



**May 16<sup>th</sup>-29<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).

---

**Contents:**

- Key Articles
- **NEW SECTION \*\*\*Relevant U.S. Administration and Congressional Activities\*\*\***
- New Reports/Policy Briefs
- Upcoming Events
- Agricultural Issues
- Foreign Assistance
- Environment (Water/Climate)
- Global Economic Crisis in the Developing World
- Biofuels
- Women
- Market Access and Trade Issues
- Agribusiness

---

**KEY ARTICLES**

**Making farms flourish: Time to regrow U.S. leadership on food**, *By Catherine Bertini and Dan Glickman, Washington Times, May 23*

Americans are generous in a crisis, both here and abroad. No nation is swifter to respond, no people are more giving than Americans when a tragedy strikes. Today, a silent tragedy is sweeping the global south. More than 1 billion people are hungry because of a shortage of food. Most of those people are small farmers and their families living in sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia.

<http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2009/may/23/making-farms-flourish/>

**The Global Food Crisis: The End of Plenty**, *National Geographic, June 2009*

Modern society has relieved us of the burden of growing, harvesting, even preparing our daily bread, in exchange for the burden of simply paying for it. Only when prices rise do we take notice. And the consequences of our inattention are profound. Last year the skyrocketing cost of food was a wake-up call for the planet. Between 2005 and the summer of 2008, the price of wheat and corn tripled, and the price of rice climbed fivefold, spurring food riots in nearly two dozen countries and pushing 75 million more people into poverty.

<http://ngm.nationalgeographic.com/2009/06/cheap-food/bourne-text>

**Nourishing Afghanistan's Agricultural Sector**, *Council on Foreign Relations, May 26*

As the United States focuses new attention on the Afghan war front, U.S. policymakers are emphasizing rural development and agricultural reform as keys to long-term stability. Bruce Riedel, who coauthored the Obama administration's review of Afghanistan-Pakistan strategy, says Washington is "going to emphasize wheat" as an alternative to opium poppy production, which has helped fund the country's strengthening insurgency.

[http://www.cfr.org/publication/19478/nourishing\\_afghanistans\\_agricultural\\_sector.html?breadcrumb=/index](http://www.cfr.org/publication/19478/nourishing_afghanistans_agricultural_sector.html?breadcrumb=/index)

**Africa hunger crisis seen still tied to politics**, *Washington Post*, May 22

Agricultural experts looking at Africa's enduring problems with food shortages and famine say hunger is unlikely to be solved there unless political stability returns to allow investment to flourish. With the recession in rich countries, there are few fresh infusions of investment capital flowing into Africa, with much of the recent investment coming from private foundations funded by Bill and Melinda Gates, Warren Buffett and the Rockefellers, experts say. Investment to transport grains and livestock and improve water and irrigation are key to Africa progress, experts said.

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/05/22/AR2009052201312.html>

**Fix the land deals**, *Financial Times*, May 26

Food commodity prices remain near historic highs. Food riots destabilised countries around the world last year – more than the financial crisis – and may well return. If food was ever a soft policy issue before, it now rivals oil as a basis of power and economic security. Like all commodities on which power depends, food is dealt in with hardening self-interest. Fearing political trouble at home, countries with surplus food have imposed export restrictions. Food-importing nations have in reaction entered large farmland leases with African states. Most of the deals are murky, many are inequitable and some are rightly denounced as land grabs.

<http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/96d3f1de-4a22-11de-8e7e-00144feabdc0.html>

**The U.S.-India Moment**, *Alyssa Ayres, Op-Ed, The Wall Street Journal Asia*, May 26

As during the 1960s, when American and Indian scientists together helped end India's chronic food shortages, agriculture must be a focus for public-private partnership between our countries. As smallholder farms begin to flourish and are linked to new global markets for their produce, a second green revolution will transform the lives of one-quarter of the world's poor. (As with most metrics in India, the scale has the power to awe.) The successes of this model can be applied throughout the developing world.

<http://online.wsj.com/article/SB124292806194144083.html>

**Biotech holds seeds of hope for Africa**, *Robb Fraley (chief technology officer, Monsanto), Op-Ed, Atlanta Journal-Constitution*, May 19

Some estimates show that of the 50-plus percent of those working in agriculture in sub-Saharan Africa, more than 80 percent are women. Introduce a natural disaster, like drought, and the spiral downward for the farmer and her family accelerates. Improving agriculture productivity in Africa is complex and there is no single solution.

<http://www.ajc.com/services/content/printedition/2009/05/19/fraleyed0519.html>

**UN: Developing world needs help to weather crisis**, *Associated Press/Forbes*, May 20

Most developing countries are innocent victims of the global financial crisis yet wealthy nations have become less willing to help them through difficult times, a senior U.N. official said. Jomo Kwame Sundaram, the U.N. assistant secretary-general for economic development, called for a more inclusive approach to dealing with the devastating economic downturn and urged policy makers to focus more on ensuring long-term growth, employment and development.

<http://www.forbes.com/feeds/ap/2009/05/20/ap6445725.html>

Creeping up: Food prices are inching up again, *The Economist*, May 29



[http://www.economist.com/daily/chartgallery/displaystory.cfm?story\\_id=13760596&fsrc=rss](http://www.economist.com/daily/chartgallery/displaystory.cfm?story_id=13760596&fsrc=rss)

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

By Dan Glickman and Catherine Bertini

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

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

---

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

**CONGRESSIONAL HEARING: Local and Regional Purchases: Opportunities to Enhance U.S. Food Aid**,  
*Subcommittee on Africa and Global Health*

*Date:* June 4, 2009

*Location:* 2172 Rayburn House Office Building

*Time:* 10:30 a.m.

*Witnesses:* **Mr. Allan Jury**, Director, United States Relations Office, World Food Programme; **Mr. Thomas Malito**, Director, International Affairs and Trade Team, United States Government Accountability Office

[http://www.internationalrelations.house.gov/hearing\\_notice.asp?id=1079](http://www.internationalrelations.house.gov/hearing_notice.asp?id=1079)

**Diplomacy and Development in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: Remarks by Senator John Kerry, *The Brookings Institution, May 21***

Sen. John Kerry (D-MA), Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, called for rebuilding U.S. development capacity, clarifying U.S. foreign assistance policies and goals, better coordinating U.S. aid efforts, and streamlining outdated foreign assistance legislation – including rewriting the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961.

[http://www.brookings.edu/~media/Files/events/2009/0521\\_foreign\\_assistance/20090521\\_foreign\\_assistance.pdf](http://www.brookings.edu/~media/Files/events/2009/0521_foreign_assistance/20090521_foreign_assistance.pdf)

**Tom Vilsack: Leading 'an Everyday, Every-Way' USDA, *Washington Post, May 21***

Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack wants to make one thing clear, and it's that his agency is not all about farming all the time. Rather, the USDA touches on just about every critical issue affecting the United States and the globe -- from immigration to obesity, from the swine flu to developing food safety in Afghanistan.

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/05/20/AR2009052003692.html>

*See Also: Complete Interview of Tom Vilsack, Secretary of Agriculture, Washington Post, May 21*

[http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/politics/documents/vop\\_vilsack\\_transcript.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/politics/documents/vop_vilsack_transcript.html)

**US Senate approves \$100 billion IMF line of credit, *Associated Press, May 21***

The Senate approved on Thursday a \$100 billion U.S. line of credit to the International Monetary Fund, rejecting an attempt by a conservative senator to remove the commitment from legislation to finance military and diplomatic operations in Iraq and Afghanistan.

<http://www.forbes.com/feeds/ap/2009/05/21/ap6454029.html>

**Committee Approves Two-Year Authorization Bill Bolstering U.S. Diplomacy, Development Efforts, *House Committee on Foreign Relations, May 20***

The House Foreign Affairs Committee today approved comprehensive legislation to shore up U.S. foreign policy efforts, the Foreign Relations Authorization Act for Fiscal Years 2010 and 2011 (H.R. 2410).

“For far too long, we have failed to provide the State Department with the resources it needs to fill critical overseas posts, provide adequate training, and ensure effective oversight of the programs that it manages,” Committee Chairman Howard L. Berman (D-CA) said. “With the expansion of U.S. diplomatic responsibilities in the 1990’s and the more recent demands of Iraq and Afghanistan, the Foreign Service has been strained to the breaking point. We simply must supply the needed resources now.”

[http://www.internationalrelations.house.gov/press\\_display.asp?id=621](http://www.internationalrelations.house.gov/press_display.asp?id=621)

**Chairman Kerry Opening Statement At Hearing On International Affairs Budget, *John F. Kerry, Opening Statement for Hearing on The International Affairs Budget, May 20***

“Finally, the President’s budget proposes important global initiatives in food security, climate change, global health and basic education. It doubles agricultural development funding to \$1 billion; doubles environmental and climate change activities to nearly \$600 million; and it sustains our commitment to fighting HIV/AIDS, funding global health programs, and increasing our investment in basic education. Each of these priorities is essential in its own right.”

<http://foreign.senate.gov/testimony/2009/KerryStatement090520p.pdf>

**Opening Statement for Foreign Affairs Budget Hearing with Secretary Clinton, *Senator Richard Lugar, May 20***

I appreciate the attention that the Secretary has focused thus far on global hunger. Eradicating hunger must be embraced as both a humanitarian and national security imperative. Unless nations work together to reverse negative trends in agricultural productivity, the combination of population growth, high energy prices, increasing water scarcity, and climate change threaten to create chronic and destabilizing food shortages.

<http://lugar.senate.gov/press/record.cfm?id=313270>

**FY 2010 Budget for the Department of State, Remarks by Secretary of State**

*Hillary Rodham Clinton Before the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs, May 20*

"If we're going to be successful in addressing food security, then we've got to get everybody who deals with food aid and sustainable agriculture in the same room, around the same table, hammering out the American approach, not the State Department or the USAID or the USDA or some other approach. It's got to be a team. And we're trying to forge those teams. We think it will make us more efficient and cost-effective at the same time."

<http://www.state.gov/secretary/rm/2009a/05/123679.htm>

**Clinton announces aid for Pakistan, *Boston Globe, May 19***

Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton announced the aid -- \$110 million and said the money will help ease the plight of about 2 million Pakistanis who have fled the recent fighting. The White House said \$100 million would come the State Department and \$10 million from the Defense Department. The largest single item is \$26 million for the immediate purchase of wheat and other food.

[http://www.boston.com/news/politics/politicalintelligence/2009/05/clinton\\_to\\_anno.html](http://www.boston.com/news/politics/politicalintelligence/2009/05/clinton_to_anno.html)

*See Also: Clinton Pledges More Aid to Pakistan, New York Times, May 19*

<http://www.nytimes.com/2009/05/20/world/asia/20clinton.html?src=tw&tw=nytimespolitics>

**Obama Seeks \$1.42 Billion for Millennium Aid Agency in 2010, *America.gov, May 19***

President Obama is asking Congress for \$1.42 billion to fund the Millennium Challenge Corporation for the fiscal year beginning October 1, an increase of 63 percent over the current year's funding.

The request shows that the administration supports MCC's focus on anti-corruption in tackling global poverty, Alicia Phillips Mandaville, a senior policy associate at the MCC, said from Washington in a May 19 *America.gov* webchat.

<http://www.america.gov/st/develop-english/2009/May/20090519155737aklennoccm0.8406488.html>

**"Game-Changing Pick" Under Consideration to Head New Foreign Assistance Effort, *Jodi Jacobson, Huffington Post, May 19***

Dr. Paul Farmer, a founder of Partners in Health, recipient of the MacArthur "genius" award and a long-time provider of and advocate for basic health care for the poor is in discussion to lead a wholly revised U.S. international assistance strategy, with portfolio over all non-military U.S. foreign assistance, including but not limited to the programs funded by USAID, the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), the Millennium Challenge Account, humanitarian assistance, emergency assistance and potentially food aid.

[http://www.huffingtonpost.com/jodi-jacobson/game-changing-pick-under\\_b\\_205284.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/jodi-jacobson/game-changing-pick-under_b_205284.html)

**Obama FY2010 International Affairs Budget Would Increase Development Capacity at USAID, State, *Testimony of Jacob Lew, Deputy Secretary of State for Management and Resources, before the House Committee on Foreign Affairs, May 13***

President Barack Obama's FY2010 International Affairs Budget request for the Department of State, the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), and other foreign affairs agencies totals \$53.9 billion, up nine percent from FY09 funding levels.

The administration requested an \$8.4 billion increase in foreign aid — a 54 percent boost — bringing the total to \$23.7 billion in fiscal 2010. The White House said the increase is "designed to strengthen diplomacy and development, such as expanding the Foreign Service and doubling foreign assistance." The aid would be used to implement the administration's strategy to defeat terrorism in Afghanistan and Pakistan, as well as for global health and climate change initiatives, the administration said.

<http://www.internationalrelations.house.gov/111/lew051309.pdf>

**House Hunger Caucus Briefing—"U.S. International Food Aid, Nutrition and Agriculture Development Programs," *Remarks by Jolyne Sanjak, Millennium Challenge Corporation's Managing Director for Implementation Support, May 13***

"Even before the global implications of a food crisis became apparent, compact eligible countries asked for MCC funds to support the infrastructure and agricultural investments needed for reliable access to sufficient, safe, and affordable food. MCC responded. All told, MCC has obligated \$3.2 billion for investments in the

world's agricultural and the rural economies to increase productivity and income. Within our country-driven approach, our partners have directed MCC grants to the very sectors essential for long-term food security: agriculture and rural infrastructure."

<http://www.mcc.gov/press/speeches/documents/speech-051309-sanjakhunger.php>

See Also: **Fact Sheet: MCC Investments Contribute to Long-Term Food Security**, Millennium Challenge Corporation, March 20

<http://www.mcc.gov/documents/factsheet-032009-foodsecurity.pdf>

**Senate Report on the Global Food Security Act of 2009**, Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, May 2009

The bill establishes a Special Coordinator for Food Security to advise the President on international food security issues and to develop a global food security strategy. This strategy is to be developed in consultation with government agencies, program implementers, private sector actors, education and research institutions, and international donor and nongovernmental actors. It should reflect a whole of government approach in harnessing the resources of the numerous U.S. Government agencies that manage programs supporting the objectives of the Global Food Security Act.

<http://www.africanhunger.org/uploads/articles/cfe1c2b0c0e3c21269f67f053978caf3.pdf>

---

## NEW REPORTS/POLICY BRIEFS

**A National Strategy for Global Development: Protecting America and Our World Through Sustainable Security**, Center for American Progress, May 19

Recent events in Afghanistan and Iraq as well as complex challenges throughout the world demonstrate the importance of effective development assistance across a wide array of circumstances. Whether responding to the tsunami in Indonesia, reacting to food riots in Egypt, promoting good governance in post-conflict Liberia, or supporting counterinsurgency efforts in the Philippines, the ability of the U.S. government to address the needs of civilian populations in various circumstances must be a key component of American foreign policy.

[http://www.americanprogress.org/issues/2009/05/security\\_development.html](http://www.americanprogress.org/issues/2009/05/security_development.html)

**Strengthening America's Global Development Partnerships: A Policy Blueprint for Better Collaboration Between the U.S. Government, Business and Civil Society**, Brookings Institution, May 2009

In the face of compounding global crises threatening development, the outdated U.S. foreign assistance system must catch up to a changed landscape of influential actors including corporations, mega-foundations, faithbased organizations and other non-governmental groups. Within the context of broader foreign assistance reform, the Obama administration and Congress have an opportunity to retool official U.S. efforts to more effectively and efficiently support global development by adapting to this new ecosystem.

[http://www.brookings.edu/~media/Files/rc/articles/2009/05\\_development\\_partnerships\\_unger/05\\_development\\_partnerships\\_unger.pdf](http://www.brookings.edu/~media/Files/rc/articles/2009/05_development_partnerships_unger/05_development_partnerships_unger.pdf)

**"Beyond Aid" For Sustainable Development**, Overseas Development Institute, May 2009

While the prospects for developing countries are shaped by a wide range of domestic issues, such as politics, others have important cross-border dimensions. These go beyond aid to include trade, migration, investment, environmental issues, security and technology. It is these 'Beyond Aid' issues, rather than aid alone, that will shape the development prospects for many countries. This Project Briefing examines Policy Coherence for Development -- approaches to ensure that donor policies on Beyond Aid issues support progress towards the Millennium Development Goals.

<http://www.odi.org.uk/resources/download/3288.pdf>

**Sustainable Agriculture and Food Security in Asia and the Pacific**, UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, April 2009

The impact of food insecurity on the Asia-Pacific region and how to deal with it is the focus of an ESCAP study entitled Sustainable Agriculture and Food Security in Asia and the Pacific. The study examines the environmental, economic and social challenges that are the roots of the region's food insecurity and suggests a regional framework of action to be taken by governments and the international community in order to create greater food security.

[http://www.unescap.org/65/theme\\_study2009.asp](http://www.unescap.org/65/theme_study2009.asp)

**The Cost of Zimbabwe's Continuing Farm Invasions**, *Eddie Cross (Member of Parliament of Zimbabwe for the Movement for Democratic Change), Cato Institute, May 2009*

The combined costs of the land reform are staggering— they include US\$2.8 billion in international food aid on an emergency basis, and nearly US\$12 billion in lost agricultural production over 10 years. It is time to give all farmers secure tenure that will enable them to finance their operations properly. Such policies cannot be implemented until the issue of the rights of the farm owners is resolved and the issue of compensation addressed.

<http://www.cato.org/pubs/edb/edb12.pdf>

**Land grab or development opportunity? Agricultural investment and international land deals in Africa**, *International Institute for Environment and Development, June 2009*

Land acquisitions are on the increase in Africa and other continents, raising the risk, if not made properly, that poor people will be evicted or lose access to land, water, and other resources, according to the first detailed study of the trend. The study has been realized by the International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED) at the request of UN Food and Agriculture Organization and International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD). It warns that such deals can bring many opportunities (guaranteed outlets, employment, investment in infrastructures, increases in agricultural productivity) but can also cause great harm if local people are excluded from decisions about allocating land and if their land rights are not protected.

<http://www.iied.org/natural-resources/key-issues/empowerment-and-land-rights/first-detailed-study-large-land-acquisitions-africa-warns-impacts-poor->

**Rice Price Formation in the Short Run and the Long Run: The Role of Market Structure in Explaining Volatility**, *C. Peter Timmer, Center for Global Development, May 2009*

The sudden spike in rice prices in late 2007 and early 2008 exacerbated concerns about volatility in the world rice market. The international community responded mostly by increasing funding for food aid; national governments tried, many with little success, to stabilize their domestic rice prices. These responses only destabilized the world market further. This paper seeks to understand price formation on the world's rice markets.

[http://www.cgdev.org/files/1422136\\_file\\_Timmer\\_Rice\\_Price\\_FINAL.pdf](http://www.cgdev.org/files/1422136_file_Timmer_Rice_Price_FINAL.pdf)

**International Trade: Free, Fair and Open?** *OECD, May 2009*

There are no simple answers to many of the questions raised by international trade. Trade can be a powerful force for positive developments, but it can also bring problems and uncertainties. It may not be the most important factor determining the prosperity of countries and people, but lasting prosperity is unlikely without it.

<http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/33/53/42732710.pdf>

*See Also: World trade set to fall 13 percent, OECD urges governments to avoid protectionism, OECD, May 19*

[http://www.oecd.org/document/12/0,3343,en\\_2649\\_37431\\_42788172\\_1\\_1\\_1\\_1,00.html](http://www.oecd.org/document/12/0,3343,en_2649_37431_42788172_1_1_1_1,00.html)

**Course on agribusiness management for producers' associations: FAO Training Materials for Agricultural Management, Marketing and Finance**, *FAO, May 2009*

The manual is aimed at improving the agribusiness management capabilities of leaders and managers of producers' associations as well as those of technicians from government, NGOs and the private sector, who provide technical assistance to agro-enterprises. It is addressed to small and medium size producers' associations with experience in production and marketing of agricultural products.

<ftp://ftp.fao.org/docrep/fao/011/i0499e>

*See Also: Knowledge is power: FAO training manual to help poor farmers turn into better business people, FAO, May 21*

<http://www.fao.org/news/story/en/item/19792/icode/>

**Agricultural Biotechnology in Latin America: A quantitative perspective**, *International Food Policy Research Institute, May 2009*

In this paper, the authors consider both modern and traditional biotechnologies, yet emphasize issues surrounding genetically modified crops. The cultivated area with GM crops has increased at an accelerated pace in Latin America and the Caribbean to 32 million hectares, yet this expansion has happened only in three crops (soybeans, corn, cotton), two traits (herbicide and insect resistance, or combinations of both) and eight countries (Brazil, Argentina, México, Uruguay, Paraguay, Bolivia, Honduras and Colombia).

<http://www.ifpri.org/pubs/dp/ifpridp00860.asp#ab>

**Human Impact Report: Climate Change – The Anatomy of a Silent Crisis**, *Global Humanitarian Forum, May 2009*

The Human Impact Report is the first consolidated volume specifically and exclusively which focus on the adverse impacts of the climate change on the human society across the world. The report is based on the latest information and inputs from world-leading scientists on the human impact of climate change. The report will also include an estimate on the numbers of the people who die as the result of climate change, the economic cost of climate change as well as making projections 20 years into the future.

Full Report: <http://assets.ghf-ge.org/downloads/humanimpactreport.pdf>

Introduction from Kofi Annan: [http://www.ghf-ge.org/programmes/human\\_impact\\_report/introduction\\_kofi\\_annan/index.cfm](http://www.ghf-ge.org/programmes/human_impact_report/introduction_kofi_annan/index.cfm)

Executive Summary: [http://www.ghf-ge.org/programmes/human\\_impact\\_report/executive\\_summary/index.cfm](http://www.ghf-ge.org/programmes/human_impact_report/executive_summary/index.cfm)

See Also: **Climate change: Go on, guess**, *The Economist, May 29*,

The human impact of climate change “is difficult to assess reliably,” say the authors of a new report from the Global Humanitarian Forum, a think-tank run by Kofi Annan, a former United Nations secretary-general, aided by a raft of eminent folk. But they make a stab, reaching the conclusion that 325m people around the world are seriously affected by climate change every year and that this number could more than double, to around 660m, by 2030.

[http://www.economist.com/world/international/displaystory.cfm?story\\_id=13743344](http://www.economist.com/world/international/displaystory.cfm?story_id=13743344)

**Managing the health effects of climate change**, *The Lancet, May 2009*

Climate change is the biggest global health threat of the 21st century. Effects of climate change on health will affect most populations in the next decades and put the lives and wellbeing of billions of people at increased risk.

<http://download.thelancet.com/flatcontentassets/pdfs/climate-article.pdf>

See Also: **GLOBAL: Climate change biggest threat to health, new study**, *IRIN, May 14*

Climate change will be the biggest global health threat in the 21st century, but little is known about its possible effects on developing countries, where the impact will be felt most, says a new report.

<http://www.irinnews.org/report.aspx?ReportID=84373>

**The Linkages Between Agriculture and Malaria: Issues for Policy, Research, and Capacity Strengthening**, *International Food Policy Research Institute, May 2009*

Malaria afflicts many people in the developing world, and due to its direct and indirect costs it has widespread impacts on growth and development. Human activity, including agriculture, has been recognized as one of the reasons for the increased intensity of malaria around the world, because it supports the breeding of mosquitoes that carry the malaria parasite. Since agriculture is the main activity of rural people in many endemic areas, it has been suggested that effective malaria control measures can be devised if attention was paid to the two-way effects of agriculture and malaria.

<http://www.ifpri.org/pubs/dp/IFPRIDP00861.pdf>

---

## UPCOMING EVENTS

**45th Annual Conference and 2009 Future Leaders Forum: “The Global Food Crisis” (hosted by the Association of International Agriculture and Rural Development)**

Date: May 31-June 3, 2009

Location: 550 C Street SW, Washington, D.C.

Our 45th Annual Conference will attract a wide array of leaders, field-based experts, students, scholars, and many others from government, academia, business, foundations and elsewhere. The program will consist of presentations by speakers who have been front and center in implementing strategies to alleviate the current crisis as well as long term planners who will think ahead to ways to prevent such a crisis.

<http://aiard.org/meetings/2009annual/invitation.htm>

**African Ministerial Council on Science & Technology, Bureau Meeting**

Date: June 1-5, 2009

Location: Burundi

In January we seemed only months away from seeing some progress on an African fund for science, technology and education. The fund features highly in the continent's 2005 science plan, the Consolidated Plan of Action. The fund is intended as a central repository for science development aid that ensures money is spent in a coordinated way and in accordance with continental policies.

<http://www.scidev.net/en/opinions/africa-analysis-continental-science-fund-forgotten.html>

**2009 World Food Prize Laureate Announcement Ceremony**

Date: June 11, 2009

Location: U.S. Department of State, Washington, DC

The 2009 winner of the \$250,000 World Food Prize – the most prestigious international award honoring individual breakthrough achievements increasing the quantity, quality, and availability of food in the world – will be made known at this special, invitation-only event hosted by the Bureau of Economic, Energy and Business Affairs and featuring remarks by Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton and Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack.

[https://www.worldfoodprize.org/press\\_room/2009/may/09announcement.htm](https://www.worldfoodprize.org/press_room/2009/may/09announcement.htm)

**Strengthening Social Entrepreneurship: An Innovative Approach to the Teaching of Food Policy Analysis, IFPRI**

Date: June 11, 2009

Time: 3:00-4:30 p.m.

Speaker: Per Pinstrup-Andersen, Cornell University

IFPRI is pleased to invite you to the following Policy Seminar, which we will hold in our fourth floor conference facility located at 2033 K Street, NW (entrance on 21st Street, between K and L Streets). **Kindly RSVP to Simone Hill-Lee** ([s.hill-lee@cgiar.org](mailto:s.hill-lee@cgiar.org); Tel: 202.862.8107). *Per Pinstrup-Andersen is the J. Thomas Clark Professor of Entrepreneurship at Cornell, H.E. Babcock Professor of Food, Nutrition and Public Policy, Nutritional Sciences Professor, Applied Economics and Management College of Agriculture and Life Sciences.*

**From Poverty to Productivity: How to Feed the World's Hungry**

Speakers: **Robert Thompson**, Gardner Chair in Agricultural Policy, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign; **Jerry Hagstrom**, National Journal; **Roger Thurow**, foreign reporter, Wall Street Journal; **Scott Kilman**, agriculture reporter, Wall Street Journal; **Marv Baldwin**, president, Foods Resource Bank

Date: **June 17, 2009**

Time: **6:00 p.m.**

Location: Blackstone Hotel, Chicago, IL

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

[http://www.thechicagocouncil.org/chicago\\_council\\_event\\_corporate\\_detail.php?eventid=2087](http://www.thechicagocouncil.org/chicago_council_event_corporate_detail.php?eventid=2087)

### **Joint International Agricultural Conference**

*Date:* July 6-8, 2009

*Location:* Droevendaalsesteeg 2, 6708 PB Wageningen, Netherlands

The main objective of the joint conference will be to form a platform for cooperation between different fields of research and to provide an opportunity to join forces with representatives from the agricultural industry and policy makers. A second objective will be to exchange research efforts focusing on precision agriculture, precision livestock farming and information technology in agriculture, food and the environment.

<http://www.jiac2009.nl/Home/tabid/362/Default.aspx>

### **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)

---

## **AGRICULTURAL ISSUES**

### **Combat Hunger by Investing in Agricultural Development**, *Des Moines Register*, May 29

The world is hungry. The unprecedented global financial crisis is plummeting more people into poverty. Nearly 1 billion worldwide go hungry, according to the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization. Our conscience tells us this is morally reprehensible; our intellect reminds us that hunger pangs can breed riots and civil unrest that jeopardize the peace for us all. This human calamity - with far-reaching consequences - demands that we strategically and smartly retool our thinking on how to tackle the scourge of global hunger.

<http://www.desmoinesregister.com/article/20090529/OPINION01/905290341/1036/Opinion>

### **Agriculture key to Africa's development, stresses UN-African Union report**, *UN News Centre*, May 28

African nations will be hit hard by the global economic crisis during the course of 2009, the United Nations and the African Union (AU) say in a new report, which stresses the need to focus on agriculture, the mainstay of economies on the continent. "Modernising agriculture is crucial to development and industrialisation in Africa, to food security, sustained poverty reduction and integration of Africa in the global economy," says this year's Economic Report on Africa.

<http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=30946&Cr=africa&Cr1=agriculture>

### **AfDB and Mozambique Negotiate Nacala Road Corridor Project**, *AllAfrica.com*, May 27

This multinational project will promote economic growth and regional integration within SADC, through the development of reliable, effective and seamless transport infrastructure. Better access to the port by for landlocked regions will improve transport services, access to markets and social services for communities in

the area, and contribute to poverty reduction. Some 787,000 people are expected to benefit directly from the project in Mozambique.

<http://allafrica.com/stories/200905270671.html>

**G8 move to halt 'farmland grabbing', *Financial Times*, May 26**

Japan will spearhead a drive at the Group of Eight summit to prevent "farmland grabbing" in developing countries and encourage responsible investing in agriculture.

The move shows growing fears among leading nations that rich countries such as Saudi Arabia or South Korea, which are not self-sufficient in food production, are investing in overseas land, particularly in Africa, to boost their food security.

<http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/c4ea7d22-498c-11de-9e19-00144feabdc0.html>

**China farmers raid police station, *BBC News*, May 26**

Hundreds of Chinese tea farmers attacked a police station following a row about social security payments.

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/asia-pacific/8067941.stm>

**Last Year's Rice Boom Turns to Slump, *The Wall Street Journal*, May 25**

A year after prices soared to record levels amid panic over supply shortages, rice appears to be plentiful and the market is in the midst of a prolonged slump. The stalled global economy, large Asian crops and a move by governments to loosen their grip on stocks have conspired to keep prices under pressure for months, analysts said.

<http://online.wsj.com/article/SB124320011767350645.html?mg=com-wsj>

**Colombian Farmers Get Broad Incentives To Forgo Coca Crops, *Washington Post*, May 22**

Colombia, with \$8 billion in U.S. backing since the late 1990s, has tried everything to eradicate the crop used to make cocaine. Now, Colombia's government may have found a remedy palatable to a Democratic-led U.S. Congress not only interested in emphasizing social development over military aid for this country but also looking for solutions to consider in Afghanistan, where the Taliban is entrenched and drug crops are flourishing.

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/05/21/AR2009052104318.html>

**Outsourcing's Third Wave: Buying Farmland Abroad, *Economist*, May 21**

EARLY this year, the king of Saudi Arabia held a ceremony to receive a batch of rice, part of the first crop to be produced under something called the King Abdullah initiative for Saudi agricultural investment abroad. It had been grown in Ethiopia, where a group of Saudi investors is spending \$100m to raise wheat, barley and rice on land leased to them by the government. The investors are exempt from tax in the first few years and may export the entire crop back home. Meanwhile, the World Food Programme (WFP) is spending almost the same amount as the investors (\$116m) providing 230,000 tonnes of food aid between 2007 and 2011 to the 4.6m Ethiopians it thinks are threatened by hunger and malnutrition.

[http://www.economist.com/world/international/displaystory.cfm?story\\_id=13692889](http://www.economist.com/world/international/displaystory.cfm?story_id=13692889)

**Cornering Foreign Fields: Land Deals in Africa and Asia, *Economist*, May 21**

OVER the past two years, as much as 20m hectares of farmland—an area as big as France's sprawling farmland and worth \$20 billion-30 billion—has been quietly handed over to capital-exporting countries such as Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and China. They buy or lease millions of acres, grow staple crops or biofuels on it, and ship them home. The countries doing the selling are some of the world's poorest and least stable ones: Sudan, Ethiopia, Congo, Pakistan. Usually, when foreigners show up in these places, it is with aid, pity and lectures (or, in one instance, arrest warrants for war crimes). It must make a nice change to find their farms, so often sources of failure and famine, objects of commercial interest instead.

[http://www.economist.com/opinion/displaystory.cfm?story\\_id=13697274](http://www.economist.com/opinion/displaystory.cfm?story_id=13697274)

**Afghanistan more food secure in 2009, *Department for International Development, United Kingdom*, May 21**

In Afghanistan, having enough food to feed your family is a big issue. Nearly 1 in 4 Afghans do not have enough to eat – more than 8 million people. In 2008, drought and a global rise in food prices saw an increase in Afghans struggling to feed their families. One strategy is the Afghanistan Vouchers for Increased

Production in Agriculture (AVIPA), which uses vouchers to distribute wheat seed and fertiliser to farmers across 14 provinces.

<http://www.dfid.gov.uk/Media-Room/News-Stories/2009/Afghanistan-food-security/>

See Also: **Wheat more expensive in Afghanistan than elsewhere** – WFP, Reuters AlertNet, May 20  
<http://www.alertnet.org/thenews/newsdesk/IRIN/1520f05344c43e26afc09d9c905a5a87.htm>

**Southern Africa food insecurity worsens on Zimbabwe**, Reuters, May 21

The number of hungry people in southern Africa rose over the past year largely due to the crisis in Zimbabwe, despite a lower regional cereal deficit, the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) said. The region's maize surplus rose following favourable rains and increased supply of seeds.

<http://af.reuters.com/article/topNews/idAFJ0E54K0AL20090521>

**It's sunny side up for Kazakh farmers**, FAO, May 21

Sunflower oil is by far the major vegetable oil consumed in Kazakhstan, but growing demand in recent years has been met largely by imports rather than increased production. Low rainfall results in poor yields - and sunflower's poor reputation among farmers in northwestern Kazakhstan. But the picture may be changing, thanks in part to efforts by FAO and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD).

<http://www.fao.org/news/story/en/item/19894/icode/>

**Taking genetic engineering from labs to African farms**, Xinhua (China), May 20

Researchers, policy makers and heads of farmer associations met recently in Entebbe to examine the potential benefits of producing Genetically Modified (GM) crops to boost food production in hunger stricken Africa. While in this meeting emphasis is being put on use of GM technology to boost production, another international meeting opened in the capital Kampala, 40 km north of Entebbe, calling for organic farming in order to take advantage of the lucrative market in Europe.

[http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2009-05/20/content\\_11407068.htm](http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2009-05/20/content_11407068.htm)

**Renewing African agriculture**, Carlos Seré (Director General, International Livestock Research Institute), ScienceAlert, May 20

Rural Africa remains largely hungry and poor despite decades of improved agricultural technologies, crop varieties and management and policy options generated by agricultural science to help solve the continent's special agricultural challenges. What's been missing is an integrated approach to African agriculture that is radically collaborative, holistic and futuristic - an approach that embraces rather than ignores the complexity of small-scale African farming and marketing and the continent's special agro-ecological and cultural diversity.

<http://www.sciencealert.com.au/opinions/20092005-19170.html>

**Food security initiative launched**, Arab News (Saudi Arabia), May 20

Saudi Arabia and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) have launched a major initiative under which they have identified eight countries to cofinance agriculture projects that would go a long way to ensuring food security. Lebanon, Yemen, Algeria, Senegal, Sudan, Morocco, Bosnia and Mauritania will be covered under the initiative, which will secure food supplies, a fundamental component of global peace.

<http://www.arabnews.com/?page=1&section=0&article=122694&d=20&m=5&y=2009&pix=kingdom.jpg&category=Kingdom>

**SOUTH AFRICA: Finally Owning the Land That They Have Been Tilling**, Inter Press Service News Agency, May 20

Land reform in South Africa has, for the most part, not been a success story. Large tracts of such land have been mismanaged and lie fallow. This is due to a number of factors, including lack of support by existing farmers and the government in the form of training; lack of seeds and fertiliser; and new farmers becoming despondent and leaving the land when they feel overwhelmed by the demands and costs of agriculture.

<http://www.ipsnews.net/africa/nota.asp?idnews=46914>

**WFP purchases maize from local small-scale farmers, *Xinhua (China), May 19***

The UN World Food Program said it has for the first time bought food from small-scale farmers in Kenya under a ground-breaking Purchase for Progress (P4P) initiative aimed at boosting agriculture in the country by connecting farmers to markets.

[http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2009-05/19/content\\_11400816.htm](http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2009-05/19/content_11400816.htm)

**New agriculture funds must target poor farmers, *IRIN, May 18***

African Development Bank president Donald Kaberuka says medium-sized farms are the engine for agricultural growth in Africa and given their position and potential they merit considerable investment. Agriculture campaigners say while they support such an approach, investors must not overlook small-scale farmers.

<http://www.irinnews.org/report.aspx?ReportId=84437>

**Biotech portion of foreign aid bill draws criticism, *Philip Brasher, Des Moines Register, May 17***

Congress has largely stayed out of the battles over genetically engineered crops, but that could change with a foreign aid bill that could target research money to agricultural biotechnology. The bill, approved by a Senate committee earlier this spring, is aimed at boosting spending on foreign agricultural development and nutrition programs from \$750 million in 2010 to \$2.5 billion by 2014. The bill spells out that the money can go to "biotechnological advances appropriate to local ecological conditions," including genetically modified seeds.

<http://www.desmoinesregister.com/article/20090517/BUSINESS03/905170317/1029/BUSINESS>

**MADAGASCAR: Food security now taken literally, *IRIN, May 15***

In Tanandava, a small village in the arid south of Madagascar, the community's most valuable asset is kept behind two padlocks to which two people each have a key. They can only access the school's food store when they are together. The daily ration of 115 grams of rice, supplemented with pulses and oil - for school children only - have become the envy of the village after three consecutive years of drought.

<http://www.irinnews.org/report.aspx?ReportID=84397>

**Maize in Kenya: The search for a successful subsidy, *International Maize and Wheat Improvement Center, April 2009***

It is a common dilemma for non-profits and assistance programs: how to deliver benefits to the needy without creating dependency or disrupting markets. Addressing this problem, Maize Seed for the Poor (MSP), a pilot project in Kenya, is exploring ways to offer farmers subsidized agricultural inputs to boost farm productivity, while also energizing local seed markets.

<http://www.cimmyt.org/english/wps/news/2009/may/maizeKenya.htm>

---

## FOREIGN ASSISTANCE

**Aid to Africa, *Financial Times, May 27***

Of course aid corrupts. The evidence is there, from Congo to Kenya. And who can doubt that most aid to Africa does not work: a greater percentage of Kenyans today live in poverty than at independence some 45 years ago, despite billions of dollars of foreign assistance.

<http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/1a359284-4a56-11de-8e7e-00144feabdc0.html>

**The Hidden Hunger, *The New York Times, May 24***

The most heartbreaking thing about starving children is their equanimity.

They don't cry. They don't smile. They don't move. They don't show a flicker of fear, pain or interest. Tiny, wizened zombies, they shut down all nonessential operations to employ every last calorie to stay alive.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2009/05/24/opinion/24kristof.html>

**Aid Ironies, *Jeffrey Saches, Huffington Post, May 24***

Americans are predisposed to like the anti-aid message. They believe that the poor have only themselves (or perhaps their governments) to blame. They overestimate the actual aid from the US by around thirty times, so they imagine that vast sums are flowing to Africa that are then squandered. Many believe, typically in private,

that by saving African children we would be creating a population explosion, so better to let the kids die now rather than grow up hungry.

[http://www.huffingtonpost.com/jeffrey-sachs/aid-ironies\\_b\\_207181.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/jeffrey-sachs/aid-ironies_b_207181.html)

*See Also: Sachs Ironies: Why Critics are Better for Foreign Aid than Apologists, William Easterly, Huffington Post, May 25*

Official foreign aid agencies delivering aid to Africa are used to operating with nobody holding them accountable for aid dollars actually reaching poor people.

[http://www.huffingtonpost.com/william-easterly/sachs-ironies-why-critics\\_b\\_207331.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/william-easterly/sachs-ironies-why-critics_b_207331.html)

*See Also: Aid Ironies: A Response to Jeffrey Sachs, Dambisa Moyo, Huffington Post, May 26*

Development is not that hard. We now have over 300 years of evidence of what works (and what doesn't) in increasing growth, alleviating poverty and suffering. We also know that there is no country -- anywhere in the world -- that has meaningfully reduced poverty and spurred significant and sustainable levels of economic growth by relying on aid.

[http://www.huffingtonpost.com/dambisa-moyo/aid-ironies-a-response-to\\_b\\_207772.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/dambisa-moyo/aid-ironies-a-response-to_b_207772.html)

### **EU Allocates Euro 54 Million for Humanitarian Needs in Horn, AllAfrica.com, May 24**

The European Commission disclosed that it was providing a total of €54 million in humanitarian aid to vulnerable people in Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Somalia, and Uganda. The funds are channeled through the Commission's Humanitarian Aid department under the direct responsibility of Commissioner Louis Michel, it said in a statement on Friday.

<http://allafrica.com/stories/200905250296.html>

### **Obama's military conundrum, Jeffrey Sachs, Op-Ed, The Guardian (U.K.), May 22**

Both Afghanistan and the neighbouring provinces of Pakistan are impoverished regions, with vast unemployment, bulging youth populations, prolonged droughts, widespread hunger and pervasive economic deprivation. It is easy for the Taliban and al-Qaida to mobilise fighters under such conditions. Only by switching spending from war to development can America hope to defeat al-Qaida and the Taliban.

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2009/may/22/obama-military-spending-development>

### **The Cornerstone of Obama's Foreign Aid Policy: Health and Wealth, Josh Ruxin, Huffington Post, May 22**

As the world's poorest countries, particularly in Sub Saharan Africa, fall behind their developed counterparts, their citizens are faced with seemingly insurmountable obstacles. Extreme poverty, fatal illnesses, and deplorable conditions make the prospect of becoming a global player extremely daunting. New business initiatives, agricultural and craft cooperatives, public/private partnerships, and relationships between Rwandan and foreign investors all point the way to creating a new prosperity and an African middle-class.

[http://www.huffingtonpost.com/josh-ruxin/the-cornerstone-of-obamas\\_b\\_206698.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/josh-ruxin/the-cornerstone-of-obamas_b_206698.html)

### **Opposition to anti-aid campaigner grows, Financial Times, May 22**

A swell of opposition is building in the aid world to a new protagonist who has thrown down a strident challenge to the rock stars and liberal economists who have long dominated debate over foreign assistance to developing countries. Galled by the ease with which Dambisa Moyo, a Zambian economist and former investment banker, has risen to prominence this year, activists are circulating detailed critiques of her ideas and mass mailing African non-government organisations to mobilise support against her.

<http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/800c5f58-46fe-11de-923e-00144feabdc0.html>

*See Also: Aid opponent spreads theory far and fast, Financial Times, May 22*

<http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/582916d0-46ee-11de-923e-00144feabdc0.html>

### **World Bank funds bypassing Zimbabwe government, The Guardian (U.K.), May 20**

A top World Bank official said grant funding to Zimbabwe was not going through the government, which has yet to demonstrate to the international community it can manage the economy with prudence and transparency. World Bank Vice President for Africa, Obiageli Ezekwesili, told Reuters some \$22 million in grants from the Bank were being spent on behalf of donors through international agencies, aid and church groups to help small farmers and the poor.

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/business/feedarticle/8516517>

**Eastern Congo: Air Drops Begin After Rains Cut Off Hungry**, *World Food Programme, May 20*

WFP has started air dropping food into Dungen in the north-eastern Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) to reach more than 130,000 displaced people and their host families who have been cut off by heavy seasonal rains.

<http://www.wfp.org/stories/wfp-starts-air-drops-congo-bid-beat-rains>

**Displaced Sri Lankans in need of food aid**, *Toronto Star, May 19*

The World Food Programme (WFP) is boosting food stocks and preparing nutritionally rich food for women and children in order to meet the needs of people who have been displaced in the final days of Sri Lanka's 26-year civil war.

<http://www.thestar.com/news/world/article/636160>

**The President's 2010 Budget: A Transition to New Priorities**; *David Beckmann, The Huffington Post, May 13*

After my initial analysis of the fiscal year (FY) 2010 U.S. budget, unveiled last week by the Obama administration, I was encouraged to see that it represents a healthy funding boost in international poverty-focused development assistance programs. The proposed \$3.4 trillion budget includes \$20.5 billion for programs to fight poverty in poor countries. The budget also demonstrates the president's commitment to fulfill his campaign goal of ending child hunger in the United States by 2015. The administration requested an additional \$1 billion per year for child nutrition programs, which are being reauthorized this year; and \$7.77 billion for the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC) Program.

[http://www.huffingtonpost.com/david-beckmann/the-presidents-2010-budget\\_b\\_202411.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/david-beckmann/the-presidents-2010-budget_b_202411.html)

---

## ENVIRONMENT (WATER/CLIMATE)

**PHILIPPINES: Farmers hit by changing rainfall patterns**, *IRIN, May 18*

Climate change is taking its toll on farming in the Philippines, with more than US\$27 million damage done to crops and livestock by typhoons Kujira and Chan-hom, the National Disaster Coordinating Council reported. The heavy rains unleashed by the two back-to-back-typhoons earlier this month are generally not expected until June.

<http://www.irinnews.org/report.aspx?ReportID=84425>

---

## GLOBAL ECONOMIC CRISIS IN THE DEVELOPING WORLD

**Poverty's Two-Way Street**, *The New York Times, May 26*

The world is agog with tales of the "nouveau poor." The well-to-do are tightening their belts: Wealthy women are reappearing in the same designer dresses, shoppers are shyly pulling coupons from their pockets, and flying commercial is back in style. But the rich and the middle class are not the only ones losing money. Millions of poor people around the world have been plunged even further into deep poverty. For them this means taking children out of school to help scavenge for food; praying instead of seeing a doctor; selling the last of the gold earrings so that the family can eat for a few more weeks. For the poor, there is nothing "nouveau" about tumbling deeper into poverty.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2009/05/27/opinion/27iht-ednarayan.html?scp=1&sq=poverty&st=cse>

**South Africa goes into recession**, *BBC News, May 26*

The South African economy has gone into recession for the first time since 1992, following a sharp slowdown in the manufacturing and mining sectors.

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/business/8068126.stm>

**IMF Steps Up Help to Africa to Combat Crisis**, *IMF Survey Magazine, May 22*

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) is stepping up its help to Africa to combat fallout from the global economic crisis by boosting lending, expanding technical assistance, and offering policy advice on how to counter the crisis and protect the most vulnerable.

<http://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/survey/so/2009/CAR052209A.htm>

**Kenya sees modest growth recovery after 2008 slump**, *Reuters, May 21*

Kenya's economy should recover slightly in 2009 after growth slumped to 1.7 percent last year due to post-election violence, poor weather and global commodity price shocks, the government said. Planning and National Development Minister Wycliffe Oparanya said the economy should expand by 2-3 percent assuming tourism and agriculture recover, infrastructure spending bears fruit and investor confidence in the coalition government is restored.

<http://af.reuters.com/article/investingNews/idAFJ0E54K08920090521>

**A New Financial Crisis Around the World: In a worsening global economy, forgiving foreign debt of developing countries has become more urgent**, *Congressional Quarterly, May 18*

After more than 20 years of dictatorship and civil war, the West African republic of Liberia held democratic elections in 2005. That was the good news. The bad news was that Liberia owed nearly \$5 billion to foreign countries, international organizations and private creditors — an amount more than eight times greater than its gross domestic product. Four years later, the country is still wrestling with high unemployment and a life expectancy of just 45 years. But its debt is shrinking rapidly. In early April, with help from the Treasury Department, the World Bank and European donors, Liberia concluded a deal with a group of hedge funds and other private creditors to buy back \$1.2 billion of its commercial debt at just 3 cents on the dollar. That move reduced the country's overall debt burden from about \$3 billion in 2008 to just \$1.7 billion.

[http://www.cgdev.org/doc/millions/debtrelief\\_cq.pdf](http://www.cgdev.org/doc/millions/debtrelief_cq.pdf)

**Issue Guide: Africa and the Global Financial Crisis**, *Council on Foreign Relations, May 2009*

Due to Africa's undeveloped financial markets, the continent's economies remained largely buffered from the financial problems experienced in the United States, Europe, and other parts of the world. It has not escaped the crisis unscathed, however. Falling demand internationally has dampened African exports. Tightening trade flows have also posed a problem for many of the continent's countries. More pressingly, the crisis has strained international aid organizations, limiting their ability to provide humanitarian relief to some of Africa's poorest countries.

[http://www.cfr.org/publication/19515/issue\\_guide.html?breadcrumb=%2Fregion%2F143%2Fafrika](http://www.cfr.org/publication/19515/issue_guide.html?breadcrumb=%2Fregion%2F143%2Fafrika)

---

## BIOFUELS

**Big Oil Warms to Ethanol and Biofuel Companies**, *New York Times, May 26*

For decades, the big oil companies and the farm lobby have been fighting about ethanol, with the farmers pushing to produce more of it and the refiners arguing it was a boondoggle that would do little to solve the country's energy problems. So why are technicians for BP, the giant oil company, now working at an experimental ethanol plant in this old Louisiana oil town, helping to make it more efficient?

<http://www.nytimes.com/2009/05/27/business/energy-environment/27biofuels.html>

**Pace lags for new biofuels**, *Philip Brasher, May 10*

The clock is ticking on the Obama administration's promises to speed development of the next generation of biofuels. There isn't a commercial-scale plant in operation making ethanol from crop residue and other types of plant cellulose, the stuff that's supposed to replace corn as the feedstock of the future for biofuels. The biomass fuel isn't economical yet, and there are obstacles still to be overcome, including how to harvest, transport and store the huge amounts of biomass required.

<http://www.desmoinesregister.com/article/20090510/BUSINESS03/90508063>

---

## WOMEN

**How Michelle Obama Can Help Africa**, *AllAfrica.com, May 29*

When Michelle Obama, the first lady of the United States, visits Ghana with President Barack Obama in July, the powerful voice she has used to empower disadvantaged girls at home can be extended to Africa. By

spotlighting the disproportionate impact of Aids on women and girls, she can help strengthen the Aids response - at home and abroad.

<http://allafrica.com/stories/200905290396.html>

**Radio boost for marginalised women**, *BBC News, May 26*

In the hot and arid countryside of Andhra Pradesh, T Manjula goes from house to house checking the year's harvest. It is a tough life for these women in the village. Most of them have not been to a formal school and work in the nearby fields. Until the radio station came along, they knew very little about new technology in farming, or better selling practises.

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/business/8061327.stm>

**LIBERIA: Rural Women Confront Hunger Gap, Their Own Way**, *Inter Press Service News Agency, May 15*

The women's 'upland' rice crop will take up to six months to grow and harvest, and as much as 40 percent of the crop may be lost to birds, groundhogs and other vermin. Meanwhile, the farm's 'lowland' or swamp area, which is naturally irrigated, is reserved for introducing one hectare of rice breeder seed called Nerica, short for 'New Rice for Africa'.

<http://www.ipsnews.net/africa/nota.asp?idnews=46859>

**Afghan Women's Situation a Test Case for Obama Administration's Foreign Assistance Policy**, *Ritu Sharma, Huffington Post, May 14*

While our focus is on the war on terror, we have yet to figure out how economic development, which is the crying need of Afghanistan, fits into our engagement in that country. Reconstruction funding for Afghanistan since 2002, according to the CRS, has amounted to some \$32 billion, including seven billion of development funding directly from USAID. But even Secretary of State Hillary Clinton recently admitted there is little to show for it. This is especially true for Afghan women, whose situation was one of the big motivators for involvement in that country in the first place.

[http://www.huffingtonpost.com/ritu-sharma/afghan-womens-situation-a\\_b\\_203454.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/ritu-sharma/afghan-womens-situation-a_b_203454.html)

---

## MARKET ACCESS AND TRADE ISSUES

**Developing world: 'Have-nots' no closer to catching the 'haves**, *Financial Times, May 29*

There are four times as many mobile subscribers in the world as there are installed PCs. In the developing world, this statistic could be crucial in showing how to bridge what has become known as the "digital divide" – a relative measure of access to, and use of, information and communications technology (ICT).

[http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/40031bd2-4a54-11de-8e7e-00144feabdc0.html?nclink\\_check=1](http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/40031bd2-4a54-11de-8e7e-00144feabdc0.html?nclink_check=1)

**Economic and Financial Indicators: Food**, *The Economist, May 28*

World food prices are 2.2% lower now than they were at the beginning of 2008, according to *The Economist's* food-price index, which has fallen by nearly a quarter since its peak in July last year. The price of wheat, which has the largest weight in the index, is now nearly a third below its January 2008 level.

[http://www.economist.com/markets/indicators/displaystory.cfm?story\\_id=13743451](http://www.economist.com/markets/indicators/displaystory.cfm?story_id=13743451)

**Is trade, not aid, the answer for Africa?** *The Guardian (U.K.), May 25*

After years when billions have been spent on aid projects in Africa, donors are now picking up on a new trend to put money on the continent's entrepreneurs. Next month, a meeting of the World Economic Forum on Africa in Cape Town is set to reinforce the message that "trade not aid" represents salvation for a continent whose average 5% growth in the past five years is projected to fall to 1.5% this year amid the global economic downturn.

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/business/2009/may/25/africa-entrepreneurs-charity>

**Bangladesh bans rice exports to curb prices**, *Reuters India, May 23*

Disaster-prone Bangladesh ordered a ban on the export of all varieties of rice for six months to ensure enough supplies and control prices during the coming monsoon period of floods and storms, officials said on Friday.

The country produces enough rice to feed its more than 140 million people but still imports around 3 million tonnes of rice and wheat for emergency stocks. It allows the export of a small quantity of aromatic rice.  
<http://in.reuters.com/article/domesticNews/idINDHA47849920090522>

**Russia seeks more Asia grain exports, Black Sea links**, *The Guardian (U.K.), May 21*

Russia plans to increase grain shipments to the Asia-Pacific region by developing export ports in the far east and called for greater co-operation between ex-Soviet grain suppliers in the Black Sea region. First Deputy Prime Minister Viktor Zubkov, Russia's senior agriculture official, also said the creation of an international grain reserve could be a way to fight hunger and tackle global food security issues.  
<http://www.guardian.co.uk/business/feedarticle/8519230>

**Economist strives to end hunger in Ethiopia**, *The Washington Times, May 18*

Eleni Z. Gabre-Madhin recalls 1984, when nearly 1 million died of starvation in Ethiopia. "There was a surplus in the fertile regions of the south but in the north people could not access it." They were captives of a market system whose failures could — and did — lead to famine. The plight of her native Ethiopia took Ms. Gabre-Madhin, an American-trained economist, on a quest that would result in the founding of the Ethiopian Commodity Exchange (ECX), which celebrated its first year in business this April.  
<http://washingtontimes.com/news/2009/may/18/economist-strives-to-end-hunger-in-ethiopia/>

---

**AGRIBUSINESS**

**Farm Output Must Rise to Meet Demand, Executives Say**, *Bloomberg, May 18*

Global agricultural production must rise to curb surges in grain prices, even as the world financial crisis temporarily reduces demand, executives from Deere & Co., Bunge Ltd. and Syngenta AG said.  
[http://www.bloomberg.com/apps/news?pid=newsarchive&sid=a.U3bDp\\_LqU4](http://www.bloomberg.com/apps/news?pid=newsarchive&sid=a.U3bDp_LqU4)

**AFRICA: Turning agriculture into a business**, *IRIN, May 14*

A plan by the Africa Commission to side-step African governments and target the private sector to invigorate the continent's business and agricultural capacity, thereby stimulating job creation, was launched in the Danish capital, Copenhagen.  
<http://www.irinnews.org/report.aspx?ReportID=84378>

**Banner Photograph:** © Ray Witlin / World Bank