2013 EDITION

PARTNERSHIPS ON THE FRONTIER
Ras al-Khaimah (RAK), literally translated as “top of the tent,” is the northernmost of the United Arab Emirates. Nestled between the desert plains bounded by the Hajar mountain range on the east and the sandy coastline of the Gulf on the west, RAK prospered for centuries at the crossroads of the trade routes linking Europe with India and China. Often labeled as “the rising emirate,” RAK emerged from the global financial crisis as an epicenter for business and investment by focusing heavily on developing its industrial sector. In addition, strong linkages with the other emirates through modern highways have helped bring RAK into its own standing, despite its lack of oil production.

Marwa Abdou is a first-year MA student in the International Development Program. She graduated from Queens University with a dual degree in Finance and Economics, and worked as a Financial Consultant with Ernst & Young MENA for three years before coming to SAIS. She started taking pictures when she was ten years old after developing a passion for film photography.
International development is the work of the practical idealist. This is what we most need to believe when our job is to relocate families to a refugee camp; to ask a mother of four why she is delinquent in the latest installment of her ten dollar loan; to shout English lessons above the clamor of children uninterested in what we have volunteered to teach them. After all, we are driven by our best impulses. We feel a fundamental affront in the face of injustice and inequality. We believe in a greater, untapped human potential. We are inspired to understand the communities of others and to strengthen and empower our own.

We worked at nonprofits, volunteered with the Peace Corps, enlisted in the armed forces because we saw ourselves as part of a larger community, because we believed in the transformative power of individual agents, and because we held to the notion that a better world was possible.

And then we came to graduate school. The academic study of development often feels like a retrospective analysis of well-intended failures. We study the history, execution, and ultimate collapse of aid initiatives. We trace the economic prescriptions imposed on developing countries from one decade’s botched philosophies to the next.

Outside our classrooms, we see aid agencies unable to effect meaningful change in post-conflict countries. Failed states seem inured to international interventions, and entrenched elites exhibit greater flexibility in manipulating funds and power than do the agencies that oversee development programs. Our foreign policy confuses economic and social priorities so deeply that neither can be met; we operate in a vacuum of meaningful data; and we stubbornly replicate our failures in the field.

But ours is the work of change. If our responsibility as students is to understand the nuances and structural deficiencies that make effective development so challenging, our responsibility as global citizens is to use that knowledge to find opportunities to better our world.

This year’s issue of SAIS Perspectives began with a question: How can we better effect meaningful change? Against the backdrop of what has not worked, we see innovative partnerships uniting unlikely collaborators. Bankers on Wall Street are investing in central African microfinance institutions and Army engineers are building schools and hiring teachers in the mountains of Afghanistan. Social entrepreneurs are developing business models that measure their returns in both economic profits and social impact.

Organizations are no longer required to cover the core competencies of every dimension of development or extend their reach beyond their capabilities. Cross-sector collaboration provides the opportunity for agents of change to approach old problems with new, more sophisticated strategies.

Our theme, Partnerships on the Frontier, invites authors to reconsider the conventional development paradigm in light of these unexpected affiliations. One article explores the potential of international trade agreements to strengthen the economies of new Middle Eastern and North African democracies. Another considers the likelihood of successfully institutionalizing an international body to promote government transparency. A case study of Ethiopia proposes a business model that identifies a niche in the fashion industry as a vehicle for change in a country crippled by poverty, inequality, and lack of market access.

This year’s authors remind us that in our field—one as often inflated by idealism as it is burdened by failure—we are part of the evolution of a new frontier. Disparate organizations are partnering to achieve common goals, aligning their incentive structures, and reevaluating their core assumptions. As graduates of this program, we will find ourselves designing and implementing collaborative models that further this new approach to development.

And if we have learned anything in the classroom, it is that this new approach may fail. Some of these new partnerships and initiatives certainly will. But each time our efforts fall short of our ideals we are left with the responsibility to ask ourselves: How can we do better? And because international development is necessarily informed by practical idealism, we are also left with a measure of faith that if we continue to ask that question, if we continue to use our failures to inspire the creation of more sophisticated strategies, we will eventually find transformative solutions that will better our world.

Carolyn Nash
Editor-in-Chief
March 2013
POEM

The New Frontier Is Finally Here

The field of development is evolving;
Old dilemmas we’re close to solving.
Years of trials and errors provide us
With “best practices” to guide us.

Some are old ones, tried and true
That still show us what to do:
If a project’s to succeed
It must fill a strong “felt need.”

Other rules we’ve learned more recently:
Local leaders may not act decently—
At the bottom, as at the top,
If corruption is to stop,
Transparency and monitoring are needed—
(A rule rich nations haven’t heeded!)

Today, new opportunities appear—
I.T. provides the new frontier.
Rural peoples now world-wide are thanking
The debut of mobile banking,
That long trip to the bank, at last,
Is now a problem of the past.

When a peasant now gets sick,
I.T. provides a helpful trick:
He can learn what makes him moan—
He’s diagnosed by mobile phone!

Microfinance now has many facets—
It’s not just loans to buy new assets.
Microinsurance can now be had,
And microsaving we can add.

In development now we see
The vital role of M&E.
New techniques can help us see
If projects are what they could be.

So, as new ideas abound,
Our efforts year-by-year gain ground,
So we’ll see in each developing nation,
More popular participation.

— William A. Douglas, IDEV Poet Laureate
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IN THIS ISSUE

1  A Letter from the Editor

2  POEM: The New Frontier Is Finally Here
William A. Douglas

4  A Message from the Director

5  An Interview with Dean Vali Nasr

8  The Open Government Partnership: Trials in Transparency
Elliot Waldman

11 Somalia: New Hope or Renewed Heartbreak?
  Evan Fowler

13 Patronage, Foreign Aid, and Corruption in Afghanistan
  Corey Gannon

16 A Nation of Non-Nationals:
The Unintended Consequences of Kuwait’s Globalized Labor Force
  Clare Dreyfus

20 Fashioning a Social Enterprise
  Marisol Trowbridge

25 Courting Corporations for Development
  Ingrid Larson

28 Clarity and Consistency through Trade Relations
  Martha R. Simms and Selim Koru

31 OP-ED: The Security Gap
  M.A. Thomas

32 Calculating Food Security
  Mark Brennan

38 International Development Program Update

39 Alumni Update
I write this message from Bologna, where I journeyed this week to meet with twenty IDEV students spending their first year at the SAIS campus in this historic city. We are far from Africa, Latin America, and Asia—yet reminders of the past and future frontiers of international development are all around us. The faded stucco walls of Europe’s first university campus remind us of the power of higher education for development. Bologna’s medieval arcades and the celebrated workshops of Emilia-Romagna bring home the importance of productive, high-quality industry and international trade for prosperity. Robert Putnam explored the social roots of the robust political institutions in this part of Italy in his famous book Making Democracy Work. Two nights ago, Catholics here and around the world celebrated the election of a new pope—a man from Argentina, described by one of his colleagues as someone who “always, always has a preferential option for the poor.”

With the arches of Bologna’s old city framing my view, it gives me great pleasure to introduce this new issue of SAIS Perspectives, with its focus on partnerships at the frontiers of international development. Our contributors explore innovative and challenging partnerships from a number of different vantage points: re-building the Somali and Afghan states; new synergies between the fashion industry and economic development; how EU trade policy might support the Arab Spring; the Open Government Partnership initiative; repositioning food security and immigration at the frontiers of development, and an important reminder that many development professionals work in dangerous environments. Aid agencies need to do far more to prepare them to meet these risks.

Special thanks to the Editor-in-Chief of this year’s SAIS Perspectives, Carolyn Nash, and her talented editorial team: Corey Gannon, Matt Putkoski, Allison Carragher, and Julia Wallin. Their hard work shows in the professionally produced and stimulating pages of this journal. Thanks are also due to Senior Associate Director Cinnamon Dornsife, who worked closely with the student team, ably supported by outgoing Program Coordinator Katherine Diefenbach, Program Assistant Tina Evangelista, and our new Program Coordinator, Kisha Manning.

SAIS Perspectives had its origins as a newsletter for the Social Change and Development and IDEV Programs. As the new IDEV Director, I am grateful to be joining a strong program with caring and talented faculty, students, and staff. We will miss Katherine as she moves on to the next chapter of her life, but we warmly welcome Kisha to the IDEV family. I am also pleased to report that IDEV is in very good health. Student demand for an international career with “a preferential option for the poor” continues to be exceptional, and we are blessed with generous donors—Bernard Schwartz (through the Bernard Schwartz Globalization Initiative, which funded this year’s intersession trip to South Africa, as well as IDEV internships and events), Hope Simon Miller, Alan Fleischmann, Dafna Tapiero, the Ferris Family, the donors of the M. Gregg Smith fellowship, and the donors of the Richard J.J. Sullivan fellowship. I thank them for their support of IDEV, and I look forward to working with all of IDEV’s supporters as we continue to explore the roots and frontiers of international development.

Deborah Bräutigam  
Director of the International Development Program  
March 2013
An Interview with Dean Vali Nasr

**PERSPECTIVES** EDITOR-IN-CHIEF CAROLYN NASH SAT DOWN WITH DEAN VALI NASR TO DISCUSS THE ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL LANDSCAPE IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES.

Carolyn Nash: This year we asked our writers to consider what the changing global landscape means for the future of international development. Can you talk a bit about what you see as the most relevant and significant transformations?

Vali Nasr: Well, there is no doubt that the global landscape is changing. And while we are devoting more attention to issues such as the environment and energy, I don’t think this represents a shift in topical focus—those issues were always there. Instead, the way in which the world is changing—and this is of particular interest to our students and graduates—concerns the rise of emerging markets.

We are dealing with a world that is far less Euro-centric since the fall of the European economies. But it is also much less US-centric. It’s certainly not that the United States no longer matters, but rather that there are so many other points of connection, points of contact, and points of discussion. Whether on trade, on agriculture, on war, on development, these conversations are happening around the world. This requires professionals who can not only procure a deep knowledge of issues and of regions, but also master the ability to relate that knowledge comparatively to other regions of the world, beyond the United States.

CN: How will this shift affect the field of international development?

VN: I think that, in many ways, development itself is more important than it was before. However, the discipline is also being forced to address a new set of issues and to provide a new perspective on them. After 9/11, and as a result of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, a whole new outlook on development emerged that was much more clearly and closely tied to security. From one side we came to view state building and institution building no longer as just an economic idea but essentially as a security idea. And because of this, development became a component of counterinsurgency.

I would say overall it’s an interesting period of intellectual ferment and productivity. We have to think about traditional development issues, we have to think about new development issues, and we have to think about them both in the context of a changing global order.

CN: Let’s discuss the link between development and security. What do you think about the trend of embedding traditional development objectives—building schools, constructing roads—in the mandates of military units?

VN: You know, these ideas emerged on the go. The military went into Iraq acting like a military—the focus was on defeating and conquering another military, and that part happened very quickly. Then all of a sudden, American soldiers realized they were now in charge of towns and cities. They had to fix sewer systems and they had to figure out how to open the bazaar again and they had to understand microfinance so merchants could facilitate these daily activities. You had pressure on the military to learn about development and about local culture as part of its own military mission.

Then later on when the idea of PRTs [Provincial Reconstruction Teams] came into being, this notion of a civil-military alliance became much more embedded in the military’s strategic doctrine. The alliance became a way to fight counterinsurgency through institution building from below—not only military institution building but also supporting good governance at a basic level.

State building is something that’s embedded in development even when development doesn’t claim to be talking about it, even when development is outwardly focused on issues such as raising the literacy rate, increasing agricultural productivity, and designing water projects. The bottom line is that these activities are micro-level state building. You have to build institutions to do these things—just as the military was trying to do. So even if military and development no longer collaborate in the same way, in the form of PRT units, nevertheless the goals are now understood to be the same. The goal of military is state building; the goal of development is state building.

The problem is that there is a broad philosophical difference about which institutions we need to build first.

CN: How does this philosophical difference play out in practice, and how might it be resolved in the future?

VN: For example, given the security environment of the day, an overwhelming amount of international investment is going into the security arm of a state. The result is states that will have overdeveloped militaries.

We’re seeing that in Afghanistan, where the primary emphasis is on building the military forces; we’re going to see that in Mali, in Somalia, etc. I don’t think philosophically we’re on the same page but now there is a certain understanding about the importance of development for the overall foreign policy strategic outlook.

So I don’t know where we go with this because now we’re no longer in a counterinsurgency environment and the President announced at the Pentagon that we’re not going to be doing nation building anymore. But I think that

CONTINUED ON PAGE 6
there is a realization that we’re not going 
to be fighting land wars or air wars à la World War II anymore—that our 
principle enemy is really failed states and the viruses and groups that can 
fester within them. That means state 
building is still a very important issue, 
and development is going to continue to 
play a significant role.

CN: What about the effects of the 
increasingly globalized economy? 
How do you see evolting economic 
relationships changing the way we think 
about development?

VN: Development is finding some 
very interesting common ground with 
global finance and the global economy. 
Financial markets are emerging in 
developing countries that are undergoing 
massive transformations. At one level 
these countries still have literacy, 
sanitation, and agricultural issues to 
resolve, but at the top level they’re 
sitting in boardrooms on Wall Street 
and are part of this global discussion of 
BRICs [Brazil, Russia, India, China] and 
MISTs [Mexico, Indonesia, South Korea, 
Turkey]. These countries’ presence 
in the global financial markets will 
impact the ways in which development 
is discussed. The synergies between 
both the economic and political 
relationships changing the way development 
landscape.

Rising incomes are also supporting 
military procurement, so there are 
plenty of countries—China, India, 
Brazil—that do not have the money 
to support the kind of military that 
they think they are worthy of. India 
wants to invest another hundred 
billion dollars to upgrade its air force; 
China wants to build a blue-water navy 
and aircraft carriers. So the military 
budget is governed by money. People 
do want to create in-house military 
industries—sort of a military version of 
the import substitution strategies of 
the 1960s—but the United States still 
holds the technological keys to military 
performance, so actually the United 
States will benefit from this trend.

CN: Does this mean you still see the 
United States playing a central role?

VN: I think America still plays an 
important role but the reality of 
emerging markets is that, and not as 
a sort of anti-Americanism, there are 
many more point-to-point relationships 
emerging. The Chinese are dealing 
directly with Brazil, Brazil directly 
with China. Some of it has to do with 
the decline of the European and US 
economies, so they had to look for other 
majors. The Turks were exporting 
to Europe. Well, Europe’s not buying 
so the Turks start looking east. Now, 
everybody’s looking to Africa. Brazil 
opened thirty-one embassies in Africa, 
Turkey opened twenty-one embassies, 
and China’s hugely invested there. That 
is becoming a trend unto itself. You’re 
dealing with a world of trade and a 
global financial system that no longer 
has America and Europe as its hub but 
is sort of a network, sort of point-to-
point depending on who’s doing business 
with whom.

CN: What does this new network mean 
for emerging, untested governments 
that may be less influenced by Western 
politics? How much pressure do these 
countries face, both internally and 
externally, to democratize or to promote 
democratic consolidation?

VN: There are many emerging 
massages that have been successful with 
democracy, like South Korea and Brazil, 
at least at the moment. And then there 
are those that have not performed 
nearly as well such as Thailand or 
Argentina. You can look at a country 
like India, where many of the problems 
are the result of the government’s 
inability to implement fundamental 
reforms. You can say that about the 
United States as well. That means that 
democracy is struggling. It hasn’t gone 
away, but it’s facing new challenges.

The same can be said about 
authoritarian regimes. Some 
governments have done well in emerging 
majors under authoritarian regimes: 
South Korea at one point in its history, 
and of course China. And some have 
not: Tunisia ultimately collapsed—even 
though it was growing at a fairly rapid 
rate at one point—because it wasn’t 
sustainable. This becomes a question 
of when do political systems change or 
consolidate. It’s a political question but 
what it tells us about development is 
that shocks do matter. Tunisia fumbled 
because of the shock in Europe. Egypt 
was at the beginning of an emerging 
market stage but couldn’t manage 
terrible food shortages. The issues that 
development is dealing with in terms of 
food and water and sustainable 
economic growth will matter a great 
deal politically, because even though 
the middle and upper classes enjoy 
the economic benefits of globalization, 
the majority of the population in many 
countries is very vulnerable to shifts in 
prices of food and water, etc.

Then there are compounding 
issues of youth, population change, 
and education. Employing huge 
youth populations is a challenge for 
many of these developing countries. 
But there is a social factor at play as 
well. Populations with large numbers 
of young people are, by definition, 
unstable, and that has to do with the 
character of the youth, their placement 
in society, and their relationship to 
authority. That is an issue irrespective 
of whether you’re in a democracy or an 
authoritarian regime.

CN: Before coming to SAIS, you spent 
two years as a Senior Advisor to US 
Special Representative for Afghanistan 
and Pakistan Richard Holbrooke. How 
do you see the role of US development 
work in Afghanistan changing after the 
2014 troop drawdown?

VN: My own view is that it’s going to be very difficult for development, at least in 
sits current structure. In an environment
of war it’s very difficult to develop. Afghanistan doesn’t really have a state, so there are no real local partners there to think about how you move forward. The way development has been set up for Afghanistan in the past decade has been under the umbrella of American security. We can actually see that our development initiatives are only working in areas where there is US protection.

There are other non-traditional, non-Western development groups that work very differently, such as the Al-Nahyan Foundation, which is a philanthropic organization that operates out of Paris. They do fantastic development work, but they are completely outside of the Western system and they do their own thing on the ground. They can be effective. This is something similar to the Edhi Foundation in Karachi. So I don’t want to say that there’s going to be no development. But I think that Western development—be it run by European or American foundations or government agencies—has really been protected by the security shield. When that security shield is not there, we will have to reinvent a development model and what that model will be I don’t know. But that vacuum might very well be filled by outfits like the Al-Nahyan Foundation or the Edhi Foundation.

CN: Beyond security concerns, politics also challenges development efforts. I’m wondering if you see a way to overcome the political entrenchment that has limited what the United States is able to accomplish abroad or if you think that is an indelible part of our political system?

VN: Well there is definitely bureaucratic momentum, and there’s not necessarily a strong incentive for our policy makers to change that. Take the case of foreign aid, the government’s primary development tool. USAID was basically beaten to a pulp in the 1980s. It was fairly broken down. Now its approach is about providing basic development and basic safety nets. Increasingly, American foreign policy needs deeper engagement from USAID, but the degree of bureaucratic resistance has prevented significant change.

Change will come when something is viewed as a vital interest and I don’t think the US government currently looks at development that way. It has to be a commitment. If I said about a country like Pakistan, ‘It’s a danger because it’s poor, it’s unemployed, we should put our shoulder into transforming it,’ politicians would say that it would be too difficult and too expensive. What are a few small things that we can do instead? Ten million dollars for a project here or there—that is an approach they can bite into. Transforming Pakistan’s economy is an order of business that we no longer want to bite into.

CN: How can we go about changing that? If the US government isn’t going to be an agent of meaningful international change, who, if anyone, is poised to fill that gap?

VN: Using the same example, from the vantage point of where we sit at SAIS, part of our mission is to train Pakistanis who have the vision and the desire to go back and transform their own country. Secondly, we also train a lot of people who either go into international agencies—the World Bank, the Asian Development Bank—or go into corporations and companies and NGOs that work on these issues.

Not all change comes through traditional channels. Take the case of microfinance. Microfinance started as an exotic idea, and it actually started outside the United States. It began to pay dividends; it began then to become something NGOs embraced. Schools like SAIS began to train people who wanted to focus on this. And from that you ended up with the formal banking system beginning to see that you could make money off the bottom of the pyramid. And so this became a much bigger industry.

Yes, there are failures here, there’s abuse, some may go bankrupt, but all in all this interest has mobilized savings and investment money for a sector that was really neglected and is having a major impact. At some point in time, these kinds of successful initiatives become important enough to get folded into government policy.

At SAIS, we’re sitting in the capital of the United States; we have a wonderful platform, we bridge the worlds of academia and policymaking, government, NGOs, and business. We’re perfectly placed to be the intellectual change agent. These changes don’t happen overnight but we can be the place where we try these ideas—as with microfinance, but also with energy, with smart cities, with new security ideas—and I think this is the way we ought to think about our mission.

CN: How do you foresee our mission changing over the next ten years?

VN: The world is changing, and I think our students are best placed to be at the forefront and direct that change. But there are larger issues they have to think about today and think about for a changing tomorrow: one, there is a change in the balance of power in the world. I don’t say it in a negative way but it’s a reality. Brazil is a center unto itself, China is a center unto itself, and understanding this sort of a networked world matters. Understanding technology matters. And not in a cliché way, not how Facebook has changed the world, but in a more nuanced understanding of the energy revolution.

Second, the focus of development may be shifting from outsiders intervening in efforts to protect those at the bottom to outsiders who work with governments to improve government capacity to do those things independently. I think that would be the most ingenious thing. If we figure that out it would be revolutionary. I think we may go back to seeing much more promise in building the state rather than protecting the civilians.
The Open Government Partnership
TRIALS IN TRANSPARENCY

Elliot Waldman

Good governance is more than just a buzzword in international development. Corruption and institutional opacity negatively affect the quality of public services, erode citizens’ trust in government, and inhibit widespread civic participation. Pro-transparency policies are increasingly utilized not only to attract aid money and international legitimacy, but also as powerful tools to achieve improved outcomes in health, education, and administrative performance. Far from being limited to bureaucrats and policy wonks, such efforts have become a priority of public interest groups and community organizers eager to hold governments more accountable to their citizens.

The Open Government Partnership (OGP) is a new multilateral, multi-stakeholder initiative that seeks to institutionalize this international push towards good governance. Its mission is “to secure concrete commitments from governments to promote transparency, empower citizens, fight corruption, and harness new technologies to strengthen governance.” To participate, countries must first meet minimum eligibility criteria of fiscal transparency, access to information, public disclosure laws for officials, and citizen engagement. Once these requirements have been met, any country can join by embracing a non-binding declaration of principles, developing and submitting a country action plan with public consultation, and committing to independent monitoring of progress toward its stated goals. Officially launched on September 20, 2011, the OGP’s membership increased from eight to fifty-seven countries in just over one year, with an additional ten countries currently developing country action plans.

Because the partnership is still in its infancy, any review of accomplishments to date would be premature. Given that its organizational structure is largely solidified, however, a review of prior multi-stakeholder initiatives such as the Extractive Industry Transparency Initiative (EITI) and the Construction Sector Transparency Initiative (CoST) can provide insight into future obstacles and opportunities the OGP may face. The picture of OGP’s future that emerges from this analysis is not necessarily a dim one, but there are several key issues—primarily in facilitating civil society engagement and preventing coordination failures among its members—that must be addressed to ensure that the partnership can deliver on its ambitious mandate.

Inclusion of Civil Society

Perhaps the most noteworthy feature of the OGP is its attempt to reconcile the disparate spheres of state and citizenry by incorporating civil society organizations not as mere placeholders, but instead as active members in governing roles. The Economist describes the partnership as “a social network for reform-minded officials,” but in reality, civil society representatives narrowly outnumber government officials in the organization’s leadership. The Steering Committee comprises nine civil society groups along with eight national governments, with a revolving leadership of three co-chairs, two from governments and one from civil society. At the national level, governmental consultations with civil society organizations and the private sector play an important role in formulating a country action plan. According to Nathaniel Heller, Executive Director of Global Integrity and Manager of the OGP Networking Mechanism, it is this characteristic of the partnership that “speaks to the hard-wired attempt to infuse non-governmental feedback, ideas, and thought leadership into what otherwise could look like just another international club of governments and technocrats.” Active engagement with civil society is heavily emphasized in the OGP’s articles of governance as well as in its draft Strategic Plan.

This emphasis on partnering with civil society is admirable, but it unrealistically presupposes the presence of an active and empowered civil society in all OGP member countries. In fact, in many developing countries it may be more accurate to assume a weak and disempowered civil society, with a highly asymmetrical power dynamic vis-à-vis state actors and corporations. This imbalance has been previously identified as a common constraint binding other multi-stakeholder initiatives. For example, in the context of Ethiopia’s participation in the CoST, civil society organizations make up 30 percent of Ethiopia’s country-level multi-stakeholder group, but legislation restricting NGO activities prevents these organizations from providing an effective link to the public. Similarly, attempts to encourage community stakeholder participation in the EITI in southeast Madagascar failed due to a fragmented civil society and a deeply embedded “hierarchy of upward dependencies” in local government.

While the relevance of these examples to the OGP is limited by their sector-specific nature, the fact remains that in many low-income countries the presence of a strong civil society capable of engaging with international actors is more often the exception than the norm.
This emphasis on partnering with civil society is admirable, but it unrealistically presupposes the presence of an active and empowered civil society. 

The Role of Transparency

In addition to a healthy civil society, effective communication and public outreach campaigns can also facilitate increased transparency at the country level. For example, a recent experiment in Brazil documented the impact of randomly conducted public financial auditing on municipal election results and found that in municipalities with local radio stations, disclosure of the audits significantly increased the likelihood of the incumbent losing reelection as compared to the same disclosure in municipalities without local radio stations. The uptake of such cost-effective public dissemination methods, including local radio, is already being promoted among OGP member countries.

At the same time, complete transparency should not be considered a necessary or even desirable goal in all cases. As Ivar Kolstad and Arne Wiig note, “maximal and all-encompassing transparency is not necessarily optimal.” In some situations, safe refuge from the glare of the public eye affords policymakers the candor and flexibility required for difficult negotiations. Moreover, government officials often make difficult choices involving necessary tradeoffs that would be damaging to their careers if revealed. For these reasons it may be in the public’s interest to allow a certain degree of secrecy in government, thereby insulating policymakers from the risks of making important yet unsavory decisions. One of the challenges OGP member countries face as they implement their country action plans is how to operationalize this balance.

Implementation Challenges

Multi-stakeholder initiatives such as the OGP must also contend with barriers to implementation at the organizational level. For example, the CoST has been hampered by inadequate commitment from many member countries, a problem which can arise either from low prioritization due to lack of time, conflicts of interest among member countries, or pressing domestic circumstances that distract attention from international obligations. The OGP may have to confront these issues in only its second year of existence, as the UK takes on responsibilities as co-chair of the steering committee. The British government faces a number of domestic political challenges, including mounting discontent over a prolonged economic recession, and thus may not be able to commit the resources necessary to keep the OGP operating at full tilt.

Another common implementation challenge faced by multi-stakeholder initiatives, and one that is important to resolve for the future success of the OGP, concerns the adaptation and institutionalization of global norms on transparency. Even in the best-case scenario, in which high-level talks result in an OGP-wide agreement on a shared vision of transparency and a resolution to work toward that vision, obstacles to norms diffusion may persist at the national and sub-national levels. Many countries, such as the aforementioned case of Madagascar, have deeply ingrained power structures or social mores that are not amenable to increased transparency. The OGP addresses this issue by requiring countries to submit action plans formulated in consultation with civil society, reasoning that self-designed plans will be more sensitive to local contingencies. However, this places a heavy burden on the OGP’s Independent Reporting Mechanism (IRM), the means by which stakeholders in participating countries track the progress and impact of implementing the country action plans. The IRM is required first to hire an International Expert Panel (IEP) to design its methodology, after which it cooperates with local researchers to generate annual monitoring reports for each member country. Nathaniel Heller aptly sums up the challenges of this process:

The prospect of hiring the IRM team, assembling the IEP, developing a monitoring methodology with broad public participation, and then issuing country reports in more than 50 countries is, to understate it, daunting. It’s certainly possible but should be celebrated as a major overachievement if OGP is able to pull this off as currently planned. I’d take the under if I were a betting man.

Heller goes on to note that because the IRM is such a crucial part of the OGP framework, failure to adequately meet this challenge in a timely fashion could threaten the OGP’s viability.

The issue of norm institutionalization emerges more concretely at the state and municipal levels. In most countries, decisions that directly impact the daily lives of citizens are made at the local level,
Open Government Partnership (continued from page 9)

yet authorities at these levels are generally less transparent. In Mexico, for example, the federal government passed a widely celebrated Freedom of Information Act in 2003, but its impact was constrained by the intransigence of state and local governments. Brazil’s above-mentioned strategy of random audits accompanied by information campaigns is an effective one, but is only replicable in countries where: (a) leading officials are committed to addressing corruption even if it means the potential downfall of well-connected local politicians, and (b) the state maintains uncontested control over all jurisdictions in its territory. That said, even in countries lacking high levels of political will and state capacity, coordinated information campaigns across electoral districts can enable voters to exercise more informed voices, thus exerting pressure on public officials. Because citizens will be more likely to take coordinated action if they are aware of the private costs they have been made to bear as a result of their leaders’ impropriety, such campaigns should be framed in a way that highlights the high costs that corruption imposes on citizens.

Conclusion

There is no question that these issues represent a formidable set of challenges for the OGP. The competing incentives of governments and civil society organizations must be reconciled at the international level while managing fluctuating levels of commitment from members and strengthening local civil society organizations. Strategies to promote transparency must be championed by all countries while ensuring adaption to local contexts and allowing enough flexibility for administrative effectiveness. Implementation processes must be owned and driven by national actors while confronting and satisfying international scrutiny. Finally, consultations with civil society must be independently monitored to ensure equal balances of power and compliance on the part of governments. Taken together, these tasks represent a herculean feat of global collective action.

At the same time, this paper has shown that each issue taken separately is not without possible solutions. With a pragmatic approach to problem solving and committed support from key members of its leadership, the OGP has the potential to become a model for effective cooperation across sectoral and national boundaries. On the other hand, it may experience suboptimal levels of inputs from member countries as the sheen of its initial appeal wears off, gradually fading from popular consciousness. Although its future remains uncertain, the OGP has already made an indelible mark as the first major governance initiative to institutionalize transparency and accountability at the multilateral level while carving out a significant role for civil society in its leadership. Whether it succeeds or fails, there is good reason to be optimistic that other collaborative initiatives will follow in its footsteps.

Endnotes

3. Ibid.
The exclusivity of the development and adoption processes, exacerbated by the international community, is a liability at a time when legitimacy and authenticity are needed most in Mogadishu.

While the communiqué from the London Conference pledged that “decisions on Somalia’s future rest with the Somali people,” it also reinforced the constitutional development process undertaken by the United Nations. In particular, the conference participants endorsed convening the National Constituent Assembly and applauded the Garowe Principles. These principles, named for agreements made between the transitional government and other Somali politicians in Garowe on February 17, 2012, promoted a federal state with a parliamentary system for post-transition Somalia. The same stakeholders who were co-opted by Ambassador Mahiga agreed to these principles, which established the barebones foundation for the new constitution. In the eyes of the international community, codification of these principles was essential to plotting a course for Somalia’s future. Furthermore, the international community proclaimed

CONTINUED ON PAGE 12
SOMALIA: NEW HOPE OR RENEWED HEARTBREAK?

If it is not able to stand united against the barrage of complexities that have yet to be resolved, then the new government may collapse or succumb to political stagnation.

the constitution may backslide into empty verbiage and Somalia could face renewed fears of Balkanization. The future of federalism as a panacea for Somalia’s woes will likely depend on the decisions propagated by the government in the formation of the Federal Member States.

The Future of the Federal Republic

The Somali government’s primary concerns in the near future are two-fold: the protection of the new politicians and the resumption of basic services within the country. In the long term, though, several questions remain about the constitution’s development, the exclusion of contentious issues from the adopted version, and the introduction of federalism. The government has a number of obstacles to overcome, and must ensure that the current optimism surrounding Somalia does not lead to complacency. If it is not able to stand united against the barrage of complexities that have yet to be resolved, then the new government may collapse or succumb to political stagnation. Somalia has made significant strides. But regardless of the praise the constitution may earn from the international community, the country’s prognosis cannot be meaningfully assessed from a document.

Endnotes

5. “Consultative Meeting of the Somali Signatories of the Process for Ending the

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the need “to incentivize progress and act against spoilers to the peace process.”

In this rhetoric, the only peace process that became acceptable was the one being enforced by the United Nations. The use and abuse of the label ‘spoiler’ against anybody who questioned the approach of Ambassador Mahiga further derailed an endeavor that already lacked credibility.

The constitutional adoption process also showcased the limitations of the new constitution. The 1960 constitution, often considered as the basis for Somalia, was adopted through a popular referendum in 1961. This time around, there was no national referendum to gauge the Somali public’s opinion on the overhaul of the political environment. Instead, the constitution was approved by an 825-member “constituent assembly,” with delegates chosen according to Somali clans and civil society representatives. The exclusivity of the development and adoption processes, exacerbated by the international community, is a liability at a time when legitimacy and authenticity are needed most in Mogadishu.

The Constitutional Prescription

The foundation of the new system, federalism, has remained an extremely divisive factor since its introduction. Critics highlight several features which make federalism a poor choice for Somalia: the homogeneity of the country, the lack of qualified personnel and funding necessary to run a federal state, and the possible problems arising from adding a territorial aspect to a volatile country. Many detractors point towards the loss of Somaliland and the autonomy of Puntland and Jubaland as early examples of how federalism will break Somalia apart. Supporters, however, state that secession is a more serious threat in over-centralized unitary systems, while federalism is more likely to sustain national unity. Several pundits have indicated that the new arrangement does not assuage the regions’ fears of domination by the center, particularly since the Federal Government has not yet prescribed a system for resource sharing. The constitution is also marred by ambiguity and indistinctness that may prove fatal to the new government.

Despite the transformation into a federal system, the borders between the different regions, the regional relationships to the Federal Government, and the status of Mogadishu remain undecided. The constitution defines two levels of government, the Federal Government and the Federal Member States. According to Article 48, “until such time as a region merges with another region[s] to form a new Federal Member State, a region shall be directly administered by the Federal Government.” In regards to Mogadishu, Article 9 of the constitution asserts, “the status of the capital city of Somalia shall be determined in the constitutional review process, and the two houses of the Somali Federal Parliament shall enact a special law with regards to this issue.”

These issues are likely to be hotly debated within Parliament, and the fact that they are not addressed definitively by the constitution is a cause for concern. The new government must be able to tread the line between establishing the new Federal Member States and working to redress the regions’ historical fears of domination by Mogadishu. If it is not able to work decisively with lawmakers on the implementation of these measures, then...
Patronage, Foreign Aid, and Corruption in Afghanistan

Corey Gannon

Billions of dollars in humanitarian aid and official development assistance have entered Afghanistan since 2001, and many have blamed these inflows for causing the pervasive corruption there today. There is greater evidence, however, that the corruption in Afghanistan, as most Westerners and many Afghans view it, is a result of both traditional governing systems and the disruption of those systems by foreign intervention and civil conflict. Since the late 1970s, conflict has altered the patrimonial hierarchy in which most Afghans participate in government, brought new actors to power, and provided new opportunities for corruption. The misuse and manipulation of foreign aid is an effect of the changed power structures, not a cause.

For hundreds of years, Afghanistan’s population. Among Tajiks, Hazaras, and Uzbeks, which make up most of the other half of the population, a *shura* (a mechanism similar to a *jirga*) has a corresponding governing function. Before the Soviet invasion in 1979, the national Afghan legal system generally reflected a balance between Islamic teachings, Afghan tribal traditions (customary law) and modern legal norms. The administration of this legal system, however, involved long delays, bribery and corruption. [...] Many Afghans in rural areas tried to avoid contact with state legal institutions and preferred their conflicts to be resolved by *jirgas* outside the courtroom.

The leader of a tribe is a *khan*. Legitimacy in tribal and national (*loya*) *jirgas* is derived mainly from charismatic and traditional, as opposed to legal, authority in the Weberian classification. Without formal legal authority, a *khan*’s power is fluid and based on his ability to “feed the people” and “tie the knot of the tribe.” *Khan* generate and maintain their authority through patronage, or the distribution of economic surpluses, employment, and other favors, because leadership is typically carried out through persuasion rather than command. “In this culture, a leader retains power by providing what the community needs: security, prestige, material goods, dispute resolution, and assistance in avoiding blood feuds.” If the *khan* can provide benefits for his followers, he is deemed worthy of continued allegiance.

The predominate governing system that existed prior to 1979 involved the competition of different actors to obtain tenuous public favor by distributing resources to certain individuals. Afghans appear to view tribal patronage differently than the ‘corruption’ that occurs in the central government, although, with the exception of overseas embezzling, there is little evidence that the latter is...
afghanistan

continued from page 13

fundamentally different in form or function. significantly, the khān’s success depends in part on his access to kābul and the benefits the national government could provide. this was important before the Soviet invasion and afterward became both more important and more problematic.

the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan lasted from 1979 to 1989, followed by several years of internecine war. the Taliban seized kābul and proclaimed themselves the rulers of the country in 1996, and remained in power until the United States and its Afghan allies took kābul in 2001. by the time of the 2003–2004 loya jirga to ratify the Afghan constitution, Afghanistan had experienced roughly twenty-five years of social and governmental upheaval leading to a central government supported by a foreign state. according to Tom Pike and Eddie Brown, “the mere presence of a patron-client mentality breeds corruption because the goal of any patron is to maintain his clientele and revenue sources. years of civil war, breakdown of the rule of law, and the pulverized infrastructure favored this patron-client dynamic.”¹²

Despite the social distortions inherent in the successive imposition of communism, Arab Islamic fundamentalism, and bureaucratic democracy, the tribal concept that legislators and other government figures were responsible for providing public resources to their specific constituencies endured: “The population views parliament members as patrons for specific local districts and legislators in a national apparatus, who serve them through national legislative duties.”¹³

In such a system, it is rational for government authorities to circumvent the formal legal or legislative framework to provide for their respective districts and rational for the people of those districts to accept those favors and the means with which they were gained. Long-standing patronage systems have become criminal activities, and foreign aid, which alone rivals narcotics as a windfall in post-2001 Afghanistan, has been incorporated into the system. Those with access to aid, like those with access to kābul, have become the most successful khāns.

others, however, point to a further circumstance. the dissolution of most national government institutions in 1992

afghanistan is unusual in that being a victim of corruption has not made people perceptibly less happy.

allowed for both greater control of the seat of national power in kābul and increased ability to achieve autonomy from the capital. “the authority of tribal elders has been eroded and tribal ties have been weakened as a result of social upheaval.”¹⁴ while bureaucracy has been incorporated into Afghanistan’s government, two factors have crippled the traditional relationships that people have maintained with their leadership: the entry of former warlords into Afghan politics and the consolidation of organized crime.¹⁵ in other words, the patronage system endures, but warlords, criminal bosses, and maliks (tribal liaisons to the central government) have to some extent replaced the khāns.

Unlike the ideal in a modern, rational political system, power “continues to be exercised in a personal and patronage-based manner, but within the overall framework of bureaucratic rules.”¹⁶ Provincial governors, for example, retain more personal control than the law explicitly allows by monopolizing local government appointments and controlling access to state resources.¹⁷ At the national level, President Hamid Karzai has been accused of handing out government positions to rivals on the basis of their power to destabilize or attack the government, the police, or the military.¹⁸ in some cases, those who rose to power during the Soviet occupation, the warlord period, and Taliban rule have returned to government posts, causing public indignation.¹⁹ in one example, jihadist leaders defeated by the Taliban in Helmand and Uruzgan provinces later regained political power and control of development funding.²⁰

The manner in which new government leaders conducted themselves, irrespective of economic gains or losses, also alienated the more traditional parts of Afghan society and damaged the post-2003 government’s legitimacy. Paul Fishtein and Andrew Wilder quote Afghan elders in Paktia province as saying, “People in government think that wearing jeans and drinking wine equals democracy.”²¹ the new leaders were attempting to dress the part of Western bureaucrats, but were neither executing the role responsibly nor being accountable to their constituencies for their power. However, Afghan communities are not wholly innocent of the changes in governance and the new democratic political game. Noah Coburn and Anna Larson describe a scene at an Afghan polling station:

[A] group of elders loudly professed their loyalty to a candidate who stopped by at the station, only to profess their loyalty for a different candidate a few minutes later once the first one had left. […] Instead of committing to one candidate and hoping they won, they were multiplying the number of potential victors who they could later approach to try to elicit resources.²²

The potential to receive land, government positions, or development projects by supporting a winning candidate became in and of itself a reason to vote.²³ it is apparent that in many instances, the people were more interested in the distribution of goods than their representation in the national
Afghanistan

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 14

government. Post-2001 systems of
government, the most recent iteration
in a series of upheavals, undermined
participative civil society in Afghanistan,
in which people select and support
leaders based on the benefits they can
provide. 23

Moreover, “[a]s crime and corruption
have become the norm, adaptation
seems to have mediated the usual effects
of these phenomena on well-being.” 24
Afghanistan is unusual in that being
a victim of corruption has not made
people perceptibly less happy. 25 Some
government corruption is perhaps
legitimized in public opinion by its
near-universal practice, indicating that
unhappiness with “corruption” in the
distribution of aid may be limited to those
who do not receive it.

Most observers regard reducing
corruption in the Afghan national
government as a priority for building
legitimacy. In countries suffering from
widespread extortion, bribery, and
narcotics trafficking, “effective efforts
have generally included the immediate
firing of corrupt officials, bolstering of
the justice system, professionalization of
new staff, and incentive and performance
assessment programs.” 26 Those measures,
however, are unrealistic in Afghanistan.
According to Ambassador Thomas
Schweich, “Narco-corruption went to the
top of the Afghan government.” 27 Fighting
corruption equates to fighting warlords
who help to maintain Karzai’s power. 28
A further complication is that the line
between crime and legitimate activity
is ill-defined. The hawala network in
Afghanistan, for example, is used to fund
warlords, facilitate purchases on the black
market, and provide aid to poor families. 29

The relationship between the
manipulation of aid and political power,
like most of the corruption that is
attributed to the influx of aid from the
United States, predates 2001. Savage
describes a camp set up in Herat in
1998 to provide humanitarian supplies
after a drought that was exacerbated by
conflict. 30 Taliban officials, then in power
in the country, seized the supposedly
democratically selected leadership
positions in the camp and used the aid to
solidify their power and maintain security.

Immediately after Kabul fell to the
US-supported Northern Alliance, a
similar pattern emerged. “Systematic
patterns of aid manipulation developed,
particularly with regard to food aid, which
was easier to monetise. The relationships
forged between aid agencies and
commanders were prone to corruption
and political favouritism.” 31 It is unlikely,
however, that in 2001 aid agencies new to
Afghanistan could find a more appropriate
local partner with wide geographical
power than the warlords with whom the
US military and intelligence services had
already developed relationships. Those
with arguably the most coercive power, in
this case, were manipulating aid, but only
because the power and corresponding
corruption existed before the aid arrived.

Later research found that development
projects appeared to generate more
negative than positive sentiment, and the
main complaint, among many, was that
the projects were subject to “extensive
corruption.” 32 Andrew Wilder and Stuart
Gordon cite one Afghan government
official as saying that aid was fueling
conflict because Karzai’s Pashtun tribe
in particular had gained virtually all
government power and control of aid
along with it. 33 As evidenced by Karzai’s
political compromises and the extent to
which he has had to incorporate rivals
in the government, his power is not
total, but the more interesting aspect of
the official’s statement is that political
dominance preceded the control of
aid. Karzai was not accused of using
international aid to obtain power, but of
manipulating the aid to benefit himself
after being elected.

The degree to which Karzai and other
government officials are maintaining
traditional patronage networks or
incorporating alternative ways of
maintaining power is debatable, but in
either case aid is a tool rather than a
source of corrupt governance. Observers
make convincing arguments that aid
fuels public discord and dissatisfaction
with the government, 34 but this does
not equate to aid fueling corruption and
changing power dynamics. The grossest
misuse of development aid appears to be
the embezzlement of funds by high-ranking
government officials. In this case, aid
allows for corruption simply by being
distributed to the host government,
but precisely because the aid leaves the
country, it does not make a clear impact
on the Afghan population. In this sense,
the corruption is sterile.

Corruption in Afghanistan is pervasive,
and there is little doubt that a significant
amount of the humanitarian assistance
and bilateral aid that has flowed there has
been diverted from roads and hospitals
to opium trafficking and mansions in
Dubai. However, Western and Afghan
notions of corruption are different. The
traditional patronage system, as distorted
as it may be after three decades of
foreign intervention and civil war, is both
legitimate in the public’s view and vaguely
criminal in law. There is little evidence
that foreign aid, despite affecting well-
documented instances of social division
dissatisfaction with government,
has caused or abetted corruption. The
manipulation of aid for political gain,
bribery, and extortion is a symptom of
Afghanistan’s fragmented political system,
not a cause.

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A Nation of Non-Nationals
THE UNINTENDED CONSEQUENCES OF KUWAIT’S GLOBALIZED LABOR FORCE

CLARE DREYFUS

While humans have migrated throughout history, the increasingly complex interdependencies of today’s globalized world have allowed transnational labor to transform societies in previously unimaginable ways. The small Arab nation of Kuwait, currently home to 1.3 million Kuwaitis but over 2.5 million foreigners, is a perfect laboratory to explore these changes. As a teacher in Kuwait for two years, I became a member of a diverse migrant labor community and experienced first-hand the challenges facing a country whose own citizens have become a minority.

Kuwait’s dramatic demographic imbalance is the direct result of its growing migrant labor dependency, which has created an unprecedented political and cultural transformation in a single generation. Their struggle to balance a complicated web of insecurity and conflicting obligations sheds light on the growing global tensions caused by transnational migration and the need for greater international and South-South cooperation. This paper will discuss the economic and social consequences of Kuwait’s modern demographic transition, and the implications for global action to better navigate these new challenges and protect the rights of all people regardless of their citizenship.

Economic Transformation Brings Demographic Upheaval

Kuwait’s economy was on the verge of collapse before the discovery of oil in 1938. The global demand for oil has fueled rapid growth ever since, making Kuwait one of the richest nations in the world, with a GDP per capita of $42,000. The 1991 Gulf War devastated the country, but once the war was over Kuwait rebounded dramatically. Oil revenues fueled reconstruction efforts, and the new permanent US military presence led to a rapid expansion of foreign investment. As Kuwaitis used government subsidies to build new houses and invest with foreign business partners, migrants responded to the increased demand for labor. With Kuwaitis as investors in, and consumers of, everything...
from Hardee’s to IKEA, the ever-expanding service sector became entirely staffed with migrant workers. Now 83 percent of the total labor force, from cleaners to engineers, comes from outside the country.5

Due to this high demand for foreign workers, only one-third of the population is Kuwaiti, while 47 percent are non-Kuwaiti Arab, 15 percent are South and East Asian, and 5 percent are European and American.6 Only 30 percent of migrant workers are women, but this number is increasing. Both educated and uneducated migrants lacking opportunity back home see Kuwait as a way to earn a high enough wage to care for their dependents, sending home $3 billion a year—4 percent of Kuwait’s GDP—in remittances.7 The massive infusion of foreign labor over the last twenty years has led to a demographic and cultural upheaval.

The influx of foreigners has transformed the day-to-day reality of Kuwaiti culture. Entire neighborhoods have been reinvented as migrant communities, introducing new languages, food, clothing, and traditions into mainstream Kuwaiti culture. For example, Kuwait is a Muslim society, but a growing number of Christian migrants have made Christmas a recognized holiday. Schools close, businesses reduce hours, and decorations pop up all over town while holiday music fills the stores. Muslim children wish you Merry Christmas as you walk by and even exchange gifts with their friends to celebrate a local secular version of the Christian holiday.8

What makes these immigrant cultural influences especially strong is that there is now an entire generation of young Kuwaitis raised by foreign live-in maids.9

The full social and cultural ramifications this will have are still unknown.

One of the most striking changes in Kuwait is the use of English. One cannot communicate with a doctor or order a coffee in Arabic;10 Kuwaitis are even forced to use English at home with their maids. Children now view English as their mother tongue, and this fluency has given them greater access to Western media. Private English immersion schools are staffed by Western teachers, which has led to increasing numbers of Kuwaitis migrating West for university. This constant interaction with Western education and media is heavily influencing this generation’s world view,11 and widening the cultural gap between children and parents. Young Kuwaitis are delaying marriage by five to ten years compared to their parents’ generation,12 and this large shift will dramatically reduce the birth rate and continue to transform cultural norms for both men and women.

Immediate Consequences and Long Term Challenges

A demographic and societal transformation this large and fast has inevitably provoked strong reactions, with non-nationals facing stigma, abuse, and relegation to second-class status. Over the last several years Kuwait has come under heightened international scrutiny for charges of rampant exploitation of disenfranchised migrant workers,13 causing friction with laborers’ home countries. Indonesia, for example, has placed several moratoriums on migration to Kuwait in an effort to force the government to improve working and living conditions.14

Most workers return home within ten years, but many stay and invite their families to join them. Kuwait’s strict citizenship laws designed to protect national access to oil revenues make it impossible for anyone to become a citizen or even permanent resident.15 As a result, children born in Kuwait to immigrant parents must get a work visa at eighteen or ‘return’ to a home country they have never seen.16 As this disenfranchised community of first generation immigrants grows, Kuwait will be forced to reexamine what it means to be Kuwaiti.

Expanding inequalities and increasing resentments on both sides17 have sparked deep-seated Kuwaiti fears. Maids are often accused of using witchcraft to curse their bosses and Kuwaiti employers use hidden cameras18 and computer spyware programs19 to monitor employees at home and in the office. This feeling of insecurity.

Children born in Kuwait to immigrant parents must get a work visa at eighteen or ‘return’ to a home country they have never seen.
A Nation of Non-Nationals

Continued from Page 17

jobs away from locals. The unanticipated transformation from the influx of transnational migrant labor has left many Kuwaitis insecure about their future role in a changing society.

A Balancing Act: Kuwait’s Response to an Unanticipated Transformation

These unprecedented challenges have forced the Kuwaiti government to respond to conflicting demands: those of its own people and those of other nations. After Indonesia’s first ban on workers entering Kuwait, and amid growing international pressure, Parliament passed new labor laws in 2010. The reforms established a new private sector minimum wage of KWD60 (US$210) a month and outlined requirements for the proper treatment of workers. These changes were unpopular domestically because they resulted in up to a 50 percent increase in wages for some foreign workers, a cost passed on to Kuwaiti households and businesses reliant on cheap foreign labor.

Projections that Kuwaitis could fall to only 19 percent of the population have prompted the government to prioritize the reversal of this demographic trend. The government has championed a marriage promotion campaign and offered low interest loans to encourage young Kuwaitis to put family before education and jobs. With most countries trying to reduce population growth rates and encourage higher education, Kuwait’s desire to increase its birth rate would put an even greater long-term burden on the state, as a ballooning population would further tax state services and state employment.

Furthermore, efforts to “nationalize” the labor force have become a major political issue, garnering attention in last year’s parliamentary campaigns. In line with popular support for these efforts, the government has set a goal of replacing 10 percent of foreign workers with Kuwaitis each year by offering incentives and subsidies to private firms. However, the trend has shown no signs of reversing because the government has not adequately addressed the economic, social, and cultural factors at play. With government supports and guaranteed employment, there is little incentive for Kuwaitis to switch to the more demanding private sector.

The government is now looking to the changing role of women in society as an untapped resource to drive the nationalization process. More Kuwaiti women work than their regional counterparts, but they are still only one-third of the labor force. Given the fact that two-thirds of Kuwaiti university graduates are now female, the potential transformation from the influx of transnational migrant labor has left many Kuwaitis insecure about their future role in a changing society.

The unanticipated transformation from the influx of transnational migrant labor has left many Kuwaitis insecure about their future role in a changing society.

Finding a Way Forward through International Cooperation

The complexity of Kuwait’s labor migration issues demonstrates the need for an international regime able to coordinate a unified global response to the problems caused by transnational migration. In our increasingly interconnected world, nations have come together to address global issues such as trade, aviation, health, and human rights, but have fallen short when it comes to migration. From the World Trade Organization (WTO) to the World Health Organization (WHO), there is an agreed-upon framework of rights, responsibilities, and appropriate actions for member states to respond to crises and settle disputes. But a WTO for migration has not materialized because dealing with cross-border flows of human beings is more sensitive than dealing with goods. While free trade agreements are becoming increasingly popular between nations, the idea of opening borders

CONTINUED ON PAGE 19
Nation of Non-Nationals

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 18

Faced with this global impasse, ministers from six labor-receiving countries on the Arab Peninsula, including Kuwait, met with ministers from eleven labor-sending Asian countries, including Indonesia, the Philippines, Sri Lanka, India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh, to conduct what is now referred to as the Abu Dhabi Dialogue. Malaysia, South Korea, and Singapore oversaw the talks, which resulted in all seventeen states signing an agreement last year that outlined guiding principles to implement bilateral and multilateral labor agreements and initiatives. The willingness of these countries to establish an agreement on migrant labor is a promising sign that implementing global regulations for migration is possible through South-South cooperation.

The current wave of globalization is expanding transnational labor migration at an incredible rate, and the unintended consequences are both unprecedented and alarming. The increased flow of migrant labor across borders has transformed traditionally homogenous societies, causing growing insecurities and prompting a backlash against the local impacts of globalized migration. This new international labor force is creating an ambiguous transnational space where state and non-state actors must continuously negotiate their authority over a shared population. Kuwait’s intense dependency on transnational labor has affected its economy, culture, and society in ways its people are still struggling to understand. This increasingly unsustainable situation highlights a larger need for international oversight of transnational migration. The escalating global power imbalance that exists between nations makes international cooperation on controversial issues like migration more difficult, but also more critical. With the traditional multilateral organizations failing to meet these growing demands, Arab and Asian states, including Kuwait and its migrant labor partners, have begun to take matters into their own hands, demonstrating that international cooperation is a possible means to meet globalization’s new challenges.

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Fashioning a Social Enterprise

MARISOL TROWBRIDGE

Social entrepreneurship is not new, but in recent years it has assumed a more prominent place at the frontier of development strategy. There is no shortage of debate about what constitutes social entrepreneurship: Must it encompass for-profit, nonprofit, blended profit companies, or B-corps? Must it focus on Base of the Pyramid (BOP) populations alone? Must it involve disruptive innovations? Regardless of the answers, social entrepreneurship is always pressing that customers will clamor for a solution. Social entrepreneurs often start by identifying a social problem and looking for a market opportunity, a problem, or a desire within its borders.

Ethiopia is a compelling location for a social enterprise precisely because it presents enormous difficulties for anyone seeking to conduct business. About approaching societal problems in new ways. The iteration process, organizational sustainability, and innovation included in entrepreneurial goals offer hope for many problems traditional aid has failed to solve.

The Entrepreneurial Process in Designing Social Enterprise

Entrepreneurs begin by looking for a market opportunity, a problem, or a desire so pressing that customers will clamor for a solution. Social entrepreneurs often start by identifying a social problem and then seek a solution with broad public appeal, leading them where traditional entrepreneurs might not go.

Once an entrepreneur identifies a problem, she must design the best solution. Typically an entrepreneur will not do this in a vacuum, but will interact with the customer to develop the best possible product. In technology startups, for example, the preliminary version of software often ships while still lacking many features. The logic of this strategy is to create the minimum version of the product for which customers will pay to understand the extent of customer demand. As consumers begin using the product, producers seek their feedback to develop new features and improve existing ones.

This kind of organic growth is a critical component of a social entrepreneur’s success. For example, rather than designing a complete mobile healthcare solution for the rural poor of Ghana in the lab, the entrepreneur must engage with the target audience to understand what they need, what they want, and what they are willing and able to pay. Is mobile healthcare even a priority to the target audience? Will it solve their most pressing problems? Is it financially feasible? What kind of cell phones do most target participants have? Does the target population have the technological literacy to use texts or mobile Internet to successfully access healthcare services? Customer communication is key at this stage and will ultimately play a role in minimizing risks to the business.

Social entrepreneurs, unlike traditional entrepreneurs who typically cater to customers in their own economic circle, can have both beneficiaries and customers. Sometimes these are one and the same, for instance, when the rural poor purchase clean water from a distributor. But sometimes the beneficiary and customer are not the same, such as when a customer purchases fair trade coffee grown by a fair trade farmer. Sometimes the payer is neither customer nor beneficiary but investor or grantee, such as Kiva or DonorsChoose.org. Regardless, to be successful and sustainable at least one group must channel money into a project because they believe it will provide an opportunity, product, service, or level of efficiency they would not otherwise be able to achieve.

Often, a social entrepreneur can create a multi-layered benefit structure so that many people benefit, including those paying. SAIS alum Saul Garlick founded ThinkImpact, an organization that takes young people to Africa for a summer educational experience that teaches them to interact with local communities and help build solutions to social issues. The students both pay for and benefit from educational opportunities, but local communities also benefit from the resulting innovations.

As a new product or service gains traction, the entrepreneur begins to think about growth. The company needs to become sustainable. At this stage, the social entrepreneur must consider questions of scalability, replicability, and specificity. Each social entrepreneur must decide for her organization whether it is better to scale one business up so that it reaches millions, to create a replicable organization that can be copied many times over, or to develop a model that, while uniquely tailored to the needs of a specific community, may have little relevance elsewhere. Entrepreneurs, investors, and philanthropists who put money into social enterprises will have different opinions about the value of each option.

Meanwhile, social entrepreneurs must measure their organizational and social

CONTINUED ON PAGE 21
Fashioning Social Enterprise
CONTINUED FROM PAGE 20

results to improve their organization’s health and sustainability while maximizing their benefits to customers, clients, and beneficiaries.

The nuances of a successful social enterprise can be as intimidating and overwhelming as the complexities of launching any business. The driver behind social entrepreneurship, however, is simple: the identification of a problem and the articulation of a possible solution.

Case Example: Designing a Social Enterprise in Ethiopia

Ethiopia is a compelling location for a social enterprise precisely because it presents enormous difficulties for anyone seeking to conduct business within its borders. The World Bank’s Doing Business report for 2011 ranked Ethiopia 111 out of 183 countries in ease of doing business. Ethiopia is widely considered one of Africa’s most centralized and repressive governments, stemming from its political culture of strong hierarchies and social stratification. Recent legislation has limited the role of nongovernmental and civil society organizations to service delivery only, and the state has strictly regulated private media outlets. The country is underserved by traditional businesses, stunting growth opportunities for Ethiopia’s economy and citizens. Furthermore, Ethiopia’s agriculture-based economy has resulted in trade deficits, as consumer products, oil, and capital goods have historically been imported. Meanwhile, it takes forty-five days, eight documents, and a pre-approved long-term plan to import raw materials.1 Ethiopia needs industries that will decrease imports and increase exports, generate employment opportunities, and reduce economic instability by promoting industry diversification.

Identifying Social Problems

Ethiopia’s social problems are tied to its macroeconomic and political challenges. Ethiopia’s unemployment rate is 25 percent overall2 and 17 percent in the urban formal sector.3 Meanwhile, 85 percent of employment is in informal rural agricultural production.4 Nearly half the population is self-employed and 50 percent are unpaid family workers.5 Paid employees constitute only about 8 percent of the total working population, of the male rate, and female secondary school enrollment is 77 percent of the male rate. For every 100,000 women, 670 die due to pregnancy-related causes. Only 6 percent of women have a skilled attendant at delivery while only 5 percent have an institutional delivery.6 Horrific traditional marriage practices in Ethiopia further challenge women’s opportunities. Articles in The Washington Post and The Huffington Post have estimated that about 70 percent of Ethiopian marriages take place for “honor” after a man abducts and rapes a woman. Ethiopian law absolves abductors of their crime if they marry the victims, as this is traditional practice for finding a wife.7 Furthermore, female genital mutilation (FGM) is still common in Ethiopia.

Designing a Solution

The options for designing a solution for Ethiopia’s myriad social and economic problems are many. To begin, a social entrepreneur seeking to create catalytic change in Ethiopia must choose her target beneficiary and target customer, develop a business model that serves the needs and desires of these groups, and have some capacity for bringing this model to fruition.

In the fall of 2012, a team of four Johns Hopkins SAIS and Carey Business School Students, including the author, designed a solution to the identified challenges facing Ethiopia. The result was a business plan for Social Style, a fashion industry social enterprise with a focus on creating inclusive value chains to develop a new socially responsible textile and apparel production sector within Ethiopia.8 The business model addresses Ethiopia’s social and economic problems

CONTINUED ON PAGE 22
through a plan based on existing market factors of apparel production in Ethiopia and incorporates the skill sets of team members to make pilot testing possible.

Textile and apparel production is a viable ‘light-manufacturing’ sector that can help economies move away from reliance on agricultural output while creating formal sector jobs that meet the skill level of workers in these settings. Furthermore, worldwide apparel production employees are 70 to 80 percent female. Textile and apparel production is thus an attractive industry for economically empowering women in countries where they are often denied formal workforce opportunities.

The textile and apparel industry is a promising growth area for Ethiopia and is already its largest manufacturing industry, with more than fourteen major textile and garment factories, both publicly and privately owned, and numerous small and medium-sized firms, employing in total about thirty thousand workers. Additionally, the potential of raw cotton production around Ethiopia is already far greater than the available processing facilities and because of Ethiopia’s history of cotton production, many laborers possess informal cotton processing skills, making them readily trainable. The skills and products of the traditional leather industry neatly dovetail with the textile sector as well.

Unfortunately, businesses have found it unsustainable to export apparel products from Ethiopia. Because of the need for imported raw materials, the challenging import conditions, and the lack of materials available at each stage in the value chain, from farm to fiber to factory, Ethiopia clearly needs more fashion sector development within its borders. By creating an inclusive value chain of small producers, Social Style will develop all necessary components.

The Social Style business model relies on matching Ethiopian skills to market demand in a successful design, production, export, distribution, and sales loop (Exhibit 1). Social Style will follow a single-channel marketing strategy, selling direct to customers online. The design ethic is based on highlighting the beauty of Ethiopian materials, skills, and crafts.

The target customers are women who care about high quality products that are sustainable, socially responsible, and well-crafted. This target market represents roughly 4.4 to 5.25 million individuals, each of whom spends on average $1,176

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**TABLE 1: Matching target customer and target beneficiary with a product & service**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BASE OF THE PYRAMID TARGET AUDIENCE</th>
<th>Traditional Main-stream &amp; Luxury Markets</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Customer Group</strong></td>
<td><strong>Earns below $1/day</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Best suited social enterprise innovation</td>
<td>Disruptive new charitable products and services that provide “good enough” solutions, serve more people, and are more cost effective. Example: making sanitation simpler and cheaper and using a mulching process to generate electricity so the toilet pays for itself and can be provided free to residents.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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**TABLE 2: Addressing Ethiopia’s challenges through Social Style**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Social and Economic Problems</th>
<th>Social Style’s Social Impact Goal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unemployment and Poverty</td>
<td>Consistent work, improved skills, market access, higher incomes, cost effective benefits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heavy reliance on agricultural sector and underdevelopment of the garment sector</td>
<td>Developing local Ethiopian garment &amp; accessories value chain and access to export markets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender Inequalities</td>
<td>Focus on women and girls working in the fashion industry</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Fashioning Social Enterprise

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 22

annually on apparel and accessories, according to the 2011 US census, creating a total revenue opportunity of $5.2 to $6.2 billion.\(^{15}\)

To start out, Social Style will seek out supplier partners already working in Ethiopia. The selection criteria for producers will be based on a combination of the right skills and the right positioning to make a social impact. By working with nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) who focus on economic empowerment and workforce development, Social Style will have partners who share in the social mission but who need a commercial drive and an outlet for graduates of their programs. Social Style will thus augment the work already done by NGOs and development organizations in separate craft and production sectors, and tie them together into one, continuous value chain. As the business grows, Social Style will also seek out individual producers and entrepreneurs with appropriate skills and train them or invest in them to allow them to join the value chain.

Social Style’s target communities will benefit most from sustainable and continuous work opportunities, reliable market access, deepening of skills, and the ability to apply existing skills to products with higher quality inputs, higher margins, and more market appeal. This will allow producers to increase the income they gain from their labor, as well as learn and grow in ways that will allow them to produce higher quality goods for other markets. Over time, Social Style will see better-off communities of producers who are working on higher value-added products, demanding better wages, and able to provide better shelter, nutrition, education, and health services for their families. Eventually Social Style will seek production orders from additional fashion brands to scale the value chain, and will transition to an Ethiopian management team.

Designing Measurement Systems

Designing a method for measuring financial and social impacts of the business is a critical part of ensuring the long-term sustainability and social benefit of a social enterprise. The best strategy for this is to build measurement into day-to-day business operations. Thus, Social Style built metrics directly into the business model (Table 3). Social Style tracks who works for them, turnover rates, and wage rates by giving each worker a mobile phone and paying wages through a mobile money company. Social Style also tracks average age, gender ratios, and health outcomes of workers through a health benefit plan. A baseline Progress Out of Poverty Index (PPI) survey, a short survey designed by the Grameen Foundation, will be conducted for each supplier group and followed up every year.

The driver behind social entrepreneurship, however, is simple: the identification of a problem and the articulation of a possible solution.
FASHIONING A SOCIAL ENTERPRISE

FASHIONING SOCIAL ENTERPRISE

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 23

five years to capture a broader view of community impacts and worker wellbeing.

Social Enterprise Design for Change: A Beginning

Tackling social problems is not as simple as designing a good business plan to address the relevant issues, but it is certainly a good place to start. Identifying key social issues, a target customer and target beneficiary, the appropriate solution to offer someone in that segment of the market, and a plan for delivering that solution is the best way to begin. From there, customer testing and iteration must take place to develop from a business model to a real social enterprise. Along the way, the entrepreneurial aspect of this development strategy will come into play critically: customer discovery, constant testing and iteration, market driven distribution, sales, and marketing will ensure the product or service is a success.

Special thanks to Megan Vaughan Albert, Javiera Gallardo, and Brad Longman for their contributions to the Social Style business plan.

Endnotes


9. Ibid.


13. Ibid.


TABLE 3: Tracking and measuring impact

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Impact Tracked Over Time</th>
<th>Tracking/Measuring Method</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Number of workers</td>
<td>Provide company cell phones &amp; pay with mobile money technology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Turnover rates</td>
<td>Enroll each worker in the producer/supplier network in Ethiopia’s Community-Based Health Insurance scheme (now supported by USAID’s Health Finance and Governance project). Cover membership fees and track aggregate data for all members of company plan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Wage rates</td>
<td>Rate products on a scale of production complexity and track ratio of complex to simple products in production. Track increase in value-added going to producer/suppliers over time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Average age of workers</td>
<td>Annual meetings with suppliers and stakeholders that assess management’s performance; results factor into management bonuses.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Gender ratio among workers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Average health outcomes of workers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Average skill level of workers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Management treatment of workers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Fairness of work, hours, &amp; pay</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Overall worker wellbeing</td>
<td>Conduct The Grameen Foundation’s Progress Out of Poverty Index (PPI) survey as initial baseline for all supplier groups and again every five years.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Community wellbeing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Human development indicators</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CourtCorporations for Development

Over the past two decades, rapid globalization has transformed the private sector’s role in international development. In 2012, official development assistance (ODA) accounted for only 13 percent of capital flows into developing countries, dropping from 70 percent in the 1960s. The remaining inflows now come from the private sector through unprecedented flows of trade, capital, domestic resources, and remittances. Recognizing these shifting dynamics, official government donor agencies are increasingly engaging with private sector actors to achieve sustainable and inclusive economic growth. This paper focuses on alliances between official donors and multinational corporations, while acknowledging the role of micro-enterprises, small and medium-sized businesses, and large domestic companies in development. Despite the international aid community’s recent efforts to engage with multinational corporations, a lack of both donor coordination and demonstrated effectiveness limits the potential of corporations to be transformative partners in achieving development outcomes.

Path to Corporate-Donor Engagement

In the late 1990s, official donors began partnering with multinational corporations to leverage the global reach and corporate social responsibility (CSR) aims of these international companies. Since 1990, the UN estimates that the number of multinational corporations has nearly doubled to over 60,000, with about 800,000 foreign affiliates and millions of suppliers and distributors fueling global supply chains. Corporations influence economic development on an international scale through three main channels: core business operations and investments; strategic philanthropy and community investments; and public policy and advocacy. Corporations can use this influence to contribute positively to development outcomes by providing jobs, products, infrastructure, and technology, as well as investing in human capital and promoting international standards. Conversely, they can have negative impacts on the countries in which they operate, through complicity in human rights abuses, unsafe labor and environmental conditions, rent-seeking and corruption, and crowding out local private investment. The CSR movement of the 1990s emerged in response to heightened public concern over corporate ethics in a globalized economy. Since then, CSR has evolved from one-off philanthropic endeavors to an integrated component of core business and strategy, which can improve the company’s access to new markets, provide a “social license to operate” in local communities, strengthen employee recruitment and retention, and mitigate international risk.

Sharing mutual concerns over certain global issues, official donors view multinational corporations and their CSR programs as natural partners in development. Although ‘partnership’ lacks a consistent definition in international development, public-private partnerships can be described as formalized collaboration between government and business in which organizations combine competencies and resources to pursue common objectives, while sharing risks, rewards, and responsibilities. They are based on the premise that effective solutions to complex social and economic challenges require the public and private sectors to work together. Partnering with business can also improve sustainability, increasing potential for programs to continue after government aid ends.

Partnerships between corporations and development agencies take on various forms. In the ‘one-on-one approach,’ individual companies partner with a development agency, wherein the donor provides partial funds, local

Lack of support for public-private partnerships stems from a failure to institute efficient donor coordination and an inability to meaningfully demonstrate the effectiveness of these partnerships.

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Courting Corporations

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 25

that brings together over 6,500 corporate signatories committed to “aligning their operations and strategies with universally accepted principles in the areas of human rights, labor, environment, and anti-corruption.” More recently, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) has also started the Growing Inclusive Markets Initiative and Business Call to Action to mobilize corporate support for development goals. From 1998 to 2001, the World Bank Group started Business Partners for Development (BPD) to study, support, and promote cross-sector partnerships through co-funding and implementing thirty pilot projects that demonstrated the value of public-private partnerships (PPPs). Following early examples of the Department for International Development, Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit, and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), since 1999 the top ten leading international development agencies, with the exception of the French Development Agency, have established programs focused specifically on engaging multinational corporations. In addition to partnerships, development agencies have also started engaging corporations as formal advisors to major donor programs through external councils or business-ministerial forums.

The US government has launched its own collaborations with multinational corporations through both the State Department and USAID. Since 2006, the State Department’s Global Partnership Initiative (GPI) has focused on mainstreaming the department’s use of PPPs tied to development and diplomacy objectives. In late 2012, in response to Hillary Clinton’s recently announced shift “from aid to investment” in development assistance, the State Department has established a new public-private initiative, Accelerating Market-Driven Partnerships (AMP), to facilitate private sector solutions to economic, social, and environmental challenges around the world. The country’s most established PPP initiative is USAID’s Global Development Alliances (GDA), which began in 2001 to develop partnership models that link private financial flows to US development assistance programs. Since 2001, GDA has established over 1,000 PPPs, involving more than 3,000 private actors from business, academia, and civil society, which collectively contributed over $13 billion towards development efforts in areas such as water, micro-credit, and agriculture.

Despite mounting efforts to engage multinational corporations in development efforts, the partnership approach has received mixed reviews. Some praise this model as a cost-effective, impactful, and sustainable solution that is transforming the development practice. Others view it as an ongoing experiment that has yet to demonstrate its value as a compelling alternative to conventional development methods. In part, lack of support for PPPs stems from a failure to institute efficient donor coordination and an inability to meaningfully demonstrate the effectiveness of these partnerships.

Lack of coordination within and between agencies

From a private sector perspective, a lack of coordination and standardization within development agencies creates challenges for initiating and implementing partnerships. With some donors lacking centralized communication and standardized criteria for corporate engagement, companies face difficulties identifying basic geographical and program requirements, as well as understanding the extent of donor funding available for PPPs. Many agencies lack a single point of access for engagement, with some programs requiring negotiations at the country mission level and others preferring to negotiate at the global headquarters level. Although many donors have designated units for CSR programs, corporations find that these teams are often understaffed and lack decision-making power within the agency.

Moreover, a survey of USAID’s business partners reveals frustration concerning the bureaucratic pace with which official donors move from initial discussion to establishment of formal partnership. In fact, companies have asked some development agencies to create a separate system for corporate engagement so that proposals can be processed more quickly; however, with procedural requirements for procurement in place, it remains to be seen if such a parallel system will emerge. Finally, companies have shown concern with USAID’s increasing decentralization, which requires individual negotiations at the mission level in every country. As the agency becomes more decentralized, corporate-donor partnerships are expected to become increasingly susceptible to changes in budget, foreign policy, or mission priority.

Together, these factors likely contribute to the reported lack of demand from multinational corporations to partner with some official donors, as companies may prefer to engage directly with international or local NGOs.

Across development agencies, a lack of consistent definitions, communication, and transparency about engagement with multinational corporations creates confusion and hinders harmonization efforts. As discussed previously, nearly all of the top development agencies have established programs specifically for private sector engagement. However, donors have their own definitions for ‘private sector,’ with some counting all nongovernmental actors, including academic institutions, civil society organizations, for-profit companies, and corporate foundations. Across agencies, ‘partnerships’ also encompass various activities, ranging from the procurement of funds for one-off projects to long-term relationships aimed at changing public policy over time.

Finally, many donors do not publicly disclose budgets for corporate partnerships, and those that report do so in various formats. Without common definitions and transparent

CONTINUED ON PAGE 27
Courting Corporations
CONTINUED FROM PAGE 26

communication between agencies, it is difficult to track the number of corporate-donor engagements worldwide and to assess the degree of harmonization. For example, an evaluation of cross-sector partnerships in global health counts forty-seven initiatives around HIV/AIDS, malaria, and tuberculosis, of which twenty-four address AIDS, making coordination efforts difficult. Harmonization issues are especially important at the country level, where duplication could overly burden local governments and civil society, causing more harm than good.

Unproven Effectiveness
Closely related to the lack of coordination is a lack of evidence that corporate-donor partnership models are more cost-effective, impactful, and sustainable than traditional approaches to development.

Scarce evidence exists to corroborate the positive development impacts of these partnerships.

Some claim that new private funding models can bypass the official aid system’s high transaction costs of transferring funds to recipient governments and various contractors, which altogether can add up to 60 percent of total funding. However, working across sectors is also associated with high transaction costs, and research shows that corporations engaged in mission-driven partnerships rarely set targets, measure results, or track cost efficiency. Given this lack of rigor and limited harmonization across development agencies, more evidence is needed to prove that corporate-donor partnerships are pooling resources efficiently and not contributing to fragmentation problems.

Scarce evidence exists to corroborate the positive development impacts of these partnerships. According to a survey on cross-sector partnerships in the UN, less than 30 percent of respondents had completed an evaluation of any kind. A report on GDA partnerships claims that most evaluations have been descriptive and qualitative, focusing on the ‘process’ of partnership building, management, and governance. When evaluations include quantitative indicators, they tend to focus on inputs and outputs, such as people reached and capital leveraged. Without a more rigorous methodology for measuring impact, partnerships risk evolving into a public relations tool that lacks credibility in the development community. At the same time, impact assessments increase partnership costs, requiring adequate tools and resources over time. Despite this lack of evidence, various emerging initiatives, such as the Business Call to Action Results Reporting Framework, the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI), and the Oxfam Poverty Footprint, are attempting to measure systematically the impact of corporations on poverty. Although a shared measurement framework could reduce transaction costs and facilitate proof of impact, this would require

Potential in need of proof
Recognizing the growing role of multinational corporations in shaping patterns of economic growth, development agencies are increasingly engaging them as strategic partners. This cross-sector collaboration represents a tremendous opportunity to combine the scale, resources, and influence of multinational corporations with the expertise, credibility, and local networks of development agencies. Despite this potential, these partnerships are currently constrained by a lack of donor coordination within and between agencies, as well as limited evidence of cost-effectiveness, development impact, and sustainability over time. With more coordinated research and evaluation across the international aid and business communities, perhaps this potential can be realized.

Endnotes
3. Ibid.

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Social Responsibility and DAI, commissioned by USAID GDA, 2008.
11. UNGC 2011.
13. UNGC 2011.
20. Ibid.
23. BCLC 2009; Dewar 2010.
33. Steets and Thomsen 2009.
34. Dewar 2008.
35. Davies 2011; Steets and Thomsen 2009.
37. Steets and Thomsen 2009.
38. Davies 2011.
39. Ibid.
41. Steets and Thomsen 2009.

Clarity and Consistency through Trade Relations

Martha R. Simms and Selim Koru

Recent political and social upheaval in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) is challenging global actors to redefine their relations with the region and question their own political values and institutions. This internal reassessment is particularly significant for the European Union (EU), which has close geographic and historical ties to the region. The EU currently maintains a strong trade relationship with the MENA region, providing the EU with leverage to encourage political openness in exchange for providing market access. The Arab uprisings of 2010 and 2011 have not only transformed the national political and social systems of the countries in which they occurred but also the nature and significance of the relationships these countries share with the rest of the world.

The EU-MENA trade relationship represents an opportunity to promote both economic and political stability. If the EU can limit its political involvement in domestic affairs of MENA countries by removing political conditionality on market access, the EU-MENA trade relationship can help encourage the participation of newly elected Arab governments in the global economy. Furthermore, policies facilitating international economic interdependence could incentivize political moderation and increased openness in the MENA region. However, if the EU fails to recognize the opportunities inherent in recent political transitions and adjust its trade policies accordingly, it risks losing its regional influence.

EU scholars have described trade as the raison d’être of the EU since the 1958 Treaty of Rome. It is one of the few political contracts in which Europe speaks with one voice and negotiates through a single agent, the European Commission. The EU has lobbied for trade liberalization around the world, and the European tradition of multilateral trade spans centuries. While Europe does maintain diplomatic involvement in the Middle East and North Africa, trade represents the EU’s primary role in the MENA region. According to the EU’s 2010 Euro-Mediterranean statistics for Egypt, the EU outstripped Egypt’s second largest trading partner, the United States, by 400 percent for gross imports and 500 percent for gross exports. Saudi Arabia, Morocco, Egypt, and Tunisia are all among the thirty largest consumers of European exports. The strength of the EU’s trade relationship with its Mediterranean partners to the south offers a consistent and positive channel for EU foreign policy.

Yet misaligned foreign policies that conflate the EU’s trade interests

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Selim Koru is a first-year MA student in the Middle East Studies Program. He has worked in journalism in the United States as well as his native Turkey and was a research assistant at the Economic Policy Research Institute of Turkey (TEPAV) before attending SAIS.
Trade Relations
CONTINUED FROM PAGE 28

with its political values threaten the success of European economic and diplomatic relations with the region. The Euro-Mediterranean Partnership (EUROMED), initiated in 1995 after the signing of the Maastricht Treaty, intended to establish a free trade zone between the EU and MENA states but was undermined by political conditionality after the introduction of the Common Strategy for the Mediterranean in 2000. Officially part of the EU's Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP), the act states as its objective “the promotion of core values such as human rights, democracy, good governance, transparency, and the rule of law,” yet names a “political and security front” as its first area of action. The European Neighborhood Policy (ENP) of 2004 further confused the EU's diplomatic and economic objectives by making the bilateral trade agreements of the EUROMED contingent on the creation of transparent democracies with strong rule of law and liberalized markets.

These agreements, however, institutionalized conditionality without generating any meaningful incentive for the EU to hold its trading partners accountable. Sensing the EU’s lack of commitment to the conditionality, Arab governments have shown little interest in reform. As MENA’s political landscape changes in the aftermath of the Arab Spring, the EU must create a consistent and mutually beneficial foreign policy toward the region.

The Effects of Change: the Arab Spring

The Arab uprisings that began in late 2010 ushered in a wave of structural change in the MENA region. The region was ripe for revolution; the tight, state-run economies were suffering from high unemployment, large income disparity, and failure to maintain competitive positions in global markets. Militaries often intervened in politics and other industries outside their purview.

Liberalization attempts failed due to weak institutions, corruption, and lack of political will.

The uprisings shook the foundations of this rigid system. Tunisia, Egypt, Libya, and Yemen underwent complete regime changes while the ruling elite in many other countries—such as Jordan, Algeria, and Morocco—have softened their grip on power.

The calls for democratic representation sweeping the region have not affected all MENA countries in the same way but there has been a common trend of political victories for popular Islamist parties. This shift in the political elite is sure to change the economic landscape of the region and will likely lead to greater international openness. The Islamic parties rising to power are more likely to engage in free trade than their predecessors, supporting free enterprise and free markets to varying degrees.

While capitalism is still viewed by some as a threat to traditional Islamic culture and society, Islamic economic thought values the rights of the individual and recognizes the need for differentiation of merit and property. These principles are strongest among a growing number of small and medium-sized businesses that are quickly achieving frontrunner status. Shutt out from government support in the past, the entrepreneurs leading this movement are seeking greater influence in politics and business groups. These groups, similar to their counterparts in Turkey or Malaysia, are more likely than their state-controlled predecessors to seek out trade relations.

Aside from ideological concerns, however, the Islamists are also motivated by a strong pragmatic element. Tunisian leaders, for example, have supported the tourism industry and allowed traditional banking practices. Islamic parties have prioritized reducing corruption, and their grassroots support and rigid party organization suggests that they will realize successes in this effort. These acts all forecast a favorable future for economic growth and creation of trade arrangements.

Few of the parties that came to power after the uprisings, however, have any experience in government. Ennahda in Tunisia, or the Muslim Brotherhood’s Freedom and Justice Party in Egypt, for example, are based on religious and social organizations that have no significant policy network. Having only recently

Misaligned foreign policies that conflate the European Union’s trade interests with its political values threaten the success of European economic and diplomatic relations with the MENA region.

emerged as formal political parties, they lack the expertise in governance. Though this presents certain practical and logistical problems, it could also make it easier for the EU to break from its historical relations with the region and develop a more symmetric trade relationship.

The EU’s attempt to adjust to the new situation has failed to address these fundamental shifts in the MENA region’s economic trajectory. The EU’s new action plan, entitled “A Partnership for Democracy and Shared Prosperity with the Southern Mediterranean,” places significant emphasis on democracy and the rule of law and attempts to promote compliance from new governments by offering greater funding. It also offers greater support for nonprofits working to consolidate participatory democracy.

Unfortunately, this appears to be more of the same: the institution of social and political conditionality on MENA countries without justifying Europe’s right to impose such requirements or developing EU incentives to ensure these stipulations are met.

The EU will continue to be relevant to the MENA region, a relationship motivated by continued EU-MENA
Trade Relations
CONTINUED FROM PAGE 29

Trade and emerging governments’ need for funding to implement new policies. The EU’s ‘progress reports’ on the implementation of the various ENP bilateral agreements observe that the contraction in GDP and trade since the Arab Spring has jeopardized the effectiveness of trade relations. Market contraction and decreased demand is a real threat not only to EU export markets but also to MENA exporters. While most new Arab governments have sought increased foreign direct investment from other Arab states, their growing need for financial security has led them to Europe for loans. Despite some anti-Western rhetoric, MENA governments and businesses know that they need international economic engagement to survive. To best strengthen these emerging democracies, Europe must remain open to economic engagement with the region while developing a more practical and justifiable approach to political conditionality. If the EU fails to do so, the imposition of Western values could hinder the MENA region’s progress towards international openness and national stability.

Proposed Changes for an Improved EU-MENA Relationship

In order to renegotiate an improved relationship with the MENA region, the EU needs to fundamentally reframe its approach. First, the EU generally confuses a normative framework and a functional framework in the negotiations. European conditionality based on European democratic norms has had limited success in MENA. Prior to the Arab Spring, this policy served to support autocratic regimes that brutally suppressed popular, democratic movements. The EU not only supported these autocrats diplomatically, but also funded them and provided civil support to their governing institutions. A functional trade-based approach would equalize the terms of interaction between the EU and MENA countries as an impartial, but positively interested party.

Secondly, the EU’s relations with MENA should prioritize clarity and consistency in messaging. The EU should not model its policies on the 2004 and 2007 EU accession agreements, as these are based on a completely different set of political issues of a normative nature.

Conclusion

This paper argues that the EU should launch a trade-based outreach to MENA countries to stabilize them in the long term. Rather than sacrifice impartiality to impose normative goals, the EU should make use of its comparative advantage and institutional expertise. Since its inception, the EU has excelled in a common market with democratic trade laws. It should use this experience to set the foundations for new trade relations with the developing private sector in the MENA region. The Arab Spring has launched a new socio-political order that will likely be receptive to such an outreach.

The most important outcome of increased trade and investment is the protection of enterprise and individual profit through strong government principles and the rule of law. This can happen organically, as governments are made aware, through a developing economy, that political and legal stability is necessary for economic growth. The European community should seize the...
Trade Relations
CONTINUED FROM PAGE 30

opportunity presented by the Arab uprisings. Here, seemingly self-interested trade can achieve valued social goals on both sides. Increased prosperity and higher standards of living will only cement democratic institutions and social stability, both north and south of the Mediterranean. Thus, the EU can enjoy the benefits of more prosperous and stable partners in its neighborhood, while staying true to its values.

Endnotes

OP-ED

The Security Gap

M.A. Thomas

This February, nine polio workers were shot dead in Nigeria. Their deaths followed the loss of at least sixteen workers killed in Pakistan and evidenced the continued fall out from the CIA’s decision to use a polio vaccination campaign as cover to search for Osama bin Laden. These most recent murders add to the increasing numbers of violent attacks on aid workers over the last decade, particularly in conflict areas such as in Afghanistan, South Sudan, Iraq, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Humanitarian Outcomes, an aid policy research group, reported 308 humanitarian aid workers killed, kidnapped, or seriously injured in 2011 alone. In addition to occupational risks of violence, aid workers are also at risk of illness and injury through accidents.

Aspiring aid workers remain largely unaware of the industry risks, due in part to the poor quality of the information. Available data are fragmented; different data sets focus on different subsets of the aid community or on different countries. The data are also incomplete. Incidents may not be reported by the individual victims (particularly in the case of sexual assault), or by the employing organizations, whether out of concern for reputation or in order to allow negotiations with kidnappers. To compare risk, we would want a denominator—308 out of how many? But it is difficult to get numbers for the total population of aid workers. (In 2008, using estimates of the population of aid workers from Humanitarian Outcomes, humanitarian aid workers appeared to have a mortality rate due to violence that was more than five times higher than that of a US police officer.) Because most aid workers are ‘local staff,’ we would also want to know how much additional risk is attributable to being an aid worker, rather than simply being a person who lives in a difficult context; these data, however, are not available either.

New entrants to the field may also be relatively unconcerned with security because they assume that their employer will keep them safe. There is little legal obligation, however, for employers to do so. Aid organizations work in countries with weak justice systems, beyond the ambit of US laws that require employers to assure workplace safety. Legal liability for aid organizations is an emerging area of law in Europe. US contractors abroad have recourse under a problematic no-

Aid workers are ultimately responsible for their own security as workers in a dangerous, unregulated international industry.

Melissa Thomas is a Senior Associate Professor in the International Development Program. Prior to coming to SAIS, she was an aid practitioner.
Security Gap
Continued from Page 31

fault workmen’s compensation scheme under the Defense Base Act that has been held to insulate employers from suit even in cases of fraud, deception, and negligence.

Moreover, small and medium-sized organizations may lack both capacity and funding to address security issues. A 2011 survey of forty-two international humanitarian aid organizations by the Security Management Initiative found that two-thirds had no working system of security management and reporting and no routine budgeting for security.

More subtly, the discussion of security in aid is a discussion of employers, and the security interests of employers and employees are not necessarily the same. Organizations are developing security plans designed to ensure that they complete their organizational mission effectively while minimizing risk (‘enabling approach’); they do not plan to keep employees safe at the cost of the organizational mission. For this to be ethical, employees must be informed of risks and assume them voluntarily. But how are aid workers informed of industry or mission risks? And what happens to employees who decline? A number of SAIS alums have spoken with me about situations in which their employer did not inform them about risk and pressured them to assume risk when they balked. New aid workers are particularly susceptible to pressure, as they lack confidence in their own judgment and are not yet established in the field.

Aid workers are ultimately responsible for their own security as workers in a dangerous, unregulated international industry. To assume this responsibility effectively, they need a number of analytic and practical skills that many lack, such as risk and threat assessment, situational awareness, first aid, stick shift and off-road driving, language, navigation, simple vehicle repair, de-escalation and mediation, radio and communications protocol, and firearms familiarization. Employers invest little in this type of training. Although a number of universities have created programs in international development, some of which are aimed at graduating practitioners, they have yet to incorporate this kind of professional training in their programs, perhaps seeing it as outside their core competence or function and believing that such training is the obligation of the employer.

At present, this leaves aid workers themselves to fill the gap, which is not easy. Unaware of risks, they may lack motivation. Lacking information, they may not know which skills to acquire. Finally, acquiring skills by finding and paying for each necessary training independently is often too expensive for the junior aid worker, even when there is an appropriate private provider. Until aid workers proactively demand the skills they need to minimize their risk, no one has an incentive to supply them.

Endnotes
2. Ibid.

Calculating Food Security

Mark Brennan

In 2007, an academic rift grew between two global titans of food security policy: the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) and the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations (FAO). At first glance it would appear to be no more than a technical hiccup.

Mark Brennan graduated in 2012 from the Johns Hopkins University Krieger and Whiting Schools with a BA in International Studies and a BA in Applied Mathematics and Statistics. He is currently Hopkins’ 2013 Margaret Walsh Leadership Award fellow, researching quantitative methods in food security discussions in Senegal.

The FAO employs one statistical approach to estimate a country’s level of undernourishment, and IFPRI researchers proposed an alternative approach, one which relies heavily on data collected through national health services. Yet, in a 2007 FAO working paper, the authors resolutely conclude: “It should be mentioned here that the FAO approach, apart from being theoretically superior, has a distinct analytical advantage.” The tension between these institutions over technical methods hints at the importance of accurate and reliable numbers for food security decision making, and more broadly, the growing influence of an anomalous frontier of international development: the innovation, politics, and application of big-data mathematics in food security.

With a focus on the food crisis in West Africa, this paper will argue for (1) the integration of more predictive and comprehensive mathematical techniques into food security discussions and (2) the concurrent broadening and deepening of statistical databases to make present and future mathematical techniques more effective.

Food security, according to the FAO, exists “when all people, at all times, have physical, social and economic access to sufficient, safe, and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life.” Access, measured from the national to the household level, is complemented by availability and stability of food supplies. Availability encompasses levels
Calculating Food Security

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 32

of production, imports, and stocks. Stability is determined by the system’s vulnerability to shocks—typically high oil prices, drought, locusts, or political conflict. Access informs caloric and nutrient intake, which in turn determines nutritional status. Reasonable access, availability, insularity to shocks, and the resulting sufficient caloric and nutritional intakes are the marks of good food security.³

A world apart and half a decade after the 2007 FAO-IFPRI exchange, the countries in the Sahel and West Africa sub-region are currently experiencing food insecurity, with 18.7 million people at risk of hunger in the region.⁴ The crisis stems from a variety of factors: the unrest in Mali that drives refugees into neighboring countries, increases in global food prices that are transferred to urban cereal retail prices, which also produced record high prices in August 2012, and low rainfall levels over the 2010–2011 and 2011–2012 growing seasons.⁵ These and other factors constitute the complex demographic, economic, and environmental context of the West African food crisis, leading decision makers to turn to mathematical statistics and models to anticipate future complications.

Current Methods in a Current Crisis

This section considers the current decision-making paradigm informed by global “early warning systems,” discusses the policy apparatus that supports it, and illustrates how the West African food crisis highlighted strengths and limitations of its technical methods.

Currently, decision makers process multitudes of data as it becomes available—inferring from village surveys, studying international grain and petroleum markets, and exploiting national tariff, subsidy, and trade data. This is typically effective for reactive and anticipatory decision making on short time scales. Often these statistics are analyzed in what are termed spatial models, which can be conveniently portrayed as heuristic maps of statistics.⁶

Supporting this methodology are multilateral and domestic statistics agencies. The United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) and the FAO produce indicators from state-collected demographic, agricultural, and economic data; from surveys conducted by staff; and, more recently, from satellite data.⁷ There are even initiatives for self-reporting on cell phones. The WFP, through a large number of ad-hoc and annual assessments as well as twenty monitoring systems, can anticipate deteriorating food security scenarios almost in real time. The FAO and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) operate similarly, producing the notable Global Information and Early Warning System and the Famine Early Warning Systems Network respectively.⁸ In West Africa, statistics agencies and ministries with mandates for agriculture, fish, and livestock—of varying institutional capacities—produce and monitor data.

In the West African 2012 food crisis, this patchwork of early warning systems successfully produced “the largest humanitarian response the region has ever seen,” resulting in $1.6 billion in international aid.⁹ Senegal has benefited from WFP relief since April 2012; the Gambia has appealed for $23 million in seed, fertilizers, and food aid; Mali’s domestic Système d’Alerte Précoce categorizes three million people as ‘at risk’ and has continued to welcome humanitarian aid.¹⁰

Despite a successful international response, initial confusion by decision makers over warning signs suggests an underlying flaw in the current method of data analysis. An opinion piece written by the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs noted that at the outset of the crisis, “[f]ood production across the region was down by just 3 percent,” which alone was not cause for concern.¹¹ However, lower production as well as “severely high food prices (30–80 percent higher than the five-year average), lack of jobs, border closures between Niger and Nigeria, and the Mali crisis” suggested potential instability.¹² This initial confusion shows how local access, availability, and insularity is increasingly linked to regional conflict, politics, production, and consumption. This suggests the food security community needs to expand the decision-making toolbox intellectually and technically to assess food insecurity in an integrated, globalized context.

The international response to the 2011 Somalia famine also hints at how early warning systems can be improved by stronger—specifically predictive—technical tools. The oncoming Somali famine was caught early by the same international and national warning systems that detected the subsequent West African crisis, however the detection failed to elicit as adequate a political and humanitarian response: “Emergency response at scale in southern Somalia was extremely late.”¹³ This failure occurred despite USAID’s early warning system introducing a predictive “multi-step scenario-building approach to estimate future food security outcomes” to the decision-making community.¹⁴ However, USAID’s predictive scenarios were discounted as “some partners expressed some discomfort with the approach, particularly the need to develop specific assumptions about future events despite limited information.”¹⁵ Just as the West African crisis suggested a need for tools

To improve the usability and relevance of models, the international community and food insecure countries need to accrue more, better, and increasingly relevant data.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 34
that better model the various cogs of the food security system, the 2011 Somalia crisis illustrated the need for stronger predictive tools to truly incentivize relief of famine and insecurity.

Innovative Methods for Future Crises

This section considers mathematical methods with potential to shift and broaden the current decision-making paradigm by (1) increasing predictive power and (2) relating disparate aspects of food security (e.g. rainfall, migration) relevant to decision making in early warning systems. This section in tandem considers the policy frameworks that are necessary for each method to be technically robust. With a thorough incorporation of these predictive models, decision-making capabilities will make a necessary analytical leap to parse out causes, effects, and responses of complex crises. Simultaneously, with more predictive power, decision makers will have more compelling information to spur political action (which, in the instance of the 2011 Somalia famine, was the limiting reagent in the reaction to the impeding insecurity).16

There are two genres of predictive models with applications to food security decision making: econometric models and simulation models. Both genres are common in agricultural policy and are less common in food security policy. The greatest agriculture and food security communities must modify traditional agricultural models in the context of food security—though it is essential to note there are already policy makers using these models in food security policy. The power of these models lies in providing a decision maker with the ability to see how variables interact in complex scenarios (e.g. age, income, and malnourishment in an econometric model; tariffs, production, and exports in a simulation model). Both can ultimately produce measurements of sub-nutrition, or proximate factors of sub-nutrition, because “measurement is typically indirect and based on food balance sheets and national income distribution and consumer expenditure data.”17

The Econometric Model

The econometric model can tell a statistical story about the most relevant stakeholders in food security: the malnourished. Econometric models range from the US Department of Agriculture’s Rasch Model to the University of Dhaka’s (CGE) class—show decision makers how sectors of an economy, aspects of a population, or weather can interact to determine agricultural and food security outcomes.21 They simulate possible scenarios to describe likely outcomes. CGE models became a computational reality when Herbert Scarf developed a generic algorithm to solve a simultaneous system of equations relating government, production, and consumption to produce equilibrium prices, setting off an academic boom in equilibrium modeling in 1969.22 Integrated assessment models and dynamic stochastic general equilibriums emerged more recently, as data and computing structures evolved.

The CGE model is a strong tool where data is weak, because it can be built on macro-level data to explain macro-level trends. Kevin O’Rourke from the Trinity College Dublin notes that CGE models avoid “econometric problems associated with time series data; not to mention changes in the way statistics were collected over time.”23 The CGE model is also used to study how external shocks might affect an economy. “With their optimising specifications, CGE models can offer insights into the likely effects of shocks for which there is no historical experience,” and can do so in incredible sectoral and regional detail.24 CGE models are limited in that decision makers can have to interpret the downstream humanitarian effects of the macro-predictions (i.e. interpret diminished maize production’s impact on nutrition). Already technically validated in agriculture, the CGE and the integration of assessment models will be key to food security.

The Simulation Model

The simulation community’s toolbox is filled with models developed by IFPRI, The World Bank, Purdue University, and the FAO.25 Simulation models—typically the computable general equilibrium (CGE) class—show decision makers how sectors of an economy, aspects of a population, or weather can interact to determine agricultural and food security outcomes.21 They simulate possible scenarios to describe likely outcomes. CGE models became a computational reality when Herbert Scarf developed a generic algorithm to solve a simultaneous system of equations relating government, production, and consumption to produce equilibrium prices, setting off an academic boom in equilibrium modeling in 1969.22 Integrated assessment models and dynamic stochastic general equilibriums emerged more recently, as data and computing structures evolved.

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Calculating Food Security

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 34

a drought in West Africa on a similar scale to that experienced in 1992 could increase average consumer maize prices in the region by ~50%.”25 A similar US Department of Agriculture report using a partial equilibrium model discusses projected insecurity in West Africa from 2012 to 2022.26 The econometric model has been validated to predict long-term production shifts that impact malnutrition, such as climate change’s impact on food production.27 Using these models to inform or validate policies over extended time frames puts less stress on the data and modeler, than using these models to plan and allocate an acute humanitarian response.

Notably, in the current food crisis, a CGE was used to evaluate short-term policy responses to insecurity in both Senegal and Mali.28 However, in the 2011 Somali crisis, short-term predictive analyses from early warning systems was met with hesitation: “[D]ecision-makers often seemed uncomfortable with the uncertainty inherent in probabilistic early warning analysis and the absence of definitive statements about future outcomes, particularly mortality levels.”29

Predictions based on complex systems can make non-technical decision makers skeptical. Nonetheless, comprehensive technical tools must be developed and refined to respond to global conditions threatening food security.

A Global Statistical Architecture

For models to be robust and useable in policy, they must be built on sufficiently strong data. To improve the usability and relevance of models, the international community and food insecure countries need to accrue more, better, and increasingly relevant data. Moreover, as databases gain more resolution, and models are politically and numerically validated, they will organically integrate into the increasingly complex food security environment, in a self-reinforcing cycle.

Policy Framework for Global Statistical Architecture

The integration of predictive modeling into the field of food security, the expansion of statistical decision making from the international to the sub-national levels, and the ability to respond to famine and malnutrition depends upon data.

Recognizing the need for more data, the UN created a Statistical Commission for Africa, which has held intermittent meetings since 2006.30 A principle goal of the 2012 meeting was to “mainstream statistics into national planning … to ensure statistical activities are adequately funded and seen as a key element in the development process.”31 These UN efforts will architect a policy in which econometric and simulation models can be an integral part of short-term decision making in the coming decade.

Efforts to expand statistics will be nullified, though, if statistics cannot become a more dependable part of the development process. An FAO report notes, “The problem of unreliable data on production and unrecorded trade is unavoidable, but may be serious for many of the most food insecure countries in sub-Saharan Africa.”32 Poorly collected data or poorly constructed statistical analyses, as seen by the tension in the 2007 IFPRI-FAO working paper tiff, are not only a major detriment to effective decision making but also a humanitarian liability.

Finally, more and better data will only occur through a carefully choreographed public-private and international-national effort.

More and better data will only occur through a carefully choreographed public-private and international-national effort.

Relevant Data: Statistical Disaggregation to Protein and Regions

Two particular avenues of data growth will greatly improve the relevance and demand for modeling in food security: (1) statistically exploring non-cereal foods and (2) expanding sub-national databases.

Data often discounts protein and essential non-cereals. In acute famine such as that in the Horn of Africa in 2012, cheap cereals (e.g. calories) are of utmost concern—but in more developed countries where responders can distinguish between famine and “moderate acute malnutrition,” access to fish or beans is under examined.33 The FAO notes of their early warning system, “The main focus of the analysis is on cereals as information on other types of food is often extremely weak. However, the system is expanding its coverage of non-cereal staple foods particularly in countries where they constitute a large part of the national diet.”34 This is a large flaw in the current decision-making framework in countries like Senegal and The Gambia, where fish accounts for much of the national diet. A 2003 IFPRI-WorldFish report notes: “As a consequence of rising demand and slower growing production, the real prices of most fresh and frozen fish have risen since World War II.” Diversifying data structures to include highly relevant non-cereals will be key for better decision making.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 36
Calculating Food Security

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 35

As data becomes more abundant at sub-national levels, the spatial resolution of models can increase. In climate change studies, there is a strong trend towards increasing spatial resolution to evaluate sub-national impacts. The FAO acknowledges this, noting of their early warning system again: “Both academics and practitioners agree that national level food supply monitoring can tell only part of the story. Abundant supplies at the national level are no guarantee that everybody has access to enough food.”36 The FAO further notes in a separate report, “An important intra-country gap exists in current analyses of food insecurity, which focus on the national level or the individual level, as reflected either in averages derived as ratios of national aggregates or a national survey estimate.”37 As databases become richer at sub-national levels, they may naturally begin to incorporate relevant local non-cereals.

Conclusion

In West Africa, decision makers and farmers have begun to take stock. Recent rains in October 2012 and high levels of production in the 2012–2013 growing season are expected to begin mitigating West Africa’s food crisis. While it is locally exacerbated by a military intervention in northern Mali, the November decline in the average price of staple coarse grains (millet, sorghum, and maize) in many West African markets further suggests the markets are finally stabilizing.38

As the crisis continues to be resolved, the food security community is taking a moment to reflect upon the policy lessons learned. They are varied but united by the shared need for better data and more comprehensive and robust analyses. Predictive methods like econometric and simulation modeling, used to evaluate policy responses and anticipate insecurity, need to be continually integrated into the decision maker’s toolboxes. Not only do these methods advance decision making technically, but they also do so academically by incorporating many aspects of an increasingly complex landscape.

It is important to note that more accurate predictions are not a panacea to global food insecurity. Far from the ideal calculation and subsequent relief—the creation of a statistic in a remote commune of Senegal and the arrival months later of a much-needed WFP bag of Thai rice—misappropriated numbers can do more damage than no numbers at all. Moreover, donor politics, conflict and climate change, logistics, and technical limitations will continue to pose challenges to even the most numerate food security discussions. However, it is certain, if households, nations, and regions are to progress from food insecure to secure, the progression stands to gain by being quantitatively informed.

Discussing the choice between food or cash aid in the West African crisis, WFP food security analyst Jean-Martin Bauer noted, “The type of analysis we need in the humanitarian sector must start to change.”39 The technical tools already exist, but we are still waiting for policy frameworks that facilitate the exchange and cultivation of broader and deeper data, bringing food security response and analysis into an era of informed, rapid, and effective decision making.

Endnotes


3. This paragraph is adapted from Figure A2 in, Jrad et al.; Jrad, Samir, Bashar Nahas, and Hajer Baghaha. “Food Security Models.” Issue brief no. 33. Syrian Arab Republic. Ministry of Agriculture and Agrarian Reform, National Agricultural Policy Center, 2010.


6. English physician John Snow used the first spatial model of significance in his famous 1854 Broad Street, London cholera result. Considering incidences of cholera (his statistic) and the location of outbreaks relative to a Broad Street water pump (the spatial context of the statistics), he demonstrated that cholera is a water-born illness.


12. Ibid.


14. Ibid.

15. Ibid.


Calculating Food Security
CONTINUED FROM PAGE 36

2010.


34. United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (IRIN) 2012.


36. Ibid.


38. United Nations Food And Agriculture Organization 2012.

International Development Program Update

Dr. Deborah Bräutigam, the new Director of the International Development (IDEV) Program and professor of International Development and Comparative Politics, joined us in July 2012.

Dr. Bräutigam brings to SAIS nearly thirty years of academic experience in the international development field, focusing on China-Africa relations, governance, foreign aid, industrialization, and state-building. Our students—and the broader SAIS community—are greatly benefiting from her extensive teaching and research accomplishments.

Dr. Bräutigam is collaborating with Professors Cinnamon Dornsife and Bill Douglas, who served together last year as the interim co-directors, in meeting with a range of stakeholders and discussing future directions for the program.

It has been a pleasure to have Professor Douglas with us in IDEV again this year. We continue to benefit from his vast experience, as we have since he began his association with IDEV in 2000, with two years spent at the Hopkins Nanjing Center from 2009–2011.

Cinnamon Dornsife is in her eighth year with IDEV. She is now serving as Senior Associate Director and continues in her appointment as Associate Practitioner in Residence.

Melissa Thomas, Associate Professor, continues in her eighth year with IDEV.

Dorothy Sobol, Coordinator of the Emerging Markets specialization, maintains her formal association within IDEV as a Senior Adjunct Professor.

Tanvi Nagpal is in her third year with IDEV as Faculty Advisor and Professorial Lecturer.

Maya Ajmera is in her second year with IDEV as Visiting Scholar and Professorial Lecturer.

Robin Washington, Program Administrator in Political Economy, has continued to provide her able support to the program and all associated activities.

Katherine Diefenbach, in her fourth year with the program, served as IDEV Program Coordinator through January 2013 and continues to advise on select program activities for the balance of the academic year.

Kisha Manning joined IDEV in February 2013, as our new Program Coordinator.

Marriet “Tina” Evangelista, IDEV’s Program Assistant, continues in her second year with the program.

In January 2013, the International Development Program undertook a field practicum to South Africa. The group was led by Professors Deborah Brautigam and Brian Levy, and student coordinators Nadir Shams and Ranga Mllambo, ably supported by Katherine Diefenbach.
Alumni Update

Chris Cochran (IDEV ’12) works for Wal-Mart’s Sustainability team based at Wal-Mart’s home office in Bentonville, Arkansas. He focuses on sourcing from small and medium farms in emerging markets and measuring the financial value of Wal-Mart’s sustainability efforts.

Jason Loughnane (IDEV ’12) is a financial analyst on the Development Finance team at Global Communities (formerly CHF International), where he works to improve the operations and financial performance of eight microfinance institutions. He lives near DuPont Circle and can occasionally be spotted at SAIS happy hours.

Julia Perri (IDEV ’12) is working in Haiti as a technical advisor for Management Sciences for Health (MHS) on a governance and management program with the Ministry of Health. MSH is an international health nonprofit that works mainly with US government grants. She has been there since October. Getting this new project off the ground has been challenging but interesting, and she is glad to be back in Haiti.

Samantha Krause (formerly Perry, IDEV ’11) and Benjamin Krause (IDEV ’09) got married in Fraser, Colorado on August 18, 2012, surrounded by many fantastic dancing SAISers. Sami is currently an associate at McKinsey & Co, and Ben is country director for J/P Haitian Relief Organization. They are now living in Park View, DC and would love to have some SAISers over for dinner.

Jamie Tanguay (IDEV ’10) has been working with the Government of Vanuatu National Statistics Office since June 2010 as a consultant tasked with designing and implementing a set of well-being indicators for use in government decision-making processes. Jamie has recently accepted a position with the Melanesian Spearhead Group (MSG) Secretariat where he will commence coordination of regional efforts toward the construction of a Melanesian Well-being Index following the successful pilot in Vanuatu.

Vanessa Fajans-Turner (IDEV ’09) is the assistant director of the Avatar Alliance Foundation, where she generates and manages a diverse portfolio of climate change and sustainable energy initiatives. Her role with the Foundation has grown to include analysis of international programming and investment opportunities in Brazil, China, Mongolia and Kenya, as well as contributions to DEEPSEA CHALLENGE, an historic expedition launched in partnership with National Geographic to research and explore the Mariana Trench.

Ayesha Wagle and Pierre Berard (both IDEV ’08) have been working together at MicroCredit Enterprises (MCE) for the last three years, where they put their SAIS skills to work in managing a portfolio of microfinance debt investments worldwide. MCE’s unique guarantor model leverages guarantees from high net worth individuals, foundations, and corporations to raise private capital for the provision of loans to poor micro-entrepreneurs in developing countries.

Nichole Graber (SC&D ’06) is currently a crisis, stabilization, and recovery officer with USAID’s Foreign Service where she has been living and working in Haiti for the past two years in the Democracy and Governance Office. In December 2012, she was assigned to Kingston, Jamaica where she will head up the Office of Citizen Security starting this May. She was recently married in February 2013 to Christiansen William Simmons.

Doina Cebotari (SC&D ’06) after 6 years of work in international development at the World Bank and as advisor to the Prime Minister of Moldova on attracting foreign direct investment, has embarked on the INSEAD MBA program. She will graduate in July 2013.

Anne Knight (SC&D ’05) left her position at US Africa Command in May 2011 to join the Office of Partnership Strategy and Stability Operations within the Office of the Secretary of Defense. Her work there includes developing policy guidance for DoD’s multimillion-dollar humanitarian assistance program and collaborating on civil-military initiatives with USAID and the State Department. This year she was accepted into DoD’s ten-month Executive Leadership Development Program.

Anne Glick (SC&D ’02) currently lives in The Hague, The Netherlands, with her husband and three young boys. She continues to travel, photograph, and write for One Globe Kids, an interactive story series that introduces young children to other children around the world.

Brad Roberts (SC&D ’01) and his family relocated from Colombo, Sri Lanka to the Washington, DC area in January 2013. He is a Senior Operations Officer with the International Finance Corporation, and will now be the program manager for the advisory services side of the Global Agriculture and Food Security Program.

Matthew Breman (SC&D ’97) is now director of Africa Programs at the International Youth Foundation (IYF), managing a portfolio of programs that ensure youth have access to quality education and skills that prepare them for the world of employment and entrepreneurship. Matthew is also excited to help IYF explore and integrate sport as a vehicle to empower youth to lead and effect social change in their communities. Matthew and his wife Rachel welcomed their daughter Leora Grace into the world in November 2013, much to the delight of their son Sebastian and their daughter Aviva.

Amy Larocque-Rumano (SC&D ’96) sends greetings from Lilongwe, Malawi where she has been living with her

CONTINUED ON PAGE 40
husband and two children and serving as country representative for Catholic Relief Services (CRS). She has worked for CRS in Zimbabwe, Haiti, Tanzania, and Baltimore. She hopes to move back to the US in the next year or so and looks forward to catching up with old friends in the Baltimore-DC area.

Jim Barnhart (SC&D ’92) has been the USAID/Albania mission director since September 2012. He served the previous two years as the mission director for USAID/Lebanon.

Susannah Hopkins Leisher (SC&D ’92) is studying for a post-graduate certificate in epidemiology at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, doing volunteer research on perinatal death at the Mater Medical Research Institute in Brisbane, Australia, and taking her turn as primary caretaker of her three boys, Zimri, Kai, and Ilem.
While many Ugandan farmers primarily plant staple crops, such as maize, plantains, and ground nuts, some entrepreneurial farmers in central Uganda have increased their production of fruits in response to growing overseas demand. By constructing solar dryers, these farmers have added value to their fruit crops, which are then transported to a retailer outside of Jinja, a nearby town, before the dried fruits are exported to Europe. In this photo, a successful farmer shares his fruit drying business model with farmers from a neighboring district. Pictured in the background is the farmer's collection of solar dryers, which he uses to dry a wide variety of fruits, including pineapples, bananas, and papayas. Since this photo was taken, the farmer pictured has expanded his business and now leases solar dryers to other farmers seeking to enter the fruit drying business.

Matt Putkoski is a second-year MA student in the International Development Program and a Senior Editor for SAIS Perspectives 2013.