Distinguished Delegates,

I would like to welcome you to the 2008 Southern Regional Model United Nations Conference (SRMUN) and to the United Nations Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) committee. My name is Cortney Moshier and I am from New York where I recently completed my Bachelors Degree in Political Science and History from Pace University. The best thing that I ever did was to join the Model UN team and start competing in conferences. The knowledge that I have obtained about the international community, the United Nations and the way diplomacy works is priceless. We, students of Model UN, represent a very small group of people educated on international affairs. These tools enable us to change the world and to create the culture of peace we so desperately need. As a delegate, I have been to many conferences, but this represents my first time on the "other side" of a collegiate level committee. As your Director I can assure you that many hours were spent creating the background guides and technical appendices to ensure that your experience at SRMUN is one that you will not soon forget. Joining me this year is Erica Little, a recent graduate from the University of North Carolina at Asheville. Erica obtained her Bachelors Degree in Atmospheric Sciences. We have both been working hard to put together an amazing and challenging committee for you.

The FAO is the leading international institution in the global fight against hunger. Essentially, the FAO serves as a neutral forum where any country can come to negotiate agreements, discuss policy and exchange valuable sources of information on agricultural issues. In response to current discussions within FAO's forums and this year's SRMUN theme, the topics that will be discussed by this committee are as follows:

I: Farming in the 21st Century: Using Technology to Advance Agricultural Practices and to Combat Hunger
II: Examining the Impacts of Climate Change on Food Security
III: Alleviating Poverty Through the Use of Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers

The background guides that are available for the topics provide a good foundation for your research. Additionally, the links provided in the technical appendices provide more detailed information on different aspects of the topics and should be very useful in preparing for the conference. In order to ensure a high quality simulation, thorough preparation for each topic is expected of every delegate and detailed preparation will assist in facilitating meaningful discussion at the conference. The background guides and technical appendices are a useful initial step in the research process, but delegates should conduct independent research and are encouraged to employ a variety of other sources in their conference preparations.

In addition, each delegation is required to submit a position paper for consideration. It should be no longer than two pages in length (single-spaced) and demonstrate your country's position, policies and recommendations on each of the three topics. For more information regarding the position papers please visit the SRMUN website at http://www.srmun.org. Position papers must be submitted on-line via the SRMUN website and will be due by Midnight on October 24, 2008.

We sincerely look forward to working with each of you and wish you the best of luck with conference preparations.

Good luck and Happy Researching!

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Committee History of the Food and Agriculture Organization

The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) was established as an organization of the United Nations on 16 October 1945, taking on the responsibilities of the International Agriculture Institute.[1] The FAO leads the international community in the fight to defeat hunger in both developed and developing countries.[2] The FAO is headquartered in Rome, Italy with over 1800 field projects working at any given time.[3] The committee's mandate is to "raise levels of nutrition, improve agricultural productivity, better the lives of rural populations and contribute to the growth of the world economy."[4] The FAO serves as a neutral forum where any country can come to negotiate agreements, discuss policy and exchange valuable sources of information.[5] Stressing the importance of sustainable development, the FAO offers the resources and the assistance for both the people and Member States to help them.[6] There are four areas that the FAO concentrates on in their efforts, which are:

- Putting information within reach,
- Sharing policy expertise,
- Providing a meeting place for nations,
- Bringing knowledge to the field.[7]

FAO has gained much recognition in the efforts of building a world without hunger, most specifically the efforts attached to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). FAO has a very specific strategy that presents a "twin-track" approach to meeting the MDG 1 targets by 2015.[8] By simultaneously improving productivity in agriculture with the promotion of healthy food choice and at the same time promoting programs that give access to healthy food for the poorest areas of the globe, the FAO is providing a service to the international community.[9] Since the inception of the organization there has been a strong emphasis on providing for developing rural areas of the world that contain 70 percent of the poor and hungry.[10] Using an emphasis on community involvement and local experience, the FAO is consistently providing an opportunity for the future of the rural communities.[11]

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[1] "Lester B. Pearson's Role in the Formation of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and in Other United Nations Activities." The United Nations Association in Canada. http://www.unac.org/en/link_learn/canada/pearson/part_iii.asp

[2] "FAO at Work Home." Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. http://www.fao.org/UNFAO/about/index_en.html

[3] "Development." Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. http://www.fao.org/UNFAO/devel-e.htm

[4] "FAO at Work Mandate." Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. http://www.fao.org/UNFAO/about/mandate_en.html

[5] "FAO at Work Home." Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. http://www.fao.org/UNFAO/about/index_en.html

[6] "FAO at Work Mandate." Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. http://www.fao.org/UNFAO/about/mandate_en.html

[7] "FAO at Work Activities." Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. http://www.fao.org/UNFAO/about/activities_en.html

[8] "Direct and Indirect Contributions of FAO to the Millennium Development Goals." Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. http://www.fao.org/mdg/fao_goal1.asp

[9] *Millennium Development Goal No. 1: Mobilizing Resources to Halve World Hunger*. United Nations General Assembly 60th Session. New York. 14-16 Sept. 2005. ftp://ftp.fao.org/docrep/fao/008/a0076e/a0076e00.pdf

[10] "FAO at Work Home." Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. http://www.fao.org/UNFAO/about/index_en.html

[11] "What is FAO." Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. http://www.fao.org/UNFAO/devel-e.htm

The FAO is governed by the Conference of Member Nations.[12] Every two years these Member Nations meet to discuss budgets and review the work carried out by the organization. These 49 Member Nations are voted upon by the entire body and serve three-year terms.[13] The FAO consists of eight departments: Agriculture and Consumer Protection; Economic and Social Development; Fisheries and Aquaculture; Forestry; Natural Resources Management and Environment and; Technical Cooperation.[14] Staffed by over 3000 people[15] and with over 1800 field projects going on in 100 countries at once, there is a tremendous opportunity for success in meeting the MDGs, specifically MDG 1; the Eradication of Extreme Poverty and Hunger.[16] Currently there are specifically extensive programs in place to alleviate hunger in the Caribbean and Latin America, meet the targets of the MDGs, and a program to pay farmers to use environmentally friendly practices in their daily lives.[17]

In Latin America and the Caribbean more than 52 million or 10 percent of the population suffer from hunger and malnutrition.[18] There is a tremendous disparity between food production and access to the produced food.[19] Some areas in the Caribbean and Latin America have the largest exports in the world.[20] In order to meet the MDGs, something needed to be done as 2015 deadline is rapidly approaching. The Latin American and the Caribbean without Hunger Initiative was created with the complete elimination of hunger in the region as its priority.[21] This program works on three different fronts: raising awareness of the problem of hunger and the right to food; enhancing national capacities to carry out public policies and programs aimed at eliminating hunger and ensuring the right to food; and then monitoring food and nutritional security (FNS) and analyzing the methodology.[22] This work is aimed to act as a "catalyst and organizer of regional efforts to fight hunger."[23]

The FAO is also working on a potential program that will compensate farmers for using environmentally friendly practices. As stated in The State of Food and Agriculture, "carefully targeted payments to farmers could serve as an approach to protect the environment and to address growing concerns about climate change, biodiversity loss and water supply."[24] Over 2 billion people depend on crops, fisheries, livestock and forests for food.[25] These people hold a tremendous power—to either harm or help the environment—depending on decisions they make in their daily living and work practices. "Population growth, rapid economic development, increased demands for bio-fuels and

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[12] "Structure and Finance." Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. http://www.fao.org/UNFAO/struct-e.htm

[13] Ibid.

[14] Ibid.

[15] Ibid.

[16] "Direct and Indirect Contributions of FAO to the Millennium Development Goals." Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. http://www.fao.org/mdg/fao_goal1.asp

[17] "Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations" http://www.fao.org

[18] "Freeing Latin America and the Caribbean From Hunger." Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. FAO News Room. February 2008. http://www.fao.org/newsroom/en/focus/2008/1000780/index.html

[19] Ibid.

[20] Ibid.

[21] Ibid.

[22] Ibid.

[23] Ibid.

[24] "Paying Farmers to Protect the Environment?" *FAO: The State of Food and Agriculture 200.* The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. FAO News Room 15 November 2007. http://wwww.fao.org/newsroom/en/news/2007/1000698/index.html

[25] Ibid.

climate change, are putting environmental resources under pressure throughout the world."[26] The farmers will be able to make favorable choices with incentives to help subsidize cost.[27] If carefully designed, these programs could really help the international community eliminate hunger.

Current Members of the Food and Agriculture Organization:

AFGHANISTAN, ALBANIA, ALGERIA, ANDORRA, ANGOLA, ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA, ARGENTINA, ARMENIA, AUSTRALIA, AUSTRIA, AZERBAIJAN, BAHAMAS, BAHRAIN, BANGLADESH, BARBADOS, BELARUS, BELGIUM, BELIZE, BENIN, BHUTAN, BOLIVIA, BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA, BOTSWANA, BRAZIL, BULGARIA, BURKINA FASO, BURUNDI, CAMBODIA, CAMEROON, CANADA, CAPE VERDE, CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC, CHAD, CHILE, CHINA, COLOMBIA, COMOROS, CONGO, COOK ISLANDS, COSTA RICA, COTE D'IVOIRE, CROATIA, CUBA, CYPRUS, CZECH REPUBLIC, DEMOCRATIC PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF KOREA, DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO, DENMARK, DJIBOUTI, DOMINICA, DOMINICAN REPUBLIC, ECUADOR, EGYPT, EL SALVADOR, EQUATORIAL GUINEA, ERITREA, ESTONIA, ETHIOPIA, FIJI, FINLAND, FRANCE, GABON, GAMBIA, GEORGIA, GERMANY, GHANA, GREECE, GRENADA, GUATEMALA, GUINEA, GUINEA-BISSAU, GUYANA, HAITI, HONDURAS, HUNGARY, ICELAND, INDIA, INDONESIA, ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN, IRAQ, IRELAND, ISRAEL, ITALY, JAMAICA, JAPAN, JORDAN, KAZAKHSTAN, KENYA, KIRIBATI, KUWAIT, KYRGYZSTAN, LAO PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC, LATVIA, LEBANON, LESOTHO, LIBERIA, LIBYAN ARAB JAMAHIRIYA, LITHUANIA, LUXEMBOURG, MADAGASCAR, MALAWI, MALAYSIA, MALDIVES, MALI, MALTA, MARSHALL ISLANDS, MAURITANIA, MAURITIUS, MEXICO, FEDERATED STATES OF MICRONESIA, MOLDOVA, MONACO, MONGOLIA, MONTENEGRO, MOROCCO, MOZAMBIQUE, MYANMAR, NAMIBIA, NAURU, NEPAL, NETHERLANDS, NEW ZEALAND, NICARAGUA, NIGER, NIGERIA, NIUE, NORWAY, OMAN, PAKISTAN, PALAU, PANAMA, PAPUA NEW GUINEA, PARAGUAY, PERU, PHILIPPINES, POLAND, PORTUGAL, QATAR, REPUBLIC OF KOREA, ROMANIA, RUSSIAN FEDERATION, RWANDA, SAINT KITTS AND NEVIS, SAINT LUCIA, SAINT VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES, SAMOA, SAN MARINO, SAO TOME AND PRINCIPE, SAUDI ARABIA, SENEGAL, SERBIA, SEYCHELLES, SIERRA LEONE, SLOVAKIA, SLOVENIA, SOLOMON ISLANDS, SOMALIA, SOUTH AFRICA, SPAIN, SRI LANKA, SUDAN, SURINAME, SWAZILAND, SWEDEN, SWITZERLAND, SYRIAN ARAB REPUBLIC, TAJIKISTAN, THAILAND, THE FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA, TIMOR-LESTE, TOGO, TONGA, TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO, TUNISIA, TURKEY, TURKMENISTAN, TUVALU, UGANDA, UKRAINE, UNITED ARAB EMIRATES, UNITED KINGDOM, UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA, UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, URUGUAY, UZBEKISTAN, VANUATU, VENEZUELA, VIET NAM, YEMEN, ZAMBIA, ZIMBABWE.

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[26] Ibid.

[27] Ibid.

Topic I: Farming in the 21st Century: Using Technology to Advance Agricultural Practices and to Combat Hunger

"It is startling to remember that never at any time in history has there been enough food to go around."

-Lester Pearson, First Chairman of the FAO[28]

Introduction

One of the biggest crises facing developing countries today is food insecurity. According to the International Hunger Taskforce, "food insecurity is a condition in which people lack basic food intake to provide them with the energy and nutrients for fully productive lives."[29] Current statistics show that nearly 820 million people worldwide face hunger—the majority of which are women and children.[30] The regions suffering the most from food insecurity are Southeast Asia and sub-Saharan Africa.[31] In 2006, the United Nations reported that nearly 50 percent of children under the age of 5 in these regions were malnourished and that these regions boasted the highest rate of death resulting from food insecurity.[32] Added to the current situation is the issue of population growth. Experts forecast that the world population is expected to increase by 3 billion by 2050 and that the majority of these new inhabitants will reside in developing countries; countries in which the rates of extreme poverty and hunger are already high.[33] As a result, agricultural production will be under extreme pressure to not only produce enough food to decrease current rates of hunger, but to meet the demands of a growing population.[34] One way in which such needs and demands can be met is through the use of innovative technologies.

Many scientists and policy experts believe that the use of new technology, especially biotechnology, has the ability to alleviate the global food security crisis.[35] As defined by the FAO, biotechnology is "the use of living organisms or their products to modify human health and the human environment," and includes an array of tools for introducing or removing a particular gene to produce plants, animals and micro-organisms with specific traits.[36] This kind of genetic manipulation is referred to as "genetic engineering."[37]

Biotechnology can provide tools that developing countries can use to raise crops, enhance pest control and disease resistance, adapt crops to new or adverse ecological conditions, and enhance the nutrition content of food among

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[28] "Lester B. Pearson's Role in the Formation of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and in Other United Nations Activities." United Nations Association in Canada. http://www.unac.org/en/link_learn/canada/pearson/part_iii.asp

[29] "Understanding Hunger." International Hunger Taskforce. http://www.hungertaskforce.org/understanding_hunger/understanding_hunger/

[30] "Food Security Statistics." Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. http://www.fao.org/es/ess/faostat/foodsecurity/index_en.htm

[31] Ibid.

[32] "Progress on Hunger Reduction: 2006." Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. http://www.fao.org/es/ess/faostat/foodsecurity/index_en.htm

[33] "6 billion and Counting: Population and Food Security for the 21st Century." International Food Policy Research Institute. http://www.ifpri.org/pubs/FPS/fps37.htm

[34] Ibid.

[35] "FAO Statement on Biotechnology." Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. http://www.fao.org/biotech/stat.asp

[36] Ibid.

[37] Ibid.

other things.[38] For example, some biotechnology crops such as soybeans and corn can be engineered to tolerate specific herbicides, which make weed control simpler and more efficient.[39] Other crops have been engineered to be resistant to plant destroying insects, which can make pest control more reliable and effective and decrease the use of pesticides. A good example of how biotechnology can be used to enhance nutrition content of food can be seen with rice.[40] Biotechnology has been used in rice to increase the amount of beta-carotene, a nutrient that is converted to Vitamin A--which is in short supply in diets in many parts of the world.[41] According to the FAO, consumption of foods rich in beta-carotene will alleviate the chronic Vitamin A deficiencies in the diets of many of the poor in Asia and Africa.[42]

According to the International Service for the Acquisition of Agri-biotech Applications (ISAAA), a non-profit organization which tracks data on the international usage of genetically engineered crops, 81 million hectares of biotech crops were grown by 8.25 million farmers in 17 countries in 2005.[43] In 2003 alone, there were only 55 million hectares of biotech crops being grown by only 6 million farmers.[44] Thanks to scientific and technological advances many countries are considering the use of biotechnology to meet the food demands of their country.

Undeniably, biotechnology as well as other high yielding farm equipment such as tractors could be utilized in all developing countries to enhance production and provide adequate food supplies. However, in many of these countries, low-output and traditional farming techniques continue to be employed due to the lack of access to new technologies and advanced equipment.[45] FAO Director-General Jacques Diouf states that, "The world undoubtedly has the productive capacity to produce adequate quantities of nutritious food for all, yet gross inequities in people's access to resources, opportunities and – not least- fair representation perpetuate the hunger and deprivation of more than 800 million people today."[46]

Among the various actors in the international arena, the FAO is taking the lead role in the fight against food insecurity—offering a neutral forum for dialogue, and encouraging the sharing of vital resources.[47] In June 2008, The FAO convened the High-Level Conference on World Food Security in which 180 world leaders met in Rome, Italy to discuss the various challenges of food security and to devise a plan of action to address such challenges.[48] During the discussions, the leaders placed a heaving emphasis on the role of science and technology stating that

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[38] "Biotechnology Overview." United States Environmental Protection Agency. http://www.epa.gov/scipoly/biotech/pubs/overview.htm

[39] Ibid.

[40] Ibid.

[41] Ibid.

[42] "Improving the Nutrition of the Rural Poor in Asia and the Far East." Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. http://www4.fao.org/cgi-bin/faobib.exe?rec_id=139092&database=faobib&search_type=link&table=mona&back_path=/faobib/mona&lang=eng&format=EFMON

[43] "Global Status of Commercialized Biotech/GM Crops 2005." International Service for the Acquisition of Agri-biotech Applications. http://www.isaaa.org/Resources/publications/briefs/default.html

[44] Ibid.

[45] *FAO Ethics Series: Ethical Issues in Food and Agriculture: FAO Ethics Series.* Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. Rome: United Nations. 2001. ftp://ftp.fao.org/docrep/fao/003/X9601e/X9601e00.pdf

[46] Ibid.

[47] "The State of Food Insecurity in the World." Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. 2004. http://www.fao.org/docrep/007/y5650e/y5650e05.htm#P116_28094

[48] "High-Level Conference on World Food Security." Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. http://www.fao.org/foodclimate/hlc-home/en/

"stepping up scientific research and embracing innovative technology (especially biotechnology) will help combat existing and new food challenges."[49]

Biotechnology and Agriculture

Biotechnology is a powerful tool in agricultural development with great potential to significantly reduce food insecurity and rural poverty.[50] For example, such technologies can increase food quality, reduce costs for agricultural production, and provide alternatives to harsh pesticides which adversely affect the environment.[51] While there are many types of biotechnology, the application most often discussed and used is genetic engineering. At the core of this process is the ability to take favorable traits from one species and replicate them in another.[52]

These new creations, Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs), have become very controversial. Simply said, scientists are altering the genetic make up of plants, animals and organisms.[53] They are combining favorable qualities, strengthening resistance to pesticides and herbicides, and even creating new species and organisms completely.[54] Although this is a relatively new development in agriculture, in 2006, there were over 252 million acres of transgenic crops that have been planted in 22 countries by over 10.3 million farmers.[55] According to the FAO, GMOs have been most successful in North America and most European countries creating a surplus in food supplies. The success of GMOs in developing countries has not been successful—as many developing countries are experiencing a food crisis. However, much of the limited success of biotechnology in developing countries is due the lack of access to the technology itself.[56] In the few developing countries where biotechnology is used, farmers have seen moderate success. For example, in South Africa, yields of yellow maize and cotton increased nearly two fold after implementing the use of biotechnology applications to agriculture in 2001.[57]

Although biotechnology can be used to increase food supplies worldwide, there are several concerns over its use. The concerns often articulated include, human health, food safety, environmental impact, as well as access and equity issues.[58] When assessing such a sensitive issue, members of the FAO must pay particularly close attention to the impact these modified organisms will have on human health. One of the most important aspects of this new technology will be in the communication between producers and consumers as well as between the FAO and members of the international community.[59] Labeling products that have been genetically modified must provide the

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[49] Ibid.

[50] "FAO Statement on Biotechnology." Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. http://www.fao.org/biotech/stat.asp?lang=en

[51] Ibid.

[52] Ibid.

[53] "Human Genome Project." Department of Energy and National Institute of Health. http://www.ornt.gov/sci/techresouces/Human_Genome/elsi/gmfood.shtml

[54] Ibid.

[55] Ibid.

[56] "FAO Statement on Biotechnology." Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. http://www.fao.org/biotech/stat.asp?lang=en

[57] "Background Document: Applications of Biotechnology." Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. http://www.fao.org/biotech/C2doc.htm

[58] "Genetically Modified Organisms, Consumers, Food safety, and the Environment." Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. Rome: 2001. http://www.fao.org/DOCREP/003/X9602E/x9602e04.htm#TopOfPage

[59] Ibid.

consumer with the identity source and composition, effects of processing and cooking, the transformation process, effects on function, potential toxicity and allergenicity, and risk of consumption of these foods.[60]

The European Union has established a comprehensive set of criteria that GMOs must abide by in order to be presented to the constituents of the EU. The Labeling and Traceability Regulation is their database of all GMOs that have been approved to go to market.[61] Before an item can be placed on a shelf in a store or even be considered for sale, it must state on the package that the food within has been genetically modified with details regarding the process and providing potential risks for consumers.[62] With strict criteria and a strong dedication to providing the people valid and necessary information regarding their health and well-being, the EU provides a solid example of how developed countries are using technology to combat hunger.

Improving Access to Technology

Another key concern with this technology is access and equity. Although the benefits of biotechnologies have been proven, many agricultural producers in developing countries do not have easy access to such applications. According to the Consultative Group on International Agriculture (CGIAR), the main barrier of access to biotechnologies is research and development (R&D) costs.[63]

Whether a country is an leader in agricultural biotechnology, or whether it adapts technology developed elsewhere, getting involved will entail new investments in research infrastructure, tax breaks or subsidies for pioneering companies, as well as training and management development for research personnel.[64] A study from the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) shows that an initial investment of at least $100 million (U.S.) is required just to get biotech research intuitions up and running.[65] Once an institution has been established, countries must commit itself to guaranteeing substantial ongoing financial support. This support will be needed to ensure that research facilities have skilled staff and updated laboratory equipment.[66] In addition, facilities must have the minimal technology base required to "(1) adapt technology tried and tested to local ecological and production conditions and (2) to meet national obligations for biosafety, release of GMOs and sale of products derived from them."[67] Due to the large infrastructure and financial requirements needed to develop biotechnologies, many developing countries cannot support such initiatives.

To help improve access to biotechnology, the FAO works to promote information exchange between countries. Developing countries need to know what technologies are available, what they can be used for, how they can be applied, and what the cost-benefit implications are of using them. As such, the FAO created the BioDeC database which "gathers, stores, organizes and disseminates, updated information on the state-of-the-art of crop biotechnology products and techniques, which are in use, or in the pipeline in developing countries."[68] The database

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[60] Ibid

[61] *EU Policy on Biotechnology*. European Union Directorate General Environment. Luxembourg: 2006. http://ec.europa.eu/environment/biotechnology/pdf/eu_policy_biotechnology.pdf

[62] Ibid.

[63] "Biotechnologies and Developing Countries." Consultative Group on International Agriculture. http://www.cgiar.org/biotech/rep0100/leising.pdf

[64] "National Agricultural Biotechnology Research Capacity in Developing Countries: ESA Working Paper No. 04-14." Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. ftp://ftp.fao.org/docrep/fao/007/ae069e/ae069e00.pdf

[65] "Research Policy and Management Issues." International Food Policy Research Institute. http://www.ifpri.org/2020/focus/focus02/focus02_08.asp

[66] Ibid.

[67] Ibid.

[68] "FAO BIO-Dec." Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. http://www.fao.org/biotech/inventory_admin/dep/default.asp

lists over 2000 biotechnology products from 70 developing countries.[69] Although the database only provides baseline information on these products and does not evaluate the products or provide information on human capacity and funding[70], it is a step in the right direction in reducing access barriers.

Conclusion

FAO Director-General Jacques Diouf maintains that the FAO will serve in many capacities when it comes to preserving resources for future generations.[71] As Diouf stated to the FAO body, "Agriculture employs more people and uses more land and water than any other human activity. It has the potential to degrade the Earth's land, water atmosphere and biological resources—or to enhance them—depending on the decisions made by the more than two billion people whose livelihoods depend directly on crops, livestock, fisheries, or forests."[72] The future generations of the international community depend on the decisions of the present. Innovation, technology and knowledge can play a pivotal role to preserve the environment and provide adequate food supplies for those that suffer from hunger and the FAO can be at the lead during the process.

Committee Directive

By researching and formulating plans of action, delegates should come prepared to discuss the topic at hand. Be knowledgeable of poverty and hunger statistics in your country as well as any policies or practices that have helped reduce food insecurity. Reminding delegates of the neutrality that exists in the FAO, we ask that you prepare in a way that will enhance the ability for all Member States to reach the MDGs and to eradicate extreme hunger and poverty with technology. What technological advances have added to your successes in agriculture? How can we ensure that all Member States, whether developed or developing have access to such technologies? As describe in this guide, one of the biggest concerns with technology is access due to cost. While cost is important, it is equally important to address other barriers such as strengthening intellectual property rights laws and their enforcement in developing countries. Also, you should consider what FAO can do to strengthen its own information-sharing programmes, as well as the broader role FAO can in addressing the issue of food insecurity.

Topic II: Examining the Impacts of Climate Change on Food Security

> *"Humanity must learn to live with climate change. But we cannot allow climate change to become one more aggravating factor for hunger in the world, one more dividing factor between the rich countries, and the poor countries. It is our duty to help the poorer countries and, in those countries, the more vulnerable populations at risk, to deal with this new challenge."2*
>
> Jacques Diouf, Director-General, FAO.

Introduction:

One of the most pressing issues facing the international community today is climate change. According to the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), climate change is simply a change in the earth's average temperature due to both natural causes and human activities.[73] Statistics show that climatic changes have resulted in

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[69] Ibid.

[70] Ibid.

[71] *FAO Ethics Series: Ethical Issues in Food and Agriculture: FAO Ethics Series.* Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. Rome: United Nations. 2001. ftp://ftp.fao.org/docrep/fao/003/X9601e/X9601e00.pdf

[72] Ibid.

[73] "What is Climate Change." United Nations Environment Programme. http://www.unep.org/Themes/climatechange/whatis/index.asp

a 1.2-degree increase in global mean surface temperature, as well as 10 to 15 centimeters rise in sea levels.[74] If current trends continue, scientists predict that global temperatures will increase by another degree by 2050.[75] This means that precipitation irregularities will also rise—which in turn could increase the occurrence of weather related hazards.[76]

A rising concern of climate change is its impact on food security. People's ability to grow enough to feed themselves and their livestock is determined largely by weather—particularly temperature, light and water.[77] Thus, short or long-term fluctuations in weather patterns can have significant impacts on agricultural production.[78] For instance, climatic fluctuations can decrease crop yields and force farmers to adopt new agricultural practices in response to altered conditions. Further, a study conducted by the World Food Programme showed that half of the 820 million people that face hunger are farming families existing off subsidiary lands subject to catastrophes such as droughts and floods. [79] This study also showed that three-quarters of all famished inhabitants exist in rustic areas**,** generally in the townships of Asia and Africa.[80] These populations have no substitute basis of earnings or for receiving services and, as a result, are predominantly susceptible to predicaments such as floods and droughts.[81] For example, in the 1980s, the majority of the African countries saw continuing deterioration of their food production due to extreme droughts, which led to a famine across the continent.[82] Thus, from the perception of global food protection, it is imperative to distinguish that food security precautions involves climate, not merely as an accepted danger but also as a natural reserve.[83]

To maintain with the growth in human population, more food will have to be produced worldwide over the next 50 years. The UN millennium milieu judgment ranked land deprivation among the world's supreme ecological challenges, asserting it risked undermining societies, jeopardizing food refuge and escalating paucity. Some of the worst affected regions are Central America, where 75 percent of land is uncultivable, Africa, where a fifth of soil is tarnished, and Asia, where 11 percent is inapt for farming.[84] The preponderance of soil erosion is initiated by water, either through flooding or poor irrigation. Farming practices such as plowing also damage soil, as well as repeated planting in fields, which diminishes the soil of nutrients. According to the UN's food and agriculture program, 854 million people do not have adequate food for an active and healthy life.[85]

Noting these concerns, the international community has launched many initiatives to address and reduce the impacts of climate change on agriculture. The chief international organization that works to reduce the effects of climate

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[74] "Basic Information: Climate Change." United States Environmental Protection Agency. http://www.epa.gov/climatechange/basicinfo.html

[75] Ibid.

[76] "What is Climate Change." United Nations Environment Programme. http://www.unep.org/Themes/climatechange/whatis/index.asp

[77] "Adaptation to Climate Variability and Change in Agriculture." Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. http://unfccc.int/files/adaptation/adverse_effects_and_response_measures_art_48/application/pdf/200609_fao.pdf

[78] Ibid.

[79] "Facts and Figures." World Food Programme. http://www.wfp.org/aboutwfp/introduction/hunger_who.asp?section=1&sub_section=1

[80] Ibid.

[81] Ibid.

[82] "Climate Change and the World's Hungry." World Food Programme. http://www.wfp.org/english/?ModuleID=137&Key=2708

[83] "Climate and Food Security." World Meteorological Organization. 2008. http://www.wmo.int/pages/food_security/index_en.html

[84] Ibid.

[85] Ibid.

change on agriculture is the FAO.[86] Within the scope of this issue, the FAO's main role is to increase farmers' ability to cope with variability by providing them with farming practices that withstand climate variability such as the use of drought-resistant crop varieties or the more efficient use of water resources.[87] The FAO also works with national decision-makers and the scientific community to improve monitoring of both current conditions and long-term climate change by providing global geo-spatial data, analytical tools and models, crop forecasting, impact monitoring and information on risks related to climate variability and change.[88] In addition to the FAO, the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) recently developed a series of workshops on climate change and agriculture for West African countries.[89] The purpose of these workshops are:

- To provide a central forum to develop an improved understanding and assessment of the impacts of climate change on agriculture in west African countries;
- To discuss and develop informed decisions on practical adaptation strategies for the agricultural sector of west African countries;
- To discuss and suggest the appropriate ways to promote adaptation planning and integration into sustainable development in west African countries; and
- To develop an appropriate mechanism for continuous information exchange on climate change impacts and adaptation amongst the different West African countries.[90]

According to the WMO, the workshops should result in enhanced capacity to "identify/understand impacts, vulnerability and adaptation; select and implement adaptation actions; and enhance cooperation among West African countries to better manage climate change risk."[91]

Climate Change and Agricultural Adaptation

Agriculture is the chief terrain use across the world.[92] Presently 1.2 to 1.5 billion hectares of land are underneath crops.[93] A further 4 billion hectares of forest are utilized by humans to various degrees, while absent from land, international fisheries are used incredibly exhaustively, frequently greater than capacity.[94] Agriculture continues to be exceedingly susceptible to climate discrepancies, the leading foundation of the general inter-annual changeability of construction in countless provinces and a long-lasting resource of interference to bionetwork services.[95] For instance, the El Niño Southern Oscillation phenomenon, with its coupled sequences of droughts and flooding events explains between 15 percent and 35 percent of universal yield distinctions in wheat, oilseeds, and coarse grains.[96] This example clarifies why a changing climate will

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[86] "Agriculture and Climate Change: FAO's Role." The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. http://www.fao.org/news/1997/971201.thm

[87] Ibid.

[88] Ibid.

[89] "International Workshop on the Adaptation of Climate Change in West African Agriculture." World Meteorological Organization. http://www.wmo.ch/pages/prog/wcp/agm/meetings/iwacc08/index_en.html

[90] Ibid.

[91] Ibid.

[92] "Adapting Agriculture to Climate change." Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. http://www.pnas.org/cgi/content/abstract/104/50/19691

[93] Ibid.

[94] Ibid.

[95] Ibid.

[96] Ibid.

have successive collisions on agriculture. Therefore, it has become vital to recognize and assess alternatives for adjusting to climate change in future decades.[97]

With less reliable weather patterns, it will be crucial to increase the capability to stockpile water for agricultural use and diminish inefficiencies in its function as water remains a necessity in all areas of life.[98] The purpose of undertaking agricultural adaptation is to effectively manage potential climate risks over the coming decades as climate changes.[99] Climate change adaptation policies will interact with, depend on, or perhaps even be just a subset of policies on sustainable development and natural resource management, such as those necessary to regulate genetically modified organisms, protect human and animal health, and foster governance and political rights, among many others.[100] This process is often referred to as the "mainstreaming" of climate change adjustment into policies planned to enhance expansive flexibility to risk or to promote sustainable expansion.[101] Inadequate contemplation of adaptation alternatives could result in the susceptibility to climate change being extensively overstated, giving rise to more relentless mitigation targets. Additionally, mitigation policies can affect the array of adaptation options that practitioners have at their disposal (i.e., sponsoring bio-fuel fabrication robustly manipulates the market for agricultural produce).[102] Another perception is that implementing efficient variations can save time awaiting an effective mitigation response.[103] Hence variation analyses may be used to enlighten both the importance and timing of mitigation.[104] Realization of this compound task of successfully integrating mitigation impacts and adaptation to notify public policy development remains a considerable challenge for the scientific population, although some studies are now budding.[105]

To assist farmers in adapting their agricultural practices to climate variability, the FAO has established a computerized system, AQUASTAT, which monitors and alerts farmers of extreme weather conditions.[106] AQUASTAT is a worldwide database that collects, analyzes and disseminates data and information by country and by region.[107] The system provides information related on varied characteristics such as environmental force of water resources growth, and agricultural water management to countries worldwide.[108] According to the FAO, this database is useful to agricultural users because it allows them to obtain climate data such as average

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[97] Ibid.

[98] J.N Pretty, J. I. L. Morison and R. E. Hine, "Reducing food poverty by increasing agricultural sustainability in developing countries." Science Direct. 2002. http://www.sciencedirect.com/science?_ob=ArticleURL&_udi=B6T3Y-46H4D3V-1&_user=628622&_rdoc=1&_fmt=&_orig=search&_sort=d&view=c&_acct=C000033083&_version=1&_urlVersion=0&_userid=628622&md5=744ec211e5982e537e738da8da2193fd

[99] "Adaptation to Climate Variability and Change in Agriculture." Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. http://unfccc.int/files/adaptation/adverse_effects_and_response_measures_art_48/application/pdf/9_fao_agric.pdf

[100] Ibid.

[101] Ibid.

[102] "Adapting Agriculture to Climate change." Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. http://www.pnas.org/cgi/content/abstract/104/50/19691

[103] Ibid.

[104] Ibid.

[105] Ibid.

[106] "Agriculture and Climate Change: FAO's Role." The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. http://www.fao.org/news/1997/971201.thm

[107] "AQUASTAT." Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. https://www.fao.org/nr/water/aquastat/main/index.stm

[108] Ibid.

monthly precipitation, mean temperature, days of ground frost, and relative humidity—information useful for adaptation purposes.[109]

Measures Taken to Combat Climate Change

In an effort to address and mitigate the effects of climate change, the international community has formed sub-committees and treaties such as United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Kyoto Protocol to address the growing concerns of climate change.[110] The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC or FCCC) is an international environmental treaty that aims at stabilizing greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere at a level that would avoid treacherous anthropogenic obstructions with the climate system. The Convention began on March 21 1994.[111] Under the Convention, governments collect and share information on greenhouse gas discharges, nationalized policies and best practices.[112] It also helps to start nationwide policies for concentrating on greenhouse gas releases and adjusting to projected impacts, counting the stipulation of monetary and scientific support to developing countries and work together in preparing for adjustment to the impacts of climate change.[113]

The Kyoto Protocol is an agreement made under the UNFCCC.[114] Countries that sanction this protocol obligate themselves to reducing their emanation of carbon dioxide and five additional greenhouse gases (GHG), or engaging in emissions operations if they sustain or augment production of these gases.[115] The treaty places special emphasis on the promotion of sustainable forms of agriculture, citing land-use changes, methane fermentation, manure management, rice development, agricultural soils and biomass burning as sources of greenhouse gases that must be taken into deliberation by countries in their reports to the Conference of the UNFCCC Parties.[116]

Conclusion

Disturbances or declines in worldwide and local food supplies owed to climate change can be evaded through additional proficient irrigation and watershed organization, enhanced land nurturing and livestock supervision and the progression of produce varieties and strains that are modified to changing climatic conditions. A successful use of climate data and forecasts, throughout early alert systems can aid in evaluating the impacts of climate change on agricultural production and the complete food chain. There are many prospective adaptation choices accessible at the management level, often discrepancies of existing climate threat management. Nevertheless, comparatively few studies evaluate both the probable usefulness and implementation rates of achievable reaction policies. A critical piece of this approach is an adjustment consideration structure that can justifiably employ farmers, agribusiness, and policymakers, managing the extensive joint awareness of agricultural systems, yet centering on ethics of magnitude to stakeholders.

Committee Directive

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[109] Ibid.

[110] J.N. Pretty**,** J. I. L. Morison and R. E. Hine. "Reducing food poverty by increasing agricultural sustainability in developing countries." Science Direct. 2002. http://www.sciencedirect.com/science?_ob=ArticleURL&_udi=B6T3Y-46H4D3V-1&_user=628622&_rdoc=1&_fmt=&_orig=search&_sort=d&view=c&_acct=C000033083&_version=1&_urlVersion=0&_userid=628622&md5=744ec211e5982e537e738da8da2193fd

[111] "Essential Background." The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. http://unfccc.int/essential_background/convention/items/2627.php

[112] Ibid.

[113] Ibid.

[114] Ibid.

[115] Ibid.

[116] "Kyoto Protocol—Important Tool for Sustainable Development." Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. http://www.fao.org/newsroom/en/news/2005/89784/index.html

Agriculture adaptability in relation to climate change is an extremely dominant and important issue, yet very complex. Various ideas and suggestions have been given in order to find a substantial way of dealing with this issue. In order to be well prepared to discuss this topic you must understand in detail the impacts of climate now and into the future as well as the consequences and suggestions given to adapt to this issue rather than the obvious. Take time to really assess what substantial issues should be addressed in further detail uniting all countries in the world to have a proactive role in this on-going dilemma. In addition, it is important to understand that climate change is a systemic problem in many countries and addressing the obvious alone is not sufficient to tackle the problem, expand beyond. Delegates should have a firm grasp of understanding cultural sensitivities and the unique needs of immediate at-risk populations in each country that will enable efforts by both UN and associated governments involved in this concern to be more effective in banning together and beginning a change.

Topic III: Alleviating Rural Poverty through the Use of Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers

Introduction

Since the creation of the United Nations one of the greatest challenges for the international community has been that of combating rural poverty. Unfortunately, despite dedicated efforts there has been little significant alleviation of this great problem. Today, of the 1.2 billion people living in poverty, nearly 800 million live in rural environments.[117] The vast majority of people living in rural areas are highly dependant on agriculture, forestry, fisheries and other labor-intensive means for survival, therefore this issue is of vital importance to the work of the United Nations Food and Agricultural Organization. People living in rural communities face many challenges. According to the International Labour Organization (ILO) workers in rural areas earn significantly less money and experience higher rates of poverty and unemployment than those in urban or suburban locales. In addition, food insecurity is more common in rural areas and rural child poverty rates remain higher than those for urban children (21 percent versus 18 percent).[118] Rural populations all over the globe face tremendous challenges when dealing with poverty reduction. With an unbalanced access to food, education and resources, these populations are forced to depend on non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and institutions to help them. Important international agreements such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, explicitly state that every man, woman, and child has the right to adequate nutrition.[119] The FAO even states in its constitution that all people have the right to be free from hunger and to have access to nutritious food every day.[120] With the general consensus being that one dollar a day is not an adequate amount to survive or that going to bed hungry every night is unacceptable, the United Nations, the FAO, and civil society must take a stance and work towards the reduction of rural poverty.

It is estimated that 75 percent of people who live in rural areas depend upon agriculture, forestry, fisheries and other activities for survival.[121] Unfortunately, traditional modes of addressing poverty has been through industrial, urban and service sectors rather than agricultural and rural sector development. The promotion of the rural economy in a sustainable way has the ability to increase rural employment, reduce income disparity, and stem urban migration while at the same time contribute to the protection of rural landscapes, indigenous cultures and traditions.[122] It is the view of the FAO that under certain conditions agriculture can be a driving force for growth and development in rural areas.

Characteristics of Rural Poverty

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[117] "About Rural Poverty." The Rural Poverty Portal of the International Fund for Agricultural Development. http://www.ruralpovertyportal.org/english/topics/index.htm

[118] Ibid.

[119] *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*. United Nations General Assembly. December 10, 1948.

[120] "Constitution of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nation." Internet Guide to International Fisheries Law. http://www.infish.net/treaties/fao.htm

[121] Gustavo Anriquez and Kostas Stamoulis. "Rural Devlopment and Poverty Reduction: Is Agriculture Still the Key?" Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations. June 2007. ftp://ftp.fao.org/docrep/fao/010/ah885e/ah885e.pdf

[122] Ibid.

Most of the world's poor live in rural areas. The International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) estimated that in 2001, 3 out of 4 of the world's 1.2 billion poorest people lived in rural areas.[123] They make up the poorest fifth of the world's population and do not earn enough to cover their basic food needs.[124] It is important to understand what rural poverty is and what its causes are before attempting to address the issue as a whole. First, the term *rural* refers to a variety of contexts. Most often it refers to either a geographical or a demographic representation. For example, some countries define rural as being any geographical area outside of certain city centers.[125] Others would define being rural as a centralized population below a certain number.[126] It is important to note the distinction because differing poverty reduction strategies will have varied outcomes based upon the context in which *rural* is defined. The causes of rural poverty are both structural and inherent.[127] Structural causes of poverty lie in the basic social structure of rural society, which range from inequitable distribution of land and resources based in feudal, ethnic and tribal systems to population growth.[128] Inherent causes on the other hand refer to man made instances that influence inequitable access to resources and add to the problem of rural poverty. These inherent causes range from inequitable access to credit and assets, adverse trade policies, macroeconomics, and even civil violence.[129] Because of the combination of the varied causes of rural poverty along with the shear numbers of those suffering because of it, the international community must take steps in combating hunger. The FAO must also intensify its provision of assistance to those in need and help Member States make productive, educated decisions when attempting to alleviate rural poverty.

Recognizing the impact of the above causes on rural communities, the international community has made firm commitments to reducing poverty. On September 8, 2000, The United Nations General Assembly adopted the Millennium Declaration in which 190 Member States pledged their support to it and its subsequent Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).[130] The MDGs are a set of eight major development goals in key areas of global policy that Member States have declared essential to ensure the sustainability of humanity. Ranging from the eradication of poverty to universal healthcare and the HIV/AIDS pandemic, these goals represent a platform for change. The number one goal identified by the United Nations is MDG 1, the "eradication of poverty and hunger."[131] Specifically, the intent of this goal is to "half by 2015 the proportion of people living on less than one dollar a day" and "half the proportion of people who suffer from hunger."[132] To do so, the international community has adopted several strategies to achieve this goal that range from debt forgiveness to the use of Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs). These methods are very useful and can help reduce rural poverty throughout the world.

History of International Organizations Associated with Poverty Reduction

The FAO is dedicated to the eradication of rural poverty, and serves as a neutral forum and source of information to aid Member States in their quest of eradicating global poverty through addressing food supply and agricultural

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[123] Ibid.

[124] Ibid.

[125] Ibid.

[126] Ibid.

[127] Sartaj Aziz. "The Unfinished Task of Eradicating Rural Poverty." The International Fund for Agricultural Development. http://www.ifad.org/poverty/aziz.pdf

[128] Ibid.

[129] Ibid.

[130] "About the MDGs." The United Nations Millennium Project. http://www.unmillenniumproject.org/goals/index.htm

[131] A/RES/55/2. *United Nations Millennium Declaration.* United nations General Assembly. September 8, 2000 http://www.un.org/millennium/declaration/ares552e.pdf

[132] "Implementing the Millennium Declaration." The United Nations. http://www.un.org/milenniumgoals/MDGs-FACTSHEET1.pdf

development issues.[133] Although the FAO represents a wealth of knowledge and resources, it must be stressed that the key to success is for Member States to work together.[134] However, there is a capacity for the FAO to serve on a national level, which will best suit the collective needs of the international community.[135] The FAO, along with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank (WB) for example, offer some assistance and hope to those suffering the most through specific programs like Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSP) and debt forgiveness.[136]

The World Bank (WB) and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) are two International Organizations that are most closely associated with poverty reduction. The WB offers the international community a valuable source of technical and financial assistance, with a mission of global poverty reduction as well as improving standards of living in developing countries.[137] There are two development institutions that make up the WB; the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) and International Development Association (IDA).[138] The IBRD areas of concern are middle-income countries and credit worthy states.[139] The IDA focuses on the poorest countries of the world.[140] These two institutions together provide low-interest loans, credit provided interest-free, and grants that go to the developing world that are used for education, health, infrastructure, communications and other things.[141]

The IMF was established in order to promote cooperation, exchange stability and arrangements.[142] The goal of the organization is to foster economic growth, raise employment and provide temporary financial assistance to indebted countries.[143] The operations of the IMF involve economic surveillance, financial assistance, and technical assistance, which have developed to meet the changing needs of the international community.[144] These organizations work together and with Member States to help alleviate poverty, concentrating a great deal in rural populations.

Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers

Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSP) are a very important part of reducing rural poverty. These papers are prepared by low-income Member States in a process involving stakeholders within their country as well as foreign development partners and international organizations like the WB and the IMF.[145] This paper is the plan of action that the Member State puts forth for economic and domestic policies that they will follow in the following years to promote growth within the country and to reduce poverty, while simultaneously helping investors and other outside

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[133] "FAO at Work Activities." Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. http://www.fao.org/UNFAO/about/activities_en.html

[134] "The Road Ahead: Responding to the Millennium Declaration: FAO's Contribution So Far." Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. Rome 2005. ftp://ftp.fao.org/docrep/fao/meeting/009/j5259e/j5259e00.pdf

[135] Ibid.

[136] Ibid.

[137] Ibid.

[138] Ibid.

[139] Ibid.

[140] Ibid.

[141] Ibid.

[142] "About the IMF." The International Monetary Fund. http://www.imf.org/external/about.htm

[143] Ibid.

[144] Ibid.

[145] "Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSP)." The International Monetary Fund. http://www.imf.org/external/np/exr/facts/prsp.htm

participants in the process.[146] PRSPs are updated every three years and describe the country's macroeconomic, structural and social policies to promote broad-based growth and poverty reduction.

The creation of the strategy papers was an attempt by the IMF and the WB to take ownership of their responsibilities to the international community and those suffering from want and poverty. PRSPs are the "crucial link between national public actions, donor support, and the development outcomes needed to meet the United Nations' Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)."[147] PRSPs have been associated with notable successes in making poverty reduction more prominent in policy debates and dialogue. As of March 2008, there have been more than 70 full PRSPs and around 50 preliminary ones.[148] There are five core principles that underline the approach presented by the IMF and WB for poverty reduction. These core principles state that the strategy papers must be country-driven, result-oriented, and comprehensive, encourage strong partnerships, and are based on a long-term perspective for poverty reduction.[149] These PRSPs provide the basis for lending and debt relief under the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Initiative.[150] The HIPC Initiative was created in 1996 by the WB and IMF to ensure that no country would face a debt that they could not overcome.[151] This coordinates actions by international financial sources that reduce the external debt burden of the most heavily indebted poor countries.[152] To date, forty-one counties have been found eligible for this HIPC assistance.[153]

The PRSP process has continued to refine its procedures through periodic assessments completed by the IMF and World Bank Boards. These reviews have stressed the importance of country ownership, realism, flexibility and better prioritization in goal setting, and more open discussion of alternative policies.[154] In order to enhance the effectiveness of the PRSPs, the IMF and the World Bank have pledged to continue to help countries design realistic and flexible macroeconomic frameworks which are linked to national budgets and strategies; align IMF and World Bank operations as closely as possible with that of its domestic partners; maximize the impact of public spending on poverty reduction; and work with other donors for better coordinated assistance.[155]

Case Studies: Rural Poverty, Development and Food and Agriculture

At the beginning of the 20th century, economists noted that countries that had a smaller proportion of their output coming from agricultural sectors and a higher proportion of industrial output tended to be wealthier nations.[156] Since that time, particularly in Latin America and Africa, the focus has been to follow this trend in order to achieve better economic and rural development. However, there have been those who have suggested that agriculture can actually play a significant role in rural poverty reduction and overall economic development. Agriculture is an important component of rural economies in developing countries. Successful development and poverty reduction will contain an agricultural development component. Below are two case studies that outline the PRSPs and their agricultural aspects for two differing countries. These case studies will serve to illustrate the differences and similarities in strategies related to rural poverty reduction and agricultural development.

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[146] Ibid

[147] Ibid.

[148] Ibid.

[149] Ibid.

[150] Ibid.

[151] "Debt Relief Under the Heavility Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Initiative." The International Monetary Fund. http://www.imf.org/external/np/exr/facts/hipc.htm

[152] Ibid.

[153] Ibid.

[154] Ibid.

[155] Ibid.

[156] Gustavo Anriquez and Kostas Stamoulis. "Rural Devlopment and Poverty Reduction: Is Agriculture Still the Key?"Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations. June 2007. ftp://ftp.fao.org/docrep/fao/010/ah885e/ah885e.pdf

Bolivia

In Latin America, 7 in 10 people live below the poverty line with 65 million people standing to benefit in the rural environments of Latin America and the Caribbean.[157] Bolivia is one of the poorest countries in the world and suffers from severe poverty in both rural areas and urban centers. The poverty level in Bolivia is one of the highest in Latin America, with 63 percent of Bolivians falling below the poverty line.[158] Extreme poverty levels are higher in rural municipalities of the high plateau where indigenous peoples and communities are scattered, difficult to access, poorly integrated, have limited basic services, and where agricultural yield is low and production infrastructure is insufficient.[159] Small-scale agricultural producers face high levels of risk in production and marketing. A large proportion of producers are vulnerable to flood and droughts and most rural households mark their production for home use (subsistence farming).[160] With a heavy reliance on the cocoa crop and few alternatives for farmers, there is a dire situation in Bolivia.[161]

The World Bank and International Monetary Fund insist that targeted rural investment would greatly help Bolivia, citing investment aimed at the rural economy as the key to reducing poverty in Latin America.[162] The World Bank has cited three main reasons for continued high levels of poverty within Bolivia. First, growth in the 1990s was not in labor-intensive fields; second, low productivity did not lead to growth in employment; and third, the poor have inadequate opportunities to improve their human capital in education.[163] In February of 2000, three conditions were established for Bolivia to reach in order to receive debt relief. First, they had to implement strong macroeconomic and structural policies. Second, they had to establish a fully defined PRSP. Finally, they had to have confirmation of participation in debt relief from other creditors outside of the IMF and World Bank.[164]

The completed Bolivian Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper represents a comprehensive promise for future improvements that will benefit all members of society. As stated within the paper, "the aim of the BRSP is to make strides in the design of economic policy…pressing for deliberate and incisive action on the part of the State to tackle poverty."[165] Overall, the paper acknowledges the importance of mainstreaming policy that target poverty reduction and establish responsibility between government and civil society.[166] Public participation plays an important role in the plan to combat rural poverty through the Dialogue, a specific plan for Bolivia to include civil society and the State.[167]

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[157] "Debt Relief Under the Heavility Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Initiative." The International Monetary Fund. http://www.imf.org/external/np/exr/facts/hipc.htm

[158] *Republic of Bolivia: Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper*. The International Monetary Fund. March 2001. http://www.imf.org/external/NP/prsp/2001/bol/01/033101.pdf

[159] Ibid.

[160] Ibid.

[161] Alberto Sourviron. "Rural Poverty Central to Bolivia's Plight." BBC News. http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/business/42.65295.stm

[162] Ibid.

[163] "Bolivia Poverty Assessment: Establishing the Basis for Pro-Poor Growth." The World Bank. http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/COUNTRIES/LACEXT/0,,contentMDK:20796043~pagePK:146736~piPK:146830~theSitePK:258554,00.html

[164] "IMF and World Bank Support US $1.2 billion in additional debt service relief for Bolivia Under Enhanced HIPC." The International Monetary Fund. June 8, 2001. http://www.imf.org/External/NP/SEC/PR/2001/pr0129.htm

[165] *Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper: Republic of Bolivia.* The International Monetary Fund. March 2001. http://www.IMF.org/external/NP/prsp/2001/bol/01/033101.pdf

[166] Ibid.

[167] Ibid.

With four components: enhanced employment and income opportunities; building productive capabilities of the poor; enhanced security and protection; and promoting social integration and social participation , this PRSP is well on its way to providing great change in the fight to combat rural poverty.[168] The improvements in society will continue to make opportunities for many women in the agricultural field, as well as education and health.[169] Proper use of resources, water management, biological diversity and utilizing forest reserves are just a few of the many topics that this PRSP discusses.[170] Specifically, the agricultural related policies it proposes include constructing and maintaining roads; constructing new irrigation systems and improving and expanding existing systems, investing in production infrastructure such as collection and storage centers, silos, greenhouses, livestock infrastructure; and over seeing the continued provision of electricity to rural areas.[171]

Mozambique

With over 50 percent of its population living on less than one dollar a day and 80 percent of poor households living in rural poverty, Mozambique's need for poverty relief is evident.[172] Subsistence farming is the main source of survival with little to no room for profit.[173] Almost all rural households in Mozambique have access to a plot of land to farm.[174] While rural poor and non-poor have roughly the same amount of land available to farm, the non-poor use more equipment have more irrigated land than the poor.[175] Land is therefore not the issue for rural poor, but their capacity to adequately work the land, which they have. Women in Mozambique are primarily responsible for food crops, yet are disproportionately disadvantaged when it comes to education, health, and skills.[176] Additionally isolation, inadequate access to resources and infrastructure all contribute to rural poverty in Mozambique.[177]

As of April 2000, Mozambique committed to make progress in implementing sound macroeconomic and structural policies.[178] There are three areas for completion that must be met in order to receive aid and achieve poverty alleviation in rural environments of Mozambique. They are as follows: complete a full PRSP; continue implementation of strong macroeconomic and structural policies supported by the IMF; and continue to strengthen a key set of structural, social and institutional policies. [179]

The Republic of Mozambique has recently completed their PRSP with the final draft being accepted in 2007. A comprehensive look at the plans established a commitment from the Republic of Mozambique and fellow creditors towards achieving debt relief.[180] With a concrete goal of reducing poverty from 54 percent in 2003 to 45 percent in

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[168] Ibid.

[169] Ibid.

[170] Ibid.

[171] Ibid.

[172] "Rural Poverty in Mozambique." Rural Poverty Portal of the International Fund for Agricultural Development. June 19, 2007 http://www.ruralpovertyportal.org/english/regions/africa/moz/index.htm

[173] Ibid.

[174] *Action Plan for the Reduction of Absolute Poverty: Republic of Mozambique.* The International Monetary Fund. April 2001. http://www.imf.org/External/NP/prsp/2001/moz/01/043101.pdf

[175] Ibid.

[176] Rural Poverty in Mozambique." Rural Poverty Portal of the International Fund for Agricultural Development. June 19, 2007 http://www.ruralpovertyportal.org/english/regions/africa/moz/index.htm

[177] Ibid.

[178] Ibid.

[179] Ibid.

[180] "Republic of Mozambique: Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper." The International Monetary Fund. January 2007. IMF Country Report. NO. 07/37. http://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/scr/2007/or0737.pdf

2009, there are specific benchmarks and areas for consideration to achieve these goals.[181] Many areas must be considered in order to alleviate hunger and poverty in the Republic of Mozambique. Gender, HIV, the Environment, Food and Rural Development are just some of the areas that the will be concentrated on during the next year in order to achieve the aforementioned goals.[182] Political Leadership and cooperation between the sectors are all going to play an integral part of the process in order to alleviate rural poverty in Mozambique.[183]

With such a rapidly approaching deadline of 2009, there are many areas of the PRSP that will not be reached and achieved. Although working through a tremendous resource in the International Monetary Fund, there are still great strives that must be met within the international community and the FAO in order to alleviate rural poverty all over the world.

Conclusion

Poverty reduction has been established as one of the most important and urgent problems facing the international community to date. With such a huge number of people living in want and lacking necessities for daily living, the FAO and other organizations must help in whatever way they can. Director General Jacques Diouf has repeatedly stated that the FAO will do whatever it can to ensure the sustainability for future generations.[184] Looking towards the future when there are 800 million people living in rural poverty, makes the goal of halving that number a challenge, a challenge that we must accept.

Committee Directives

We ask that Member States come prepared to discuss this topic. Be knowledgeable of statistics and facts that pertain to poverty and rural poverty within your Member State. Understanding that many Member States have not participated in the PRSP process or have not been successful in working with the IMF and WB, we ask that you come up with new and innovative ideas and alternative ways to help reduce rural poverty through an agricultural framework. What are the main difficulties that rural poor face in your nation? What percentage of the rural population participates in agrarian practices? Are there any food supply issues in rural areas? Next, we would like you to pay close attention to the PRSP from your country, or similar countries. Be familiar with their terminology and the types of strategies proposed within them. Place close attention to strategies related to rural and agricultural development. Our focus is not to recreate the policies found within different PRSPs but to create new and innovative ways in which the Food and Agricultural Organization may support the efforts of its member countries to combat rural poverty through PRSPs.

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[181] Ibid.

[182] Ibid.

[183] Ibid.

[184] "Ethical issues in food and agriculture." Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. Rome, 2001. http://www.fao.org/DOCREP/003/X9601E/X9601E00.HTM

Technical Appendix

Topic I: Farming in the 21st Century: Using Technology to Advance Agricultural Practices and to Combat Hunger

Cacek, Terry, and Linda Langner. 1986, The economic implications of organic farming. American Journal of Alternative Agriculture Vol 1 Number 1, pp. 25-29.

This article looks at the organic farming phenomenon. There are so many studies available that discuss organic farming, but this one specifically looks into the economic implications and the projected trends for the future and further discusses the argument over whether or not is cost effective to farm organically. Taking the research from this article into committee could definitely help when discussing financing and funding for the specific plans that could be created during the conference. This article gives delegates a unique perspective on alternative farming practices and should serve as a good tool for delegates to determine if the ideas they have will benefit economically in the long run.

Chowdhuri, Satyabrata Rai. Hunger in the Third World. Third World Network. March 1999. http://www.twnside.org.sg/title/1875-cn.htm

This article discusses an important issue for the FAO when dealing with food shortages in the developing world. This article discusses the political interests attached to aid.

FAO STAT. Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations: Helping to build a world without hunger. http://faostat.fao.org/default.aspx

This website should become a staple source when researching for committee. This huge database is constantly updated and covers all areas of the globe. Over two hundred Member States are reported on and statistics are available for production, trade, resources and much more. The archives section at the top of the home page offers a variety of scholarly resources in addition to the information in the database. Important statistics on food consumption and world trade are very valuable for the FAO and for our work in committee. Primary focus should be on solving the issues presented in our topics with new and innovative ideas, not simply re-inventing programs and policies that already exist.

FAO: Biotechnology in Food and Agriculture. The Impact of Intellectual Property Rights (IPRs) on Food and Agriculture in Developing Countries. Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. http://www.fao.org/biotech/C6doc.htm

This website from the FAO goes into deeper discussion of IPRs and Agriculture than there was room for in the Background Guide. This issue is an important piece of background that all delegates should become aware of before attempting to address any use of biotechnology.

Natural Resources Management and Environment Department. Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. http://www.fao.org/NR/index_en.htm

The Natural Resources Management and Environment Department website is very valuable because it links all important documents and resources on bioenergy, climate change, environment, genetic resources, land, research and extension, and water. For topic one there are links to food access and even statistics on the use of natural resources and bioenergy. Delegates should become aware of the research that has already been done by looking through the working papers and published works available through this site. Everything pertains to the FAO and is valuable for the topics we will be discussing during committee.

Plaut, Martin, Africa's hunger—a systemic crisis. BBC News. Jan. 31, 2006.
http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/africa/4662232.stm

Understanding the needs of the developing world is very important, especially when discussing hunger and poverty. This article points toward Africa, highlighting areas of need, but also acknowledging causes of poverty and hunger that run rampant on the continent. Additionally it brings attention to consequences that will be evident in the coming years. Bringing attention to the need for investment and resources this article ties in with topic one very well. Delegates should not only read this article and others about Africa, but make sure all areas of the globe are researched. By acknowledging the failures and flaws of the past and present, the FAO can create plans of action that can revolutionize the world as we know it for the future.

Topic II: Examining the Impacts of Climate Change on Food Security

Bazzaz, Fakhri and Win Sombrock. "Global Climate Change and Agricultural Production: Direct and indirect effects of changing hydrological, pedological and plant physiological Processes" Food and Agriculture Organization. Rome: FAO 1996.
http://www.fao.org/docrep/W5183E/w5183e03.htm#1.%20the%20climate%20change%20%20%20agriculture%20conundrum

This book looks at climate change and agriculture, each having a significant impact on the other. It goes beyond the technical agriculture areas and instead stresses some of the major FAO goals, providing an unique perspective on the issue of climate change and what it means for the international community. Beginning with a world perspective on agriculture and how agriculture is changing, the first part of this book establishes the context for the problems associated with climate change and gives way to the second half which is very technical and scientific. This is an explanation with scientific statistics and reason for what climate change will mean for the international community.

"Climate Change" United Nations. http://cyberschoolbus.un.org/briefing/climate/climate.pdf

This is a very simplistic, but very helpful beginning document on climate change. Beginning with vital statistics, this is an explanation of the current degradation to the planet and a discussion about the Kyoto protocol and other programs associated with climate change. A good explanation is given here about facts of climate change; what is climate change, what does it mean for the international community, what have Member States done already to combat climate change? Delegates should utilize this resource for a great preliminary understanding of climate change in the international community and should spark inspiration that will lead to programs for change.

"High Level Conference on World Food Security: The Challenged of Climate Change and Bioenergy" Food and Agriculture Organization Rome: 3-5 June 2008.
http://www.fao.org/fileadmin/user_upload/foodclimate/HLCodocs/HLC08-inf-1-e.pdf

Food prices are soaring throughout the World and global markets, especially of developing countries are suffering. The high prices make lives for those 800 million already suffering from chronic hunger that much more difficult. This article was written to discuss the causes and consequences of high food prices. It provides an assessment of global trends in food markets, the economic impact, personal level impacts on the market based on high prices, and short and long-term policy options to help the international community.

"Overview of United Nations activities in relation to Climate change: Report of the Secretary General. The General Assembly. Sixty-second session. Agenda Items 48, 54 and 116. 10 January 2008. A/62/644
http://www.un.org/ga/president/62/ThematicDebates/a-62-644.pdf

The Secretary General has made it a personal priority to work with all Member States to make sure the United Nations maximizes its efforts to support and encourage change. This paper discusses the current projects and capabilities. Delegates can go on from there and come up with a plan of action to ensure food

security within the International Community. Scientific as well as socio-economic research is presented and could all be very valuable for committee.

Research and Impact: CGIAR on Global Issues: CGIAR and Climate Change. Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research.
http://www.cgiar.org/impact/global/climate.html

Farmers have always had to deal with weather patterns. Farming emits a great amount of green house gases into the environment, but the impact that weather extremes place on the Developing world is of primary concern. CGIAR and other organizations are helping farmers deal with the weather extremes but also to create policy and practical initiatives that enable countries to cope. Delegates can explore the website to find and research current projects.

Small Island Countries Say Climate Change Already Threatens Very existence: Urge Immediate Aide to Vulnerable states, In General Assembly Debate: Sixty-Second General Assembly Plenary 80th and 81st Meeting. 12 Feb. 2008 GA/10689
http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2008/gal0689.doc.htm

Many Member States discussed raised sea-levels and very extreme weather events. Stressing that climate change is stripping the developing world of progress and preventing sustainable development where it is desperately needed.

"World Food Program Information on climate change activities and views on risk assessment and adaptation strategies" http://unfccc.int/files/adaptation/sbsta_agenda_item_adaptation/application/pdf/wfp_app_16_may.pdf

The World Food Program at the United Nations represents the largest food aid program of the United Nations that provides assistance to those in need that have been threatened by climate change among other disasters. Reiterating the need for policy and development that will help these communities that depend so much on agriculture and other forms of resources that can fall victim to climate instability, this articles presents a line of action or emergency response that will help build resilience for food production. Additionally climate risk management is presented in this article, along with development profiles and how to monitor programs through capacity building.

Topic III: Alleviating Rural Poverty through the Use of Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers

"Compendium of United nations Work Programmes on Rural Poverty Alleviation"
Sustainable Rural Livelihoods in Asia and the Pacific. Poverty Reduction Section, Poverty and Development Division (PDD) United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific.
http://www.unescap.org/rural/doc/compendium

The FAO is part of the UN Inter-agency sub-commission on Poverty Alleviation for Asia and the Pacific. This website has very valuable links to publications and other resources that pertain to our discussion on rural poverty. Concentrating in Asia and the Pacific, regional resources provide valuable tools to understand the great severity of poverty. Organic Agriculture, pest management, NGO participation, and sustainable development are just a few of the subtopics with specific information on this website. Delegates can get a great look at the Asian and Pacific area and start thinking about programs that can aid in poverty alleviation in that region, but also in the rest of the international community.

Engagement in Poverty Reduction Strategies: Policy Issues: Agenda Item 5. World Food Programme Executive Board Annual Session. Rome, 12-16 June 2006.WFP/EB:A/06/5B
http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/poverty/PovertyForum/Documents/Engagement%20in%20Poverty%20Reduction%20Strategies.pdf

Achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), specifically Goal One, poverty reduction is perhaps the most important challenge facing the international community today. The World Food Program must work with the rest of the international community to aide with resources and information that can help make an impact in the fight against the spread of hunger and poverty. Food security, malnutrition and emergency preparedness are just some of the areas that the WFP is well-established in and can help. By being engaged in the Poverty Reduction Strategy Process, the WFP will provide support and assistance to help combat rural poverty.

Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Initiative and Multilateral Debt Relief Initiative (MDRI)-Status of Implementation. World Bank. September 27,2007.
http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INDEBTDEPT/PrograssReports/21656521//HIPCProgressReport20070927.pdf

Finance is such an important part of the HIPC Initiative. This report discusses the successes, but also the shortcomings the program has seen since its inception. Delegates should pay particular attention to the recent developments section of the website which explains all things new to the Initiative; changed policies, exceptions to be made, and an updated list of Member States that have completed, are in progress of completing, and those that are beginning their PRSPs. Graphs throughout the paper chart progress and many tables make gathering data easy. There is another section that separates by country the progress on PRSPs and any recent activity in the creation of it with specific details on Political Development, Status of the PRSP, Status of IMF Supported Economic programs and estimated decision time for completion. Additionally, it would be beneficial to use the resources linked in the footnotes for specific country research on the topic.

Khan, Mahmood Hansan. "Rural Poverty in Developing Countries: Implications for Public Policy" International Monetary Fund March 2001.
http://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/issues/issues26/index.htm

The IMF has releases this economic series to provide the general public with access to IMF practices and research projects pertaining to rural poverty, a perfect source for topic three. There are statistics and explanations for projects in progress, but more importantly an understanding of how to alleviate rural poverty. According to the IMF, absolute poverty can be alleviated if economic growth continues on a sustained basis and that growth is neutral with respect to income distribution. The IMF states that the rural poor depend on farming, fishing and gaming and this becomes an FAO issue. They discuss where development should occur, what should be done to increase income for all, policies to reduce rural poverty as well as key components of these policies. Use this series to get a good understanding of the IMF.

Mule, Harris S "Institutions and their Impact on Addressing Rural Poverty in Africa"
http://www.ifad.org/poverty/mule.pdf

Undeniably there is a disparity between developed and developing countries when it comes to poverty. This transcribed speech that was presented to the FAO portrays how important development, education and institutions are for Africa. Discussed in the speech are lessons that have been learned as well as describing the inequality in Africa when it comes to development and technology. This speech is just one that IFAD has on its website with links to the text and other resources to go through. Delegates should come prepared to the FAO with information regarding rural poverty in their Member State, global region, and continent. The point of including this article/speech is to remind delegates to become aware of the larger picture going on around their specific country.

"Overcoming Human Poverty" UNDP Poverty Report 2000. Chapter 2: Developing National Anti-Poverty Plans. http://www.undp.org/povertyreport/chapters/chap2.html

This is a very good discussion of project plans, mainly an explanation, validation and examples of the variety of plans that have worked throughout the international community to alleviate poverty. One very important distinction this article makes is that a plan does not simply set up targeted interventions, instead particular attention must be paid to economics, policy set up by the national government and civil engagement. Perhaps one of the biggest reasons for the creation of these plans came after a crisis of some kind happened in the first place. Dealing with poverty after a major event has happened does not solve the problem that got the Member State to the current position. This article goes on to discuss management and financing of poverty plans, tying in wonderfully for our discussion in the FAO. Understanding what goes into making a plan for reducing poverty and also getting a look at some alternative means for poverty reduction should be of primary interest for delegates.

Poverty Mapping: Promoting the use of poverty maps in policy making and targeting assistance, Particularly in the areas of food security and environmental management. Poverty Mapping http://www.povertymap.net

This website is an excellent source for topic three, with links to a variety of journals and specific information on food security, poverty and the environment. The highlighting resources here are the poverty maps. Taking information from research and using consensus statistics you get maps of countries, continents, and specific regions of the globe with indicators that show data. A poverty map of Malawi is on the opening page with a visual of the population's poverty levels. You could use the maps especially when discussing rural poverty and development. These maps visualize where investment is needed, and show where progress is being made. The maps and graphics section has links to maps that would definitely help during committee with specific links to food security resources.

"Women and Poverty" UNFPA: Working to Empower Women: Critical Area 1: Women and Poverty. @Interactive population center. http://www.unfpa.org/intercenter/beijing/poverty.htm

Developing countries have suffered greatly from poverty and hunger, with women suffering more so than any other group. This is an article discussing the need for the empowerment of women in economics. This is just one area that the FAO has concentrated their efforts on. Several examples of programs around the world are cited, which should get delegates thinking about their own policies and practices. Look into additional program that aim to empower women. There are other avenues to go down when discussing economics to combat rural poverty that can and should be brought to the floor during committee.