

Buzz: Food prices | IDA | Papua New Guinea

By Development Policy Centre
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Stiglitz on the global economic crisis

Three years after the global financial crisis, some of the biggest names in economics came together with the International Monetary Fund to discuss what we have learned—and what we need to do differently. Hear what Professor Stiglitz, winner of the Nobel Prize in Economics, had to say.

Ivory Coast: UN warns of forgotten humanitarian crisis

As the world focuses on Libya and Japan, the Ivory Coast is becoming a forgotten humanitarian catastrophe. The UN refugee agency UNHCR [says](#) one million people may have been displaced by fighting in Ivory Coast. BBC [reports](#) the UN aid agencies' security struggles in Ivory Coast, which are worsening with serious funding problems too.

Port Moresby 'Wired for Change'

Last week, PNG's Prime Minister, Sir Michael Somare, was found guilty of misconduct and suspended for two weeks. Many reporters have covered the political drama in PNG, and Rowan Callick's [article](#) for The Australian is well worth reading.

Social change: can networked activists achieve real change?

Or was [Malcolm Gladwell right to argue](#), in a widely read piece, that networked activists are trivial and ineffective by comparison with the courageous sit-in organisers of the civil rights movement?

What matters most, according to Paul Hider, is:

- Spotting unmet needs or injustices
- Working with the social grain
- Coming up with an effective, empowering and sustainable response

Hider [argues](#) that technology has repeatedly inspired changes in how we organise our societies and the challenge is to learn, innovate and adapt.

Youth to the rescue!

Youths played a role in bringing down some long-standing dictatorships and that may only be the start. In contrast to traditional economists and political scientists, Charles Kenny, Center for Global Development, [argues](#) that a burgeoning young population signals improvements in quality of life worldwide and might help speed global economic growth.

Global Land Grab debate

In response to the [Global Land Grab debate](#), IDS is releasing a report this week, coinciding with their forthcoming conference. The conference aims to identify global land grab trends, the key drivers, the winners and losers, and what policymakers, activists and citizens can do.

The Journal of Peasant Studies Forum on global land grabbing sets the scene:

- Klaus Deininger promotes government-sponsored institutional support laid out in the 2010 'Principles of Responsible Agricultural Investment' for land deals to be successful
 - Contrastingly, [Olivier de Schutter](#) is critical of the World Bank-led position about 'managing risks while harnessing opportunities' and proposes 'Minimum Human Rights Principles'.
 - Tania Murray Li also critiques mainstream thinking on land deals and highlights labour consequences.

Open Forum on Food Prices

Rising food prices are causing pain and suffering for poor people around the world, driving 44 million people into extreme poverty in recent months. The World Bank has initiated an Open Forum from April 14-15 to help find solutions. [Join the 24-hour food crisis conversation](#).

What should international non-governmental organizations do differently in the next 5 years?

This was the question posed by [Trocaire](#) - one of Ireland's most respected INGOs - in their [Leading Edge 2020](#) report released last week.

Lawrence Haddad [summarises](#) the top 3 burning questions for INGOs that emerged from the report:

1. *Advocacy*: how do INGOs protect their independence and ability to speak out on issues that may be unpopular with important stakeholders? To what extent does funding compromise stance?

2. *Downward accountability*: How do INGOs ensure that they are as (or more) accountable to the people they reach as they are to the development partners that fund them?
3. *Flexible and responsive*: How can INGO's experiment and innovate without falling victim to development fads?

Haddad concludes INGOs should: be less obsessed with ODA and focus on other government departments; focus more on global public goods that your own government can affect, such as climate, trade, and security regimes; and try to focus on transformative actions.

Cash on Delivery Aid

Cash on Delivery (COD) is a hot topic in the [blogosphere](#). Nancy Birdsall believes that COD Aid is easier than traditional aid for donor country taxpayers to understand and assess; after all the outcomes are measured and verified as a basis for the transfer of taxpayer money.

Nancy suggests that COD Aid will encourage citizens to focus on their own government's performance rather than donor's performance. Thus, it may be the best way to ensure aid helps [trigger systemic and institutional change over the long-term](#). The key hypothesis worth testing has to do with whose performance is finally judged by citizens in recipient countries: the donor's or their own government's?

G20 appetite for anti-corruption reforms

The G20 to combat corruption? Ted Moran [explains](#) what's creating an appetite for anticorruption action and how the Chinese are involved. China's National People's Congress passed a slate of 49 amendments to the Criminal Law. But the ultimate effectiveness of the amendment to prevent overseas bribery will depend on interpretation and implementation.

International Development Association needs a reinvention strategy?

According to [new research](#) by Benjamin Leo and Todd Moss, Center for Global Development, by 2025 IDA will be operating in a vastly different world, one with drastically fewer poor countries; IDA may only have 30 clients left - down from roughly 70 now. Moss [challenges](#) World Bank management and donors to begin exploring updated - or entirely new - business models for IDA. Andy Sumner [blogs](#) about the implications for the aid system.

About the author/s

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