

Session #22: Emerging Issues and Policy Implications of Food and Energy Security

1. According to South Centre (2008), the current food crisis (rising prices as well as reduced stocks) has differential impacts on different countries and different groups within countries. Discuss the differences between the following pairs:
 - Developed countries v.s. developing countries (in terms of capacity in state support and services, the ability to adjust to market changes, and terms of trade)
 - Food-importing countries v.s. food-exporting countries
 - Food producers v.s. food consumers
 - Multinational food corporations v.s. small farmers (in terms of who retains the benefits from rising food prices)
2. The South Centre has a distinct view opposing current trade and investment liberalization. (Note how this point is not different from World Bank's interpretations as we read last time) How does it think that trade liberalization has contributed to the current food crisis? How can international trade be changed to be pro-poor and pro-developing countries?
3. What is the South Centre's view on biofuel production, in terms of being an alternative to fossil fuel, its environmental impact and its effect in cost saving of energy production? Do you agree?
4. What does the South Centre suggest in order to rethink the agricultural policies in response to the food crisis? More specifically, what are the short-term and the medium-to-long-term approaches?
5. What is the projection of population growth by 2050 and the situation of hunger in the world? (See Mueller in UN 2008, p. 165) What implications does this trend have for energy consumption?
6. With the rising prices of crops, the value of farmland has also increased. What is the impact of that on poor people's access on land? What are some mitigating measures? (See Vermeulen in UN 2008, pp. 168-170)
7. What is Jatropha and what are the advantages of it as a raw material to produce biofuel? If the use of non-crop materials like Jatropha can be augmented, to what extent would the current food crisis be mitigated? (See Lopez in UN 2008, pp. 172-174)
8. Why does the Hunt (UN 2008, pp. 175-176) think that the agricultural sector should be considered problematic for the climate system?

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