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Updates for paragraphs 4.3 and 4.10

THE GLOBAL FOOD CRISIS

The global financial crisis is combining with other factors to have serious impacts on food security. As stressed by the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI): 'Income growth, climate change, high energy prices, globalization, and urbanization are transforming the world food situation.' Food prices are rising sharply (in some cases they have recently more than doubled), which affects not only the world's poor, but also communities that had previously been in a state of food security.

At the same time, staff of the World Food Programme (WFP) claim: 'That's the new face of hunger - people who suddenly can no longer afford the food they see on store shelves because prices have soared beyond their reach.' According to WFP, high food prices are pushing 130 million people deeper into poverty and hunger; and if, as seems likely, the prices remain high, this will amount to a major setback in the accomplishment of the UN Millennium Development Goals.

Those wishing to keep abreast of the rapidly deteriorating situation, which arguably demands greater ethical concern than many issues that dominate Western news headlines, will find much useful information at the ReliefWeb website:

Website reference:

http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/rwb.nsf/GlobalFoodCrisis?Readform&qclid=CJmY0_XfwZwCFYYU4wod3Eyxng

G8 LEADERS AGREE TO SET UP \$20 BILLION FUND TO HELP WORLD'S POOR

Leaders of the world's eight richest nations (the G8) meeting in L'Aquila, Italy, in July 2009, agreed to provide \$20 billion (£12.3 billion) to help the world's poorest countries to grow and sell more of their own food. The G8 plan calls for farmers in developing countries to be given greater access to seeds and fertilizers, and for them to be encouraged, through regional trade pacts, to sell more of their own crops. The L'Aquila summit meeting ended with a statement highlighting the urgent need for 'decisive action to free humankind from hunger.'

The money will be committed over three years, with the USA likely to contribute \$3.5 billion, and the UK \$1.8 billion. But anti-poverty campaigners claim that much of the promised money, which they argue is too little to have a significant impact, will come from existing aid budgets. Moreover, while the fund represents a shift from the dominant food aid programmes, providing assistance to poor countries to 'help themselves,' it was pointed out by the Save the Children fund that more agricultural production does not necessarily result in fewer hungry people, because the poorest families have very little land or money to buy food from markets.

Website reference:

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/g8/5795689/G8-leaders-announce-12.3-billion-package-for-worlds-poor.html>