

Weekend links: humanitarian aid, two fearless advocates, Saudi solar power, World Bank critics, and looking beyond growth

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Foreign Affairs this week published an [article](#) authored by David Miliband and Ravi Gurumurthy – the President/CEO, and Vice-President for Strategy and Innovation, respectively, of the International Rescue Committee – on what should be done to improve humanitarian aid. Among a range of suggestions, they emphasise the role of systems, and the use and generation of evidence. (Note that *Foreign Affairs* limits access to two free articles per month for registered readers).

In a recent [episode](#) [43 mins] of the Global Dispatches podcast, Kenyan advocate Kakenya Ntaiya recounts her remarkable life story: as a young Maasai girl, she made a deal with her father that she would undergo female genital mutilation (FGM) in exchange for the opportunity to complete secondary school. Today, she is an ardent campaigner for girls' education and against FGM.

Thulisile Madonsela is another courageous figure making waves on the African continent – in her case, by taking on the mammoth task of rooting out corruption at the highest levels of government. As South Africa's first female public protector (a role akin to a cross between government watchdog and public prosecutor), Madonsela's willingness to ask difficult questions is exposing critical 'fault lines' in the country's democracy. Alexis Okeowo [profiles](#) Madonsela in the *New York Times Magazine*.

The Guardian [reports](#) on the impending mass deportation of Haitians and people of Haitian descent from the Dominican Republic and its potential consequences, following a controversial 2013 ruling that strips citizenship from the children of Haitian migrants retroactively to 1930.

Saudi Arabia, 'the quintessential petrostate', has long been powered by oil, both economically and literally; the vast majority of its electricity is produced by burning oil. However, the Saudis are now investing heavily in infrastructure to generate solar power. Jeffrey Ball [explores](#) this seemingly contradictory logic in the July/August issue of *The Atlantic* magazine (spoiler alert: it's not because they're worried about climate change).

A worrying new [report](#) issued by Human Rights Watch (HRW) details reprisals against critics of projects financed by the World Bank and the World Bank Group's International Finance Corporation (IFC). Based on evidence collected in Cambodia, India, Uganda and Uzbekistan, among other countries, HRW alleges the Bank has done too little to prevent and condemn the harassment and intimidation of community activists and campaigners who have spoken out about problems resulting from Bank-funded projects.

Finally, this brief [animation](#) from Aeon [3 mins] presents a short-and-sweet summary of a lecture by Oxford academic (and 'doughnut economics' creator) Kate Raworth, who argues that economists' traditional focus on an unspecified 'growth' has neglected issues that can accompany it, including deprivation, degradation, and inequality. The increasing attachment of qualifiers – 'inclusive', 'sustainable', and 'long term lasting' growth – suggests public sentiment is turning to favour a definition of growth that cannot be measured by change in GDP alone. Meanwhile, from a somewhat different perspective, Lant Pritchett is [busy arguing](#) that 'post-materialism' in donor countries is hampering aid work – a view that is vigorously disputed in [this](#) blog post written by Emre Özalp of, wait for it, the World Bank.