

## GLOBAL FOOD FOR THOUGHT

THE WEEKLY NEWS BRIEF OF THE GLOBAL AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT PROJECT



March 12<sup>th</sup> – March 18<sup>th</sup>, 2009

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

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### KEY ARTICLES

#### **Helping Foreign Farmers to Help Themselves, *CQ Weekly*, March 15**

American food aid has long been a simple thing, at least structurally speaking: Take surplus crops grown in the United States and send them to countries where people are hungry but don't have the capacity to produce all their own food. But that equation is about to be shaken up, to judge by the consensus emerging among policy makers and experts on world hunger.

<http://www.cqpolitics.com/wmspage.cfm?docid=weeklyreport-000003075232>

#### **FY 2009 Budget Increases Allocations for Poverty-Focused Programs, *PR Newswire*, March 12**

Analysis by Bread for the World of the FY 2009 U.S. budget, signed into law by President Obama, reveals an increase of \$740 million in the international poverty-focused development assistance programs of the government. Some of the most important and dramatic funding improvements in the FY 2009 budget are in agricultural development. Congress allocated \$450 million for global agricultural development, an increase of \$100 million over FY 2008.

<http://news.prnewswire.com/DisplayReleaseContent.aspx?ACCT=104&STORY=/www/story/03-12-2009/0004987675&EDATE=>

**As Indian Growth Soars, Child Hunger Persists**, *Somini Sengupta, The New York Times, March 12*  
Small, sick, listless children have long been India's scourge — “a national shame,” in the words of its prime minister, Manmohan Singh. But even after a decade of economic growth, child malnutrition rates are worse here than in many sub-Saharan African countries. In India, despite robust growth and good government intentions, the amount of malnourished children is 42.5%.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2009/03/13/world/asia/13malnutrition.html?ref=asia>

**Crops With Attitude**, *Mac Margolis, Newsweek, March 14*

With the earth's population set to tip 9 billion by 2050, farmable land is disappearing. Recent studies predict that developing countries could lose 135 million hectares of arable land over the next half century to erosion, declining water tables and encroaching settlement. That means farmers will have to grow more food on less land with less water. Gene splicing can achieve in a matter of weeks or months what takes decades for traditional cross breeding.

<http://www.newsweek.com/id/189263>

**A message from Africa**, *Kofi Annan, Guardian (U.K.), March 16*

World Bank forecasts indicate declines in economic activity and jobs could result in more than 50 million people being added to those living on less than \$2 a day. Gains in poverty alleviation, health, education and food security are being reversed. Investing in Africa's infrastructure and clean energy potential would create jobs, address deficits that constrain growth, provide a basis for food security, and boost regional trade. It would also create business and markets for the world.

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2009/mar/16/kofi-annan-africa-recession>

**U.S. Africa Policy: Don't expect a revolution**, *The Economist, March 12*

It might seem obvious that American policy towards Africa would change under America's first African-American president. But while the new man seems set to break with his predecessor in many other foreign-policy areas, changes towards Africa may be less substantial.

[http://www.economist.com/world/unitedstates/displaystory.cfm?story\\_id=13279006](http://www.economist.com/world/unitedstates/displaystory.cfm?story_id=13279006)

**Africa's aid plea on 'development crisis'**, *Financial Times, March 16*

The poorest continent is being crowded out of global capital markets because of the massive demands of the developed world, and will need additional aid to avert a “full-blown development crisis”, according to some of Africa's most influential policymakers. African economies are being ravaged by a collapse in world commodity prices. Foreign investment is drying up and some of the continent's star reformers are struggling to contain ballooning budget deficits.

<http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/d738ae2e-124e-11de-b816-0000779fd2ac.html>

*See Also: Don't Leave Africa in a Scramble, Editorial, Financial Times, March 16*

To many minds, Africa is a picture of hopeless misery: afflicted by poverty, scarred by corruption and ravaged by Aids and war. The potential cost of the crisis in Africa is not just unemployment; it is starvation, civil war and the closing of an escape route from poverty.

That is a price the world cannot afford to pay.

<http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/477ec71e-125d-11de-b816-0000779fd2ac.html>

**The global crisis and the poor: The toxins trickle downward**, *The Economist, March 12*

A financial crisis that began in New York and London and spread to manufacturing in rich, then industrializing countries, has now hit the “bottom billion”: the poorest people in 60-odd countries who have seen only halting gains from globalization, but will feel its reverse, perhaps precipitously.

The poor are being hit not by the financial tsunami itself but by second-order waves of trouble. So the impact has been delayed—but it may also be prolonged.

[http://www.economist.com/world/international/displaystory.cfm?story\\_id=13278585](http://www.economist.com/world/international/displaystory.cfm?story_id=13278585)

**Gender and U.S. Aid**, *Connie Morella and Ritu Sharma, Op-Ed, Baltimore Sun, March 18*

This elevated focus on women's issues indicates a new strategic approach by the Obama administration toward development. Women are most at risk of being poor worldwide and stand to benefit greatly from more effective U.S. foreign assistance. Sensible reforms that emphasize investing in women and that direct aid to those who need it most would mean both women and men can contribute to lifting themselves and their countries out of poverty.

<http://www.baltimoresun.com/news/opinion/oped/bal-op.women18mar18.0.1745569.story>

**How to make US foreign aid work**, *Raymond C. Offenheiser and Rodney Bent, Op-Ed, Christian Science Monitor, March 18*

President Obama is ushering in a "new era of responsibility." And at this time of economic downturn it's a good thing. Every facet of the government's business, including how US tax dollars are invested in the fight against global poverty, must be treated with a renewed sense of responsibility.

<http://www.csmonitor.com/2009/0318/p09s02-coop.html>

**Trade Barriers Could Threaten Global Economy**, *Washington Post, March 18*

At least 17 of the 20 major nations that vowed at a November summit to avoid protectionist steps that could spark a global trade war have violated that promise, with countries from Russia to the United States to China enacting measures aimed at limiting the flow of imported goods.

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/03/17/AR2009031703218.html>

*World Bank Report (also in "New Reports" section):*

[http://siteresources.worldbank.org/NEWS/Resources/Trade\\_Note\\_37.pdf](http://siteresources.worldbank.org/NEWS/Resources/Trade_Note_37.pdf)

**Food remedies misdirected, says UN envoy**, *Financial Times, March 10*

Development aid and proposals to reform agricultural trade were directed at the wrong target and would not prevent the recurrence of food crises or end hunger, according to the United Nation's human rights envoy. Mr. de Schutter said too much attention was given to boosting overall supply, especially for export. The real challenge was enabling subsistence farmers to feed themselves adequately and addressing the lack of purchasing power among the urban poor.

[http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/75a053ca-0d84-11de-8914-0000779fd2ac.html?nclick\\_check=1](http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/75a053ca-0d84-11de-8914-0000779fd2ac.html?nclick_check=1)

**Adding Pressure to Sudan, Obama Will Tap Retired General as Special Envoy**, *The New York Times, March 17*

President Obama plans to appoint a close adviser, Maj. Gen. J. Scott Gration, to be his special envoy to Sudan as the administration ratchets up pressure against the government in Khartoum for expelling humanitarian relief organizations from the ravaged region of Darfur.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2009/03/18/world/africa/18prexy.html?ref=world>

**Overcoming the World Food and Agriculture Crisis through Policy Change and Science.**

*Joachim von Braun, Trust for Advancement of Agricultural Sciences (TAAS), Fourth Foundation Day Lecture, March 6*

The sharp rise in global food prices in 2007–08 severely undermined the nutrition security of the poor, provoked social and political instability, and increased competition for already limited natural resources. The crisis, however, also renewed the focus on food and agriculture in national and

global agendas, after decades of policy neglect and underinvestment in agricultural science, rural infrastructure, and rural institutions.

<http://www.ifpri.org/pubs/speeches/20090306jvbtaas.pdf>

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## **NEW REPORTS/POLICY BRIEFS**

**Agricultural Policies in Emerging Economies: Monitoring and Evaluation 2009**, *Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, March 2009*

The years 2006-08 were marked by a significant increase in world prices for most, but not all, agricultural commodities. This report analyses policy developments during this period in seven emerging economies: Brazil, Chile, China, India, Russia, South Africa and Ukraine.

*Report Highlights:* <http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/54/30/42347206.pdf>

*Press Statement:* **Freer trade and well targeted support are keys to food security in emerging markets**

[http://www.oecd.org/document/28/0,3343,en\\_2649\\_34487\\_42348828\\_1\\_1\\_1\\_1,00.html](http://www.oecd.org/document/28/0,3343,en_2649_34487_42348828_1_1_1_1,00.html)

**Integrated Solutions to the Water, Agriculture and Climate Crises**, *Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy and the Heinrich Boll Foundation, March 16*

The dramatic convergence of multiple crises – climate, food and water – requires a global shift from the dominant industrial model of agriculture toward more sustainable practices. The paper traces the role of industrial agriculture in contributing to greenhouse gas emissions, water use and degradation and global hunger. It also outlines the effects industrial agriculture has had in driving irrigated agriculture, massive water infrastructure projects and water withdrawals.

<http://www.iatp.org/iatp/publications.cfm?accountID=451&refID=105477>

**Where does it hurt? The impact of the financial crisis on developing countries**, *ActionAid, March 2009*

Africa will suffer a huge drop in income because of the financial crisis – with the worst affected countries seeing a fall in income of up to 50%. ActionAid argues that the fall is due to both the financial crisis and the global recession - 22 billion dollars due to the financial crisis, on top of a 27 billion dollars drop in export earnings, aid and income from rich countries that are now themselves in recession.

[http://www.actionaid.org.uk/doc/lib/where\\_does\\_it\\_hurt\\_final.pdf](http://www.actionaid.org.uk/doc/lib/where_does_it_hurt_final.pdf)

See Also: **Africa Hit Hard by Financial Crisis, Says New Report**, *VOA News, March 16*

<http://www.voanews.com/english/Africa/2009-03-16-voa55.cfm>

**Crisis 'will cost Africa \$49bn'**, *BBC News, March 16*

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/business/7945843.stm>

**Global Financial Crisis: Impacts on South Asia**, *South Asia Region, World Bank, February 2009*

The global financial crisis hit South Asia at a time when it had barely recovered from severe terms of trade shock resulting from the global food and fuel price crisis. The food and fuel price shocks had badly affected South Asia, with cumulative income loss ranging from 34 percent of 2002 GDP for Maldives to 8% for Bangladesh. Current account and fiscal balances worsened sharply and inflation surged to unprecedented levels.

<http://siteresources.worldbank.org/SOUTHASIAEXT/Resources/223546-1171488994713/3455847-1232124140958/gfcsouthasiafeb172009.pdf>

**Trade Protection: Incipient but Worrisome Trends**, *World Bank, March 2009*

The cost of inaction on the Doha Agenda is rising. To date most countries have not yet raised tariffs to bound levels or taken full advantage of headroom on agricultural subsidies. However, as the recession deepens, many countries may be tempted to. This threat underscores the importance of pushing forward with a rapid conclusion of the Doha round.

[http://siteresources.worldbank.org/NEWS/Resources/Trade\\_Note\\_37.pdf](http://siteresources.worldbank.org/NEWS/Resources/Trade_Note_37.pdf)

See Also: **Protectionist Measures Show Worrisome Rise Since Beginning of Financial Crisis**, *World Bank, March 17*

<http://go.worldbank.org/VTMB9Y1PT0>

**Local Markets, Local Varieties: Rising Food Prices and Small Farmers' Access to Seed**, *Melinda Smale, Marc J. Cohen, and Latha Nagarajan, International Food Policy Research Institute, February 2009*

There are no easy solutions to the ongoing food price crisis. Maize and wheat prices doubled between 2003 and 2008, and the price of rice doubled in the first four months of 2008, rising 33 percent in a single day. Even with declines in food prices later in 2008, prices remain well above 2000–2005 levels. To address the complex causes of this phenomenon, IFPRI has recommended a combination of “emergency” and “resilience” actions.

Main brief: <http://www.ifpri.org/pubs/ib/ib59.pdf>

Insert - India: Minor Millet Seed in Tamil Nadu: <http://www.ifpri.org/pubs/ib/ib59India.pdf>

Insert - Kenya: Pigeonpea Seed in Semi-Arid Areas: <http://www.ifpri.org/pubs/ib/ib59Kenya.pdf>

Insert - Mali: Millet and Sorghum Seed in the Sahel: <http://www.ifpri.org/pubs/ib/ib59Mali.pdf>

Brief and inserts as a single file: <http://www.ifpri.org/pubs/ib/ib59all.pdf>

**Climate Literacy: The Essential Principles of Climate Science**, *Climate Program Office, United States Government, March 2009*

In an effort to improve understanding of climate science, a group of government agencies has combined efforts to produce "Climate Literacy: The Essential Principles of Climate Science." The guide was organized by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, along with the departments of Agriculture, Commerce, Defense, Energy, Health and Human Services, Interior, State, Transportation and the Environmental Protection Agency, National Aeronautics and Space Administration, National Science Foundation, Smithsonian Institution, U.S. Agency for International Development and the American Association for the Advancement of Science.

High Resolution pdf: <http://climate.noaa.gov/education/pdfs/ClimateLiteracy-8.5x11-March09FinalHR.pdf>

Low Resolution pdf: <http://climate.noaa.gov/education/pdfs/ClimateLiteracyPoster-8.5x11-March09FinalLR.pdf>

Word: [http://climate.noaa.gov/education/docs/Climate\\_Literacy\\_CCSP\\_final\\_030609.doc](http://climate.noaa.gov/education/docs/Climate_Literacy_CCSP_final_030609.doc)

See Also: **Science of climate and change detailed in new brochure compiled by government agencies**, *Chicago Tribune, March 19*

<http://www.chicagotribune.com/news/nationworld/sns-ap-sci-climate-literacy,0,4886944.story>

**Breeding for minor gene-based adult plant resistance to stem rust in wheat**, *R.P. Singh, J. Huerta-Espino, S. Bhavani, D. Singh, P.K. Singh<sup>1</sup>, S.A. Herrera-Foessel<sup>1</sup>, P. Njau, R. Wanyera and Y. Jin, Borlaug Global Rust Initiative 2009 Technical Workshop, March 17 – March 20*

In this paper, the scientists present several new wheat varieties, developed as a result of an aggressive international breeding project to counter a particularly virulent form of the plant disease stem rust called Ug99, that are not only resistant to the fungus but produce better yields than many conventional wheat types.

[http://www.globalrust.org/uploads/file/singh\\_et\\_al\\_final.pdf](http://www.globalrust.org/uploads/file/singh_et_al_final.pdf)

**Eliminating Drastic Food Price Spikes – a three pronged approach for reserves**, *Joachim von Braun, Justin Lin and Maximo Torero, International Food Policy Research Institute, March 2009*

The 2007/08 food price crisis caused many hardships. The rise in food prices led to economic difficulties for the poor and generated turmoil in many countries. The crisis could also result in long-term, nutritional damage, especially among children. There is a global interest in preventing such events from recurring. This episode highlights the need to modify international financial and agricultural markets to address the problem of price spikes, especially their effects on the poor.

<http://www.ifpri.org/pubs/reservenote20090302.pdf>

**Girls' Education in the 21st Century: Gender Equality, Empowerment, and Economic Growth**, *World Bank, March 2009*

The good news today is that girls have crowded into school in record numbers over recent decades. They have shrunk the gender gap with boys, and won significant economic, social, and development gains for themselves and their communities. Overall primary school enrollments for girls in poor countries jumped from 87% in 1990 to 94% in 2004, with also more girls than ever before now in secondary school, according to the report.

[http://siteresources.worldbank.org/EDUCATION/Resources/278200-1099079877269/547664-1099080014368/DID\\_Girls\\_edu.pdf](http://siteresources.worldbank.org/EDUCATION/Resources/278200-1099079877269/547664-1099080014368/DID_Girls_edu.pdf)

**Managing Water for All: An OECD Perspective on Pricing and Financing**, *Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, March 2009*

This report examines: strategic financial planning for water supply and sanitation that balances the key resources of revenues for the water sector - the "3Ts" of taxes, tariffs and transfers; the design and implementation of water pricing strategies that balance financial sustainability with other policy objectives; recent development in private sector participation in the water sector; and trends and the future outlook of water use in agriculture.

*Key Messages for Policy Makers:* <http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/53/34/42350563.pdf>

**Suppression of South Asian Summer Monsoon Precipitation in the 21st Century**, *Ashfaq, Moetasim; Shi, Ying; Tung, Wen-wen; Trapp, Robert J.; Gao, Xueijie; Pal, Jeremy S.; Diffenbaugh, Noah S., Geophysical Research Letters, Vol. 36, January 2009*

The researchers used a high-resolution climate modeling system to investigate the response of South Asian monsoon dynamics to increases in greenhouse gas concentrations. They found that enhanced greenhouse forcing resulted in suppression of summer precipitation, a delay in monsoon onset, and an increase in the occurrence of monsoon break periods. Such changes in monsoon dynamics could have impacts by decreasing summer precipitation in areas of South Asia.

[http://www.purdue.edu/eas/earthsystem/Ashfaq\\_GRL\\_09.pdf](http://www.purdue.edu/eas/earthsystem/Ashfaq_GRL_09.pdf)

See Also: **Study: Climate change to affect monsoon in South Asia**, *USA Today, February 27*  
The South Asian summer monsoon — critical to agriculture in Bangladesh, India, Nepal and Pakistan — could be weakened and delayed due to rising temperatures in the future, according to a recent climate modeling study

[http://www.usatoday.com/weather/climate/globalwarming/2009-02-27-climate-change-asian-monsoon\\_N.htm](http://www.usatoday.com/weather/climate/globalwarming/2009-02-27-climate-change-asian-monsoon_N.htm)

**State of the World's Forests: 2009**, *FAO, March 2009*

The *State of the World's Forests* considers the future of forests at the sub-regional, regional and global levels. It examines the impacts that external factors such as demographic, economic, and technological changes have on forests. Some countries and regions are better prepared to face the

challenges and take advantage of emerging opportunities, while others still lack essential institutional, legal and economic conditions to sustainably manage their forest resources.  
<ftp://ftp.fao.org/docrep/fao/011/i0350e/i0350e.pdf>

See Also: **Forests 'Facing a Testing Time'**, *BBC News*, March 16

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/science/nature/7942237.stm>

**World lost 70m hectares of forest in 15 years: UN**, *Economic Times (India)*, March 17

<http://economictimes.indiatimes.com/Flora--Fauna/World-lost-70m-hectares-of-forest-in-15-years-UN/articleshow/4276162.cms>

### **Maize-Rice Cropping Systems in Bangladesh: Status and Research Opportunities,**

*International Maize and Wheat Improvement Center*, March 2009

Responding to demand from expanding poultry feed markets, maize area in Bangladesh rose from only a few thousand hectares in the 1980s to more than 200,000 hectares in 2007-08. This publication describes the rise of maize in Bangladesh, emerging problems or risks, technology options for rice-maize systems, and future research and development needs.

[http://www.cimmyt.org/english/docs/maize\\_producys/bangladesh.pdf](http://www.cimmyt.org/english/docs/maize_producys/bangladesh.pdf)

### **Understanding Farmers' Perceptions and Adaptations to Climate Change and Variability:**

**The Case of the Limpopo Basin, South Africa**, *International Food Policy Research Institute*, February 2009

Climate change is expected to have serious environmental, economic, and social impacts on South Africa. Rural farmers, whose livelihoods depend on the use of natural resources, are likely to bear the brunt of adverse impacts. The extent to which these impacts are felt depends in large part on the extent of adaptation in response to climate change. This research uses a "bottom-up" approach, which seeks to gain insights from the farmers themselves based on a farm household survey.

<http://ifpri.org/pubs/dp/IFPRIDP00849.pdf>

### **CME Group Ethanol Outlook Report**, *CRB Research Team of Commodity Research Bureau*, March 16

April CBOT Ethanol futures prices last week rallied mildly to a new 2-week high and closed 6.5 cents higher at \$1.57/gallon. Bullish factors included (1) higher gasoline and corn prices, (2) emerging support in Washington for the ethanol industry's push to raise the blend wall from 10%, (3) the sharp rally in global stocks, and (4) the reduction in ethanol supply seen over the past several months.

<http://www.barchart.com/newsletters/cme/ethanol/archive/1237209541CME-Weekly-Ethanol-16-Mar-2009.pdf>

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## **NEW BOOKS/PUBLICATIONS**

### **Dead Aid: Why Aid Is Not Working and How There Is a Better Way for Africa**, *Dambisa Moyo*, March 2009

In the past fifty years, more than \$1 trillion in development-related aid has been transferred from rich countries to Africa. Has this assistance improved the lives of Africans? In *Dead Aid*, Dambisa Moyo describes the state of postwar development policy in Africa today.

*Book Overview:* <http://www.dambisamoyo.org/>

See Also: **When Help Does Harm**, *Book Review*, *The Wall Street Journal*, March 17

It is one of the great conundrums of the modern age: More than 300 million people living across the continent of Africa are still mired in poverty after decades of effort -- by the World Bank, foreign governments and charitable organizations -- to lift them out of it.

<http://online.wsj.com/article/SB123725502933150589.html>

**Moving Out of Poverty: Success from the Bottom-Up (Volume 2), World Bank, March 2009**

Poverty studies typically focus on people who live below the poverty line. Few studies have examined how people are able to not only move out of but also stay out of poverty. The global Moving out of Poverty study, carried out in 15 countries, is one of the few large-scale comparative research attempts to analyze mobility out of poverty rather than poverty alone.

*Book Overview:* <http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTMOVOUTPOV/Resources/Overview.pdf>

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## UPCOMING EVENTS

### **World Biofuels Markets**

*Date:* March 16-18, 2009

*Location:* Brussels, Belgium

*Speakers:* Sir Bob Geldof (Activist and businessman); Lord Browne (Director of Riverstone Holdings and former CEO of BP); Minister Andrea Correa do Lago (Department of Energy for the Ministry of Foreign Relations in Brazil); Dr. Hermann Scheer (President of the International Forum on Renewable Energies and Member of Parliament for Germany); and Dr. Zoran Stancic (Deputy director general of Directorate-General Research for the European Commission)

The global biofuels industry is facing up to huge challenges and many exaggerated scare stories as it continues to mature. However innovation is accelerating and new streams of carbon negative, sustainable fuels are coming on tap. This key session brings together top leaders of the global biofuels industry to share their vision for a sustainable bio future. The three-day congress will address all issues facing the biofuels industry, from sustainability to fuel quality.

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

### **World Forest Week: Forests in a Changing World (hosted by the FAO Committee on Forestry)**

*Date:* March 16-20, 2009

*Location:* FAO Headquarters, Rome, Italy

*Speaker:* Gro Harlem Brundtland (UN Secretary General's Special Envoy on Climate Change)

Forests and climate change, adapting to new the economic uncertainties these and other challenges facing global forestry will be debated during World Forest Week taking place at FAO headquarters from 16 to 20 March 2009. This conference is meant to bring together heads of forest services and other senior government officials to identify emerging policy and technical issues, to seek solutions and to advise FAO and others on appropriate action.

<http://www.fao.org/forestry/cofo/en/>

### **World Water Forum: Bridging Divides for Water (hosted by the World Water Council)**

*Date:* March 16-22, 2009

*Location:* Istanbul, Turkey

The World Water Forum is the main water-related event in the world, aimed at putting water firmly on the international agenda. The Forum offers the water community and policy-and-decision-makers from all over the world the unique opportunity to come together to create links, debate and attempts to find solutions to achieve water security. It is organized every three year by the World Water Council, in collaboration with the host country.

<http://www.worldwaterforum5.org/>

*Program:*

[http://www.worldwaterforum5.org/fileadmin/WWF5/Forum Programme/WWF5 Forum Programme Book.pdf](http://www.worldwaterforum5.org/fileadmin/WWF5/Forum_Programme/WWF5_Forum_Programme_Book.pdf)

**Alleviating Global Hunger: Challenges and Opportunities for U.S. Leadership – Hearing before the U.S. Senate Committee on Foreign Relations**

*Date:* March 24, 2009

*Location:* 419 Dirksen Senate Office Building

*Witnesses:* Dan Glickman, former U.S. secretary of agriculture; Catherine Bertini, former executive director, UN World Food Program; Rob Paarlberg, Professor of political science, Wellesley College; David Beckmann, president, Bread for the World; Edwin Price, associate vice chancellor and director, Norman Borlaug Institute for International Agriculture; Gebisa Ejeta, professor of agronomy, Purdue University

<http://foreign.senate.gov/hearings/2009/hrg090324a.html>

**Barriers to Household Risk Management: Evidence from India (hosted by the Center for Global Development)**

*Date:* March 24, 2009

*Location:* 1776 Massachusetts Avenue, NW, Third Floor, Washington, D.C.

*Speaker:* Xavier Giné (World Bank)

*Discussant:* Ruth Vargas Hill (International Food Policy Research Institute)

Financial engineering offers the potential to reduce income fluctuations faced by individuals, households, and firms. Yet, to date, much of this promise remains unrealized. In this paper, we study household participation in an innovative rainfall insurance product offered to low-income rural Indian households. Farmers are exposed to substantial income risk from rainfall variation during the growing season; the insurance contract compensates farmers in case of deficient rainfall.

<http://www.cgdev.org/content/calendar/detail/1421293/>

**Africa's Private Sector: What's Wrong with the Business Environment and What to Do About It (hosted by the Center for Global Development)**

*Date:* March 26, 2009

*Location:* C. Fred Bergsten Conference Center, 1750 Massachusetts Avenue, NW, Washington, DC

*Moderator:* Todd Moss (Senior Fellow at the Center for Global Development)

*Speaker:* Vijaya Ramachandran (Senior Fellow at the Center for Global Development)

*Remarks:* The Honorable James A. Harmon (Chairman of Harmon and Company, LLC); Ambassador Ombeni Y. Sefue (Embassy of the United Republic of Tanzania)

Why is the private sector yet to take off in much of sub-Saharan Africa? In Africa's Private Sector, Vijaya Ramachandran identifies the biggest obstacles: inadequate infrastructure and burdensome regulations. The authors suggest investing in infrastructure and reforming regulations to lower the cost of doing business, and increasing the access to education for would-be entrepreneurs to help foster the emergence of a broader-based business class that crosses ethnic divides.

<http://www.join.cgdev.org/site/Calendar?view=Detail&id=102681>

**Securing a Place for Agriculture at the International Climate Change Negotiations (hosted by IFPRI)**

*Date:* March 27, 2009

*Location:* 2033 K Street, N.W., Washington, D.C.

*Speakers:* Gerald Nelson (Senior Research Fellow, IFPRI); Siphwe Mkhize (Minister of Agriculture at the Embassy of South Africa); Ian Noble (Lead Climate Specialist of the World Bank)

Including agriculture in the international climate change negotiations is essential if mitigation and adaptation goals are to be met. Climate change will have dramatic consequences for poor people; cost-effective ways must be found to help poor people to adapt to the changes. Speakers will discuss *why* it is important to include agriculture on the agenda of the UNFCCC negotiations as well as identify *how* to communicate the key issues to negotiators and policy makers.

<http://www.ifpri.org/events>

### **Global Agricultural Development Symposium (sponsored by the Chicago Council on Global Affairs)**

*Date:* April 7, 2009

*Location:* Intercontinental Hotel, 505 N Michigan Ave, Chicago, IL 60611, Chicago, IL

*Time:* 8:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

Global Agricultural Development Project cochairs Catherine Bertini, former executive director of the UN World Food Program, and Dan Glickman, former U.S. secretary of agriculture, and other foreign policy and development leaders will discuss recommendations during this half-day symposium in Chicago. The World Food Prize Foundation is a cosponsor of this symposium.

[http://www.thechicagocouncil.org/chicago\\_council\\_event\\_corporate\\_detail.php?eventid=2054](http://www.thechicagocouncil.org/chicago_council_event_corporate_detail.php?eventid=2054)

### **Farm Foundation's 30-Year Challenge Competition (hosted by Farm Foundation)**

*Date:* June 1, 2009 (submission deadline); September 2009 (announcement of winners)

*Location:* 1301 West 22nd Street, Suite 615, Oak Brook, IL

Farm Foundation has organized a competition seeking innovative and promising public policy options to address the challenges agriculture may face in providing food, feed, fiber and fuel over the next 30 years. The competition is open to anyone with an interest in the public policy issues outlined in the Foundation's report, *The 30-Year Challenge: Agriculture's Strategic Role in Feeding and Fueling a Growing World*. The Foundation intends to award cash prizes totaling \$20,000.

<http://www.farmfoundation.org/news/articlefiles/1694-Competition%20for%20Web%203-5-09.pdf>

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## **AGRICULTURAL ISSUES**

### **From Riches to Rags: Inflation & Poverty in Zimbabwe, *The New American*, March 19**

Under Mugabe, white-owned farmland was seized and turned into Soviet-style collective farms, ostensibly "to correct colonial-era injustice." Naturally, food production plummeted, bringing widespread hunger. Instead of letting Mugabe's regime die a natural death, however, the IMF, World Bank, UN, USAID, and other agencies spent years pouring in aid to prop it up.

<http://www.thenewamerican.com/economy/economics-mainmenu-44/897>

### **Donors launch new fund for Africa's small farmers, *Agence France-Presse*, March 18**

Standard Bank of South Africa and the Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA), chaired by former UN head Kofi Annan, joined forces to set up a fund to support small farmers and agricultural businesses in four countries. At a press conference in the Ghanaian capital, the bank said it will put 100 million dollars (78 million euros) into the fund over three years and AGRA will provide a 10-million-dollar loan guarantee fund.

<http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5hI3Gg5a4jbP7LeOHl9WCVsuJR2-Q>

### **Planting season, *Richard Kavuma, Guardian (U.K)*, March 18**

The choice of what to grow is a delicate balancing act between the need for food to feed one's family, the need for money, especially to pay for school fees, and weather. In Katine, and much of rural Uganda, it is women who do the majority of the work in the fields, but it will often be men who decide what it is that is grown.

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/katine/2009/mar/18/what-crops-to-plant>

**Scientists gain in struggle against wheat rust**, *Associated Press, March 17*

Researchers are deploying new wheat varieties with an array of resistant genes they hope will baffle and defeat Ug99, a highly dangerous fungus leapfrogging through wheat fields in Africa and Asia. More than 200 crop scientists from around the world were attending the workshop sessions, where three dozen papers were to be presented discussing the effort to crossbreed wheat varieties resistant to the new, virulent type of rust fungus.

<http://www.google.com/hostednews/ap/article/ALeqM5g5A7arCYehfHJ2i7eAztrdXpatWQD96VUA8G0>

See Also: **Wheat experts warn of worldwide disease threat**, *Agence France-Presse, March 17*

<http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5iZvFKKe5tBo6eKCzguKXhDgesHC9w>

**Tanzanian Government to Increase its Agricultural Budget**, *African Press Agency, March 15*

The Tanzanian Minister for Finance and Economic Affairs, Mr. Mustafa Mkulo, said that the government intends to allocate 7% of its next budget to the agricultural sector, up from 6.2% in the current financial year. The move was aimed at boosting production in the sector, in line with the Maputo Declaration on Agriculture and Food Security in Africa.

[http://www.apanews.net/apa.php?page=show\\_article\\_eng&id\\_article=91809](http://www.apanews.net/apa.php?page=show_article_eng&id_article=91809)

**Nigeria's Creaking Economy: A Double Strike**, *The Economist, March 14*

A rare bright spot in Nigeria is agriculture. Nigeria's lands are fertile; water, at least in the south, is plentiful. A fertilizer plant has been privatized and is supposed to start supplying farmers. Local food and tobacco prices remain high compared with world prices, which should give farmers good incentives.

[http://www.economist.com/world/mideast-africa/displaystory.cfm?story\\_id=13278805](http://www.economist.com/world/mideast-africa/displaystory.cfm?story_id=13278805)

**President Obama Announces Under Secretaries for Agricultural Department**, *Nayyera Haq, USDA, March 13*

President Barack Obama announced his intention to nominate James W. Miller to be Under Secretary of Agriculture for Farm and Foreign Agricultural Services and Dallas P. Tonsager to be Under Secretary of Agriculture for Rural Development.

[http://www.usda.gov/wps/portal/lut/p/s.7\\_0\\_A/7\\_0\\_10B?contentidonly=true&contentid=2009/03/0059.xml](http://www.usda.gov/wps/portal/lut/p/s.7_0_A/7_0_10B?contentidonly=true&contentid=2009/03/0059.xml)

**South Africa Seizes Failing Farm Under New Policy, SAPA Reports**, *Bloomberg, March 13*

The South African government reclaimed control of an ostrich farm near Pretoria this week under a policy of taking back unproductive farms allocated to blacks as part of a land redistribution program, the South Press Association said.

<http://www.bloomberg.com/apps/news?pid=20601116&sid=aXSgTFaqCt3Q&refer=africa>

**Flood-Resistant Rice Aids Farmers in South Asia**, *VOA News, March 12*

Most rice grows in wet environments, but too much water can be disastrous for rice crops. Plant biologist Pamela Ronald helped create a type of flood-resistant rice that is being introduced to India and Bangladesh.

<http://www.voanews.com/english/2009-03-12-voa83.cfm>

**Time for explosive action**, *Guardian (U.K.), March 11*

In the third in a series of interviews with experts on development, economist Paul Collier tells Anne Perkins why Uganda needs to think big on agriculture, create more job opportunities and watch its step with oil.

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/katine/2009/mar/11/paul-collier-interview>

**South African \$1.2 Billion Fruit Industry Braced for Fly Strain**, *Bloomberg, March 10*

South Africa's 12.8 billion-rand (\$1.2 billion) fruit industry is braced for a possible invasion of a new strain of fruit fly that has spread across the continent in the past five years. *Bactrocera invadens*, originally from Sri Lanka, was discovered in Kenya in 2003 and has spread southward.

<http://www.bloomberg.com/apps/news?pid=20601116&sid=a7tGwUO8IGWo&refer=africa>

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## ENVIRONMENT (WATER/CLIMATE)

**Europe 'living beyond its means' when it comes to water use**, *Lauren Morello, New York Times, March 18*

Water managers have long relied on historical records of streamflow, rainfall and snowpack to help ensure that their communities have ample water for sanitation, recreation, agriculture and other uses. But climate change is altering those patterns, stretching the water cycle's extremes.

<http://www.nytimes.com/cwire/2009/03/18/18climatewire-europe-described-as-living-beyond-its-means--10176.html>

**UN warns of rising demand for clean water**, *Christopher Torchia, Associated Press, March 16*

Worldwide demand for water is rising just as access to safe drinking water and sanitation remains inadequate in much of the developing world, the United Nations said recently, calling for better management to alleviate water shortages. Population growth and mobility, as well as increased energy production, especially of biofuels such as ethanol, are contributing to the high demand for water.

<http://www.google.com/hostednews/ap/article/ALeqM5igEAd0RMIRim96Ta9PB5qC46EdjgD96V5V5G3>

**The world's water and climate change**, *Reuters, March 15*

World water supplies may be severely stressed in coming decades because of climate change linked to the burning of fossil fuels such as coal and oil, and a rising global population.

<http://in.reuters.com/article/environmentNews/idINTRE52E0YM20090315>

**Water management in South Asia**, *South Asian Sub-regional document, Prepared for the 5th World Water Forum, March 15*

The first and foremost challenge in South Asia is the vulnerability to water related disasters. This cause huge loss of life and property estimated loss range from 2-20% and revenue loss between 12-66% and it hinders sustainable development for poverty reduction by eroding hard earned gains of development.

<http://nation.ittefaq.com/issues/2009/03/16/news0261.htm>

**Scientists claim global warming 'can be controlled', *Times (U.K.), March 14***

Such rises would have severe consequences for human populations, with the brunt being borne by the developing world but with even wealthy countries likely to suffer disastrous changes to the climate. Food production would be an enormous problem because while the human population is forecast to rise to nine billion, agriculture in many regions would collapse.

<http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/environment/article5904431.ece>

**Water pipe sparks Ethiopian conflict, *BBC, March 13***

Some 70,000 people have fled their homes in southern Ethiopia after a deadly conflict broke out between rival groups - apparently triggered by the construction of a new borehole. This part of Ethiopia has a history of conflict over water among its various pastoral communities. The residents attribute the attack to jealousy over the scheme to dig a new borehole.

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/7929104.stm>

**Leaders of UN, US declare 2009 the year of climate change, *UN News Centre, March 12***

With nations set to conclude negotiations on an ambitious new greenhouse gas emissions agreement this December, Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and United States President Barack Obama have stressed the need for 2009 to be the year of climate change. Mr. Ban said today that he and Mr. Obama were of the same opinion that 'green' investments are an essential part of any stimulus package targeting the current global economic turmoil.

<http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=30171&Cr=climate+change&Cr1=>

**New way to farm boosts climate, too, *Jared Flesher, Christian Science Monitor, March 12***

Some scientists say an ice age was prevented thousands of years ago by the dawn of human agriculture - deforestation and farming released enough greenhouse gases into the atmosphere to prevent another global cool down, the theory goes. Now, millennia later, researchers hope new farming techniques will put some of that carbon back into the ground and help stem the rising tide of global warming.

<http://features.csmonitor.com/environment/2009/03/12/new-way-to-farm-boosts-climate-too/>

See Also: **Regenerative Organic Farming: A Solution to Global Warming**, *Rodale Institute, 2008*

[http://www.rodaleinstitute.org/files/Rodale\\_Research\\_Paper-07\\_30\\_08.pdf](http://www.rodaleinstitute.org/files/Rodale_Research_Paper-07_30_08.pdf)

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## THE EFFECTS OF THE GLOBAL ECONOMIC CRISIS IN THE DEVELOPING WORLD

**Call for IMF gold sale to aid Africa, *Financial Times, March 18***

The International Monetary Fund should be allowed to sell some of its gold reserves to cushion Africa from the global economic crisis, African countries will argue at next month's Group of 20 summit.

<http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/e42b235a-1343-11de-a170-0000779fd2ac.html>

**Sri Lanka Cuts Rates as Economy Grew at Slowest Pace Since 2003, *Bloomberg, March 18***

Sri Lanka's central bank lowered interest rates for the third time in three months after the island's economy expanded last quarter at the slowest pace since at least 2003. Sri Lanka's government expects agriculture to be a vital support to growth in the coming quarters as areas controlled by the rebel Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam are liberated.

<http://www.bloomberg.com/apps/news?pid=20601091&sid=aT5TBL.T.knM&refer=india>

**Downturn 'risks Africa conflict', *BBC News, March 16***

African leaders have warned that parts of the continent could be plunged back into conflict if they are not helped to recover from the global downturn.

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/7947321.stm>

See Also: **African leaders petition G20 for more funds**, *Reuters, March 17*

<http://af.reuters.com/article/topNews/idAFJOE52G01220090317>

**African leaders tell G20 crisis threatens 'chaos'**, *Agence France-Presse, March 17*

<http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5hQHLui0rWUEW0gA59bBycgnN TKQQ>

**Engaging Africa on the London Summit**, *London Summit, March 16*

The economic downturn could have severe consequences for the developing world. The Department for International Development (DfID) estimates that 90 million more people could be forced into poverty by the end of next year and new estimates suggest the fight against extreme poverty could be put back by up to three years.

<http://www.londonsummit.gov.uk/en/media-centre/latest-news/?view=News&id=14978740>

**We Need to Keep Digging Deep for Africa**, *The Guardian (U.K.), March 16*

In the west, recession means rising unemployment, falling house prices and failed businesses. In Africa, recession means children taken out of school and clinics running out of drugs; belt-tightening means hunger, malnutrition and death.

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/business/2009/mar/16/global-recession-africa>

**G20 backs boosting Asian Development Bank's capital by \$100 billion**, *Reuters, March 14*

G20 finance chiefs backed a tripling of the Asian Development Bank's capital to just over \$150 billion and said other development banks should consider whether they need more to fight the crisis.

<http://www.reuters.com/article/bondsNews/idUSSTR46127120090314>

**World Bank Head Frets Over Poverty Threat**, *Deutsche Welle, March 14*

The head of the World Bank has urged the world's 20 largest economies not to forget developing countries in the search for ways to kick start the global economy. Yet getting any agreement at all could prove difficult. "Millions will be falling into poverty and we estimate that with the gross slowdown 200,000 to 400,000 more babies will die each year," Zoellick told reporters.

<http://www.dw-world.de/dw/article/0,,4096403,00.html>

**Africa Conference Debates Way Forward Amid Crisis**, *International Monetary Fund, March 13*

The international donor community must honor its commitments to Africa, but the continent can also do more to live up to its growth potential and strengthen its resilience, concluded participants at a two-day conference on Africa's economy in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania.

<http://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/survey/so/2009/CAR031309A.htm>

Conference Website: <http://www.changes-challenges.org/>

**Development Finance Institution Meeting Seeks Closer Cooperation to Reduce the Impact of the Global Financial Crisis on Developing Countries**, *World Bank, March 12*

The world's largest International Finance Institutions and Development Finance Institutions met in Vienna on March 12<sup>th</sup> to discuss closer cooperation in responding to the global financial and economic crisis and to share information on initiatives aimed at supporting banking, trade, infrastructure, agribusiness, and other key sectors in developing countries.

<http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/NEWS/0,,contentMDK:22099923~menuPK:34463~pagePK:34370~piPK:34424~theSitePK:4607,00.html>

**Global Recession Hits the Developing World**, *Voice of America*, March 12

Both the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund expect the world economy to shrink this year for the first time since World War Two. As recently as January, the I.M.F. had predicted growth of one-half percent. But this week its chief, Dominique Strauss-Kahn, said the world has entered what he called "a great recession."

<http://www.voanews.com/specialenglish/2009-03-12-voa2.cfm>

**UN poverty goals key as crisis hits poor**, *Reuters*, March 12

The U.N.'s Millennium Development Goals was an overly ambitious agenda for reducing global poverty, critics say, and may now appear altogether unrealistic as the world grapples with the worst economic downturn since the Great Depression. Not true says U.N. Deputy Secretary-General Asha-Rosa Migiro. If anything, the goals, which include halving global poverty by 2015, have become more important to protect the world's poor from the effects of the global crisis.

<http://www.reuters.com/article/latestCrisis/idUSL273127>

**Growth in Africa to halve from average of past decade**, *Barney Jopson*, *Financial Times*, March 10

Economic growth in sub-Saharan Africa is set to halve from the average of the past decade to just over 3% in 2009 as the continent is hit by the "third wave" of the global economic crisis. Antoinette Sayeh, director of the IMF's Africa department, said the crisis that began in developed economies and then hit emerging markets was hurting the world's poorest continent via low global commodity prices, tighter credit markets and depressed external demand.

<http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/62a2058c-0d13-11de-a555-0000779fd2ac.html>

See Also: **Africa faces deepening gloom**, *BBC News*, March 11

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/business/7938081.stm>

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## FOOD CRISIS

**China Advises Sudan Not to Let Darfur Crisis Worsen**, *Bloomberg*, March 18

China has expressed "serious concern" to Sudan's government about the expulsion of aid workers from Darfur, yet won't back United Nations Security Council pressure to reverse the decision, China's envoy said. The expelled aid groups say that 1 million people in Darfur -- where government-backed militias have fought local rebels -- are at risk of life-threatening illnesses and hunger because of the suspension of relief work.

<http://www.bloomberg.com/apps/news?pid=20601080&sid=aaYP5RjktTkM&refer=asia>

See Also: **Sudan to 'expel all aid groups'**, *BBC*, March 16

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/7946306.stm>

**UN seeks \$244 million to boost food aid to vulnerable Kenyans**, *UN News Centre*, March 18

The United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) today appealed for \$244 million to scale up its operation in Kenya, where high food prices and drought have left 3.5 million people in need of aid. Subsistence farmers in south-eastern and coastal areas were hardest hit and have experienced almost total crop loss.

<http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=30219&Cr=kenya&Cr1=food>

**Stop The Economic Crisis From Becoming A Human Crisis**, *World Food Programme*, March 17

Preoccupied by the economic crisis, policy makers are warning that hunger is slipping down their list of priorities. But the stumbling world economy is the very reason they should accelerate funding for food security, says Nancy Roman.

<http://www.wfp.org/stories/stop-economic-crisis-becoming-human-crisis>

**UN Forced to Cut Off Humanitarian Air Service to West Africa**, *Lisa Schlein, VOA News, March 17*

The World Food Program warns the UN will be forced to close its West African Humanitarian Air Service on Friday because it has run out of money. The World Food Program says aid operations in Guinea, Sierra Leone, Liberia and Ivory Coast will be seriously affected if the UN Humanitarian Air Service shuts down.

<http://www.voanews.com/english/2009-03-17-voa23.cfm>

**WFP Ramps Up Assistance to Hungry in Pakistan**, *World Food Programme, March 16*

Pakistan, riven by political tensions in the last few days, has an ongoing need for food assistance which has deepened recently due to high food prices, conflict and natural disasters. In response, WFP is ramping up its programs in 2009.

<http://www.wfp.org/stories/wfp-ramps-assistance-hungry-pakistan>

**Food security gets major boost**, *The Daily Times (Bangladesh), March 13*

The United Kingdom will give Bangladesh assistance for coordinated development of the country's coastal areas under a £60 million (over Tk 560 crore) trust fund. The UK also pledged to help the country's food security program.

<http://www.thedailystar.net/newDesign/news-details.php?nid=79483#>

**Rising food prices will mean devastation for the bottom billion**, *by Josette Sheeran, Independent (U.K.), March 13*

Food security is non-negotiable; we must provide more food and we must ensure that people have access to it. Food prices have fallen since the highs of 2008, but for the world's "bottom billion" that record increase in food prices has had a devastating effect, pushing a further one hundred million people into food poverty. For instance, in Malawi, maize is 100% more expensive than a year ago.

<http://www.independent.co.uk/opinion/commentators/josette-sheeran-rising-food-prices-will-mean-devastation-for-the-bottom-billion-1643918.html>

**WFP gives \$179 million to Bangladesh's poorest for food**, *Reuters, March 13*

The United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) would provide \$179 million over the next nine months to help Bangladesh's poorest people, who have been hard hit by high food prices and natural disasters.

<http://in.reuters.com/article/southAsiaNews/idINIndia-38489620090313>

**Is there a solution for Somalia?** *GlobalPost, March 12*

Somalia's chaos has disrupted agriculture and the country has experience widespread food shortages for years. The UN's World Food Program estimates that 3 million Somalis currently need international food aid but it can only distribute food to less than half that number. Hungry and terrified, more than a million Somalis have fled their country, going to Kenya or Yemen. Others have received asylum in the United States.

<http://www.globalpost.com/dispatch/africa/090311/there-solution-somalia>

**New MCC Board of Directors Reviews Partnerships to Combat Global Poverty**, *Millennium Challenge Corporation, March 11*

The Board reviewed the progress and emerging results from MCC's partner countries implementing poverty/hunger reduction and policy reform programs worldwide. Although MCC's funding level was reduced in the FY2009 Omnibus Appropriations Act, ongoing compact and threshold programs will not be affected by these cuts.

<http://www.mcc.gov/press/releases/documents/release-031109-board.php>

**WFP plans global fund to pre-buy food stocks**, *Reuters, March 10*

The UN World Food Programme plans to launch a global fund that will allow it to secure food stocks in advance rather than panic-buying when crises hit. Josette Sheeran, executive director of the world's largest humanitarian organization, said the move would help bring predictability to food aid and prevent distortion of local markets already hit by food-price spikes and the financial meltdown.

<http://www.reuters.com/article/homepageCrisis/idUSLA665360.CH.2400>

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## WOMEN

**India: Women Farmers Ready to Beat Climate Change**, *Inter Press Service, March 17*

A collective of 5,000 women spread across 75 villages in this arid, interior part of southern India is now offering a chemical-free, non-irrigated, organic agriculture as one method of combating global warming. Agriculture accounts for 28% of Indian greenhouse gas emissions, mainly methane emission from paddy fields and cattle and nitrous oxides from fertilizers.

<http://www.ipsnews.net/news.asp?idnews=46131>

**Ghana: Women Lose Their Farms to Biofuel Production**, *Public Agenda (Ghana), March 16*

Ghanaian small scale farmers, particularly women, are facing displacement from their farm lands. In recent times, the northern parts of Ghana are said to be witnessing an influx of foreign companies engaged in jatropha and sugar-cane plantation for biofuel production.

<http://allafrica.com/stories/200903161744.html>

**Best Chance to Make Foreign Policy Work for Women**, *Ritu Sharma, World Pulse Magazine, March 13*

During her confirmation hearings, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton stressed the importance of prioritizing women and girls, who are at the greatest risk of being poor, and make up nearly 70% of the world's hungry. Clinton must make international assistance a foreign policy priority and ensure that this assistance benefits the world's woman

<http://worldpulse.com/magazine/columns/best-chance-to-make-foreign-policy-work-for-women>

**'Educate a woman, create a nation'**, *by Dina Habib Powell, CNN, March 13*

As we mark International Women's Month in March, it is encouraging to see that the movement to recognize the vital role that women play in families and economies has been building for more than a decade and that developments in the past few years have shown that real progress has begun. Every extra year of girls' education can reduce infant mortality by 5 to 10%. In Africa, children of mothers who receive five years of primary education are 40% more likely to live beyond age 5.

<http://edition.cnn.com/2009/WORLD/americas/03/13/powell.women/>

See Also: **Women Hold Up Half of the Sky**, *Goldman Sachs, Global Economics Paper No: 164, March 2008*

Education is key to gender equality. At the macroeconomic level, female education is a key source of support for long-term economic growth. It has been linked to higher productivity;

higher returns to investment; higher agricultural yields; and a more favorable demographic structure.

<http://www2.goldmansachs.com/ideas/demographic-change/women-hold-up-half-of-the-sky.pdf>

**\$50 million US contribution will boost women's rights, says UN, *UN News Centre, March 12***

United States President Barack Obama's release of \$50 million to the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) will help curb poverty and improve the health of women and children in over 150 nations, the agency said, lauding an action it said will help it continue its "life-saving" work.

<http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=30164&Cr=population&Cr1=>

**Nigerian Activists Press Families to Educate Girls, *Isiyaku Ahmed, VOA News, March 10***

In the northern Nigerian town of Kano, women activists say the major issues hindering women's development are poverty and lack of a good education. Since the mid-1980s, some state governments in northern Nigeria began offering free education for girls up through secondary school. In other states, it was made an offense not to educate a girl. But women's rights advocates say those guarantees are not always enforced, and girls continue to lag behind boys.

<http://www.voanews.com/english/Africa/2009-03-10-voa31.cfm>

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## BIOFUELS

**Oil Refiner to Buy 7 Ethanol Plants, *Clifford Krauss, New York Times, March 18***

Valero Energy, the country's largest independent refiner, said that it would buy seven ethanol plants from VeraSun Energy for \$477 million, giving the biofuel industry a lift at a time when it is suffering from excess production capacity and falling gasoline consumption.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2009/03/19/business/energy-environment/19ethanol.html?ref=business>

**PetroAlgae Wins Sustainable Biofuels Award at World Biofuels Markets Event, *PR Newswire, March 18***

In a gala event including the world's foremost leaders in biofuels, PetroAlgae was presented the Sustainable Biofuels Technology Award in the Technology Supplier category at the 2009 World Biofuels Markets in Brussels.

<http://sev.prnewswire.com/OTC-smallCap/20090318/SF8540618032009-1.html>

**Brazil wants help lifting US ethanol tariffs, *International Herald Tribune, March 17***

Brazil's President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva implored American businessmen to help convince the United States to lift the 53-cent-per-gallon import tariff it places on his country's ethanol fuel. Speaking at a Wall Street Journal-sponsored investor forum this week, Silva defended the gasoline alternative as a cheap and easy way to end dependence on foreign oil and help reduce global poverty.

<http://www.ihf.com/articles/ap/2009/03/17/business/NA-US-Brazil-President.php>

See Also: **Senators Feinstein, Gregg, Bingaman, Collins, Cantwell and Martinez Introduce Bipartisan Measure to Reduce Tariffs on Imported Ethanol in Effort to Help Lower Gas Prices, *Press Release, Office of Senator Dianne Feinstein, March 19***

[http://feinstein.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?FuseAction=NewsRoom.PressReleases&ContentRecord\\_id=1a87898e-5056-8059-76e2-2b6eb7241822](http://feinstein.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?FuseAction=NewsRoom.PressReleases&ContentRecord_id=1a87898e-5056-8059-76e2-2b6eb7241822)

**Shell fuels cellulosic ethanol push with new Codexis deal**, *Biofuels International*, March 17

Oil giant Shell has stepped up its push into the biofuels sector, shelling out an undisclosed sum to increase its stake in Codexis, a developer of enzymes designed to enhance the efficiency of second-generation biofuels.

[http://www.biofuels-news.com/industry\\_news.php?item\\_id=627](http://www.biofuels-news.com/industry_news.php?item_id=627)

See Also: **Shell to focus on biofuels and raises dividend**, *International Herald Tribune*, March 17

<http://www.ihrt.com/articles/2009/03/17/business/shell.php>

**Everyone Hates Ethanol**, *Editorial, The Wall Street Journal*, March 16

These days, it's routine for businesses to fail, get rescued by the government, and then continue to fail. But ethanol, which survives only because of its iron lung of subsidies and mandates, is a special case. Naturally, the industry is demanding even more government life support.

[http://online.wsj.com/article/SB123716798764436701.html#mod=todays\\_us\\_opinion](http://online.wsj.com/article/SB123716798764436701.html#mod=todays_us_opinion)

See Also: **King Corn Cows Washington**, *Editorial, Boston Globe*, March 13

[http://www.boston.com/bostonglobe/editorial\\_opinion/editorials/articles/2009/03/13/king\\_corn\\_cows\\_washington/](http://www.boston.com/bostonglobe/editorial_opinion/editorials/articles/2009/03/13/king_corn_cows_washington/)

**Obama says no quick end to ethanol dispute**, *Financial Times*, March 15

The issue – that the U.S. continues to levy import tariffs on Brazilian sugarcane ethanol, which is more environmentally friendly than the maize ethanol produced in the US – has become a bone of contention between the two countries, with Brazil threatening litigation at the World Trade Organisation over the US's 54% gallon import tariff.

<http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/7f40b194-1109-11de-994a-0000779fd2ac.html>

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## MARKET ACCESS AND TRADE ISSUES

**Brazil Leader Asks U.S. to Focus on Trade, Credit**, *The Wall Street Journal*, March 17

Brazilian President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, visiting the U.S. this week, urged world leaders to revive moribund global trade talks to cushion the world's poor against the economic crisis. The left-leaning Mr. da Silva, a former union leader, has become an unlikely ally of more open trade, which he says can help stimulate growth in developing nations even as the U.S., Europe and Japan fall into recession.

<http://online.wsj.com/article/SB123721641967542341.html>

**EU Trade Commissioner: Obama Could Jump-Start Doha Talks**, *Morningstar*, March 17

The fate of the Doha round of global trade negotiations may lie in the hands of U.S. President Barack Obama, said European Union Trade Commissioner Catherine Ashton. In an interview, Ashton said she hopes Obama will give strong backing to relaunching talks on the long-stalled agreement when he meets with Group of 20 leaders next month.

[http://news.morningstar.com/newsnet/ViewNews.aspx?article=/DJ/200903171455DOWJONESDI ONLINE000611\\_univ.xml](http://news.morningstar.com/newsnet/ViewNews.aspx?article=/DJ/200903171455DOWJONESDI ONLINE000611_univ.xml)

**India May Subsidize Wheat Exports as Stockpiles Mount**, *Bloomberg*, March 17

India, the world's second-biggest wheat grower, may subsidize exports to run down stockpiles at government warehouses that may reach a seven-year high, likely pressuring global prices.

<http://www.bloomberg.com/apps/news?pid=20601091&sid=aMcibSq5RwHs&refer=india>

**Beijing to boost spending in Africa fund**, *Financial Times*, March 16

China is to pump a further \$2bn into its African investment fund earlier than planned to snap up opportunities left by the hasty retreat of western investors from the continent. A prospectus lists initial investments in agriculture ventures in Ethiopia, Malawi and Mozambique; a share of a \$450m power station in Ghana; and Nigerian industrial zones, among other projects.

<http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/2e22e976-1258-11de-b816-0000779fd2ac.html>

**What The G-20 Must Do**, *Bruce Stokes, National Journal, March 14*

Washington and Brussels could commit to forgo all export subsidies for agricultural products, enabling farmers in developing countries to be more competitive. The E.U. and the United States could grant duty-free, quota-free access to their markets for products from the poorest nations. The industrial world has promised all of these actions upon completion of the stalled Doha Round of multilateral trade negotiations.

[http://www.nationaljournal.com/njmagazine/ei\\_20090314\\_4878.php](http://www.nationaljournal.com/njmagazine/ei_20090314_4878.php)

**10 Ideas Changing the World Right Now: Africa, Business Destination**, *Time Magazine, March 12*

Though it rarely occurs to Westerners who've been instructed that Africa needs their help, charity is humiliating. Not emergency charity, of course: when disaster strikes, emergency aid is always welcome, whether in New Orleans or Papua New Guinea. But long-term charity, living life as a beggar, is degrading. Andrew Rugasira, 40, runs Good African Coffee, a Ugandan company he set up in 2004 to supply British supermarkets under the motto "Trade, not aid."

[http://www.time.com/time/specials/packages/article/0,28804,1884779\\_1884782\\_1884769,00.html](http://www.time.com/time/specials/packages/article/0,28804,1884779_1884782_1884769,00.html)

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## AGRIBUSINESS

**East Africa Seeks 'Green Revolution' In Agribusiness**, *Forbes, March 18*

Agriculture is a key driver of economic growth and development in sub-Saharan Africa, yet investment remains limited and the sector dominated by small-scale producers. Expanding the large-scale agribusiness sector could boost production and bring to Africa the fruits of a second green revolution.

<http://www.forbes.com/2009/03/17/east-africa-agribusiness-investment-business-oxford.html>

**Targeting African, Asian, Middle Eastern markets**, *Kwasi Kpodo, Guardian (U.K), March 16*

Ghana's Cocoa Processing Company expects to boost its revenue almost fivefold in the current financial year as a result of a recently-completed expansion. Ghana, the world's second biggest cocoa grower, is encouraging firms to grind beans locally rather than shipping raw cocoa overseas, as it aims to draw greater income from making and selling value-added products.

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/business/feedarticle/8405043>

**The Coca-Cola Company Commits US\$30 Million to Clean Water Projects across Africa**, *Fox Business, March 16*

The Coca-Cola Company announced that it has committed US \$30 million over the next six years to provide access to safe drinking water to communities throughout Africa through its Replenish Africa Initiative (RAIN). Implemented by The Coca-Cola Africa Foundation, RAIN will provide at least 2 million Africans with clean water and sanitation by 2015.

<http://www.foxbusiness.com/story/markets/industries/retail/coca-cola-company-commits-million-clean-water-projects-africa/>

**Business suffers with world water shortages, Reuters, March 15**

About 70% of global water used is for agriculture, in some developing countries where populations are growing fastest that figure is as much as 90%. Australia's drought helped sharply boost global rice prices last year. Companies that make products that require large amount of water, such as meat and biofuels, face drought risks.

<http://in.reuters.com/article/environmentNews/idINTRE52E0YL20090315>

**Zambia's agri-business powerhouse, BBC News, March 11**

Turning the countryside into a viable, sustainable industry on a much larger scale is something people here have talked about for ages. But until now, it has not happened. That is because it takes more than Mother Nature's blessing to turn Zambia into an African breadbasket. "The problem is money," says Zambeef's managing director, Francis Grog. "It costs \$10,000 a hectare to turn bush-land into farmland. That's just getting the electricity and irrigation up and running," he says.

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/business/7934677.stm>

**DSM extends its fight against 'hidden hunger' with scientific breakthrough, MSNBC, March 9**

Royal DSM NV has been working with its partner the World Food Programme (WFP), and the Swiss Federal Research Institute's Laboratory for Human Nutrition, to find new solutions to problems of poor quality nutrition - or so-called 'hidden hunger'. This describes a situation affecting around 2 billion of the world's population, where people eat enough calories to live, but whose diets fail to provide the crucial vitamins or vital minerals that allow them to be mentally and physically healthy.

<http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/29594737/>

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**UN WORLD FOOD PROGRAMME SCHOOL FEEDING PROGRAMS IN AFRICA AND SOUTH ASIA**

**Ending Child Hunger: School Feeding in Bangladesh, American Chronicle, March 14**

Bangladesh is a country in Asia that is struggling with hunger and the effects of high food prices. According to the UN World Food Programme, "Approximately half of the population (63 million people) live below the food poverty line" and "dietary intakes of both children and adults are severely deficient in vitamins and minerals in particular iron, vitamin A and zinc." Natural disasters have occurred with such frequency in Bangladesh as to deeply worsen the cycle of poverty.

<http://www.americanchronicle.com/articles/view/94431>

**Ending Child Hunger: School Feeding in Benin, American Chronicle, March 15**

In the West African nation of Benin the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) reports that "thirty percent of the population is rated poor while sixteen percent are reported to live in extreme poverty."

<http://www.americanchronicle.com/articles/view/94553>

**Ending Child Hunger: School Feeding in Bhutan, American Chronicle, March 15**

Located between India and China, Bhutan is often victimized by natural disasters like flooding. The rainy season can even close road access to remote communities for up to six months. The United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) is helping Bhutan eliminate hunger and poverty. According to WFP, "close to one-third of the population suffers from food insecurity."

<http://www.americanchronicle.com/articles/view/94501>

**Ending Child Hunger: School Feeding in Burundi, American Chronicle, March 15**

The African nation of Burundi faces many challenges to overcome hunger and poverty. A civil war devastated the country and displaced many of its citizens. Recovering from that tragedy alone is daunting when you consider the physical and emotional damage. When you add the effect of climate change, crop diseases and high food prices the task becomes even more difficult.

<http://www.americanchronicle.com/articles/view/94526>

**Ending Child Hunger: School Feeding in Cameroon**, *American Chronicle*, March 15

Located in West Africa, the country of Cameroon has 64 percent of its rural population impacted by poverty according to the "United Nations World Food Programme". School feeding programs can help lift children and their families out of the poverty trap.

<http://www.americanchronicle.com/articles/view/94503>

**Ending Child Hunger: School Feeding in the Central African Republic**, *American Chronicle*, March 15

The Central African Republic has been plagued by internal fighting in recent years, forcing over 200,000 people to flee their homes and villages. According to the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP), most of the displaced people "live hidden in the bush to protect themselves from acts of violence and are the target of armed groups."

<http://www.americanchronicle.com/articles/view/94524>

**Ending Child Hunger: School Feeding in Chad**, *American Chronicle*, March 15

In the African nation of Chad the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) provides aid to 150,000 people who have been displaced by fighting in the eastern part of the country. Chad is also host to refugees from the conflicts in Darfur and the Central African Republic. The effects of these internal and external conflicts alone are monumental, but Chad also struggles with natural disasters like drought.

<http://www.americanchronicle.com/articles/view/94549>

**Ending Child Hunger: School Feeding in Côte d'Ivoire**, *American Chronicle*, March 15

Located in West Africa, Côte d'Ivoire is a country where 800,000 people have been displaced following a 2002 "attempted coup-turned-rebellion." According to the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) "the prolonged crisis in Côte d'Ivoire has created a complex humanitarian emergency that has disrupted the country's food security."

<http://www.americanchronicle.com/articles/view/94529>

**Ending Child Hunger: School Feeding in Lesotho**, *American Chronicle*, March 15

In the African nation of Lesotho, drought and soil erosion have caused havoc in recent years, harming food production. The United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) is helping Lesotho combat the resulting hunger and poverty, training farmers how to boost food production under difficult drought conditions with some positive results. School feeding programs are also an essential part of the strategy for ending hunger and poverty in Lesotho.

<http://www.americanchronicle.com/articles/view/94500>

**Ending Child Hunger: School Feeding in Malawi**, *American Chronicle*, March 11

School lunch programs can offer a calm in the storm of poverty in developing countries. Having children ensured a meal at school is a valuable safety net for poor families. The African nation of Malawi is one country that needs universal school feeding to overcome hunger and poverty.

<http://www.americanchronicle.com/articles/view/94035>

**Ending Child Hunger: School Feeding in Nepal**, *American Chronicle*, March 11

The UN World Food Programme estimates that nearly 2 million children go to school hungry in Nepal each day. Nepal's children have some of the worst nutrition statistics in the world. One in two children are stunted and 39 percent are underweight. Acute malnutrition rates are now rising and are as high as 20 percent in the districts bordering India.

<http://www.americanchronicle.com/articles/view/94102>

**Ending Child Hunger: School Feeding in Pakistan**, *American Chronicle*, March 9

In Pakistan, "almost 85 percent of the population live on a marginal income of less than US\$ 2 per day," according to the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP). Food for Education is a key strategy for helping the impoverished in this nation of over 140 million people, most living in rural areas. Food for Education programs provide school feeding and also take-home rations for children.

<http://www.americanchronicle.com/articles/view/93882>

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