Publications/GFA20/GFA20_ReportSummary.pdf)

Entire Report: <http://www.ers.usda.gov/Publications/GFA20/GFA20.pdf>

**G8 Summit: Feed the Hungry or Fuel Hunger?**, *Foreign Policy in Focus, July 8*

As the rich **Group of 8** (G8) nations convene in L'Aquila, Italy this week, world hunger will once again take center stage. The United States will likely announce a "**significant**" increase in funding for agricultural development aid, along with multi-year commitments from other G8 countries. This follows the G8's admission of failure in tackling hunger at its **first-ever farm conference in Treviso, Italy** in April 2009. FOREIGN POLICY IN <http://www.fpiif.org/fpiftxt/6239>

**Ghana: Obama's Visits a Hopeful National on Troubled Continent**, *AllAfrica.com, July 8*

Guest columnist Richard Joseph, an Africa expert at the Brookings Institution and Northwestern University in the United States, has been travelling to Ghana for 30 years. Beginning 20 years ago, while working with former President Jimmy Carter, he followed closely Ghana's return to multiparty politics. On Saturday he will be in Accra for the visit of President Barack Obama, an event he describes as a "sublime and potentially transformative moment for Africa."

<http://allafrica.com/stories/200907080768.html>

**Whatever happened to the food crisis?**, *The Economist, July 2*

World food prices soared in 2007-08, pushing hundreds of millions into poverty. But—said people at the time—there was a silver lining: high prices would be good for farmers, especially smallholders in poor countries such as Mr Tegegn. Higher returns would suck money into farming, leading to higher yields, bigger harvests and stable or falling food prices. Eventually, the argument ran, farmers and consumers would all be better off.

[http://www.economist.com/world/international/displaystory.cfm?story\\_id=13944900](http://www.economist.com/world/international/displaystory.cfm?story_id=13944900)

**Hungry World: A Silent Crisis Calls for Urgent Action**, *Yale Global, July 7*

As the world still struggles to deal with the first truly global recession, little attention has been given to the growing number of hungry people and the possibility of mounting food crises in the years ahead. According to the World Bank, over a billion people around the world are now chronically hungry. Stagnant agricultural productivity, rising food prices and now declining incomes, especially in much of Africa and parts of South Asia, have brought the world dangerously close to humanitarian distress and resulting social and political instability. Averting such a calamity must be high on the global agenda.

<http://yaleglobal.yale.edu/display.article?id=12544>

**Seeds of Change**, *Gourmet.com, July 1*

Earlier this month, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton used the announcement of this year's **World Food Prize** winner to herald the administration's new foreign policy approach to tackling global hunger. "The issue of chronic hunger and food security is at the top of the agenda," Clinton told the crowd of some 500 who had gathered in the regal Benjamin Franklin Room at the U.S. State Department on June 11. "For too long," she continued, "our primary response has been to send emergency aid when the crisis is at its worst. This saves lives, but it doesn't address hunger's root causes."

<http://www.gourmet.com/foodpolitics/2009/06/world-food-prize>

**Agricultural Development: Commissioner calls for an enhanced African integrated market**, *The African Union, June 29*

"Let us make agriculture a viable investment option that will open more opportunities for enhanced investment and growth of African Agriculture". Mrs. Rhoda Peace Tumusiime, Commissioner for Rural Economy and Agriculture of the African Union, was speaking today, Monday 29 June 2009, while addressing journalists at a press conference held at the margins of the 13th Ordinary Session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the AU in Sirte, Libya, under the theme: "Investing in Agriculture for Economic Growth and Food Security".

<http://www.africa-union.org/root/AU/Conferences/2009/july/summit/13thsummit.html>

**A New Era of Food Insecurity?**, *Survival: Global Politics and Strategy*, June-July

With the world in the midst of the most serious economic downturn since the Great Depression and soft commodity prices depressed, it is easy to forget that barely a year ago sky-rocketing food prices were generating serious political and social strife in more than 30 countries around the world. The price of rice more than tripled in the 12 months to April 2008, while the food price index published by the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) rose by an unprecedented 50%.

<http://www.iiss.org/publications/survival/survival-2009/year-2009-issue-3/a-new-era-of-food-insecurity/>

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**RELEVANT U.S. ADMINISTRATION AND CONGRESSIONAL ACTIVITIES**

**Transcript: Obama G-8 Press Conference**, *Time*, July 10

...Finally, we have committed to investing \$20 billion in food security -- agricultural development programs to help fight world hunger. This is in addition to the emergency humanitarian aid that we provide. And I should just note that going into the meeting we had agreed to \$15 billion; we exceeded that mark and obtained an additional \$5 billion of hard commitments. We do not view this assistance as an end in itself. We believe that the purpose of aid must be to create the conditions where it's no longer needed -- to help people become self-sufficient, provide for their families, and lift their standards of living.

<http://thepage.time.com/transcript-obama-g-8-press-conference/>

**Agriculture Secretary Vilsack Names Ann Mills as Deputy Under Secretary**, *The U.S. Department of Agriculture*, July 8

Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack today announced the appointment of Ann Mills as USDA Deputy Under Secretary for Natural Resources and Environment (NRE). In this position, Mills will have responsibility for the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), the federal agency with primary responsibility for working with private landowners in conserving, maintaining and improving their natural resources.

<http://www.usda.gov/wps/portal/!ut/p/.s.7.0.A/7.0.10B?contentidonly=true&contentid=2009/07/0295.xml>

**With Something for Everyone, Climate Bill Passed**, *The New York Times*, June 30

As the most ambitious energy and climate-change legislation ever introduced in Congress made its way to a floor vote last Friday, it grew fat with compromises, carve-outs, concessions and out-and-out gifts intended to win the votes of wavering lawmakers and the support of powerful industries. The deal making continued right up until the final minutes, with the bill's co-author Representative Henry A. Waxman, Democrat of California, doling out billions of dollars in promises on the House floor to secure the final votes needed for passage.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2009/07/01/us/politics/01climate.html?scp=6&sq=agriculture&st=cse>

**Ambassador-at-Large for Global Women's Issues Melanne Vermeer reaffirms the U.S. commitment to Afghan Women**, *The U.S. Department of State*, June 30

The women in Afghanistan are critical to progress and stability in their war-torn country. It is in Afghanistan's interest that human development and the unity of action take place. Only by men and women working together can Afghanistan move forward.

<http://www.state.gov/s/gwi/rls/rem/2009/125512.htm>

**US seeks new approach to food security**, *Reuters*, June 29

The United States will shift its emphasis in the fight against global hunger from giving emergency aid to helping countries produce more of their own food, U.S. Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack said on Monday. Under the new approach, the United States will focus on providing expertise and training to boost agricultural productivity abroad, Vilsack said in a speech to the Chicago Council on Global Affairs.

<http://www.reuters.com/article/homepageCrisis/idUSN29202925.CH.2400>

*See Also: Secretary Tom Vilsack's Outlines Components of U.S. Food Security Strategy, Remarks before The Chicago Council on Global Affairs, June 29, Full transcript/audio -*  
[http://www.thechicagocouncil.org/hottopics\\_details.php?hottopics\\_id=134](http://www.thechicagocouncil.org/hottopics_details.php?hottopics_id=134)

**Obama Administration Begins Naming State Executive Directors for the Farm Service Agency**, *The U.S. Department of Agriculture*, June 29

The Obama Administration today began naming individuals who will serve as State Executive Director for the Farm Service Agency at the USDA. "These individuals have a solid understanding of the challenges and opportunities facing our rural communities and will help build on the Obama Administration's efforts to rebuild and revitalize rural America," said Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack.

<http://www.usda.gov/wps/portal/!ut/p/.s.7.0.A/7.0.10B?contentidonly=true&contentid=2009/06/0264.xml>

**McCollum Introduces Innovative Global Food Security Strategy**, *The Office of Congresswoman McCollum*, June 28

Congresswoman Betty McCollum today introduced the Global Food Security Act of 2009 (H.R. 3077) with Representatives Donald Payne, Jo Ann Emerson, and others, calling for a coordinated and comprehensive U.S. global food security strategy that leverages bilateral and multilateral investments and creates partnerships with the private sector, NGOs, and universities.

[http://www.mccollum.house.gov/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=631&Itemid=92](http://www.mccollum.house.gov/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=631&Itemid=92)

**U.S. Announces Shift in Afghanistan Drug Policy**, *Time.com*, June 27

The United States has announced a new drug policy for opium-rich Afghanistan, saying it was phasing out funding for eradication programs while significantly increasing its funding for alternate crop and drug interdiction efforts.

<http://www.time.com/time/nation/article/0,8599,1907545,00.html>

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**NEW REPORTS/POLICY BRIEFS/BOOKS**

**Eliminating World Poverty: Building our common future**, DFID, July 6

The UK's new White Paper on International Development, *Building our common future* argues that rather than turn away when things get tough we need to redouble our efforts. Development is not only morally right, but it is in our shared interest. So using new approaches, new partnerships, and working through the international system, we will help the poorest countries confront global challenges and build a fairer, safer and more sustainable world for all people.

<http://www.dfid.gov.uk/Documents/whitepaper/building-our-common-future-print.pdf>

**SEE ALSO: can DFID's white paper eliminate poverty?**, *The Guardian (U.K.)*, July 8

The release of Department for International Development's white paper this week, ahead of the G8 summit in Italy, sets out the UK government's position on [aid and development](#) in an increasingly fraught and complex global environment. The paper, [Eliminating World Poverty: Building our Common Future](#), includes a renewed commitment to push 0.7% of Britain's Gross National Income into international development, reaching £ 9bn by 2013, and a doubling of funding for African infrastructure programmes including transport, energy and trade.

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/society/katineblog/2009/jul/08/dfid-white-paper-poverty>

**Investing in Poor Farmers Pays: Rethinking How to Invest in Agriculture**, *Oxfam America*, June 2009

Decades of faltering public commitment to investing in agriculture has hindered farmers' ability to cope with price volatility, climatic and economic shocks, or to pull themselves out of poverty. Yet donors and

governments must see investing in agriculture as part of the long-term solution to the food, financial, and climate crises. Global agricultural growth and rural livelihoods cannot be improved nor poverty reduced without renewed public commitment to invest more, and more wisely in agriculture. Investments must include the forgotten poor people who live in marginalized areas, be context specific, demand-driven, participatory, and promote sustainable rural livelihoods through environmentally sustainable and empowering practices that treat men's and women's needs equitably.

Summary: <http://www.oxfam.org/sites/www.oxfam.org/files/bp-129-investing-in-poor-farmers-summary.pdf>

Full Report: <http://www.oxfam.org/sites/www.oxfam.org/files/bp-129-investing-in-poor-farmers.pdf>

**Help vital for African food security**, *United Nations Conference on Trade and Development*, June 30

The African farming sector has been neglected for years, and a well-coordinated, well-funded response is needed - and must begin soon, speakers said at a meeting on "Food security in Africa: lessons from the recent global crisis". Agricultural trade barriers must be lowered and more official development assistance (ODA) must be allocated to the African farming sector, said Akinwumi Adesina, Vice President of the Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa.

<http://www.unctad.org/Templates/Page.asp?intItemID=4934&lang=1>

**See Also: Top UN officials urge donors to help Africa weather food crisis**, *AllAfrica.com*, July 1

As more than 300 million Africans – or about one third of the continent's population – face chronic hunger, donors must honour their pledges to help boost agriculture, which is the key to ensuring food security, top United Nations officials say.

<http://allafrica.com/stories/200907010884.html>

**Faltering agriculture investments leaving two-thirds of rural poor behind**, *Oxfam International*, June 30

Today's food crisis could worsen dramatically as decades of declining investment in agriculture have constrained the ability of the world's poorest people to cope with climatic and economic shocks, according to a new report released by international agency Oxfam International.

<http://www.oxfam.org/en/policy/investing-in-poor-farmers-pays>

**Investing in Agriculture: Far-Reaching Challenge, Significant Opportunity**, *Deutsche Bank Climate Change Advisors*, June 25

DB Climate Change Advisors (DBCCA), Deutsche Asset Management's (DeAM) institutional climate change investment and research business, today published a new report, "Investing in Agriculture: Far-Reaching Challenge, Significant Opportunity: An Asset Management Perspective." DBCCA, in collaboration with The Nelson Institute's Center for Sustainability and the Global Environment (SAGE) at the University of Wisconsin-Madison (UW) estimates that the caloric needs of the planet will soar 50% by 2050 driven by population, wealth and diet as well as some biofuel demand.

[http://www.dbcca.com/dbcca/EN/investment-research/investment\\_research\\_1735.jsp](http://www.dbcca.com/dbcca/EN/investment-research/investment_research_1735.jsp)

**Food Security: The Role of Agricultural Trade**, *International Food and Agricultural Trade Policy Council Discussion Paper*, June 2009

The global food system faces substantial challenges. It must help eliminate chronic and crisis hunger and nutritional deficiencies while smoothing the transition of developing countries from agricultural to industrial societies and increasing security and opportunity for the world's poor. It must move food through longer, more integrated supply chains while meeting consumers' rising expectations for safer, healthier products. And it must double food production in a sustainable manner by 2050, which means using no additional land area, consuming less fresh water and mitigating and adapting to climate change.

<http://www.agritrade.org/Publications/documents/FoodSecurity.pdf>

**Increased Role for Women in Agriculture**, *Australian Women Online*, July 1

A new survey has found that farm wives are becoming increasingly involved in the financial aspects of running the family farm. According to the quarterly AgScan by Solutions Marketing and Research, when the data was analyzed according to farm type, women were primarily responsible for collecting these products on sugar cane (70%), cotton (63%) and grain (54%) farms.

<http://www.australianwomenonline.com/increased-role-for-women-in-agriculture/>

**High speed internet is key to economic growth and job creation in developing countries, says new World Bank Group report**, *The World Bank*, June 30

A new report from the World Bank Group finds that access to affordable, high quality internet and mobile phone services enables development across all levels of the economy and society. The report finds that for every 10 percentage-point increase in high speed Internet connections there is an increase in economic growth of 1.3 percentage points. It also identifies the mobile platform as the single most powerful way to reach and deliver public and private services to hundreds of millions of people in remote and rural areas across the developing world.

<http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/NEWS/0,,contentMDK:22231347~pagePK:34370~piPK:34424~theSitePK:4607.00.html>

**World Bank releases 2009 Worldwide Governance Indicators**, *The World Bank*, June 29

Better governance helps in the fight against poverty and improves living standards. Research by many scholars, including the WGI authors, shows that improved governance strengthens development, and not the other way around. When governance is improved by one standard deviation, infant mortality declines by two-thirds and incomes rise about three-fold in the long run.

<http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/NEWS/0,,contentMDK:22229554~pagePK:64257043~piPK:437376~theSitePK:4607.00.html>

**See Also: World Bank study finds major Africa improvements**, *The Washington Post*

Several African nations are among those that have made great improvements in how their people are governed, with Botswana even on a par with many more-developed Western nations.

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/06/29/AR2009062902008.html>

**Soil salinity affects large areas of cultivated land, causing significant reductions in crop yield globally**, *Plant Cell Advance Online*, July 7

Soil salinity affects large areas of cultivated land in more than 100 countries. Increased soil salinity negatively affects the growth of many crop plants, and the continued salinization of arable land provides an increasing threat to global crop production, especially in irrigated systems.

<http://www.plantcell.org/cgi/content/abstract/tpc.108.064568v1>

**See Also: GM crops are another tool in the struggle against poverty**, *The Guardian (U.K.)*, July 8

It is estimated that one-fifth of irrigated land is salt-affected. And it is a problem that is only going to get worse as pressure to use more water increases and the quality of water decreases. Helping plants to withstand this salty onslaught would have a significant impact on world food production.

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/environment/cif-green/2009/jul/08/gm-crops-poverty>

**Suffering the Science**, *Oxfam International*, July 6

'Suffering the Science' combines the latest scientific observations on climate change, with evidence from the communities Oxfam works with in almost 100 countries around the world, to reveal how the changing climate is already hitting poor people hard. The report outlines evidence of how climate change is affecting every issue linked to poverty and development from access to food and water to health and security. It warns that without immediate action 50 years of development gains in poor countries will be permanently lost.

<http://www.oxfam.org/en/policy/bp130-suffering-the-science>

**See Also: Millions hungry as warming shifts seasons**, *Reuters*, July 6

Oxfam says interviews it carried out with farmers in 15 countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America show that seasons are shrinking in number and variety. This is destroying harvests, pushing farmers to abandon traditional crops and causing widespread hunger -- which, the agency predicts, will likely be "climate change's most savage impact on humanity in the near future".

<http://www.reuters.com/article/featuredCrisis/idUSL3426594>

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### **Farm Foundation Forum**

Date: July 14, 2009

Location: Washington, DC

Topic: Carbon Policy Issues and Implications for Agriculture

<http://www.farmfoundation.org/webcontent/Farm-Foundation-Forums-363.aspx?z=na&a=363>

### **International ISHS/ProMusa Symposium Global Perspectives on Asian Challenges**

Date: September 14-18, 2009

Location: Guang Dong, China,

ProMusa, in collaboration with the Guang Dong Academy for Agricultural Sciences (GDAAS), the International Society for Horticultural Science (ISHS) and Bioversity's Banana and Plantain Regional Network for Asia and the Pacific (BAPNET), has announced the "International Banana Symposium: Global Perspectives on Asian Challenges."

[http://www.promusa.org/symposium\\_2009/home.html](http://www.promusa.org/symposium_2009/home.html)

[http://www.farmpolicy.com/wp-content/uploads/2009/04/fischerboel-hill-event\\_may-06-09-invite-final-3.pdf](http://www.farmpolicy.com/wp-content/uploads/2009/04/fischerboel-hill-event_may-06-09-invite-final-3.pdf)

### **2009 World Food Prize and "Borlaug Dialogue" symposium: Food, Agriculture, and National Security**

Date: October 14-16, 2009

Location: Des Moines, IA

The formal awarding of the \$250,000 World Food Prize will be the cornerstone of a week-long series of events that will attract several hundred government officials and policymakers, private-sector and agribusiness executives, academics and scientists, and NGO and development-agency leaders from over 65 countries. The "conversations" of the annual Norman E. Borlaug International Symposium will this year focus on the connection between food and agriculture and national and international security and cooperation, with speakers including renowned global CEOs, agricultural ministers and diplomats, noted intelligence and security experts, and other eminent leaders in agricultural and rural development.

<https://www.worldfoodprize.org/symposium/2009.htm> (registration available beginning in June)

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## AGRICULTURAL ISSUES

### **Scientists hope tiny insect can help save soybeans, *The Washington Post*, July 9**

An insect no bigger than a comma is being studied as a natural predator that farmers could use instead of chemicals to protect the nation's soybean crop from aphids. Researchers are exploring a number of ways to combat aphids without costly spraying. The insects can destroy up to 40 percent of a farmer's crop, threatening a soybean industry worth \$27.3 billion last year.

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/07/09/AR2009070900516.html?sub=AR>

### **Poor nations look for help to feed themselves, *The Financial Times*, July 6**

Kanayo Nwanze is hoping that the Group of Eight summit will increase his workload dramatically. As president of the International Fund for Agriculture Development, the United Nations agency in charge of helping poor countries to increase their food output, he has long hoped for the G8 to confirm its shift from food aid to long-term agricultural investment.

[http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/fd15fdf8-6984-11de-bc9f-00144feabdc0.html?nclick\\_check=1](http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/fd15fdf8-6984-11de-bc9f-00144feabdc0.html?nclick_check=1)

### **Uganda facing food crisis, *The Guardian (U.K.)*, July 6**

Food shortages are approaching crisis levels in some districts of Uganda as subsistence farmers sell their crops for cash, according to government officials. Members of parliament from Kumi county, one of the worst affected areas, reported that farmers were selling food in neighboring Sudan, attracted by high prices. Lack of income-generating activities means many farmers had resorted to selling their food for cash.

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/katine/2009/jul/06/uganda-food-crisis>

**Africa: Biotechnology - Africa Must Not Be Left Behind**, *AllAfrica.com*, July 3

Africa must embrace agricultural biotechnology or risk being excluded from a major technological revolution that has had increased food production in the Europe, North America and Asia. Professor Diran Makinde, director of the West African Biosciences Network and NEPAD Biosciences Initiative says that "Africa missed the Green Revolution, which helped Asia and Latin America achieve self-sufficiency in food production. Africa cannot afford to be excluded or to miss another major global 'technological revolution' especially with the increasing population."

<http://allafrica.com/stories/200907050017.html>

**Soybeans Set for First Weekly Gain in Three on Supply Concerns**, *Bloomberg News*, July 2

The U.S. Department of Agriculture said June 30 farmers will sow a record 77.483 million acres with soybeans. That compared with an average of 78.16 million acres forecast in a Bloomberg News survey of 24 analysts. Inventories are forecast to drop to a 32-year low of 110 million bushels by Aug. 31.

<http://www.bloomberg.com/apps/news?pid=newsarchive&sid=aIcfMFKfo1x8>

**A Buffett Turns to Farming in Africa**, *The Wall Street Journal*, July 1

After a meeting with farmers in Fufuo, Ghana, Howard Buffett stood up to shake hands, African style. He extended his right arm, marked with a faint scar from a cheetah bite, and then launched into a rapid combination of finger snapping and palm slapping. The middle child of Warren Buffett is an unassuming Illinois soybean and corn farmer. But for the past four years, he has played a behind-the-scenes role in the global war against hunger. Mr. Buffett is looking for ways to help African farmers increase their harvests without increasing their costs, thus his interest in developing plants that resist disease and drought.

<http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052970204621904574246440378843148.html>

**Big Spring Planting Bodes Well for Food, Ethanol Companies**, *The Wall Street Journal*, July 1

U.S. farmers planted more than expected this spring, potentially giving some relief to ranchers, food companies and ethanol makers, which have endured relatively high grain prices in the past two years. Unless there is a dramatic change in weather over the growing season or some other unexpected disruption to the crops, corn and soybean prices could stay relatively low over the coming months, analysts say.

<http://online.wsj.com/article/SB124637913749274129.html>

**Stronger Agriculture Sector Key to Brighter Future**, *The UN Information Center*, July 1

The United Nations Deputy Secretary-General today highlighted the benefits of investing in agriculture, which she stressed is the key to a brighter future for Africa and its people. Agricultural investment creates jobs, can make economic growth more durable, can increase food and nutritional security, and can also have a "profound" impact on social equality, particularly by improving the situation of women, who account for the bulk of smallholder farmers in Africa, said Ms. Asha-Rose Migiro.

<http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=31335&Cr=africa&Cr1=agriculture&FORM=ZZNR4>

**Lula promises to help Africa achieve a 'green revolution'**, *AFP.com*, July 1

Brazilian President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva on Wednesday promised to help Africa achieve a "green revolution" in agriculture, at the launch of a continental summit in Libya. She said "South-South" cooperation among developing countries was "like an attack force against the distortions and inequities that persist in the global order." He also urged more focus on bio-fuels, pointing to his country's success with ethanol, made from sugar cane.

<http://uk.news.yahoo.com/18/20090701/tsc-lula-promises-to-help-africa-achieve-c2ff8aa.html>

**Uganda: Food Court – Genetically Modified Versus Organic Foods**, *AllAfrica.com*, July 1

Over 700 of Africa's best agricultural research scientists crammed the arrival and departure lounges at Entebbe International Airport last week. With many of the sub-Saharan African countries including Tanzania, Zambia, Rwanda, Kenya, Burundu and South Africa that attended having such overwhelming population growth, the question of access to nutritious food, let alone competing in international markets, is becoming more important than ever before.

<http://allafrica.com/stories/200907010678.html>

**Global Food Supply Far From Secure, Reuters, June 30**

Africa's farmers need help to access loans, fertilizer and export markets to avoid future food supply crises caused by climate change and commodities speculation, said Akinwumi Adesina of the Alliance for a Green Revolution. Wheat, rice and maize prices have fallen sharply from their 2008 highs, when protests broke out across the developing world over unaffordable staple foods and countries imposed export bans to ensure their people had enough to eat.

<http://uk.reuters.com/article/idUKTRE55T2B620090630>

**EU, WFP to assist agriculture sector, Daily Times (Pakistan), June 30**

European Union (EU) and World Food Programme (WFP) would give assistance of 24.7 million Euro and 14 million Euro respectively for progress of Agriculture sector in Pakistan. Federal food and Agriculture Minister, Nazar Muhammad Gondal, said that Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) is a reliable partner in progress and its services in strengthening agriculture and ensuring food security of the region are laudable.

[http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=2009\06\30\story\\_30-6-2009\\_pg5\\_5](http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=2009\06\30\story_30-6-2009_pg5_5)

**Africa: Continent Must Invest More in Agricultural Research, AllAfrica.com, June 30**

African Agriculture Ministers have called on governments to increase financial resources for scientific research in order to optimize agricultural production.

The recommendation was made during a meeting of the African Union (AU) Executive Council to prepare an ordinary summit of heads of state and government, which opens in the Libyan city of Sirte on Wednesday.

<http://allafrica.com/stories/200906300904.html>

**Africa has enormous potential to produce more food but faces challenges, Xinhua (China), June 30**

While Africa has the great potential to produce more food and significantly reduce its food import bills, the continent will continue to be troubled by food shortage if the governments take no actions. The food crisis ravaged the world last year with the African continent hardest hit where people spent more to buy less food due to the skyrocketing prices of food.

[http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2009-06/30/content\\_11627365.htm](http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2009-06/30/content_11627365.htm)

**Is It Easier To Grow Poppy Than Wheat?, Slate, June 29**

How easy is it to grow poppy? Quite. Poppy seeds are tiny, hardy, and inexpensive. Soil preparation is minimal, and little fertilizer is required. The seeds can simply be scattered on the field rather than drilled into the ground. (Sowing most grains with this technique will result in a patchy and unproductive field.) Although poppy requires a fair amount of water, alternative crops—like wheat—will die much more quickly in times of drought.

<http://www.slate.com/id/2221757/>

**Scientists Develop High-Protein Pea Varieties to Fight Hunger, VOA News, June 29**

Scientists at an India-based institute are developing new varieties of pigeon pea, a high-protein dietary staple. In the eastern Kenyan district of Makueni, a research team is testing more than 40 varieties of pigeon pea that can also be grown in Tanzania, Malawi, and Mozambique.

<http://www.voanews.com/english/2009-06-29-voa12.cfm>

**High-Protein Pea Developed To Fight Hunger, VOA News, June 29**

Scientists at an India-based institute are developing new varieties of pigeon pea, a high-protein dietary staple. In the eastern Kenyan district of Makueni, a research team is testing more than 40 varieties of pigeon pea that can also be grown in Tanzania, Malawi, and Mozambique.

<http://www.voanews.com/english/2009-06-29-voa12.cfm>

**FAO Director General Highlights Government Efforts, AllAfrica.com, June 29**

UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) director general, Jaques Diouf, highlighted today the Angolan government efforts in creating infra-structures in rural areas, seen as vital for competitive agriculture.

<http://allafrica.com/stories/200906300375.html>

**Crop plants get genomics centre**, *BBC.com*, June 29

Britain's biotechnology research council the BBSRC will this week open a research centre to decode the DNA of plants and animals used in agriculture. Among its aims is to help farmers boost food production. It's also hoped that the work will lead to breeding of livestock better able to resist emerging diseases, such as Bluetongue.

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/science/nature/8119704.stm>

**Indian farmers who cashed out struggle with riches**, *The Washington Post*, June 28

In recent years, tens of thousands of villagers across the country sold their fields to industrialists and developers building malls, suburbs and factories for the new India. But the new wealth has ruptured the age-old relationship that the farmers had with the soil. It has led to a string of crimes - murder, theft, assault - and troubles from property disputes to depression.

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/06/28/AR2009062801188.html>

**Land hunger eats into Kenya's fragile forest**, *The Financial Times*, June 28

All three – cash crops, rivers and wildlife– are crucial to Kenya's long-term viability. But they are being starved of moisture because of the degradation of the Mau forest that serves as the drainage basin at the country's ecological heart. Its destruction by subsistence farmers is creating the kind of threat to development – slow-burning but potentially catastrophic – that Kenya's coalition government was formed to tackle after the country's violent post-election crisis last year.

[http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/27d4b868-63f9-11de-a818-00144feabdc0.html?nclick\\_check=1](http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/27d4b868-63f9-11de-a818-00144feabdc0.html?nclick_check=1)

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## FOREIGN ASSISTANCE

**The aid Afghanistan really needs**, *The Guardian (U.K.)*, July 8

Aid levels for basic services and rural development are still insufficient. According to the Afghan government, one-third of the US\$21bn donors promised at last year's Paris conference had been previously pledged. Although licit agriculture supports the livelihoods of over 70% of the population, and is essential for reducing poppy cultivation, it has received only 5% of overseas aid.

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2009/jul/08/afghanistan-taliban-insurgency-victory>

**Assistant FM voices China's further commitment to agricultural co-op with African nations**, *Xinhua*, July 2

China will continue to develop bilateral and multilateral agricultural cooperation with African countries and boost the "South-South cooperation" within the framework of "Special Program for Food Security (SPFS)," Assistant Foreign Minister Zhai Jun said. In an interview with Xinhua on the sidelines of the 13th Africa Union (AU) Summit currently underway in Libya's seaside city of Sirte, Zhai said the agricultural cooperation between China and Africa constitutes an important part of bilateral cooperation.

[http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2009-07/02/content\\_11640892.htm](http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2009-07/02/content_11640892.htm)

**Somalia: Somaliland In Plea For Food Aid**, *IRIN*, July 2

The authorities in Somalia's self-declared republic of Somaliland have urged the international community to come to its aid to avert severe food shortages and hunger due to a prolonged drought in the region. Ahmed Yusuf Yasin, vice-president and chairman of the National Disaster Committee (NERAD), told a news conference in Hargeisa that Somaliland was experiencing the worst drought in decades.

<http://www.irinnews.org/Report.aspx?ReportId=85053>

**In Refugee Aid, Pakistan's War Has New Front**, *The New York Times*, July 1

Islamist charities and the United States are competing for the allegiance of the two million people displaced by the fight against the Taliban in Swat and other parts of Pakistan — and so far, the Islamists are in the lead. Although the United States is the largest contributor to a United Nations relief effort, Pakistani authorities have refused to allow American officials or planes to deliver the aid in the camps for displaced people. The Pakistanis do not want to be associated with their unpopular ally. Meanwhile, in the absence of effective aid

from the government, hard-line Islamist charities are using the refugee crisis to push their anti-Western agenda and to sour public opinion against the war and the United States.

[http://www.nytimes.com/2009/07/02/world/asia/02aid.html?\\_r=1&hp](http://www.nytimes.com/2009/07/02/world/asia/02aid.html?_r=1&hp)

**Zimbabwe turns to China for \$950m credit line**, *The Financial Time*, July 1

The coalition government in Harare is discussing a credit line of almost \$1bn with China, after Morgan Tsvangirai, Zimbabwe's prime minister, secured less funding than had been hoped during a three-week trip to Europe and the US. China appears more willing to step up its long-term interest in Zimbabwe.

<http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/975b4768-65cc-11de-8e34-00144feabdc0.html>

**World Food Program Reports Difficulties in North Korea**, *VOA News*, July 1

The United Nations World Food Program has to drastically cut the number of hungry North Koreans it feeds because of a lack of international funding and new restrictions imposed by Pyongyang.

<http://www.voanews.com/english/2009-07-01-voa10.cfm>

See Also: **North Korea's Other Crisis: An Economy in Tatters**, *Time*, July 2009

<http://www.time.com/time/world/article/0,8599,1907641,00.html>

**Australia boosts aid funding to Pak, Afghanistan**, *Agence France Presse*, July 1

Australia committed an extra five million dollars (four million US) to humanitarian assistance in Pakistan and one million dollars to support elections in Afghanistan. The Pakistan funds would be used to help 2.5 million people displaced by fighting with Taliban militants in the country's troubled northwest, Foreign Minister Stephen Smith said. "This latest contribution will enable the World Food Programme to transport local stockpiles of wheat flour to those in need and will feed around one million displaced people over the next six months," he said.

<http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5h0QrBK6-h69ioVggSnZP2AsPGd-g>

**Why BRICs love Africa**, *Foreign Policy Magazine*, June 30

While much of the Western world is disengaging from risky emerging markets, the BRICs -- Brazil, Russia, India, and China -- are swooping in to take shares in mineral operations, build up diplomatic ties, and feed the growing African commercial market. It's a move guaranteed to win favor for the BRICs from African leaders -- a relationship that will surely outlast recession.

[http://blog.foreignpolicy.com/posts/2009/06/30/why\\_brics\\_love\\_africa](http://blog.foreignpolicy.com/posts/2009/06/30/why_brics_love_africa)

**US Looks to Expand Development Aid to Strategic Partner Ethiopia**, *VOA News*, June 30

The Obama administration is signaling its intention to keep Ethiopia as a key strategic partner, despite concerns about the country's slide toward authoritarianism. The United States is seeking to expand development assistance to the Ethiopian government. The United States last year gave more than \$1 billion in aid to Ethiopia, most of it in emergency food assistance, and practically all the rest in programs to fight HIV/AIDS and Malaria. The administration is looking to broaden the program to include development aid.

<http://www.voanews.com/english/2009-06-30-voa49.cfm>

**Somalia aid tied to shaky government**, *The Washington Post*, June 28

The Obama administration's recent move to increase aid to Somalia takes aim at Islamic extremists' safe havens, pouring resources into a government that analysts say may not be worth salvaging. The administration's plan is to provide the faltering Somali government money with weapons and to help armies in several neighboring African nations train Somali forces. Many experts worry that the arms sent to Somalia may end up diverted to insurgent groups, and they question whether millions of dollars in aid will be well spent on a weakened government overwhelmed by violence and humanitarian needs.

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/06/28/AR2009062800239.html>

**U.S. Government Announces \$26.3 Million Small Grants Fund to Support Afghan Women**, *The U.S.*

*Department of State*, June 26

U.S. Ambassador to Afghanistan Karl Eikenberry and Ambassador-at-Large for Global Women's Issues Melanne Verbeke announced the start of the Ambassador's small grants program to support gender equality

in Afghanistan. this three-year, \$26.3 million program will provide technical assistance and small grants to women-focused Afghan NGOs in accordance with the National Action Plan for the Women of Afghanistan.  
[http://kabul.usembassy.gov/p\\_release27609.html](http://kabul.usembassy.gov/p_release27609.html)

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## ENVIRONMENT (WATER/CLIMATE)

### **G-8 Climate-Change Agreement Falls Short**, *The Wall Street Journal*, July 9

The Group of Eight leading nations agreed Wednesday to cut their emissions of heat-trapping gases 80% by 2050, but failed to reach an accord on shorter-term targets -- a setback that could have repercussions for a major meeting on climate change in Copenhagen later this year.

[http://online.wsj.com/article/SB124704550659510745.html?mod=rss\\_com\\_mostcommentart](http://online.wsj.com/article/SB124704550659510745.html?mod=rss_com_mostcommentart)

### **UNEP report says environment investment to spur economic growth**, *Vanguard (Nigeria)*, July 9

A newly published report by the UN environmental agency underscores how environmental investments can get the global and national economies back to sustainable work. The report launched in Nairobi on Monday said one third of the around 2.5 trillion dollars worth of planned stimulus packages should be invested on 'greening' the world economy to assist in powering the global economy out of recession and onto a Green, 21st century path.

<http://www.vanguardngr.com/2009/07/09/unep-report-says-environment-investment-to-spur-economic-growth/>

### **Project to 'grow carbon sinks'**, *BBC.com*, July 9

Ambitious plans to grow 24 million trees to soak up carbon dioxide and restore the rainforest have got underway in Ghana. The first million seedlings are being planted in a pilot scheme in an area that has been heavily logged in recent years. Ghana has lost an estimated four-fifths of its rainforest in the past 50 years and tropical deforestation globally is estimated to contribute nearly one-fifth of all greenhouse gas emissions.

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/science/nature/8139351.stm>

### **Poorer Nations Reject a Target on Emission Cut**, *The New York Times*, July 8

The world's biggest developing nations, led by China and India, refused Wednesday to commit to specific goals for slashing heat-trapping gases by 2050, undercutting the drive to build a global consensus by the end of this year to reverse the threat of climate change.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2009/07/09/world/europe/09prexy.html?ref=europe>

### **Twelve countries on climate change hit-list**, *IRIN*, July 8

The World Bank has made a list of the five main threats arising from climate change: droughts, floods, storms, rising sea levels, and greater uncertainty in agriculture. Four of the world's poorest nations top the list of the 12 countries at the highest risk.

<http://www.irinnews.org/Report.aspx?ReportId=85179>

### **Devastation in Zambia as climate change brings early flooding**, *The Guardian (U.K.)*, July 6

The ceremony is called *Kuomboka*, meaning "moving out of the water". Every year the king of the Lozi people journeys from the flooded plains to higher ground. The *Kuomboka* is traditionally the cue for local people to follow the king in escaping the rising waters, but the reality of climate change is catching up with this colorful ritual. The most recent flood came too soon and too strong, killing at least 31 people in Zambia's impoverished western province. The devastating aftermath has left people starving and homeless.

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/environment/2009/jul/06/zambia-flood-climate-change>

### **Poor rains 'shut down Kenya dam'**, *BBC.com*, July 1

Kenya's largest hydro-electric dam has been shut down because of low water levels, raising fears that power prices may rise in the East African country. A drought three years ago forced neighboring Tanzania to introduce daytime power cuts.

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/8128681.stm>

**India will reject greenhouse gas emission targets**, *Reuters*, June 30

India will not sign up to targets to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions but will instead focus on fighting poverty and boosting economic growth, the environment minister said. India is one of the world's biggest emitters alongside China, the U.S. and Russia, and the second most populous nation. But India's per capita emissions lag far behind rich countries and it feels the developed world should take the lead on tackling climate change.

<http://www.reuters.com/article/GCA-GreenBusiness/idUSTRE55T65N20090630>

**World Food Emergencies Likely to Increase on Climate, FAO Says**, *Bloomberg*, June 30

Food emergencies are likely to increase in coming decades because of climate change, according to Alexander Sarris, director for trade and markets at the United Nations' Food and Agriculture Organization.

<http://www.bloomberg.com/apps/news?pid=20601130&sid=acw3XXNayb4E>

**Rwanda: Climate Change Hits On Food Production**, *All Africa*, June 29

Developing countries like Rwanda need to conserve as much water as it can sustain so as to counteract the problems of global warming and maintain its agriculture at a level commensurate to the needs of the whole population. Rwanda being a hilly, makes it possible to collect water from the steep landscape, conserve it and used for agriculture and domestic purposes.

<http://allafrica.com/stories/200906290280.html>

**Water shortage affecting humans, livestock in Somali Region**, *Ethiopian Review (Ethiopia)*, June 29

In Somali Region, the approaching close of the gu rains and their poor performance as well as early cessation in several areas raises the potential for water shortages affecting both livestock and humans in pastoralist and agro pastoralist communities, which could exacerbate food insecurity in the region.

<http://www.ethiopianreview.com/news/5749>

**The Last Straw**, *Foreign Policy*, June 2009

When it comes to the stability of one of the world's most volatile regions, it's the fate of the Himalayan glaciers that should be keeping us awake at night. In the mountainous area of Kashmir along and around Pakistan's contested border with India lies what might become the epicenter of the problem. Since the separation of the two countries 62 years ago, the argument over whether Kashmir belongs to Muslim Pakistan or secular India has never ceased. Since 1998, when both countries tested nuclear weapons, the conflict has taken on the added risk of escalating into cataclysm. Another increasingly important factor will soon heighten the tension: Ninety percent of Pakistan's agricultural irrigation depends on rivers that originate in Kashmir.

[http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2009/06/22/failed\\_states\\_index\\_the\\_last\\_straw](http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2009/06/22/failed_states_index_the_last_straw)

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## GLOBAL ECONOMIC CRISIS IN THE DEVELOPING WORLD

**Leaders agree five-point plan to boost growth amid concern that global economy needs help to avoid further recession**, *The Guardian (U.K.)*, July 8

The leaders of the west's most powerful countries expressed fears tonight of a double-dip recession and stressed the continued need for emergency measures to boost growth until recovery from the worst post-war global recession was assured. Gordon Brown said the G8 summit had agreed a five-point programme to boost economies and create jobs. "There are warning signals we cannot afford to ignore," the prime minister said.

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2009/jul/08/g8-recession-plan-global-economy>

**Cutting Off a Continent?**, *Time.com*, July 7

At a previous G-8 summit in 2005, member nations vowed to boost aid to Africa by nearly \$22 billion over five years in a bid to finally end grinding poverty and chronic disease by tightly coordinating work on problems such as education, water and major epidemics. At the time it seemed like a workable plan. But amid the deepest recession in decades in each G-8 country — the U.S., Britain, France, Italy, Germany, Russia, Canada and Japan (with the European Union as an observer member) — big-ticket promises to Africa have become increasingly difficult to keep.

[http://www.time.com/time/specials/packages/article/0,28804,1909148\\_1909157\\_1909233,00.html](http://www.time.com/time/specials/packages/article/0,28804,1909148_1909157_1909233,00.html)

**Number of Hungry People Soars**, *The Wall Street Journal*, July 3

The U.S. Agriculture Department said the number of hungry people in 70 poor nations soared 10.8% last year and will climb at least 1.7% this year, and perhaps much more depending on how the global recession plays out. The annual USDA survey, which attempts to calculate how many people are consuming less than 2,100 calories a day in countries that do or did receive food aid, is ammunition for the Obama administration in its push to help poor nations feed themselves.

<http://online.wsj.com/article/SB124657562097589083.html>

**Opinion: Come Together, Right Away**, *The New York Times*, July 2

The world is in the midst of multiple crises. Food. Fuel. Flu. Financial. We are struggling to overcome the worst global financial and economic crisis since the founding of the United Nations, while the effects of climate change and extreme poverty become ever starker.

The real impact of the crisis could stretch for years. Millions more families are being pushed into poverty. An estimated 50 million jobs could be lost this year alone.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2009/07/03/opinion/03iht-edmoon.html?scp=4&sq=%22food%20security%22&st=cse>

**Crisis far from over: World Bank chief**, *The Washington Post*, June 30

World Bank President Robert Zoellick said on Tuesday that financial markets are showing signs of stabilization, but warned that the global crisis was far from over in developing countries. Speaking to reporters ahead of a meeting of finance ministers from Latin America, Zoellick said developing countries were only now feeling the full force of the global economic and financial crisis, which could quickly return to advanced economies where it began.

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/06/30/AR2009063002177.html>

**Don't shut the door on Africa**, *the Guardian (U.K.)* June 28

Experts are unanimous: the financial, food and energy crisis will hammer the "bottom billion" – the poorest in some 60 countries that survive on about a dollar a day – the hardest. Because of the crisis, many African countries are likely to miss the 2015 deadline for the Millennium Development Goal of poverty reduction. A failure to help the "bottom billion" could fuel mass migration and global insecurity.

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2009/jun/28/africa-recession>

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## WOMEN

**Women go where aid agencies fear to tread**, *IRIN*, July 6

Women's groups in embattled Mogadishu are stepping into the aid vacuum to assist thousands more displaced by fighting in the capital, civil society activists said. Due to insecurity, aid agencies have little access to internally displaced persons (IDPs), but Sha'ur said women's groups could move more freely.

<http://www.IRINnews.org/report.aspx?Reportid=85147>

**Woman's shop breaks Afghan mould**, *BBC.com*, July 1

In Afghanistan, there are few jobs available for women and those families without a male breadwinner face hardship. The lucky ones might find work as cooks or laundry workers in the cities, but the unlucky ones often end up begging. But in Mazar-e- Sharif one woman has defied men's hostility to become the city's only female shop-owner.

[http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south\\_asia/8126116.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south_asia/8126116.stm)

**A New Crop of Farmers**, *The Washington Post*, June 28

Women always played important roles on the family farm. They kept the books, milked the cows and fed the children, often juggling another part-time job while the men worked the fields. Sometimes, they ran the farm after their husbands or fathers died. But increasingly, women such as Stinar are turning to farming on their own.

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/06/27/AR2009062702386.html>

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## MARKET ACCESS AND TRADE ISSUES

**Africa Said Pleased with Aid for Trade Conference Outcome**, *VOA News*, July 8

African representatives at the just concluded World Trade Organization Aid for Trade conference in Geneva said they are pleased with outcome. Executive secretary of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Mohamed Ibn Chambas, who attended the conference, said trade can be a strong instrument for economic growth and fighting poverty in Africa.

<http://www.voanews.com/english/Africa/2009-07-08-voa5.cfm>

**African plan to keep vulture funds at bay**, *The Financial Times*, June 30

The African Development Bank launched a legal support organization on Monday designed to level the playing field for cash-strapped African states negotiating complex commercial transactions or facing litigation by vulture funds. The Africa Legal Support facility will provide funding and advice so that African governments are not at a disadvantage for lack of top level legal representation when subject to predatory debt claims.

<http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/e9c4cb5c-64f8-11de-a13f-00144feabdc0.html>

**Lending Talent, and Money, on a Micro Scale**, *The New York Times*, June 24

Government agencies and international aid groups have long supported programs that train the world's poor in how to start and run their own businesses. The training is seen as a way to end hunger and stabilize societies. But interest in these programs has grown lately with the wider availability of microloans, or very small enterprise loans made to the poor. As with any start-up, these businesses are more likely to survive, advocates say, if the owners have basic operational skills.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2009/06/25/business/smallbusiness/25sbiz.html?scp=3&sq=developing%20countries&st=cse>

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## AGRIBUSINESS

**IFC, World Bank to help boost agri-business in Bihar**, *Fnbnews.com (India)*, July 1

The International Finance Corp (IFC), a member of the World Bank Group and the World Bank, has announced partnership with Bihar state to boost agri-business competitiveness in the state. An "Agri-business Competitiveness Partnership" will facilitate collaboration between the public and private sectors to formulate policies, laws, and regulations to make local agri-business more competitive.

<http://www.fnbnews.com/article/detnews.asp?articleid=25661&sectionid=1>

**Editorial - Farmland reform aims to revitalize agriculture**, *The Yomiuri Shimbun*, June 28

The idea of arresting the decline of agriculture by shifting the focus of the farmland system from ownership to effective use informs the revised Agricultural Land Law, which recently passed the Diet. This is a major revision in that the owner-cultivator system maintained since the postwar farmland reform, which gave ownership of farmland to those who cultivated it, was overhauled. The revised law allows letting and leasing of farmland in principle and has eased regulations on the entry of corporate entities into agribusinesses.

<http://www.yomiuri.co.jp/dy/editorial/20090628TDY04309.htm>