

ISSN 1655-3293

# IBON EDM

Education for Development  
Vol. 10, No. 1 January - February 2011

2011: The year of living dangerously

Arab regimes fear bread intifadah

Agricultural aid in Africa

# The Future of Food

Climate change, speculation  
and corporate control  
push the global food system  
to breaking point

**COVER STORY**

- 1 **The Year of Living Dangerously  
Rising Commodity Prices and Extreme Weather Events  
Threaten Global Stability**  
Michael T. Klare

**FEATURES**

- 5 **Frenzy in the Food Markets**  
Jayati Ghosh
- 8 **Arab regimes fear bread intifada**  
Cam McGrath
- 11 **Agricultural aid in Africa:  
Old problems remain amid renewed focus**  
Arnold Padilla

**ALTERNATIVES**

- 18 **Can eating less meat curb climate change?**  
Wendee Holtcamp
- 21 **Food for a rooted future**  
Robin Broad and John Cavanagh
- 23 **Food Crises: G20 needs Architects, not Firefighters**  
Olivier De Schutter

**NEWS**

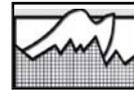
- 25 **APRN will host third regional workshop on CSO  
and development effectiveness**
- 25 **PCFS holds Regional Thematic Consultation  
on Development Effectiveness of CSOs**
- 26 **PCFS Holds Asia-wide CSO Conference on Aid  
and Development Effectiveness in ARD**

**BOOK REVIEW**

- 27 **Taking Stock of the Movement: Food Justice**  
Kate Hoppe

**Education for Development Magazine**

is published by

**IBON International  
IBON Foundation, Inc.**IBON Center  
114 Timog Avenue, Quezon City  
1103 PhilippinesWebsite: [www.iboninternational.org](http://www.iboninternational.org)  
E-mail Address: [ibon.international@ibon.org](mailto:ibon.international@ibon.org)  
Tel. Nos. +632 927 7060 to 62  
Local 202  
Fax +632 927 6981**Antonio Tujan, Jr.**  
International Director  
Editor-in-Chief  
International Department**Paul Quintos  
Maria Theresa Nera-Lauron**  
Editorial BoardCover Design  
Ron VillegasLayout Design  
Darius GalangPhoto Credits  
<http://www.ayushveda.com/>  
<http://blog.clarity.com/>  
[capitalleritrea.com](http://capitalleritrea.com)  
<http://civileats.com>  
<http://www.cohp.org/>  
<http://definitelyfilipino.com>  
<http://farmlandgrab.org/>  
<http://www.flickr.com/photos/worldbank/>  
<http://iboninternational.org/>  
[mlach.wordpress.com](http://mlach.wordpress.com)  
<http://mrloran.wikispaces.com>  
<http://www.nature.com/>  
<http://news.markets247.com>  
<http://www.newworldorderwar.com>  
<http://palestinianpundit.blogspot.com>  
<http://pmnewsnigeria.com/>  
<http://www.redskynews.com/>  
<http://www.spiegel.de>  
<http://theeconomiccollapseblog.com>  
<http://wallpapers.free-review.net>  
<http://webapp.ciat.cgiar.org/>  
<http://whitewaithe.files.wordpress.com/>

# The Year of Living Dangerously

## Rising Commodity Prices and Extreme Weather Events Threaten Global Stability

By Michael T. Klare



<http://mforan.wikispaces.com>



<http://www.newworldorderwar.com>



<http://blog.clarity.com>

**G**et ready for a rocky year. From now on, rising prices, powerful storms, severe droughts and floods, and other unexpected events are likely to play havoc with the fabric of global society, producing chaos and political unrest. Start with a simple fact: the prices of basic food staples are already approaching or exceeding their 2008 peaks, that year when deadly riots erupted in dozens of countries around the world.

It's not surprising then that food and energy experts are beginning to warn that 2011 could be the year of living dangerously -- and so could 2012, 2013, and on into the future. Add to the soaring cost of the grains that keep so many impoverished people alive a comparable rise in oil prices -- again nearing levels not

Protesters demonstrate against a hike in fuel prices in Ghana's capital Accra. Ghana's annualised producer price inflation rate rose to 17.98 percent in December 2010 from 15.98 percent the month before, the country's statistics office said. The government announced a hike in the price of petrol and diesel by 30 percent in an effort to offset a costly surge in crude oil prices on the world market and to pay off the state-owned refinery debt.



<http://whiteiraithe.wordpress.com>

seen since the peak months of 2008 -- and you can already hear the first rumblings about the tenuous economic recovery being in danger of imminent collapse. Think of those rising energy prices as adding further fuel to global discontent.

Already, combined with staggering levels of youth unemployment and a deep mistrust of autocratic, repressive governments, food prices have sparked riots in Algeria and mass protests in Tunisia that, to the surprise of the world, ousted long-time dictator President Zine al-Abidine Ben Ali and his corrupt extended family. And many of the social stresses evident in those two countries are present across the Middle East and elsewhere. No one can predict where the next explosion will occur, but with food prices still climbing and other economic pressures mounting, more upheavals appear inevitable. These may be the first resource revolts to catch our attention, but they won't be the last.

Put simply, global consumption patterns are now beginning to challenge the planet's natural resource limits. Populations are still on the rise, and from Brazil to India, Turkey to China, new powers are rising as well. With them goes an urge for a more American-style life. Not surprisingly, the demand for basic commodities is significantly on the rise, even as supplies in many instances are shrinking. At the same time, climate change, itself a product of unbridled energy use, is adding to the pressure on supplies, and speculators are betting on a situation trending progressively worse. Add these together

and the road ahead appears increasingly rocky.

### **Breadbaskets without Bread**

Let's begin with food, the most important and volatile of these commodities. Food prices declined in October 2008 after the onset of the global financial crisis, but that seems to have been an anomaly. The December 2010 index of global food prices compiled by the U.N.'s Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) hit a record 215, one point higher than in the spring of 2008. (In that index, based on a "bundle" of food staples, a baseline of 100 represents average prices in 2002-2004.) In fact, some food products, including sugar, cooking oils, and fats, are now trading substantially above their 2008 levels; others, including dairy products, grains, and meat, are inching perilously close to record levels.

As 2011 begins, food experts fear that, within months, prices for key staples will climb above the 2008 threshold and stay there, causing extreme hardship for poor people around the world. "We are at a very high level," said a worried AbdolrezaAbbassian, an economist at the FAO. "These levels in the previous episode led to problems and riots across the world."

Of particular concern to Abbassian and his colleagues is the rising cost of corn, rice, and wheat, the staple crops of billions in many of the poorest countries. According to the FAO, by the end of 2010 international corn and wheat prices were

already approaching their 2008 peak levels (about \$260 and \$340 per metric ton, respectively).

Analysts attribute the rise in grain prices to growing demand in both developed and developing nations, along with a number of cataclysmic weather-related events and speculation by investors. An extreme drought and fierce fires last summer destroyed a large percentage of the wheat crop in Russia and Ukraine, while heavy flooding in India and the inundation of 20% of Pakistan damaged significant parts of the grain output of those countries. At the same time, unusually hot and dry weather suppressed production in a number of other key farming areas.

What makes the picture look so worrisome today are indications that the severity and frequency of extreme weather events appear to be on the rise. In the past few weeks alone, several such events point the way to serious supply problems ahead. Most significant has been the unprecedented rainfall and flooding in Australia that put an area more than twice the size of California largely underwater, significantly disrupting wheat cultivation there. Australia is one of the world's leading wheat producers. Unusually dry conditions in the American Midwest and Argentina have also hinted at future problems in grain and corn output. It's still too early to predict the size of this year's grain and corn harvests, but many analysts are warning of a shortfall in supplies, along with sky-high prices.

Mainstream analysts and government officials are loathe to attribute this traffic jam of extreme weather events to global warming. Huge variations in rainfall can be normal, especially in places like Australia that are susceptible to El Niño/La Niña ocean-temperature oscillations, and politicians are fearful of assuming responsibility for a problem as massive as climate change. But climate change theory has long suggested that the warming trend -- 2010 tied 2005 for the warmest year on record and nine of the 10 warmest years have come in the

last decade -- will be accompanied by an increase in the frequency and severity of storms. It's hard to escape the conclusion that recent events, including those Australian floods, are tied to rising global temperatures.

### The Energy Crisis Returns

Soaring food prices are being driven as well by speculative investments and the rising price of oil. Partly in response to the diminishing value of the dollar, some investors are sinking their money into food futures (along with gold and silver) as a speculative hedge. At the same time, the price of oil is edging toward the \$100 mark, making it increasingly profitable for farmers to switch from growing corn for human consumption to growing it for the manufacture of ethanol, which in turn reduces the amount of farm acreage devoted to staples. Oil would have to fall below \$50 per barrel to make the cultivation of corn as a food product competitive with ethanol production -- and that's not likely to happen. So even if more corn is produced this year, less will be available for food purposes and the price of what remains is bound to rise.

The precipitous rise in oil prices has startled the experts. Not so long ago, the U.S. Department of Energy (DoE) was projecting a price range of \$70-\$80 per barrel in 2011, but as the year began oil was already trading above \$90 a barrel and some analysts predict that it will reach \$100 before the year is out. A few are even talking about the \$150 barrel and gas prices at the pump of \$4 or more. If prices climb above \$100, global consumer spending could take another nosedive.

"Oil prices are entering a dangerous zone for the global economy," says Fatih Birol, the chief economist for the International Energy Agency (IEA). "The oil import bills are becoming a threat to the economic recovery."

As with food, the rising cost of oil is a product

**It's not surprising then that food and energy experts are beginning to warn that 2011 could be the year of living dangerously**

of growing demand, insufficient supplies, and speculative investments. According to the most recent projections from the IEA, daily global oil consumption in 2011 will average 87.4 million barrels, an increase of about two million barrels from the first quarter of 2010. Much of the extra demand is coming from China, where a newly-minted middle class is buying automobiles at a record clip, as well as from the United States, where previously cautious consumers are slowly returning to pre-2008 driving habits.

At a time when the oil industry is experiencing declining rates of output at many existing oil fields and finding it ever more difficult to add production, even two million extra barrels per day can be a daunting challenge (and greater demand is expected in the coming years). In the United States, for example, much hope was placed in oil exploration in the deep waters of the Gulf of Mexico and offshore Alaska, but in the wake of the BP disaster, this seems like a forlorn prospect. Production in Mexico and the North Sea, two bright spots of recent years, is facing a sharp decline, while other key producers, including those in the Middle East, are struggling to maintain current output levels at existing fields.

Many energy analysts believe that the world is at (or will soon reach) peak oil -- the moment when global petroleum output achieves a maximum sustainable daily rate and begins a long-term, irreversible decline. Others contend that higher levels of output are still possible. Whatever the truth of the matter, at this moment the oil industry is finding it increasingly difficult, and ever more costly, to boost output above current levels. This, combined with insatiable demand, is driving prices skyward.

Under these circumstances, speculators are again being drawn into the oil market as a rare sure bet. Such speculators helped push oil prices to a record \$147 per barrel back in 2008, but fled the market

when prices crashed as the American economy headed to a meltdown. Now, they're coming back. "Hedge funds and private investors are buying up financial instruments tied to the price of crude, and thereby helping push up oil prices," the Wall Street Journal reported in late December.

Most analysts are expecting a price surge this spring or summer when American motorists hit the road. "We will have a spring rally that will take us to between \$3.10 and \$3.50 a gallon for gasoline at service stations in the United States," predicted Tom Kloza, chief oil analyst at the Oil Price Information Service.

The rising price of gas will, in turn, hurt consumers just as they show signs of opening their wallets again. No less worrisome, oil-importing countries like the United States, Japan, and many in Europe will face soaring bills for fuel imports, further enfeebling economies already suffering from profound weakness.

According to some calculations, oil prices added another \$72 billion to America's mammoth balance-of-payments deficit last year. Europe had to cough up an additional \$70 billion for imported oil and Japan \$27 billion. "It is a very telling story," says the IEA's Fatih Birol of recent oil-price data. "2010 rang the first alarm bells and 2011 price levels could bring us to the same financial crisis times that we saw in 2008."

Rising food prices leading to riots, protests, and revolts, mounting oil prices, mammoth worldwide unemployment, and a collapsed recovery -- it looks like the perfect set of preconditions for a global tsunami of instability and turmoil. Events in Algeria and Tunisia give us just an inkling of what this maelstrom might look like, but where and how it will next erupt, and in what form, is anyone's guess. A single guarantee: we haven't seen the last of resource revolts which, in the coming years, could reach an intensity we scarcely imagine today.

---

**Michael T. Klare** is a professor of peace and world security studies at Hampshire College, a TomDispatch regular, and the author, most recently, of *Rising Powers, Shrinking Planet*. This article was published in TomDispatch.com.



# Frenzy in the Food Markets

<http://www.redskynews.com>

By Jayati Ghosh

So now we are back in another phase of sharply rising global food prices, which is wreaking further devastation on populations in developing countries that have already been ravaged for several years of rising prices and falling employment chances. The food price index of the FAO in December 2010 surpassed its previous peak of June 2008, the month that is still thought of as the extreme peak of the world food crisis.

Some of the biggest increases have come in the prices of sugar and edible oils. The US import price of sugar doubled over the second half of 2010. Traded prices of edible oils like soya bean oil and palm oil increased by an average of 50 per cent over the same period. But even staple prices have shown sharp increases, with the biggest increase in wheat prices, which went up by 95 per cent between June and December 2010. Rice prices have been relatively stable in global trade over the past year

in comparison, but in fact the FAO reports that domestic rice prices in major rice producing and consuming countries, especially in Asia, continued to increase and are now at their highest ever levels.

No one can claim that we could not see this coming. In fact, ever since the severe price crunch of mid-2008, there have been those who argued that unless major changes were made both in national policies towards agriculture and the way in which we manage the global trade in both agricultural commodities and their futures markets, such a repeat would be almost inevitable.

But the world is a curious place nowadays, with public memory so short as to be almost non-existent and media analysis (as well as public policy) still dominated by those who have comprehensively messed it up but have no sense of either shame or rectitude. So the same tired old reasons for the

current food price increase are being trotted out once again, even though they were completely wrong two years ago and are wrong again today.

Wrong reason number 1: Global food prices are increasing because of increased demand from developing countries, especially the rapidly growing large populations of China and India. In fact, FAO data tell the real story, which is quite the opposite. The total consumption of major food grain increased only slightly in the world as a whole (less than 2 per cent) and for several crops it even fell. The total amount of food grain traded in global markets has actually fallen.



<http://www.cohp.org>

Consider the case of wheat, which has seen such a dramatic increase in price over the past year. Total global “utilisation”, or consumption, is estimated to have increased by only 1.2 per cent over the previous year. But global wheat production fell, quite sharply, by 4.3 per cent, so it is the supply shortfall that affected prices. Of course, even this real imbalance is not enough to explain the significant price shift – but more on that later.

In annual terms, the really big increase has come in maize (or corn) prices. The US f.o.b. corn export price increased by around 53 per cent in the year to December 2010. But global utilization of all coarse grains (in which corn dominates) increased by only 1.8 per cent. The problem for corn was that production fell by 1.1 per cent, and the effects of La Nina and other weather-related phenomena suggest that there may be further adverse effects on supply. In early January the US government cut its forecast for corn stocks by as much as 30 per cent, creating a new and even more intense spiral in corn prices.

And of course corn use is significantly affected by the obscene subsidies that are still provided for biofuels. Last year these subsidies – which ironically are not even really “green” – meant record ethanol production that accounted for nearly 40 per cent of US corn production.

Clearly, therefore, the recent problem relates much more to supply than to demand – and that too, supply from the major large exporters among developed countries. Production in most developing regions was actually significantly higher in 2010 than it was in the previous year, and indexed has generally kept pace with utilisation in

some developing countries. But various weather and other shocks have meant that large exporters have seen their production and exports drop, thereby affecting global markets.

So does that mean that supply shocks have caused the recent problem? Certainly to a significant extent – and that brings back the crucial issues of reviving agriculture and making it more viable, especially for small cultivators in the developing world. But it cannot explain the entire increase. And that raises the second common – and wrong – reason that is presented for the current price hike.

Wrong reason number 2: The price hike is entirely because of real demand and supply imbalances. This is simply not possible given the volatility and sharp movements of prices that can be seen from the charts. Once again, it is likely that a combination of panic buying and speculative financial activity is playing a role in driving world food prices up well beyond anything that is warranted by real quantity movements.

The most recent data on financial activity in commodity futures markets from the US Commodity Future Trading Commission suggest that until the end of November the net long positions of index investors had increased dramatically in commodities like wheat and corn. This is likely to have increased even more in the past few weeks, given the announcements about lower levels of public stocks.

Similar trends are evident in the petroleum market, which has driven oil prices up to around \$100 a barrel. Higher oil prices also feed into higher food prices, creating another source of price spiral.

Once again we are also seeing contango in these commodity markets, with futures prices higher than spot prices. This is all a repeat of 2007 and the

first half of 2008, when prices of these commodities nearly tripled. And it is not surprising, because the regulations that could prevent or at least limit such speculative financial activity are not yet in place, and there are even concerns about whether they will be effective or toothless in the implementation.

But is such regulation a case of shooting the messenger? No, because we have direct recent experience of how financial speculation in commodity markets can create not only unprecedented volatility, but also affect prices in developing countries with extreme effects on hunger and nutrition for at least half of humanity. The case for moving swiftly to ensure effective regulation in this area – and for dealing with supply issues in a serious and sustainable way – has never been more compelling.



<http://theeconomiccollapseblog.com>

---

**Jayati Ghosh** is a professor of economics at Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi. This article was published by Triple Crisis ([triplecrisis.com](http://triplecrisis.com)) on January 20, 2011.



A man carries a loaf of bread while a mob builds up in tunisia. Photo: <http://palestinianpundit.blogspot.com>

# Arab Regimes Fear Bread Intifadah

Analysis by Cam McGrath

**C**AIRO, Jan 18, 2011 (IPS) - "Break my heart but don't come near my bread," goes an old Arabic proverb. Failure to observe it has often come at a high political price.

Just ask Tunisian president Zine El-Abidine Ben Ali, who has now fled.

For weeks his countrymen had protested against high unemployment, endemic corruption and political repression. They also decried the high cost of staple food items such as wheat, sugar and milk, whose prices rose about 25 percent in the first week of January.

"We want bread, water, and Ben Ali out," one group of protestors chanted.

On Friday, after a brutal crackdown and last-minute concessions failed to contain the rising tide, the embattled Tunisian president fled to Saudi Arabia with his family.

Commentators said Ben Ali, who ruled the North African country with an iron fist for 23 years, grossly underestimated the public's anger over being unable to put food on the table. It was a cardinal error by an aging dictator who a U.S. diplomatic cable released by WikiLeaks described as being out of touch with his people.

The disgraced despot would have done well to recall the bread riots in 1984 that left some 80 Tunisians dead and almost unhinged the government of his predecessor, Habib Bourguiba. Similar protests erupted in Egypt in 1977, Morocco in 1981 and Jordan in 1989. And it was bread riots in 1988 that eventually brought Islamists to the verge of parliamentary control in Algeria – a situation that led to a decade-long civil war.

Providing cheap food to the masses is part of an unwritten pact between Arab dictators and their people. Since the 1950s, authoritarian Arab regimes have committed to distributing subsidised food staples such as bread, milk and eggs to their populations in exchange for political quiescence.

"While officials acknowledge the burden that subsidies put on national budgets, they have been hesitant to reduce or remove them," says economist Abdel Fatah El-Gebali of the Al-Ahram Centre for Political and Strategic Studies. "They worry it could cause inflation and lead to social upheaval."

In Egypt, which allocates about 7 percent of GDP to fuel and food subsidies, plans to restructure the food subsidy programme are whispered in the halls of parliament.

The government wants to replace the current "in-kind" system with a cash payment system that it says would directly target those who need it most. Yet the controversial plan is repeatedly delayed by nervous officials.

Antiquated and inefficient subsidy systems from Rabat to Riyadh are now buckling under the pressure of record-high global food (and fuel) prices. Arab governments face the dilemma: absorb the extra costs of food inflation into national subsidy programmes at the risk of deepening budget deficits, or permit domestic food prices to rise at the risk of social unrest.

Tunisia appears to have chosen unwisely.

Of course, food inflation is not a problem on its own. It is the combustible mixture of poverty, high unemployment, economic disparity, and rising living costs that has turned the region into a powder keg.

**Providing cheap food to the masses is part of an unwritten pact between Arab dictators and their people. Since the 1950s, authoritarian Arab regimes have committed to distributing subsidised food staples such as bread, milk and eggs to their populations in exchange for political quiescence.**

Arab Labour Organisation (ALO) figures show that Arab countries have among the highest unemployment rates in the world – an average of 14.5 percent in fiscal year 2007/08 compared with the international average of 5.7 percent. The rates may even be higher if one accepts unofficial estimates.

According to national figures, more than 20 percent of Egyptians live on less than two dollars per day, the UN-recognised poverty threshold. In Algeria, about 23 percent of the population lives below the poverty line, while in Morocco it is 14.3 percent, in Tunisia it is 12.8 percent, and in Yemen the rate exceeds 45 percent.

The popular uprising that sent Tunisia's president packing was not a political movement, but a



<http://palestinianpundit.blogspot.com>

spontaneous economic revolt by citizens unable to make ends meet. It began when Mohammad Bouazizi, a 26-year-old university graduate, doused himself with kerosene and set himself alight after Tunisian police confiscated the unlicensed produce cart he was using to make a living.

"Tunisians and Algerians are hungry. The Egyptians and Yemenis are right behind them," Emirati commentator Mishaal Al Gergawi wrote in the Dubai-based newspaper Gulf News. "Mohammad Bouazizi didn't set himself on fire because he couldn't blog or vote. People set themselves on fire because they can't stand seeing their family wither away slowly, not of sorrow, but of cold stark hunger."

Bouazizi's self-immolation on Dec. 17 sparked a conflagration that toppled the Tunisian government and now threatens to engulf much of the Arab world.

Should the region's autocratic rulers be worried? To date, they have managed to retain power through sham elections and by neutralising and demoralising political opposition. But a bread intifadah – in which the disenfranchised masses are ready to face down bullets to secure food for their families – can be a very formidable force.

Copyright © 2011 IPS-Inter Press Service

---

This article was published by Inter Press Service ([ipsnews.net](http://ipsnews.net)) on January 18, 2011.



Photo: © Curt Caremark / World Bank (<http://www.flickr.com/photos/worldbank/2628528653/>)

# Agricultural aid in Africa: Old problems remain amid renewed focus

By Arnold Padilla

Agriculture is considered as the key to employment, growth, and poverty reduction in Africa. In Sub-Saharan Africa, the agricultural sector is said to employ 65% of the labor force and generates 32% of the gross domestic product (GDP). Self-employed farmers, many of whom are women, comprise more than half of rural employment in Sub-Saharan Africa. Like in most low-income countries, agriculture has a great potential in growth and job creation in the region (i.e. a \$1 increase in agricultural income typically translates to a \$2.5-increase in overall income). In terms of poverty reduction, GDP growth coming from agriculture is said to be two to four times more effective in raising incomes of extremely poor people than GDP originating from other economic sectors.<sup>1</sup>

## Decades of neglect

But despite its importance to the economy and in reducing poverty, agriculture in Africa has been largely neglected. In the past several decades, agricultural production has stagnated. The increase in total farm output has failed to keep pace with the increase in the population of the region. In

particular, food production has lagged resulting in worsening undernourishment in Africa. The number of chronically undernourished people increased from 173 million in the early 1990s to 200 million, of which 194 million are from Sub-Saharan Africa, in the latter part of the decade.<sup>2</sup> During the same period, Africa has posted high levels of food imports.



Current aid policies are not best serving Africa's farmers. (J.C. Rubyogo)

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

declining steadily in the 1990s until the early part of the 2000s.

Furthermore, the fall in aid to agriculture was also linked to the attractions that assistance to social infrastructure and services offer to donors which agriculture and other productive sectors supposedly

Among the major reasons behind the decline of agriculture were flawed policies such as privatization and other structural adjustment policies that took away the direct role of the state in farm production. This caused severe dislocation of production, farm trade, and farmer support services. Another reason was serious lack of investment with many African governments devoting less than 1% of their budgets to agriculture.<sup>3</sup>

Every year, between 1995 and 2003, official development assistance (ODA) commitments for agriculture, fishery, and forestry in Africa were declining by 4% per year or some \$78.81 million annually. Bilateral aid from the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) donors fell by \$37.51 million a year while assistance from multilateral donors declined by \$41.3 million during the same period.

Such trend reflected the global pattern of declining aid to agriculture in the previous decade, which was blamed on the "limited success of aid to agriculture and a shift towards structural adjustment lending (connected with a stronger focus on economic liberalization)."<sup>4</sup> Global ODA commitments to agriculture peaked at \$11.82 billion in 1987 before

lack. ODA to health and education, for instance, can be easily linked to the targets identified in the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) unlike agriculture which has a long gestation period and does not have the same clear relationship between aid expenditure and outcome. Also, pouring aid to social infrastructure and services was seen as a way to reduce transaction costs since assistance can be coursed through large public sector bodies either as program support to ministries/departments or as general budget support.<sup>5</sup>

**Renewed focus**

To address the worsening agricultural crisis, African leaders and their development partners launched in 2003 the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP). The CAADP is the agricultural program of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), which is the implementing agency of the African Union (AU) responsible for driving economic integration in Africa.

It has four key focus areas (or "Pillars") for agricultural improvement and investment, namely Sustainable Land and Water Management; Market Access; Food Supply and Hunger; and Agricultural Research. The CAADP aims to raise Africa's agricultural productivity by at least 6% per year and increase public investment in agriculture to 10% of

national budgets per year.<sup>6</sup>

The four pillars, the CAAPD estimated, will need about \$17.9 billion per year or some \$251 billion in investments from 2002 to 2015. Bulk of the amount, or 77.7%, will go to investments in land and water management and rural infrastructure.

Initiatives under the CAADP's four pillars are currently being funded by various bilateral and multilateral donors, with the TerrAfrica program receiving bulk of the funding with \$1 billion.

According to the OECD Development Centre's Business for Development 2008 report, "Aid to agriculture (in Africa) is back in the donor agenda, with a stronger focus on trade and private sector development". The report said that there has been a renewed awareness both among African policy makers and donor agencies of the vital contributions of agriculture to long-term growth and poverty reduction. Africa, the OECD claimed, now recognizes that the underperformance of agriculture has caused a major drag in its economic and social development. At the same time, the donor community has supposedly begun to refocus policy attention on the important role that trade and the private sector play in development especially in agriculture.<sup>7</sup>

From 2000 to 2009, ODA commitments to agriculture in Africa from both multilateral and bilateral (DAC) have increased by 23.5% and 21.4% respectively. DAC donors comprised more than half (52.8%) of the total ODA commitments to agriculture in Africa of \$4.06 billion in 2009. As a portion of total ODA commitments to Africa, aid to agriculture has also recovered from its decline. From a low of 3.8% in 2003 and 2005, it has climbed to 6.7% in 2009.

The US is the biggest bilateral source of ODA to agriculture in Africa with \$3.35 billion in cumulative commitments from 1995 to 2009 followed by Japan with \$2.68 billion; France, \$1.87 billion; Germany, \$1.43 billion; Canada, \$828.03 million; United Kingdom, \$790.71 million; Belgium, \$737.64 million; Netherlands, \$691.03 million; Denmark, \$680.66 million; and Norway, \$648.34 million.

Among multilateral donors, the International Development Association (IDA) accounted for 53.8% of total multilateral commitments to agriculture or some \$5.95 billion from 1995 to 2009. EU institutions ranked second with \$1.99 billion followed by the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), \$1.62 billion; African Development Fund (AfDF), \$1.46 billion; OPEC Fund, \$17.20 million; and the UN Development Programme (UNDP), \$11.03 billion.

#### More aid money still not enough

While ODA commitments to African agriculture have been improving both in absolute terms and as a percentage of total aid in recent years, they are still far short of the actual need of the agricultural sector and of what donors have pledged to provide.

Donor pledges at the 2005 Gleneagles Summit, which include strengthening donor support to agricultural investment and production to help enable African governments' achieve their target of investing 10% of their budgets to agriculture have been largely unmet. (As of 2009, only \$7 billion out of the total \$21.5 billion in aid promised at the Gleneagles Summit have actually been delivered.)

This was aggravated by the food and fuel crises that hit Africa in 2007 that presumably further raised the financial requirements (which the CAAPD puts at \$17.9 billion a year)

**Despite its importance to the economy and in reducing poverty, agriculture in Africa has been largely neglected. In the past several decades, agricultural production has stagnated. The increase in total farm output has failed to keep pace with the increase in the population of the region.**

of agricultural development in the region.

But beyond the quantity of aid, the quality of foreign assistance and the type of policies and programs they promote have remained unreformed, dampening prospects of real recovery, much less development, of agriculture in Africa. A 2008 study by the UK Food Group,<sup>8</sup> for instance, noted how donors continue to use agriculture aid in Africa to “promote globalisation and the production of food and fuel, primarily for more affluent markets, with safety nets for the poor who lose out.”<sup>9</sup>

An earlier study (2005) by the Participatory Ecological Land-use Management (PELUM) Association and the Practical Action pointed out that the aid of the European Commission (EC) to agriculture in Sub-Saharan Africa has not been well-focused on resource poor farmers. EC aid to privatize agricultural extension services prejudice poor farmers since service provision in remoter areas are not prioritized because they are not profitable while its focus on commodity crops only benefit better-off farmers because those living below the poverty line could not participate. And when EC aid does reach poor farmers, the study said, it is usually in the form of food aid that often has an adverse impact on local production systems and markets, and leads to longer-term dependency on aid.<sup>10</sup>

**Private funding for an African Green Revolution**

The world’s two largest philanthropic organizations – the Rockefeller Foundation and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation – have also been actively funding agricultural development in Africa for more than a decade under what they call the New Green Revolution. This initiative was launched in 1999 by the Rockefeller Foundation, which has since spent \$150 million that supported the development of more than 100 new crop varieties, capacity building, promotion of inorganic fertilizers, etc.

In 2006, the Rockefeller Foundation was joined by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation that gave a



<http://webapp.ciat.cgiar.org/>

Soil degradation in Africa

substantial boost to the New Green Revolution initiative and gave birth to the Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA). Under the AGRA, the Rockefeller Foundation committed \$50 million (on top of the \$150 million already mentioned) while the Gates Foundation committed \$100 million. AGRA is established as a public charity institution aimed at reducing hunger and poverty in Africa through agricultural development, specifically to improve the productivity and profitability of small-scale farming via the use of technological, policy, and institutional innovations. To implement initiatives under AGRA, the Program for a Green Revolution in Africa (ProGRA) was created. The initial \$150 million donated by the Rockefeller and Gates Foundations is being used to fund ProGRA’s five-year (2006-2011) Program for Africa’s Seed Systems (PASS).

As of 2008, the Gates Foundation has committed an additional \$341.8 million to fund its various initiatives on agricultural development in Africa. Of the said amount, \$164.5 million went to AGRA’s Soil Health Program. This is the second program of AGRA after the PASS initiative and aims to “help small farmers renew their soils and increase their productivity through the use of appropriate fertilizers and soil management practices.”<sup>11</sup> A major portion of the \$341.8 million has also been allocated to improve market access for small



<http://farmlandgrab.org/>

African farmers such as the \$42.9-million dairy and \$47-million coffee projects in Kenya, Rwanda, Uganda, and Tanzania.

These programs of the Rockefeller and Gates Foundations enhanced the initiatives in African agriculture of multilateral donors, specifically the World Bank and the African Development Bank (AfDB). The World Bank was mainly responsible for the liberalization, deregulation, and privatization of Africa's seeds industry in the 1990s.

On the other hand, the AfDB joined the push for a Green Revolution in Africa in 2005 when it funded a \$34-million project to help disseminate the New Rice for Africa (NERICA), a new strain of rice that Rockefeller funding helped develop. The following year, the AfDB has been

**According to the OECD Development Centre's Business for Development 2008 report, "Aid to agriculture (in Africa) is back in the donor agenda, with a stronger focus on trade and private sector development". The report said that there has been a renewed awareness both among African policy makers and donor agencies of the vital contributions of agriculture to long-term growth and poverty reduction.**

tasked by the African Union during the African Fertilizer Summit (which was pushed and funded by the Rockefeller Foundation) to shoulder the financing burden of the Africa Fertilizer Development Financing Mechanism and Regional Fertilizer Procurement and Distribution Facilities.

#### **Trojan horse for corporate control**

Critics have noted that the main players of philanthropic groups, official donors, and agrochemical TNCs behind the New Green Revolution in Africa are the same players behind the original or "old" Green Revolution in Asia. The Rockefeller Foundation, for instance, is again playing a key role together with the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR) which the foundation created to provide the



capitalintrea.com

scientific and technical backbone for the original Green Revolution.

But like the old Green Revolution, many fear that the Rockefeller Foundation's involvement, which has been bolstered by its partnership with the Gates Foundation, is "akin to that of a 'Trojan Horse' paving the way for the entry by transnational agrochemical, fertilizer, and agricultural biotechnology companies to peddle their wares". The involvement of the same agricultural research groups supported by agrochemical TNCs in the disastrous Green Revolution in Asia ensures that the "Green Revolution prescribed for Africa basically follows the same formula used in Asia – a technology package for agriculture involving the use of external inputs, massive agricultural infrastructure and modern seeds".<sup>12</sup> If there is any difference, it is that the African version can be more harmful to the environment and poor farmers because of its promotion of genetically modified seeds, ironically the funders and agrochemical

TNCs' answer to the catastrophic ecological and social impact of the first Green Revolution.

In Sep. 2-4, 2010, the AGRA and its invited partners organized the African Green Revolution Forum (ARGF). The ARGF, as described in its website, is a "private-sector led initiative which will bring together African heads of state, ministers, farmers, private agribusiness firms, financial institutions, NGOs, civil society, and scientists to discuss and develop concrete investment plans for achieving the Green Revolution in Africa".<sup>13</sup>

Aside from the Rockefeller and Gates Foundations, other philanthropic groups involved in the African Green Revolution are the Soros Foundation (of finance speculator George Soros) and Yara Foundation (of the Norway-based chemical company Yara International ASA). Bilateral donors Department for International Development (DFID) of the UK and the US Agency for

International Development (USAID) also provide funding support.

Meanwhile, the world's leading agrochemical TNCs also participate in the funding flow of the New Green Revolution through non-government organizations (NGOs) that they established or support.

**Beyond the quantity of aid, the quality of foreign assistance and the type of policies and programs they promote have remained un-reformed, dampening prospects of real recovery, much less development, of agriculture in Africa**

Syngenta, for instance, provides funding through the Syngenta Foundation for Sustainable Agriculture and the International Service for the Acquisition of Agricultural Biotechnology Applications (ISAAA). The ISAAA also gets funding support from Monsanto, which funds as well as the Africa Harvest Biotech Foundation International, and Dupont.

Notes

- 1 Bach, C.F. and Pinstrup-Andersen, P. (2008, April). "Agriculture, growth, and employment in Africa". Discussion Paper No.2. Civil society input to the Africa Commission on Effective Development Cooperation with Africa. DanChurchAid. Retrieved from [www.africacommission.um.dk](http://www.africacommission.um.dk)
- 2 Harsch, E. (2004, January). "Agriculture: Africa's 'engine for growth'". Africa Recovery, Vol. 17 No. 4. Retrieved from [www.un.org](http://www.un.org)
- 3 Harsch, E. (2004)
- 4 OECD Development Centre. (2008). "Promoting commercial agriculture in Africa". Second edition. Retrieved from [www.oecd.org](http://www.oecd.org)
- 5 OECD Development Centre. (2008)
- 6 CAAPD. Frequently asked questions. Retrieved from [www.nepad-caadp.net](http://www.nepad-caadp.net)
- 7 OECD Development Centre. (2008)
- 8 UK Food Group members include Action Aid UK, Christian Aid, Concern Worldwide (UK), Find Your Feet, Oxfam GB, Practical Action, and Self Help Africa
- 9 The UK Food Group. (2008). "More aid for African agriculture: policy implications for small-scale farmers". Retrieved from [www.ukfg.org.uk](http://www.ukfg.org.uk)
- 10 PELUM Association and Practical Action. (2005). "The crisis in African agriculture: a more effective role for EC aid?" Retrieved from [www.sarpn.org.za](http://www.sarpn.org.za)
- 11 Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. "Working to break the cycle of hunger and poverty". Global Development Program: Agricultural Development. May 2008. Retrieved from [www.gatesfoundation.org](http://www.gatesfoundation.org)
- 12 Daño (2007)
- 13 African Green Revolution Forum. About page. Retrieve from [agrforum.com](http://agrforum.com)

# Can eating less meat curb climate change?



A conservation-minded Texas mom assesses her contribution to climate change, one meal at a time.

By Wendee Holtcamp for the Daily Climate

HOUSTON - Three years ago, I stood atop the Franklin Mountains at dusk, gazing over El Paso, Texas and gritty Ciudad Juárez, its third-world neighbor south of the border. I had just taken a gondola ride up the mountain, but as the lights in the houses of some 2.5 million people flickered on, I started to feel uneasy.

There I was: Comfortable, warm and happily digesting a hamburger, when right across the Rio Grande people lived in desperate conditions with rampant crime. Something about this juxtaposition of indulgence and poverty made me edgy.

Already, our planet's 6.8 billion people include 1 billion hungry and 1.6 billion overweight, and scientists' best predictions have the population rising to 9 billion by 2050 before leveling off. How will we feed so many people without utterly ravaging the Earth?

Here's the dilemma: As people improve their lot, first they start consuming more food, primarily grains and tubers, and then diets shift to energy-rich vegetable oils, sugars, and meat. Raising these foods on large scales - particularly meat - requires more land, water and energy, and it creates more pollution than grain crops or veggies alone.

"We are in essence eating the world's tropical rainforests and savannas," University of Minnesota ecology professor David Tilman told me. But it doesn't have to be this way. "There is no reason for even one more acre of rainforest to be cut. If we farmed them properly, the lands that have already been cleared could fully meet global food demand for at least the next 50 years," he said.

Tilman and colleagues modeled how our diet will affect the world by 2050, warning that agriculturally-driven environmental change will rival that from a warming climate. If trends continue, people will be exposed to more pesticides, and we will run out of fresh water for irrigation. Increased fertilizer use will salinize soils and raise the number of aquatic low-oxygen "dead zones." The loss of natural ecosystems to agriculture will exceed the land area of the United States, leading to biodiversity loss and species extinctions. They conclude that food demand could be lowered "if the trend toward diets rich in meat were reversed."

Perhaps I was feeling guilty over my hamburger. It's easy to bemoan runaway population growth, but as an American I contribute disproportionately to global consumption, and hence environmental degradation. In a New York Times essay, University of California-Los Angeles professor Jared Diamond calculated that Americans consume 32 times the resources than

those in developing countries. Food plays a huge role in this.

For more than 25 years now, I have lived in Texas, land of the longhorn, home of famous BBQ beef. My ex-husband gently swayed me from teenage vegetarianism back into carnivory. We raised two kids, now teens themselves, who prefer a helping of cow, pig or chicken with every meal, thank you very much.

Ah meat, it's a national obsession: Meat Lover's Pizza, lunch meat, hot dogs, hamburgers, grilled ribeye, fried chicken. Americans eat twice the recommended daily allowance of protein. The result? We "eat like an SUV," say University of Chicago scientists Gidon Eshel and Pamela Martin. The average American diet adds an extra ton and a half of CO<sub>2</sub>-equivalent emissions per capita annually compared to a vegan diet. That's significant when the annual total for an average American is 4 tons.



**There I was: Comfortable, warm and happily digesting a hamburger, when right across the Rio Grande people lived in desperate conditions with rampant crime. Something about this juxtaposition of indulgence and poverty made me edgy.**

Livestock contributes 18 percent of greenhouse gases worldwide, according to the oft-cited United Nations report, *Livestock's Long Shadow*. Much of that value comes from rainforest deforestation, and most of the rest comes from cow burps and liquefied manure. Some have criticized the report, but report co-author Dr. Pierre Gerber says, "We fully maintain the 18 percent."

The U.S. EPA estimates that 6 percent of our greenhouse gases come from all agriculture, but we also have a disproportionate number of vehicles and smokestacks. Nicolette Niman, vegetarian rancher and author of *Righteous Porkchop*, argues that it's misguided to blame American beef for rainforest destruction.

Tilman disagrees. "What we eat in the U.S. has global impacts, whether or not we directly consume beef from Brazil," he says. "We use about half of our farmland to grow grains for animal feed. Were we to eat less meat or eat more environmentally efficient meat, we would export more grains, and this would decrease the demand for crops that are an underlying driver of tropical deforestation."

A 2009 study commissioned by Compassion in World Farming and conducted by European academics determined that we can feed 9 billion people without any further habitat loss using organic, humane methods, with no factory farms. This challenging task would require reduction of meat consumption, particularly in developed nations.

This brings to mind a childhood memory. One harvest day, I watched Dad place an Araucana rooster on a stump, and with one fell smack, off came its head. True to story, the headless chicken flopped around, blood sputtering. It enthralled and revolted me in equal measure. I decided not to eat our chickens. Dad was not thrilled. "It's so much healthier than store-bought chicken," he pleaded, to no avail. I still wanted meat, but only from a package.

I retained that mental disconnect between animals and meat for most of my life. Then last year, reading Jonathan Safran Foer's *Eating Animals*, I connected my diet to problems with animal welfare, pollution,



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

worker injustices and the power of Big Ag. I made a vow to avoid factory-farmed meat. Given the high price of sustainably raised and humanely harvested meat, this single mom now eats mostly vegetarian.

"It makes sense from all perspectives - health, environmental, animals - for Westerners to reduce their meat and dairy consumption," says Niman. "Farmers and ranchers who are raising higher quality meat can command a premium and be rewarded for their good work."

I may not be able to personally change agricultural policy, slow global population growth, or invent technological innovations to curb global climate change, but I can modify my diet. With three meals a day, every day, it adds up.

---

© WendeeHoltcamp. All rights reserved

# Food for a Rooted Future

Rice farmers in the Philippines go chemical free, community strong.

By Robin Broad, John Cavanagh



miach.wordpress.com

Our search for rootedness has brought us back to the Philippines, back to communities in the south where Robin spent a year over three decades ago.

We spend time with the family of a rice farmer, Delia, on the southern Philippine island of Mindanao. Delia, her husband Romulo, two daughters, one son, and three grandchildren live in a simple but roomy house on the edge of their rice field. Behind the house is a tilapia-filled fish pond with papaya trees growing on one side. A few pigs are housed by the fish pond, and fifteen chickens have free range of the property. Vitamin-rich greens grow at the far edge of the pond, and two towering jackfruit trees provide shade as well as ingredients for delicious meals. Theirs is an example of what we call a “rooted” life; among other things, they eat mainly what they grow and raise.

So, too, is much of their other consumption locally-based—including our bedding. After dinner on the first night of our visit, surrounded by village kids, we walk five minutes up the road to the house of neighbor Ging-Ging. She is just finishing weaving two rattan mats for us on a wooden loom in her back yard. We chat as she weaves, and she explains the economics of her inputs and her time, convincing us that she still makes money on the one dollar that we pay for each.

Our host Delia is very active in the community, serving on several local committees, and—this is why we are here—is an enthusiastic backer of organic farming. After attending a workshop by a local non-governmental organization a couple of years back, Delia switched one of their three hectares from so-called “high-yielding” seeds dependent on chemical fertilizers and pesticides to organic rice.

She was an instant convert: “It is safer and the profit is bigger as expenses fell. With our two ‘chemical hectares,’ the rice traders who give us the loans are getting rich.”

Rice is central to Philippine culture, politics, the economy, and to most rural communities. It is also the biggest employer in the Philippines; over a third of the population still works in agriculture, and rice is still the largest crop. And, as we discover in several rice communities like Delia’s across the country, there are exciting shifts in the orthodoxy over what rice is planted and how it is grown.

After sleeping well on our new mats, we rise early with Delia’s family. It is the 15th of the month, which means that each family in the community must send one member to help cut weeds along the irrigation canal; those who fail to show are fined two dollars. This is one of several community tasks where all families here participate for the greater good, in this case keeping the canals free of weeds that would slow the water flow. The farmers move quickly, offering us their bolo knives so that we can join in.

At the edge of the irrigation canal, Delia proudly shows us her hectare of “zero-chem” rice and we discuss the traditional seeds she has planted. Part of the high expenses of chemical agriculture is that farmers must buy new hybrid seeds each planting season, a costly proposition. The traditional seeds that Delia and other organic farmers here are using are saved from the previous harvest or “in-bred” locally to work best in this particular area. Delia complains that the government’s agricultural extension agents sometimes give out free hybrid seeds, and that they mainly give seminars on chemical agriculture rather than providing support for “zero-chem” farming.

Delia and other organic farmers we meet are aware of the larger argument against traditional and inbred seeds and against organic agriculture overall: that it is “backward,” unscientific and can never compete with the high yielding seeds of chemical agriculture. Thus, it is often argued by proponents of chemical agriculture, it cannot feed the world. Africa is starving, the supporters of chemical farming say, and China is buying up farm land in other countries to feed

its own people. Hence, higher yields are essential to feed a hungry world—or so goes the argument.

The older farmers we meet say that yes, when the new rice varieties were first introduced in the 1960s and 1970s “green revolution,” the expensive seeds and chemical fertilizers and pesticides often produced increases in yields. But they also tell us of falling productivity over the years as soils became compacted and depleted of the nutrients that get replenished with organic farming. And, farmers were often forced to take on more debts to pay for the inputs or else, though economic desperation, to cut back on the pesticides and fertilizers, cutting yields further. Some even had to sell their cherished land.

As we see for ourselves, Delia and her zero-chem neighbors are anything but backward; they are impressive scientists in their own right, constantly experimenting with different seeds and different amounts of water. Instead of chemical fertilizers and pesticides, they cook their own non-chemical “concoctions” to handle everything from rats to stem-boring insects to plant viruses (more on this in a later blog).

After using the zero-chem techniques for a couple of seasons, several tell us their yields are just below what they were with chemical farming. Others say their yields have stayed the same or actually gone up.

The successful initiatives of farmers like Delia to take back control of their lives and gain food security are significant for this community and for the Philippines. But they are more than that. What we find here—people rejecting a half-century of conventional “wisdom” in favor of more rooted alternatives—is happening in many parts of the United States and other countries as well.

---

John Cavanagh and Robin Broad wrote this article for YES! Magazine, a national, nonprofit media organization that fuses powerful ideas with practical actions. Robin is a Professor of International Development at American University in Washington, D.C. and has worked as an international economist in the U.S. Treasury Department and the U.S. Congress. John is on leave from directing the Institute for Policy Studies, and is co-chair (with David Korten) of the New Economy Working Group. They are co-authors of three books on the global economy, and are currently traveling the country and the world to write a book entitled *Local Dreams: Finding Rootedness in the Age of Vulnerability*. This article was published in YES! Magazine (YesMagazine.org) on January 18, 2011.



<http://pmnewsnigeria.com>

# Food Crises: G20 needs Architects, not Firefighters

By Olivier de Schutter, UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food

BRUSSELS: What should the G-20 do to prepare us to confront food crises, now and in the future? World Bank President Robert Zoellick recently listed nine measures that the G-20 should adopt under its current French presidency. These range from improving information about grain stocks and developing better weather-forecasting methods to strengthening social safety nets for the poor and helping small farmers benefit from tenders from humanitarian purchasers such as the World Food Program. Although welcome, these measures tackle only the symptoms of the global food system's weaknesses, leaving the root causes of crises untouched.

These measures may mitigate the consequences of peak prices, but they are inadequate to avoiding the

recurrence of shocks, which can be accomplished if the G-20 acts on eight priorities.

First, the G-20 should support countries' ability to feed themselves. Since the early 1990's, many poor countries' food bills have soared five- or six-fold, owing not only to population growth, but also to their focus on export-led agriculture. A lack of investment in agriculture that feeds local communities makes these countries vulnerable to international price shocks, as well as to exchange-rate volatility. Mozambique, for example, imports 60% of its wheat consumption, and Egypt imports 50% of its food supplies. Rising prices directly affect these countries' ability to feed themselves at an acceptable cost. This trend must be reversed by allowing developing countries to support their

farmers and, where domestic supply is sufficient, protect them from dumping by foreign producers.

Second, food reserves should be established, not only for humanitarian supplies in disaster-prone, infrastructure-poor areas, as Zoellick proposes, but also as a means to support stable revenues for agricultural producers and ensure affordable food for the poor. If managed in ways that are transparent and participatory, and if countries combine their efforts regionally, food reserves can be an effective way to boost sellers' market power and counteract speculation by traders, thereby limiting price volatility.

Third, financial speculation should be limited as well. While not a cause of price volatility, speculation on derivatives of essential food commodities significantly worsens it (see here). Such speculation was enabled by massive deregulation of commodities-derivative markets that began in 2000 – and that now must be reversed. The major economies should ensure that such derivatives are restricted as far as possible to qualified and knowledgeable investors who trade on the basis of expectations regarding market fundamentals, rather than mainly or only for short-term speculative gain.

Fourth, many cash-strapped developing countries fear that social safety nets, once put in place, may become fiscally unsustainable, owing to a sudden loss of export revenue, poor harvests, or sharp increases in prices for food imports. The international community can help overcome this reticence by establishing a global reinsurance mechanism. If premiums were paid in part by the country seeking insurance and matched by donor contributions, countries would have a powerful incentive to implement robust social-protection programs.

Fifth, farmers' organizations need support. One major reason why the majority of the hungry are among those who depend on small-scale farming is that they are insufficiently organized. By forming cooperatives, they can move up the value chain into the processing, packaging, and marketing of their produce. They can improve their bargaining position, both for input purchases and for the sale of their crops. And they can become an important political constituency, so that decisions made about them are not made without them.

Sixth, we must protect access to land. Each year, an area greater than France's farmland is ceded to foreign investors or governments. This land grab, which is occurring mostly in Sub-Saharan Africa, constitutes a major threat to the future food security of the populations concerned. Whatever gains in agricultural production result from these investments will benefit foreign markets, not local communities. The G-20 could call for a moratorium on these large-scale investments until an agreement on appropriate ground rules is reached.

Seventh, the transition to sustainable agriculture must be completed. Weather-related events are a major cause of price volatility on agricultural markets. In the future, climate change can be expected to cause more supply shocks. And agriculture is also a major culprit in climate change, responsible for 33% of all greenhouse-gas emissions if deforestation for cultivation and pastures is included in the tally. We need agricultural systems that are more resilient to climate change, and that can contribute to mitigating it. Agro-ecology points to solutions, but strong support from governments is needed to scale up existing best practices.

Finally, we need to defend the human right to food. People are hungry not because too little food is being produced, but because their rights are violated with impunity. Victims of hunger must be allowed to access remedies when their authorities fail to take effective measures against food insecurity. Governments must guarantee a living wage, adequate health care, and safe conditions for the world's 450 million agricultural workers by enforcing the conventions on labor rights in rural areas, subject to independent monitoring.

Hunger is a political question, not just a technical problem. We need markets, of course, but we also need a vision for the future that goes beyond short-term fixes. The global food system will always need firefighters. But what we need more urgently are architects to design a more fire-resistant system.

---

This op-ed by Olivier De Schutter was published on Project Syndicate ([www.project-syndicate.org](http://www.project-syndicate.org)) on 28 January 2011. Copyright: Project Syndicate, 2011.

## PCFS holds Regional Thematic Consultation on Development Effectiveness of CSOs

### People's Coalition on Food Sovereignty

Various organizations from 11 countries gathered in a consultation on Development Effectiveness of Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) to gather the insights of civil society groups working with marginalized groups in defining the international framework of CSOs as key actors in development.

Grassroots organizations and support non-governmental organizations with work among farmers, fishers, pastoralists, indigenous people, women and migrants participated in the event, which was held in Colombo, Sri Lanka on January 22, 2010, with the Green Movement of Sri Lanka (GMSL) as host.

Organized by the People's Coalition on Food Sovereignty (PCFS), the activity is part of the Global Facilitation Group of the Open Forum for CSO Development Effectiveness, in its three-year process of building consensus among CSOs worldwide on the principles in improving the development effectiveness and minimum standards for enabling environment for CSOs.

To familiarize the participants on the CSO development effectiveness process, Lyn Pano, Secretary General of Asia Pacific Research Network (APRN), gave an introduction on the Open Forum, its objectives, and the process it is carrying out towards improving the development effectiveness of CSOs.

Ms. Pano explained that the Open Forum undertook the regional consultation as an essential step towards the High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness to be held in Busan, South Korea in November 2011, during which CSOs plan to assert the shift of agenda from aid effectiveness to development effectiveness.

Gilbert Sape of Pesticide Action Network Asia Pacific and Arjuna Seneviratne of GMSL shared the principles on CSO development effectiveness, which the attending CSOs approved in the First Global Assembly of the Open Forum held in Istanbul, Turkey in September 2010.

The broad principles were then expounded and concretized by Azra Sayeed of Roots for Equity as she explained about guidelines, mechanics and indicators on CSO development effectiveness. She gave guide questions and examples on how the guidelines, mechanics and indicators on CSO development effectiveness can be responsive to the needs and situation of CSOs working among marginalized groups in their practical work.

Poguri Chennaiah of APVVU talked about the enabling environment for CSO development effectiveness. He cited some challenges that CSOs encounter in their interaction with governments and donors. He also posed calls that CSOs may take up with governments and donors so that an enabling environment for CSOs to be most effective in their work may be created.

During the workshop, one of the discussion groups explored the best guidelines, mechanisms and recommendations in implementing the principles of development effectiveness of CSOs working with marginalized groups. Meanwhile, another group identified challenges in the enabling environment for marginalized groups to be more effective development actors, and on that basis recommended steps that can be undertaken to overcome the identified challenges.

The results of the consultation will be submitted to the Open Forum as the contribution of the CSOs working with marginalized groups in the CSO development effectiveness process.

### APRN TO HOST THIRD REGIONAL WORKSHOP ON CSO AND DEVELOPMENT EFFECTIVENESS

By APRN Secretariat

The Asia Pacific Research Network (APRN) is hosting the third regional workshop for the Asia and Middle East-North Africa regions on May 2-3, 2011 in Jakarta, Indonesia.

The workshop aims to consolidate the regional input into the Draft International Framework for CSO Development Effectiveness, with emphasis on enabling environment and multi-stakeholder dialogue as well as CSO advocacy strategy and tasks for the Fourth High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness, which will be held in November in Busan, South Korea.

Held just before the ASEAN Summit on May 7 and 8, which will also be

Continued on page 26

## PCFS holds Asia-wide CSO meet on Aid and Dev't Effectiveness in ARD

### People's Coalition on Food Sovereignty

Peasant organizations and support non-governmental organizations from all over Asia came together and exposed the intensifying problems on food and land despite the increasing stream of development aid from developed countries and international funding institutions to third world countries in a conference held in Colombo, Sri Lanka in January 20, 2011.

The participants agreed to deepen further the awareness of stakeholders in agriculture and rural development from the grassroots and intensify their mass movements towards the High Level Forum for Aid Effectiveness (HLF IV) to be held in Busan, South Korea in November 2011.

Mr. Antonio Tujan Jr, co-Chairperson of PCFS and director of IBON International took a critical look at aid and development effectiveness to provide the framework in analyzing the issues at hand. He delved into the real agenda of development aid donors in the era of neoliberal globalization. He also explained the demands the CSOs are bringing up to challenge the effectiveness of development aid.

Sarojeni Rengam, also co-Chair of PCFS and Executive Director of Pesticide Action Network Asia Pacific, discussed three key trends in aid to agriculture today. The trends are the dipping value of aid to agriculture despite its surge in absolute figures; the control of agricultural aid by a few donors and the disregard of the food security needs of developing countries in aid allocation; and corporate agriculture being the model promoted by major aid donors.

Dr. Ujjaini Halim of the Institute for Motivating Self

Employment and P.V. Satheesh of the Deccan Development Society exposed the inefficiency of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and International Fund for Agriculture Development (IFAD). They questioned the effectiveness of the development agenda of both institutions in its failure to address the real issues confronting small holder farmers and rural development in general.

As testimonies to points laid by major speakers, Arjuna Seneviratne of the Green Movement of Sri Lanka and Mahbub Hassan of the Coastal Development Partnership shared their country experiences on agricultural aid and the affected marginalized sectors' response to its negative effects.

Dr. Azra Sayeed of Roots for Equity from Pakistan then presented concrete proposals on three critical areas that should be posed to the Busan HLF IV for it to come up with a meaningful Busan Declaration on Development Effectiveness. These are: completing and deepening current aid effectiveness commitments; operationalizing development effectiveness; and promoting a more equitable development cooperation architecture, with systemic changes in global governance of international development cooperation. The conference concurred with all three proposals.

Attending the conference were 61 participants from 11 countries, namely Kenya, India, Bangladesh, Malaysia, the Philippines, Mongolia, Senegal, Pakistan, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Colombia. BetterAid, a global platform that unites over 700 CSOs challenging the aid effectiveness agenda, sponsored the event.

Continued from page 25

held in Jakarta, the two-day workshop strives to involve donor and partner government representatives in addition to an extensive civil society organization (CSO) representation from the region, including country-level and sector organizations such as the ones working with peasants, migrants, workers, and women.

Day 1 is open to all interested CSOs and Day 2 to all CSOs, donors, and government representatives. In order to maximize the value of the event for all those involved, CSOs have been asked to conduct small

group workshops or discussions prior to the event to tease out key points that will be put on the table.

Advocacy efforts are already underway as Country Core Groups are invited to create online venues for broadening awareness, understanding and analysis of the CSO effectiveness process at the national level. For inquiries and suggestions, please email the Secretariat at [secretariat@apnnet.org](mailto:secretariat@apnnet.org) (with copy to [lfrancisco@apnnet.org](mailto:lfrancisco@apnnet.org)).

# Taking Stock of the Movement: Food Justice

By Kate Hoppe

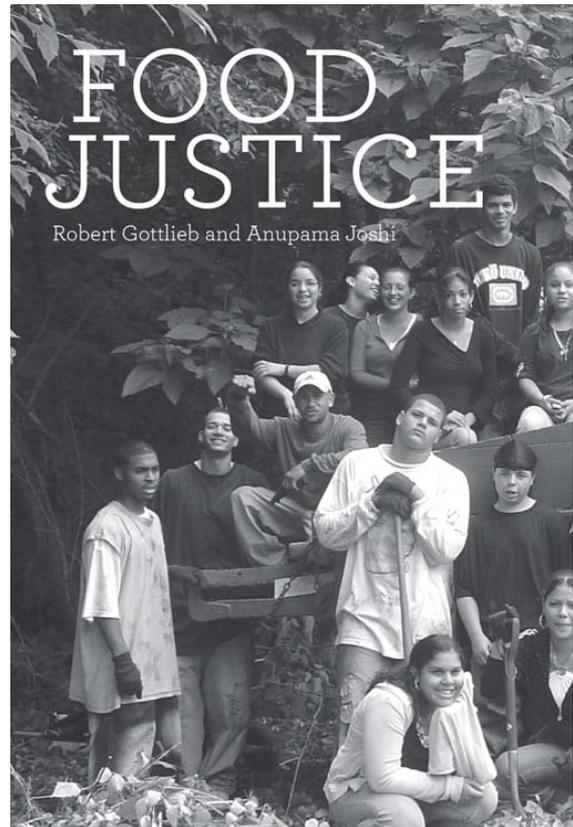
---

*Food Justice*

Robert Gottlieb and Anupama Joshi  
Author House, 2010

---

**You'll never look at food the same way again. That is the unspoken promise of the book *Food Justice*, by Robert Gottlieb and Anupama Joshi, respectively the director and farm to school director of the Urban & Environmental Policy Institute (UEPI), at Occidental College in Los Angeles.**



Published in October 2010, *Food Justice* takes the reader through a narrative analysis that relates the struggles and triumphs of food system change in the United States and abroad. *Food Justice* is about how, what, and where food is grown and processed, and who gets it. It's about the pieces of our history that have come to shape the lives of the world's hungry, its minority and migrant populations, and our food cultures, and what individuals and organizations are doing to change it.

But even as victories are won in the tomato fields of Florida, ending conditions of modern-day slavery for migrant farm workers, and in the schools of New Orleans, as students fight for healthy, locally-sourced meals, can we answer the question Michael Pollan couldn't when President Obama asked him, "Is this a movement?" (pg 79).

This simple question, posed throughout the book, is the point from which the authors weave the web

of food justice issues, revealing an answer that is at once complex yet accessible. The authors set out to uncover the common language and unifying themes that define and encapsulate the move to transform the food system. They argue the need to work united at all levels—from seed to plate—in order to effect change.

With this broad, yet crucial foundation, the authors launch into part one—an intuitively laid out, historical analysis of food injustice. From the flight to suburbia to the building of corporate food empires, what becomes clear is how these modern-day monuments of American (and increasingly global) culture have impacted the ability of people to justly grow, produce and access fresh, affordable food. Globalization, the movement of corporations abroad and “local” and “organic” marketing ploys further complicate and confuse the consumer, but are here laid bare.

In part two of Food Justice, the authors plant the seeds of inspiration. We are told the inspiring story of the NuestrasRaíces organization, for example, whose growing crew is pictured on the front cover. Faced with poverty and food insecurity when jobs in the once prosperous town of Holyoke, Massachusetts, moved overseas, this largely Puerto Rican community tapped into its farming roots and created a community garden. More than

a decade later, the organization has increased its impact through the use of a 30-acre farm, farmer training, youth empowerment programs and small-business incubation.

Like NuestrasRaíces, similar groups have formed to tackle not only food insecurity, but farm worker rights, environmental degradation, economic viability and social policy. In showing what has come before, the reader is given a road map to what can be accomplished and how we might, by way of an all-encompassing food justice movement, get there.

**Food Justice is about how, what, and where food is grown and processed, and who gets it. It's about the pieces of our history that have come to shape the lives of the world's hungry, its minority and migrant populations, and our food cultures, and what individuals and organizations are doing to change it.**

This book has something for everyone—the farmer, the college student, the foodie, and those just beginning the journey to understand where their food comes from and why it matters. My only caution to readers is that the mass of information provided through the multitude of stories may become overwhelming. That said, this book's grand sweep of food justice from the early 1900's to today is like no other on the shelves, offering food for thought and plenty of opportunity for further research.

A tell all narrative that clearly elucidates the issues and what we can do to reshape the food system, Food Justice is a must read for everyone who eats. So, is this a movement? Read Food Justice and find out.

---

A lifelong advocate for sustainable change, Kate Hoppe grew up on the plains of Kansas, where an encounter with worm composting solidified her passion for environmental work. In her six years in the Bay Area, Kate has managed pr for Backpacker magazine's Get Out More tour, led at-risk youth in environmental, service-learning programs as an AmeriCorps volunteer, and contributed to green project development for a sustainability consulting firm. She has worked on farms in the U.S. and abroad, and is pursuing a career in environmental public policy and sustainable urban development, with a focus on food justice.

This article was published in Civil Eats ([civileats.com](http://civileats.com)) on January 20, 2011

Dear EDM Reader,

We'd like to know your thoughts on this publication to improve it as an information source and capacity-building tool. Kindly give a few minutes to answer the questions below and send this feedback form to us at:

IBON Education for Development Magazine  
 3/F IBON Center, 114 Timog Avenue  
 Quezon City, 1103 Philippines

Thank you for helping us make EDM better for valued partners in development like you.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Country: \_\_\_\_\_

Email address: \_\_\_\_\_

**Frequency and access**

1. Aside from the current issue, have you read previous issues of EDM?

Yes       No

2. How do you receive EDM?

Mailed subscription       Distribution in meetings/conferences       Passed on from colleagues

**Relevance**

3. How relevant is the information in EDM for you? Please check the activity/ies that the publication was of use to you.

Knowledge building       Research  
 Writing       Training/Education  
 Other/s (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

4. What topics or issues in the publication interested you most?

Agriculture/rural development/food sovereignty       Debt/ODA/Aid  
 Migration/employment       Human rights and peace  
 Climate change/natural resources/environment       Trade and finance  
 Globalization and development       Consumer/human interest  
 Other/s (pls. specify) \_\_\_\_\_

5. Has reading EDM prompted you to:

Share EDM with others       Read more on issues  
 Join organizations       Engage in advocacy  
 Other/s (pls. specify) \_\_\_\_\_

6. How will you assess the design and layout of EDM?

Excellent       Very good       Satisfactory       Poor

**Future preferences**

7. What topics or issues would you like to read in EDM in the future?

\_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

8. Any other comments or suggestions?

\_\_\_\_\_

An Afghan farmer plows through field in preparation for cultivation of crops in Kishem, Afghanistan. UN Photo

