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**Attention:** Articles marked with a \* relate to the recent Third High-Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness.

Example: \**How donors should cap aid in Africa*, by Adrian Wood, Financial Times, September 3, 2008

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**Key Articles**

- ***Kofi Annan Calls for Global Effort to Feed African Poor***, Philanthropic News Digest via The Associated Press, September 4, 2008  
Former UN secretary general Kofi Annan has called for a global effort to help feed hundreds of millions of poor and hungry people in Africa, the Associated Press reports. Farmers who lack the resources to purchase fertilizers, have limited access to high-yield seeds, and are finding it ever-more difficult to move their crops to the market because of rising fuel costs do not benefit from higher farm prices, he noted. Indeed, to address those and other problems, Africa needs to revolutionize its entire food chain — an effort that "will require one of the largest efforts in human history." According to Annan, the underlying cause of African poverty is the neglect of agriculture by donor governments and Western aid programs. External aid to agriculture amounted to 16 percent of total aid to the continent in 1980, but fell to less than 4 percent twenty-five years later, in part due to "misguided" World Bank policies that, until recently, urged African governments to restructure their economies. To help address these issues, Annan agreed to lead the Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa, founded two years ago with funding from the Gates and Rockefeller foundations. The group has committed \$330 million to help small-scale farms in Africa.  
<http://foundationcenter.org/pnd/news/story.jhtml?id=226200010>
- \****The future of aid: A scramble in Africa***, *The Economist* print edition, Sep 4th 2008  
THE development-aid business is a shambles. Privately, most of the 1,200 delegates at the grandly titled High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness, which met this week in Accra, agreed on that. The meeting was the first big follow-up, involving 100-odd countries, international agencies and non-governmental organisations (NGOs), to an accord on making aid more effective, reached in Paris in 2005.

The main problem is not the one poor countries and NGOs usually complain about: too little aid. In fact, official development assistance has been rising modestly since the mid-1990s, in real terms and as a share of donors' national incomes.

Rather, the problem is that aid is fragmenting: there are too many agencies, financing too many small projects, using too many different procedures. "Fragmentation is the opposite of effectiveness," says Lennart Bage, head of the International Fund for Agricultural Development. the biggest problem is too many aid agencies, and the challenge is co-ordinating them. In practice, national, multilateral and NGO donors probably can't do more themselves than they do anyway, so the best way of coping with the fragmentation of aid is for recipient countries to lay down a set of national development priorities and ask donors to fit in with their plans. That sounds fine in theory, but if recipients were serious about it they would be expected to be saying no to offers of aid that don't fit in with their plans. That hardly ever happens. The Paris target is for three-quarters of recipient governments to publish development programmes that aid agencies can use. Last year, according to a survey on monitoring the Paris declaration, only a fifth did. Unless that improves, aid is likely to remain badly fragmented.

[http://www.economist.com/world/international/displaystory.cfm?story\\_id=12060397](http://www.economist.com/world/international/displaystory.cfm?story_id=12060397)

- **\*How donors should cap aid in Africa** , by Adrian Wood, Financial Times, September 3, 2008  
Ministers from developed and developing countries are gathered this week in Accra, Ghana's capital, for the latest high-level forum on aid effectiveness. Learning from past successes and failures, reformers are pressing for more ownership by developing countries of aid relationships, more predictability of aid flows and less fragmentation of aid delivery. This agenda is important. If implemented, these reforms would give the taxpayers of rich countries better value for money and increase the benefits of aid to people in poor ones. Aid cannot on its own cause development, but if properly delivered and well used it can be enormously beneficial. However, one can have too much of a good thing. Some developing countries, most of them in Africa, have had high levels of aid dependence – in excess of 10 per cent of gross domestic product, or half of government spending – for decades. It is questionable whether this has been helpful. There are various reasons to be concerned about high aid dependence, but the most worrying is the undermining of good governance by distortion of political accountability. Governments that are highly dependent on aid pay too much attention to donors and too little to their citizens. This might not matter if the interests of citizens and donors were identical. But all donors have some non-developmental motives and, even when they seek to promote development, they have their own priorities. The result is confused and shifting policies, volatile aid and spending and, as a result, slower growth. I therefore propose that donors collectively set an upper limit on the amount of aid they give to any developing country. This limit should be 50 per cent of the amount of tax revenue that the aid-receiving government raises from its own citizens, by non-coercive means and excluding revenue from oil and minerals.

*The author is professor of international development at the University of Oxford and in 2000-05 was chief economist of the UK's Department for International Development*  
<http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/b9442de0-79b9-11dd-bb93-000077b07658.html>

- **New Unicef Representative Proposes N54 Billion Project**, by Ruby Rabiun, Daily Trust (Nigeria), September 10, 2008

A new UNICEF Country Representative, Dr Suomi Sakai, has resumed duty in Nigeria and has proposed to institute a N54 billion naira project as part of the United Nations Development Assistance framework which will begin January next year.

<http://allafrica.com/stories/200809100861.html>

- **\*Okonjo-Iweala Lists Conditions for Africa's Growth**, Vanguard (Lagos), September 5, 2008  
Dr Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala, World Bank Managing Director, said yesterday in Accra that the perpetual dependence on aid by African countries would not develop the continent, but only facilitate growth. She said the continent should start looking inward for models of growth and adopt some of the best practices across the world, instead of waiting for aid.  
<http://allafrica.com/stories/200809050704.html>
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### New Reports/Policy Briefs

- **World Bank Updates Poverty Estimates for the Developing World**, The World Bank's Development Research Group, Published, August 26, 2008  
New poverty estimates published by the World Bank reveal that 1.4 billion people in the developing world (one in four) were living on less than US\$1.25 a day in 2005, down from 1.9 billion (one in two) in 1981. The new numbers show that poverty has been more widespread across the developing world over the past 25 years than previously estimated, but also that there has been strong—if regionally uneven—progress toward reducing overall poverty. Looking at the new estimates from the perspective of the Millennium Development Goals, a set of internationally agreed development targets, the developing world is still on track to halve extreme poverty from its 1990 levels by 2015. This is the first of eight critical goals. The new poverty numbers, which show that 400 million more people lived below the poverty line in 2005 than earlier thought, are benchmarked to the revised international poverty line of \$1.25 a day in 2005 prices. Poverty in **East Asia**—the world's poorest region in 1981—has fallen from nearly 80 percent of the population living on less than \$1.25 a day in 1981 to 18 percent in 2005 (about 330 million), largely owing to dramatic progress in poverty reduction in China. \$1.25 a day poverty in **South Asia** has also fallen, from 60 percent to 40 percent over 1981-2005, but this has not been enough to bring down the region's total number of poor, which stood at about 600 million in 2005. In **Sub-Saharan Africa**, the \$1.25 a day poverty rate has shown no sustained decline over the whole period since 1981, starting and ending at 50 percent. In absolute terms, the number of poor people has nearly doubled, from 200 million in 1981 to 380 million in 2005. However, there have been signs of recent progress; the poverty rate fell from 58% in 1996 to 50% in 2005.

Press Release Website: <http://go.worldbank.org/C9GR27WRJO>

Link directly to the Paper (*The developing world is poorer than we thought, but no less successful in the fight against poverty*):

[http://econ.worldbank.org/external/default/main?pagePK=64165259&piPK=64165421&theSitePK=469372&menuPK=64166093&entityID=000158349\\_20080826113239](http://econ.worldbank.org/external/default/main?pagePK=64165259&piPK=64165421&theSitePK=469372&menuPK=64166093&entityID=000158349_20080826113239)

- **\*ACCRA AGENDA FOR ACTION**  
As part of the Aid Effectiveness Forum in Accra, Ghana - ministers of developing and donor countries responsible for promoting development and Heads of multilateral and bilateral development institutions adopted the following statement in Accra, Ghana, on 4 September 2008  
[http://www.aefgh.org/images/stories/aaa\\_final\\_draft\\_25\\_july\\_2008.pdf](http://www.aefgh.org/images/stories/aaa_final_draft_25_july_2008.pdf)

- ***The Limited Promise of Agricultural Trade Liberalization [Lessons from Latin America]***, Tufts University Working group on Development and Environment in the Americas, Summarizing text taken from the “Land and People: A source on Food, Farming, and Rural Society”, September 7, 2008

It has become an article of faith in international trade negotiations that farmers in developing countries have much to gain from agricultural trade liberalization. This paper, written as a framework analysis for the recently published report, *The Promise and the Perils of Agricultural Trade Liberalization: Lessons from Latin America*, assesses the evidence for such claims. It concludes that the promise of agricultural trade liberalization is overstated, while the costs to small-scale farmers in developing countries are often high.

Relying on World Bank data and analyses, United Nations trade data, and other economic modeling carried out to inform the current round of World Trade Organization negotiations, this paper shows that:

- Rich countries are the main beneficiaries of agricultural trade liberalization, gaining markets in both the global North and South.
- Only a limited number of developing countries – for example, Argentina and Brazil – can compete effectively in global markets.
- Most developing countries are left out of the export boom but their small-scale farmers suffer the negative effects of rising imports, as tariffs and farm supports are removed.
- Farm prices do not remain high for long after liberalization, as supplies, fed by rising yields and new land under cultivation, catch up to rising demand.
- While the current commodity boom, fueled in part by the demand for agro-fuels, may keep prices high for a few years, it is unlikely to fundamentally alter the structure of global agriculture and the long-term trends toward lower prices.

Land and People: <http://landandpeople.blogspot.com/2008/09/limited-promise-of-agricultural-trade.html>

- **Paper : “The Limited Promise of Agricultural Trade Liberalization,” Timothy A. Wise, Working Group Discussion Paper DP19, July 2008 (English).**  
<http://ase.tufts.edu/gdae/Pubs/rp/DP19WiseJuly08.pdf>

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## New Books

- ***Inclusive Growth In India — Agriculture, Poverty, And Human Development***, by S. Mahendra Dev; Oxford University Press  
Mahendra Dev, (Chairman of the Commission on Agricultural Costs and Prices), looks at economic growth and equity in the post-reform (1991 onwards) period in India. He argues... for simultaneous protective measures for and provision of opportunities for the poor and the deprived. He examines inclusive growth in the laggard agriculture, employment generation and poverty reduction, social sector, and reduction in regional and other disparities. Mr. Dev explains that Indian growth has been skewed towards services, not the real economy of agricultural and industrial goods and services. With 54 per cent of the population working in agriculture, agriculture’s low and declining contribution to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) has to be reversed if poverty is to reduce rapidly. He demonstrates that land issues, irrigation and water management, credit, research and extension, and marketing must improve. Decline in public investment in agriculture was an important factor in the sectors diminishing returns. The poor record of agricultural research in helping agricultural growth can be corrected by local research to solve local problems. He should have taken a stronger position on the distortions in

cropping patterns due to cheap or free power that have led to increasing water intensive crops in dry lands and degradation of lands.

Text taken from:

<http://www.hindu.com/br/2008/09/09/stories/2008090950021400.htm>

- **\*Ending Aid Dependence**, by Dr. Yash Tandon, Fahamu Books & The South Centre, September 2008  
Developing countries reliant on aid want to escape from this dependence, and yet they appear unable to do so. This book shows how developing countries can liberate themselves from the aid that pretends to be developmental but is not. Exiting aid dependence should be at the top of the political agenda of all countries. In September 2008, ministers from over 100 countries, heads of bilateral and multilateral development agencies, donor organizations, and civil society organisations from around the world are gathering in Accra for the Third High-Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness. This timely book cautions developing countries against endorsing the agenda proposed at this meeting. If adopted, it would subject the recipients to a discipline of collective control by the donors right up to the village level. The author, Dr Yash Tandon, executive director of the South Centre, an intergovernmental think-tank of the developing countries, argues that ending aid dependence should be at the top of the political agenda of all countries This will specially affect the present donor-dependent countries, in particular the poorer and vulnerable countries in Africa, Asia and the Caribbean.  
[http://www.fahamu.org/publications/item/ending\\_aid\\_dependence/](http://www.fahamu.org/publications/item/ending_aid_dependence/)

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## Political/Conceptual Shifts

- **\*President Bush Visits National Defense University's Distinguished Lecture Program, Discusses Global War on Terror**, Speech Transcript, The White House, September 9, 2008  
In addition to these new military measures [in Afghanistan], we're stepping up efforts on the civilian side [in the effort to secure democratic Afghanistan]. We're increasing our civilian presence with new personnel from USAID, and the Drug Enforcement Agency, as well as the Foreign Service. We're using Provincial Reconstruction Teams of military and civilian experts to help local communities fight corruption, improve governance, and jumpstart their economies. We're using Agricultural Development Teams to help Afghan farmers feed their people and become more self-sufficient. We're supporting Afghanistan's National Development Strategy, which helps the democratic government in Kabul offer greater support for the provinces in areas like health and infrastructure.  
We're working with the Afghan authorities to prepare for elections of 2009 and 2010. Recently at an international conference in Paris, America pledged **\$10 billion** over the next two years to support Afghanistan's development. In all these ways, we're working to ensure that our military progress is accompanied by the political and economic gains that are critical to the success of a free Afghanistan.  
<http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2008/09/20080909.html>  
**Analysis:** The office of the President of the United States made a public statement espousing the link between agricultural development [in Afghanistan] and security. In accordance with the agreements made at the 2005 Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness, and with the 2008 Accra Agenda for Action, the President supported the recipient country's national development strategy. This arrangement may not be an accurate measure of all of USAID's future development strategies though; US/Afghan

political considerations/parallels are not reflective of all donor/recipient relations in other theaters of USAID's operation.

- ***Going Against the Grain on Subsidies***, by Busani Bafana, IPS, September 5, 2008  
LILONGWE, MALAWI - In each of the past three growing seasons, the family of Bernadette Banda, in Chidambo village in the central region of Malawi, has doubled the maize harvest from the family plot, thanks to a government input subsidy programme. Subsidised hybrid maize seed and fertilisers have helped boost harvests and incomes at household level for more than 1.7 million farming families in Southern Africa's most densely populated country. Resource-poor smallholder farmers like the Bandas have demonstrated that subsidies -- opposed by international donors such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund -- can overturn a food crisis if applied correctly. In 2005, Malawi experienced a major famine where more than 5 million people needed food aid. Three years later, Malawi has dramatically moved from a serious food deficit to becoming a net food exporter, with the 2008 maize harvest of 2.6 million metric tonnes the highest on record.  
<http://www.ipsnews.net/africa/nota.asp?idnews=43815>
- ***Interrogating Ownership in post-colonial Africa***, by Mutumwa D. Mawere, NewZimbabwe.com, August 11, 2008  
Summary: Mr. Mawere, for NewZimbabwe.com, parses through the issues in the intellectual debate on where ownership of the political system should lie in an African state. This piece tries to highlight how the colonial system created some of the paradoxical aspects of the post-colonial African understanding of the state's role in development and finance. Mr. Mawere does not answer the questions quoted below, but he insists on the importance of considering them when discussing the next chapters of African growth.  
<http://www.newzimbabwe.com/pages/mawere137.18593.html>
- ***\*WB calls for practical measures on food***, The Daily Nation ( Kenya), September 5, 2008  
The World Bank has asked the international community to urgently implement measures to contain the food crisis that has pushed millions of people in vulnerable countries to the verge of extreme poverty. The Bank's group President Robert Zoellick also called for transparency and accountability in management and delivery of foreign aid if it was to have any impact on the lives of poor people. Addressing delegates at the conference on improving quality of aid ahead of its closure on Thursday, the World Bank boss said the global food crisis had undermined efforts to overcome poverty. Consequently, he said, more "practical" measures needed to be taken urgently to deal with the crisis. He called for the lifting of export bans and restrictions for humanitarian food. The World Bank has asked the international community to urgently implement measures to contain the food crisis that has pushed millions of people in vulnerable countries to the verge of extreme poverty. He pledged the World Bank's support in removal of the bans acknowledging that it was often difficult for countries to do so.  
<http://www.nation.co.ke/News/-/1056/467430/-/tkbpyn/-/index.html>
- ***North Korea to become world's largest recipient of U.N. food aid***, By Peter Ford, The Christian Science Monitor, September 4, 2008  
*To avert a famine, more aid is needed. Half of all families eat only two meals a day, says new WFP assessment. North Korea needs a half a billion dollars' worth of emergency food aid to avert a famine, a United Nations official warned this week. Increasing numbers of North Koreans are*

*now foraging for wild foods, creating "an urgent need" for donations to the UN World Food Program's aid plan, said WFP regional director Tony Banbury.*

<http://www.csmonitor.com/2008/0904/p04s02-woap.html>

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## Food Crisis - Objective Developments

- **UN creates West Africa food store**, BBC, September 9, 2008  
The UN has established a regional food store in Ghana because of the floods that have caused havoc across West Africa in recent weeks. But it wants the region to come up with other longer-term strategies to deal with the destruction. Heavy rains have hit West Africa for a second year, killing at least 31 people, displacing almost 130,000, and damaging infrastructure, the UN says. The West African region is already suffering from escalating food prices. The UN called on governments in the region to work together to come up with solutions to the seasonal flooding. "For \$1 we spend on relief items it costs us between \$0.5 and \$1 in terms of air shipment," said Herve Ludovic de Lys, UN humanitarian agency head in West Africa. "Establishing this depot in the West African region will be really a cost-effective measure.  
<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/7605795.stm>
- **Ethiopia: Food Security in Drought-Stricken Country at Alarming Levels, Warns UN**, UN News Service (New York), September 8, 2008  
The food security situation in Ethiopia has deteriorated to alarming levels in the wake of drought conditions throughout much of the Horn of Africa country, and relief agencies are grappling with shortages of supplies, the United Nations warned today. Some 4.6 million people in Ethiopia are need of food aid due to a combination of drought and high food prices, according to the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA). UN humanitarian chief John Holmes, who just returned from a visit to Ethiopia, told reporters last week that it was clear that "the crisis remains very severe, and the numbers of people affected are continuing to rise." Successive droughts have resulted in a drop in crop production that in turn have led to a surge in food prices - up to 500 per cent in some parts of the country - over the past year. The southeast has been particularly hard hit.  
<http://allafrica.com/stories/200809090028.html>
- **Kenya: Nation Eats Maize Stock to Bare Minimum**, by Philip Ngunjiri, The East African (Nairobi), September 6, 2008  
Kenya is likely to face a maize shortage by mid next year, as the country's stock would have dwindled to less than a month's supply of grain. The country consumes about 270,000 metric tonnes a month and national stocks are expected to drop to about 163,000 metric tonnes by end of June 2009. Uganda will be in no better position with a grain stock of slightly more than a month's supply by then. Tanzania's position will be boosted by harvesting in the southern lowlands which starts around June. This means Kenya will face a grain shortage estimated at 136,500 metric tonnes by mid 2009. This year, the country had a shortfall of approximately 270,000 metric tonnes which the government has tried to cover by supplying millers with maize stock held by the National Cereals and Produce Board, which it purchased from the previous seasons  
<http://allafrica.com/stories/200809070147.html>

## The Food Crisis and Impacts on Poverty

- ***Somalia: Northeastern Villages Facing Starvation***, IRIN, September 9, 2008  
Thousands of villagers in Mudug region of the self-declared autonomous region of Puntland, northeastern Somalia, are on the brink of starvation due to severe food and water shortages, local officials said. The high level of inflation is contributing to the suffering of the people. "Everything costs three to four times more than it did a year ago," said Dahir Abdulkadir, the governor of Mudug. "This is disastrous for people whose only source of income [livestock] is no more." "People in the villages of Beer Dhagahtuur, Baadweyn and others nearby, all part of Harfo district, are facing the worst food crisis in a very long time," Bashir Mahamud Mire, the deputy governor of Mudug region, who recently visited the area, told IRIN.  
<http://allafrica.com/stories/200809090847.html>
- ***East Africa: Situation Worsening for Horn of Africa's Children, Warns UN Agency***, UN News Service (New York), September 5, 2008  
Almost three million children across the Horn of Africa are at risk of death, disease and malnutrition due to a combination of drought, rising food prices and conflict, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) warned today. The children are among the more than 14 million people in Ethiopia, Somalia, Eritrea, Kenya, Uganda and Djibouti that are critically affected, and the numbers are on an "alarming upward trajectory," according to UNICEF. The agency said some experts are predicting that millions more children and families could be engulfed across the Horn of Africa if steps are not taken immediately. "Strong national leadership is needed at this critical juncture, and more international funding must be quickly mobilized," UNICEF's regional director for East and Southern Africa, Per Engebak, said in a statement. "The risks to children and their families are immense and we are running out of time to reverse them." Relief efforts in the troubled region have been hampered by weak governance as well as attacks on aid workers by armed groups. "Security is a major complication in responding to the needs of affected people in many parts of the Horn at this time," said Mr. Engebak. He also underscored the difficulties of lack of access, along with the soaring cost of food grains and cereals worldwide. Food prices have risen by as much as 200 per cent over the past eight months in some of the worst drought-affected countries, making it nearly impossible for many families to purchase much-needed items.  
<http://allafrica.com/stories/200809050998.html>

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

- ***UN casts eye on farmland investment***, by James Reinl, The National, September 4, 2008  
UN trade watchdogs have launched a review to assess whether Gulf investment in overseas farmland will damage the vulnerable economies of Africa and Asia that are being targeted. The governments involved have argued that the deals represent a "win-win" for both parties, with the Gulf nations securing cheap and reliable access to food and the recipients benefiting from new investment, technology and employment. Last week's announcement from Al Qudra Holding – an investment company based in Abu Dhabi – that it aims to acquire 400,000 hectares of farmland in the Middle East, East Africa and Asia marked the latest such attempt. In response to such projects, the UN's Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO) has assigned a task force to

assess the likely impacts of investment from the UAE and its food-importing neighbours. The investigation comes in the wake of comments from Dr Jacques Diouf, the director general of the FAO, who warned that such investments risked being perceived as “neo-colonialism”.  
<http://thenational.ae/article/2008108818217>

- **Tanzania / Launch of Historic AfDB-USAID Partnership to Finance Private Sector Participation in Tanzania’s Agricultural Development**, African Press Organization (APO), September 6, 2008  
The [African Development] Bank Group, USAID and CRDB Bank on Thursday, September 4, 2008, launched a historical partnership in Dar-es-salaam, Tanzania, to finance private sector participation in agriculture, using a US\$10 million partial credit guarantee facility that was recently approved by the AfDB board of directors for Cooperative and Rural Development Bank (CRDB). Speaking during the launch, the Tanzania Field Office (TZFO) Resident Representative, Siphon Moyo, highlighted the consistency of the partnership with the Bank’s private sector strategy that aims at improving both the physical and financial infrastructure in Bank Group regional member countries with a view to enhancing private enterprise productivity and competitiveness. The AfDB board of directors approved a 50% Partial Credit Guarantee Facility (PCGF) which will be co-financed by the AfDB, CRDB and USAID to help expand access to medium and long-term financing for 450 Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in Tanzania, especially in the agricultural and eco-tourism sector, at least 30% of which will be owned by women.  
<http://appablog.wordpress.com/2008/09/06/tanzania-launch-of-historic-afdb-usaid-partnership-to-finance-private-sector-participation-in-tanzania%E2%80%99s-agricultural-development/>
- **Editorial: Address World Bank’s views on Vision 2030**, Business Daily (Kenya), August 25, 2008  
The World Bank, a development finance institution with its tentacles spread across the globe has, as expected, made public its views on the Vision 2030, the policy blueprint that is meant to turn Kenya into a middle income economy in a span of 20 years. To its credit, the Bretton Woods institution has attempted to reinforce and add value to the document that Kenya has single handedly crafted, but has also challenged a key premise on which the vision stands. It concludes, in a rather unflattering tone, that a 10 per cent economic growth rate is ambitious, and warns that such a high growth rate could only be achieved and sustained in a stable political and macro-economic environment. Of most concern perhaps is the bank’s call for a modification of the 2030 plan to more generic economy-wide reforms rather than the sector based approach favored by our technocrats.  
[http://www.bdafrica.com/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=9551&Itemid=5854](http://www.bdafrica.com/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=9551&Itemid=5854)
- **Mozambique: Food Crisis Can Be Solved, Says Guebuza**, Agencia de Informacao de Mocambique (Maputo), September 5, 2008  
The world food crisis can be solved, Mozambican President Armando Guebuza declared on Thursday, if major investments are made in countries such as Mozambique, which possess large amounts of arable land that is still unused or underused. Speaking at the official opening of the 44th edition of the Maputo International Fair (FACIM), Guebuza said that the industrialized world has already reached high levels of productivity in its agriculture, and does not have much room to expand agricultural production. But many developing countries "have extensive areas whose productive potential is yet to be exploited. They have a wide range of opportunities for technological applications that can lead to a rapid increase in agricultural production and

productivity", said Guebuza "It will be in countries such as Mozambique that large scale investments can contribute to mitigating the food crisis". Currently, fragile economies, such as that of Mozambique, were suffering acutely from the rise in world food prices. But these were also precisely the economies "with the greatest potential to reverse this situation".

<http://allafrica.com/stories/200809051000.html>

- **Swaziland: FAO to Support Swazi Farmers**, Ghanaian Chronicle (Accra), September 9, 2008  
The United Nations Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO) has initiated a programme dubbed, "Input Trade Fairs," to assist cash-strapped farmers in Swaziland, purchase seeds in time for the next planting season. This was made known by the Organisation's (FAO) Director-General, Jacques Diouf, when he visited farming projects in Boyane, near the capital, Mbabane on Monday. The programme forms part of the UN's agenda to deliver emergency assistance to farmers, under its Initiative on Soaring Food Prices (ISEP). Under the Initiative, the FAO will set up markets, where farmers will be able to choose seeds, and other agricultural supplies, from local producers. Instead of receiving pre-packaged quantities of seeds, the farmers would be able to use vouchers to pick and choose the varieties they prefer, while the producers will have an opportunity to meet new customers.  
<http://allafrica.com/stories/200809091114.html>
- **Tea farmers get cover**, The Daily Nation (Kenya), September 8, 2008  
Tea farmers are set to benefit from a low premium insurance product by British American Insurance Company (Britak) that will cover their health and funeral expenses. The insurance product to be delivered through a partner-agent model that the company has introduced, is a partnership with Majani Insurance brokers, a subsidiary of Kenya Tea Development Agency. Dubbed '*Kinga ya Mkulima*', the micro-insurance product will benefit about 500,000 small scale tea farmers in the country. Britak managing director Stephen Wandera said the product will enable farmers fight poverty by pooling risks.  
<http://www.nation.co.ke/business/news/-/1006/468428/-/jixesez/-/index.html>  
**Link to New Yorker article on Mid-level developmental financing:**  
[http://www.newyorker.com/talk/financial/2008/03/17/080317ta\\_talk\\_surowiecki](http://www.newyorker.com/talk/financial/2008/03/17/080317ta_talk_surowiecki)  
**Supplement (Letter to the Editor) to the above link:**  
[http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/letters/2008/04/14/080414mama\\_mail2](http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/letters/2008/04/14/080414mama_mail2)
- **State to import fertiliser worth Sh11bn**, The Daily Nation (Kenya), September 7, 2008  
The Government will import fertiliser worth Sh11 billion for next year's season, Agriculture minister William Ruto said on Sunday. Mr. Ruto said Sh5.4 billion of the money will be given to the National Cereals and Produce Board to stabilise the price of the input. Speaking over the weekend during a farmers' field day at Moi University's Chepkoilel Campus, Mr Ruto said the price of the input this year was exploitative to farmers and said that the State had started sourcing for the input.  
<http://www.nation.co.ke/business/news/-/1006/468152/-/jixh3az/-/index.html>

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## Biofuels

- **Nigeria: Ethanol project takes off**, African Press International, September 8, 2008  
Lagos - The first fuel ethanol project in Africa, worth N14.4billion will take-off today in Ekiti State.

Briefing the press on establishment of the industry in the state, Chairman, CrowNek Green Energy Company, Mr James Awoniyi, expressed the need for the nation (Nigeria) to develop agriculture, which he said has the capacity to solve both food and energy crises. He said it is high time the country stopped chasing shadows in its quest to improve its economy by paying premium on agricultural development, disclosing that no country could be industrialised if the agricultural sector is allowed to suffer wanton neglect. He observed that the only way the country could increase its foreign reserve is by diversifying its means of fuel production through domestic production of the Cassava-based fuel, ethanol. He, therefore, called on government at all levels to rally support for production of fuel ethanol, to revamp the dwindling fortunes of the country's economy. According to him, internal production of the alternative fuel would afford the country the opportunity to export more crude oil, when the fuel ethanol could supplement domestic consumption of petroleum products.

<http://africanpress.wordpress.com/2008/09/08/nigeria-ethanol-project-takes-off/>

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## Market Access

- ***Mozambique: Cheap Rail Travel Boosts Cross-Border Trade***, IRIN News, September 4, 2008  
Angelina Sidumo is one of the hundreds of traders that throng the busy train station in the Mozambican capital, Maputo, on most Wednesday afternoons to catch the once-weekly train south to Chicualacuala town in Gaza Province, an 18-hour journey covering nearly 500km. The rail route between Maputo and Gaza has also become a main source of transport for Zimbabwean cross-border traders. "I use the train at least once a month to come and sell reed mats and baskets from Zimbabwe," Tatenda Gapira, a Zimbabwean trader, told IRIN. Chicualacuala is located on the Mozambican side of the country's southern border with Zimbabwe, opposite the town of Sango in Zimbabwe. Zimbabwe has been facing a deepening economic and political crisis for more than 10 years, creating unemployment of above 80 percent among its estimated 12 million people. The economic and political collapse has pushed more Zimbabweans across the borders of neighbouring Botswana, Zambia, South Africa and Mozambique in search of greener pastures.  
<http://allafrica.com/stories/200809050020.html>
- ***Kenyan goods find markets in Scandinavia***, The Daily Nation (Kenya), September 5, 2008  
Goods produced through co-operatives will soon find direct market in Scandinavian countries. Co-operative Development minister, Joseph Nyaga who recently led a delegation of nine leaders from the co-operative movement said supermarkets in the Scandinavian countries had expressed interest to buy products directly from Kenya. "We met key supermarket chains, 80 per cent of them owned by co-operatives there and discussed possibility to sell directly and we show willingness subject to meeting stringent European Union trade terms," Mr Nyaga said. Some of coffee co-operatives societies, he said, met the conditions and could start exporting soon. He said the supermarkets were also keen to import tea and fish from Kenya. The minister noted that the market was huge for many goods except dairy products.  
<http://www.nation.co.ke/business/news/-/1006/467664/-/jij2g8z/-/index.html>
- ***'Africans to gain' from web plan***, BBC World, September 9, 2008  
Google is helping develop a system to bring high-speed internet connections to three billion people developing countries in Africa and elsewhere. The O3b Networks system aims to use

satellites to provide broadband services at the same speeds as those on offer in rich countries. The service, which is due to begin in 2010, is also backed by cable operator Liberty Global and the bank HSBC. It aims to tap into booming mobile phone usage in the developing world. It will target markets in Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Middle East. The founders of 03b Networks recently helped pioneer the first commercial 3G mobile and fibre-to-the-home networks in Rwanda, the company said in a statement. Production of an initial 16 satellites has begun, and the project allows for additional satellites to increase capacity. The company said the system will enable the spread of locally generated content and e-learning, encouraging social and economic growth in the developing world. There are various other projects under way to bring faster and cheaper internet access to the African continent.

**Other initiatives** (Same Article):

- Kenya has commissioned a fibre-optic cable from Fujaira in The United Arab Emirates along the sea floor of the Gulf of Oman, down the East African coast to the port town of Mombasa.
- Another undersea telecommunications cable, known as East African Submarine Cable System (Eassy), intends to connect 21 countries to each other and the rest of the world with high-quality internet.

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/7606824.stm>

Link to how the system will work:

[http://1.bp.blogspot.com/\\_VfdGlmUwjFQ/SMaO1gaCEwI/AAAAAAAAACU4/1ZYVCq4zRfE/s1600-h/o3b.jpg](http://1.bp.blogspot.com/_VfdGlmUwjFQ/SMaO1gaCEwI/AAAAAAAAACU4/1ZYVCq4zRfE/s1600-h/o3b.jpg)

- ***Cost of cargo transport to rise***, The Daily Nation (Kenya), September 8, 2008  
The spectre of cost-push inflation is looming large as transporters seek higher freight charges for cargo in response to the government's move to implement the three axle-load limits. Transporters are estimating that the freight charges could go up by as much as 30 per cent, which will translate to a surge in the prices of goods on the shelves, with extra costs being loaded on the consumers. If implemented, the upward adjustment would further put a strain on Kenyans who are already reeling from inflation that has seen prices of goods skyrocket by more than 20 per cent over the past eight months. Last month the inflation increased to 27.6 per cent from 26.6 per cent in July on account of the rising cost of food prices cause largely by rising fuel prices. The transporters have been citing the rise in fuel prices to increase their costs, and now with the reduced cargo load, it means their take home will be reduced if they don't adjust their charges. An axle is the minimum weight per pair of wheels on a truck allowed on the road. "The prices will have to go up in the course of the month," said Kenya Road Transporters Managing Director Sharti Shah. "Some transporters are reluctant to increase the transport costs but the other alternative is to reduce the workers." He said the rising cost of fuel and the reduced weight as the companies implement the three axle-load rule will have an effect on the transporters bottomlines.  
<http://www.nation.co.ke/magazines/smartcompany/-/1226/468386/-/ta6hpsz/-/index.html>

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## Developments in Agriculture, Science and Technology

- ***DuPont crop genetics research targets sustainable agricultural productivity***, Al Bawaba (UAE), September 9, 2008  
DuPont, one of the world's leading market-driven science companies, announced that its Crop Genetics Research and Development division is currently developing technologies to improve

agricultural productivity in order to meet rising global demand for grain. Pioneer Hi-Bred International, Inc., a DuPont business, is the world's leading developer and supplier of advanced plant genetics to farmers worldwide. Pioneer is contributing significantly to the effort by researching technologies to boost soybean and corn seed yields by 40 per cent in the next 10 years.

Over the longer term, DuPont will be introducing agricultural products that provide novel and transgenic drought tolerance and nitrogen use efficiency characteristics that complement the industry-leading products that the company currently markets.

<http://www.albawaba.com/en/countries/UAE/235352>

- **Rwanda: Soil Erosion Affecting Farm Productivity**, IRIN News, September 5, 2008  
Over the years local residents of Rebero in Gicumbi District north of the Rwandan capital of Kigali, watched as their soil was washed away by rain. They also had to contend with landslides. Until a local group, the Rebero Emergency Response and Mitigation (ERDM) committee, started to reclaim the land in 2004, mainly through terracing. "After being trained in risk management we came up with a community disaster preparedness plan," Eugene Habyarimana, the committee chairman, told IRIN. Working with the NGO World Vision, ERDM's activities aim to reduce the risk of disaster and increase agricultural productivity among the predominantly farming population of Rebero. Formed in partnership with the government, the ERDM represents the administrative unit known as a sector - part of Rwanda's administrative structure that comprises provinces, districts, sectors and cells split into groups of 10 houses. "The ERDMs are one of the ways of helping build sustainable communities by empowering local people through programmes that are community owned," William Ngabo, a humanitarian emergency affairs manager with World Vision Rwanda, said.  
<http://allafrica.com/stories/200809050685.html>

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## Women in International Development

This section has human interest stories concerned with increased institutional attention for women in the development process. This section is a showcase of some of these stories, and a marker of the continued presence of such ideas in the news cycle.

**Investing in Women**, The Daily Star (Bangladesh), September 9, 2008

WOMEN own less than 4% of the total cultivable land in Bangladesh. Due to patriarchal set up, as anywhere else around the world, they are largely excluded from capital accumulation process. They are neither considered bread-winners nor future successors of the family, which provide ample logic to support the systemic discrimination against women.

It is impossible to change patriarchal notion of ownership over means of production, as well as production relations overnight. However, recognising the gender dimensions of poverty, and achieving MDG goal on poverty, and hunger, the state and private sector must act to transfer asset and income to women, particularly to female-headed households, to those who are widows, divorced or separated. The income base for women would support them and their families to increase their level of consumption, income, asset, health and education, work opportunity, social status and so on.

<http://www.thedailystar.net/story.php?nid=53874>